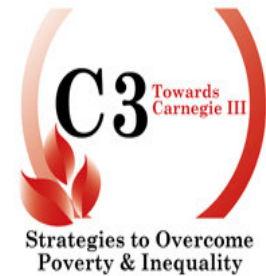




Communication and Marketing Department  
Isebe loThungelwano neNtengiso  
Kommunikasie en Bemerkingsdepartement

Private Bag X3, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa  
Welgelegen House, Chapel Road Extension, Rosebank, Cape Town  
Tel: +27 (0) 21 650 5427/5428/5674 Fax: +27 (0) 21 650 3780

[www.uct.ac.za](http://www.uct.ac.za)



**30 August 2012**

This paper will be presented at the *Strategies to Overcome Poverty and Inequality Conference* to be held at the University of Cape Town from 3 until 7 September 2012.

The 2012 conference will focus on understanding the experiences and causes of inequality, and particularly on considering practical strategies – policies and actions – that are aimed at significantly reducing inequality and poverty in both the short- and long-term.

There will be a host of experts in the social, economic, labour and health fields and will include contributions from Trevor Manuel (Minister in the Presidency, National Planning Commission) and Dr Mamphela Ramphele.

### **The poverty of education in South Africa**

David Gilmour, Pamela Christie and Crain Soudien, University of Cape Town  
([james.gilmour@uct.ac.za](mailto:james.gilmour@uct.ac.za))

The poor performances of learners in Annual National Assessments, along with consistently weak performance in international tests and at the Matric level in South Africa have highlighted deep-rooted weaknesses in the education system. The burden of failure falls primarily on rural and African children, and the consequent drop-out of learners has a knock-on effect in the labour market where, again, the burdens of unemployment fall most heavily on these youth.

The state has responded with a plethora of national intervention plans to try and turn this situation around. Most notable of these, apart from curriculum reform, are the proposed "Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa 2011–2025" and the "Action Plan to 2014: towards the Realisation of Schooling 2025" (DBE, 2010).

These are backed and underpinned by a commitment to increased learner testing, not only to provide benchmarks of progress, but significantly to create a basis for consequential accountability in the system. This paper examines weaknesses in the education system and proposals to address these.

It argues that the selection of indicators to peg performance will likely firstly, define the purposes of education in ways that may be antithetical to broader societal purposes of education, and secondly, drive the system in directions that may exacerbate the problems. Consequently, while acknowledging the place of performance evaluation, a case will be made for the use of complementary measures as yardsticks of progression and as levers for intervention.

### **Note to journalists**

**For full programme visit  
For accreditation please RSVP**

[www.carnegie3.org.za](http://www.carnegie3.org.za)  
[kemantha.govender@uct.ac.za](mailto:kemantha.govender@uct.ac.za) or 021 652 5627  
Accredited media will have access to all sessions of the conference.

**Parking**

Plenty of free parking will be available near the venue (on the south side: P5, P4 and P17)

**Updates**

Key sessions will be record and webcasts can be accessed via the conference website or UCT's youtube site. Daily blogs and links to media reports will also be placed on the conference website.

**Conference venues**

The main conference will be held in the Leslie Social Science Building on UCT's upper campus. All evening events will be in the Baxter Theatre on Rondebosch Main Road. (Please note that media wishing to attend the Impumelelo Social Innovation awards ceremony should contact Impumelelo directly at (021) 424 6360 or [info@impumelelo.org.za](mailto:info@impumelelo.org.za)

***ENDS***

***Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department***

**Kemantha Govender**

Tel: (021) 650 5672

Fax (021) 650 5628

**Cell: 084 737 6522**

E-mail: [kemantha.govender@uct.ac.za](mailto:kemantha.govender@uct.ac.za)

University of Cape Town

Rondebosch

Website: [www.uct.ac.za](http://www.uct.ac.za)