Shifting priorities – changes in youth development practice post first generation youth policy

Saadhna Panday (PhD)
Linda Richter (PhD)

HSRC
Human Sciences Research Council

Content

- Youth Policy Initiative
- Youth bulge
- Policy approach of WDR
- First chances
- Barriers to work
- Second chances
- Youth participation
- Implications for youth work

Evidence-base for youth development

- 1990s: marginalised youth & 'lost generation'
- 1997: National Youth Policy (2000)
- 2001: National Youth Development Policy Framework
- 2003: Status of Youth Report (UYF)
- 2005: African Youth Charter (AU)
- 2005: Special Issue – Youth in Africa
- 2005: Growing up global (IOM)
- 2007: World Development Report: Development & the Next Generation

Youth Policy Initiative

- Aims to influence policy & practice through research, expertise & experience
  - 6 roundtables (+2)
  - Public lecture & seminar series
  - Publications in scholarly & popular press
  - Media coverage, HSRC-wide conference
- Youth participation
  - Web & podcasts
  - Web & sms polls
  - Discussions in communities, youth centres & community radio

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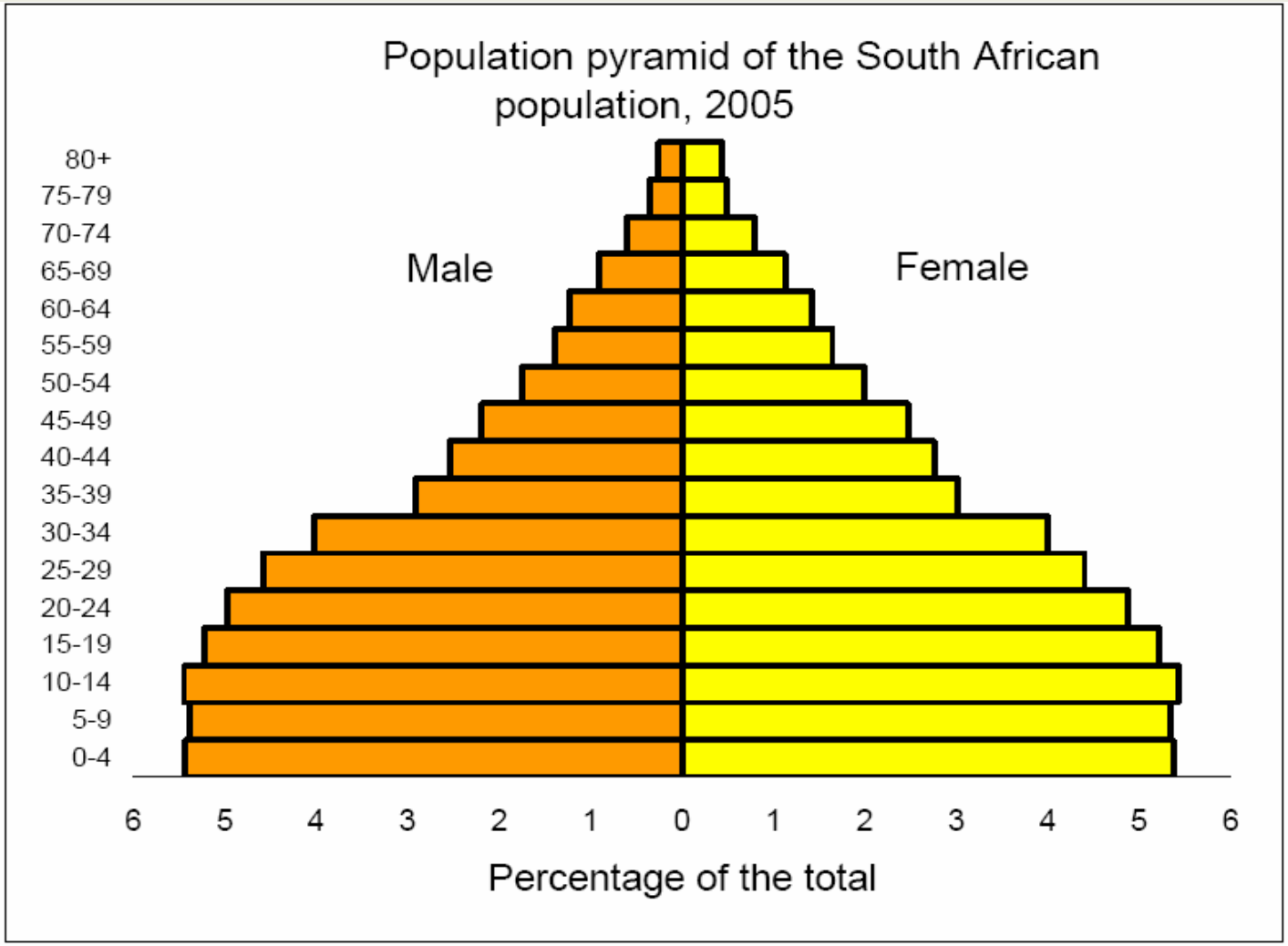
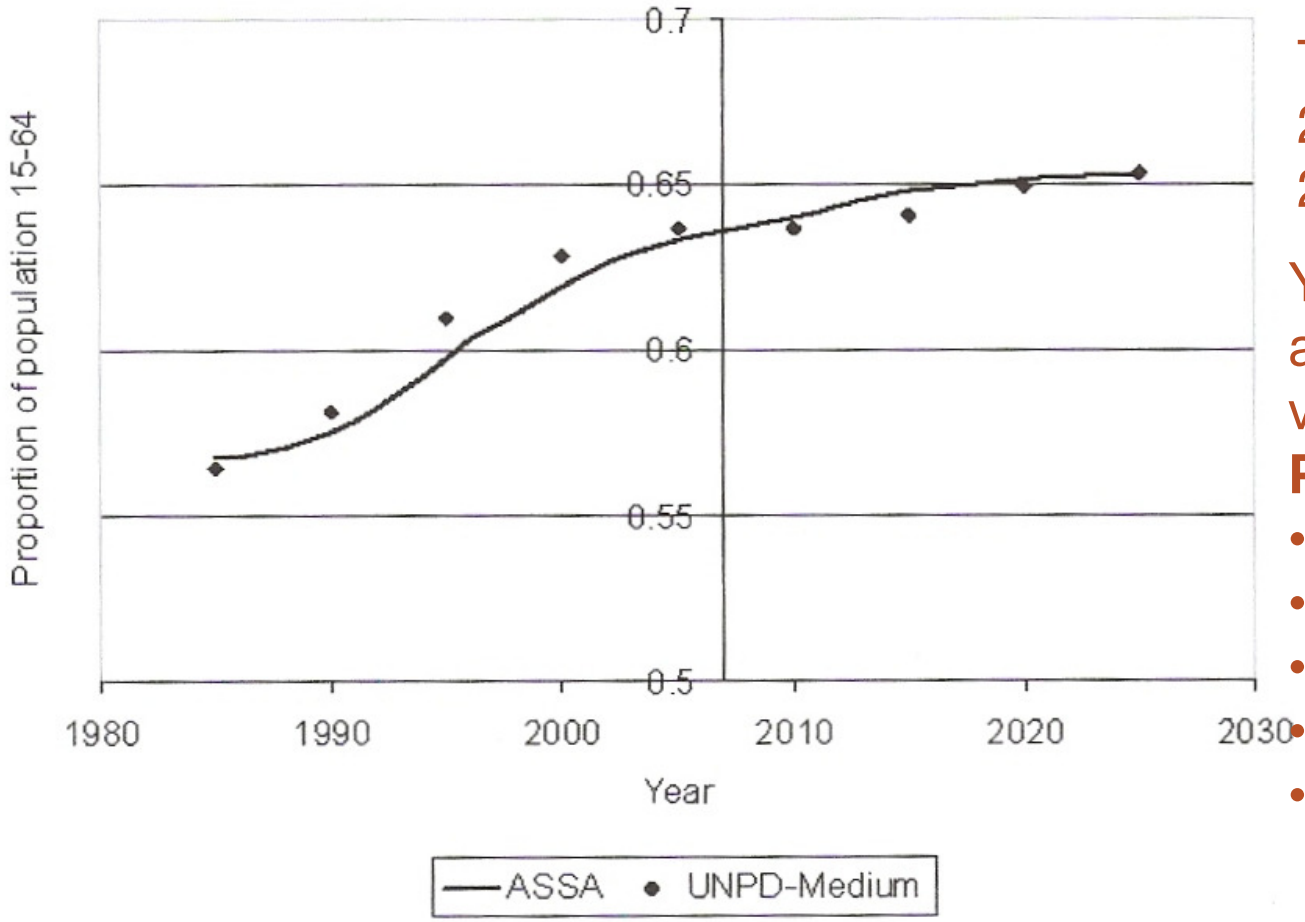
The Youth Bulge



