



**SOUTH AFRICA PAPER:  
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**SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION & THE  
'ACCESS' CONUNDRUM: POLICY CHALLENGE  
AND IMPLEMENTATION**




## CONTEXT:

- 18 years after apartheid, key challenge to SA higher education remains 'access'.
- Despite a proliferation of pro-access policy documents, many learners from disadvantaged communities do not have access to quality higher education, excluded on financial and academic grounds (Higher Grade; Standard Grade).
- 'Access' definitions – 'disadvantaged' etc are not keeping pace with changing socio-econ and political landscape e.g. White working class; refugees.
- implementation of policy on ground is haphazard.



# POLICY LANDSCAPE POST 1994

- Key developments post 1994, was robust engagement by representatives of policy stakeholders.
  - Educational policies post 1994 directed towards socio-economic and political transformation.
  - Period 1990-1994: Policy Positioning – present broad policy positions; Period 1994- : Policy Pronouncements – policies for a post-apartheid society.
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# Brief Chronology of Policies:

- 1994 Reconstruction & Development Program: Focused the transformation way for education and general development.  
Presidential Lead Projects (22 in total; one being the Culture of Learning Program).
- 1995 White Paper on Education and Training.
- 1996 White Paper on Science and Technology.
- 1997 Education White Paper 3 – A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education.
- 1998 Education White Paper 4 – A Programme for the Transformation of Further Education & Training.
- 1999 Tirisano Consultative Campaign.
- 2000 A South African Curriculum for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- 2001 National Plan for Higher Education.



# PROBLEM FOCUS (1)

- The total underestimation of the enormity of the problem.
- No specifics were issued on how the transformation process was to be implemented.
- No proper audit was carried out in financial, or other, terms.
- There was no human capacity in terms of the skills to undertake the task.



# CRITICAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How can South African education policies be formed and guided by research?
- How can applied research impact and enhance implementation of education policy in South Africa?
- How can capacity to implement be developed?