40% of population are between 14-35 years of age

Figure 2 **Proportion of the South African population aged between 15 and 64, 1985-2025, ASSA model and United Nations population projections (medium variant)**



The bulge will last ± 2-3 decades from 2010

Youth bulge offers a positive frame to view young people

Provided…

- Healthy
- Educated
- Able to find work
- Participate in civic
- life

About 67% of the population is aged 15 to 64 years, leveling off

…but youth development in crisis

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Healthy?

- Pregnancy: 40% pregnant (20 yrs of age), 70% unplanned
- HIV, substance use, mental ill health peaking
- Crime & violence: 180 000 young men in prison

Educated?

- Quantity -1 million leave school / yr, 29% matric
- Quality - Poorest on maths & science scores

Able to find work?

- 50% of 18-24 yr olds are unemployed

Participate in civic life?

- Expanding rights, contracting participation

What does it take to be a youth worker in SA?

Lesson 1: how to promote positive youth development in a context of multiple, inter-related & deep-rooted developmental challenges?

- Youth development practice policy must focus on the youth we have today
- Challenges are not of the minority but mainstream youth

Policy approach of WDR

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Expand opportunities

- Learn beyond primary school
- Ease barriers to start & sustain work
- Enhance youth voice

Increase capabilities

- Informed: curricula for life skills training, media, IT
- Resourced: it takes money to make money!
- Responsible: process information

Create second chances

- Targeted
- Mainstreamed
- Reconciliation with accountability

Youth policy: doing it & getting it right

- Poor coordination & limited accountability
  - Have a vision but fail to set priorities & coordinate actions
  - Youth policy stand alone from national development policy
- Weak voice in policy formulation & service delivery
- Paucity of proven success

Strengthen first chances

- Remediation is costly & difficult to achieve
- Building blocks for transition to youthful years are set up during childhood
- Benefits of ECD programmes are unequivocal, early investments in nutrition, health, psycho-social development, child care improve child outcomes
- Keep children in school for as long as possible
- Provide quality education – reading, writing, comprehending, interpreting, but also higher order skills

Ease barriers to start work

Get going with PYF's

Starter PACK

The **PYF Starter Pack** is designed to help youth get a headstart in the world of work.

The **PYF Starter Pack** offers four components that help open doors to employment:

- **Paperwork 4life:** Practical advice on which official/formal procedures are key to getting ahead; financial and other assistance in applying for an ID.
- **On the road:** Tuition and assistance to passing a Learner Driver's License test.
- **Career Quest workshops:** Skills training for the workplace (such as how to write a great CV, interview skills, and what to expect from the world of work); and critical life skills (such as self-confidence and communicating well).
- **Dressed 4life:** A head-to-toe makeover to get you looking sharp and professional. This includes a hair treatment and a manicure; a complete work-smart outfit; and a cellphone to keep you in touch with the job market.

WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

PYF is giving away 10 fully sponsored Starter Packs – worth R10 000 each.
This includes costs for participants such as transport, accommodation and food.

Who can enter
Any unemployed South African citizen, between 18 and 25 years old, who has a permanent address.
How to enter
Your application to win a **PYF Starter Pack** must include:

- ☑ A letter, written by yourself, that explains who you are; what you've achieved so far in your life; and *why you* should be one of **PYF's Starter Pack** winners.
- ☑ A letter of recommendation (such as from a volunteer youth, sports or church organisation; or from a suitable referee, such as a former teacher or employer). This letter must confirm that you actively contribute in some way to your community/society.
- ☑ A certified copy of your birth certificate.
- ☑ Each of the letters spelling C A R E E R S
  In each of the next seven PYF editions (Edition's 2 to 8), one letter of the word C A R E E R S will appear somewhere on these pages.
  You need to collect a complete set of these letters, cut out from PYF pages, and include them with your application to win a **PYF's Starter Pack** (no photocopies allowed!). **Make sure you cut out the first clue in this edition.**

Do you want to be 1 of the 10?
Then you can't afford to miss a single edition of PYF. Look out for the **second** cut-out-and-collect clue in Edition 3

Where to send your application:
Post to PYF/Starter Pack, PO Box 1654, Saxonwold, 2132
Closing date: March 17 2008
Winners will be announced on April 30 2008

- ID
- drivers license
- bank account
- postal address
- IT skills
- communication
- curriculum vitae
- referee's
- work experience

How to overcome sectoral insularity?

Lesson 2: help young people navigate the system

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- Youth development is cross-sectoral & integrated in nature
- Ability to navigate a system that is uncoordinated, not receptive & sometimes harsh
- Opportunities & information are increasing but help needed to process & act on information –behavioural & critical thinking skills required
- Social networks lacking yet critical - be the 'connection' of young people for education, health, work & civic opportunities

Second chances

- Youth policy
  - 1st generation - enabling environment
  - 2nd generation - targeted policy choices
- Second chances ≠ second rate
- Resources
  - Youth in the mainstream need second chances!
- Linked to exit opportunities
- Support services - holistic approach
  - social, economic & personal factors
  - technical skills can be learnt, hard to change a bad attitude, provide socialisation

Lesson 3: Training, skills & resources to make programmes work

- Creating second chances for a group with:
  - little confidence, self-esteem, trust in institutions

"You lack a sense of belonging, you feel like a loser/failure, you become a beggar, its like living in a prison, society labels you an outcast"

  - little information, lack of ability to navigate system
  - absent social networks, support systems with limited capacity
  - bad attitude, mismatched expectations
- Training must be part academic & part practical to cope with the daily realities that young people face

Youth voice

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Youth policy

- unaware & uninvolved, academic, restrictions & bureaucracy

Youth structures

- inaccessible, unapproachable
- intimidating – discouraged/uniformed
- "put them in their place instead of encouraging them & treating them like adults"
- need a welcoming face, "tone that makes the experience memorable"

"*What support? They talk about us being the future of the country…and yet they treat us like we don't exist. They don't listen to us, they don't support us and they certainly don't nurture us*"

Lesson 3: Communication & trust

- **Meaningful** youth & youth worker participation in youth development practice policy is critical
- Build an ethos of care, support & empathy amongst youth workers

"Be our ear when we need to speak to someone & our voice when we need help – listen to what we say & spread the word"

- Inspire confidence by being a role model & being knowledgeable about subject & related fields
- Word of mouth is a powerful advertising tool

Lesson 4: Monitoring & evaluation

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- Few youth policies & programs that have proven effectiveness
- Serious impediment to taking programs to scale
- Gives youth policy the aura of being soft & lacking rigour
- Knowing what works, what does not, & in what circumstances would be of tremendous value in improving policy at national & global levels

Lesson 5: Support & referral system

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- Youth work is a demanding job
- Cannot be voluntary, low paid, low recognition, without a career ladder
- High turn-over damages continuity, trusting relationships
- Youth workers will need the support of a professional organisation
- Must promote holistic development but…
- Youth workers cannot be social workers, health workers, youth development specialists, recruitment officers, teachers & civic activists