

**CHET
POLICY / CHANGE DIALOGUES**

REPORT

**Seminar for
Performance Indicator Project**

**Victoria Junction Hotel,
Cape Town**

9 – 10 March 2004

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[Estimated download time: about 7 min]	

Introduction

This seminar was initiated in the context of a CHET project entitled: *Performance Indicators and Benchmarks for Universities and Technikons in South Africa*. This is an exploratory project that aims first, to suggest ways in which sets of performance indicators can be produced for the SA higher education system and secondly, to develop a proposal for a project on performance indicators in six other African countries. Participants at the seminar thus included representatives from higher education institutions and ministries in Nigeria, Mozambique, Kenya, Tanzania, Botswana and Egypt. South African participants included representatives from the National Department of Education, UCT¹, UWC², US³, Technikon Free State, Wits⁴, Cape Technikon and Tshwane University of Technology⁵. Other invited participants included Frans Kaiser from CHEPS⁶ in the Netherlands and Maurice Kogan from Brunel University in the UK, both of whom have worked extensively on developing and critiquing performance indicators in higher education, and representatives from the Ford Foundation.

CHET will bring out a book later this year on performance indicators that will include some of the papers presented at this seminar.

In the report that follows, we first give an overview of performance indicators as discussed at the seminar and then describe performance indicator projects in South Africa and responses to these. The report concludes with the proposals made for an African Performance Indicator Project.

1. Overview of Performance Indicators

In the overview of performance indicators we discuss the presentations made by Kogan and Kaiser as well as experiences in the use of performance indicators within higher education systems in other African countries.

1.1. Performance indicators and the broader context

A lengthy discussion of performance indicators (PI) was sparked by the paper presented by Kogan, in which he described the broader political context within which PIs and benchmarks should be viewed. He referred to the UK experience, describing how PIs were first used as an accountability mechanism by government, then used to make funding allocations, then used as tools by institutions to assess their own performance and more recently, as part of quality assurance, and monitoring and evaluation regimes, to 'control' the performance of higher education institutions (HEIs). He also talked about the influence of market forces, the massification of higher education and a

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new culture of managerial efficiency as ideologies underpinning performance indicators.

Several issues were raised in response to his paper: One issue related to academia's response to the regime of indicators. It was suggested that academics' 'gut' distaste and scepticism for PIs arise from academics seeing themselves as 'good' and not needing performance indicators to regulate their behaviour. It was felt that there has been a loss of trust between academia and government, which is in part related to the lack of performance indicators within government, so lack of trust is pervasive. Hence the academy has responded quite lethargically and at times negatively, to the use of performance indicators by regulative bodies in government to measure progress and success within the higher education system. Another issue raised was that PIs have been used to de-motivate the system and undermine innovation. The assumption has been that PIs are there to address 'bad attitudes' and 'incompetent' institutions, hence their use has acquired a very negative connotation. A related concern was that PIs and other regulative measures limit the autonomy of institutions in certain respects.

The use of performance indicators, however, was defended on the basis that PIs, particularly in SA, are needed to demonstrate that we are 're-making' our society – they represent figures of change which are seen as counter to ideology. Another motivation was that performance indicators could also be useful to HEIs for formative evaluation, to draw investment into the HE system, and grow confidence in the system. While it was noted that PIs come out of a utilitarian ambition for higher education and are thus seen as a primary mechanism for steering the system, they should not be used for micro-management of institutions, nor for government to find technical arguments for ideological policies such as mergers.

1.2 The European Union experience – Frans Kaiser

In his presentation, Frans Kaiser, described a new steering mechanism, developed by the European Union Commission of 'Structural Indicators', that uses indicators and benchmarks to monitor the progress of European states against the achievement of agreed strategic goals and objectives. He describes this new steering mechanism, called the "open method of co-ordination", as follows:

The open method of co-ordination is an instrument for identifying best policy practices, using the diversity of policy approaches in European countries as a grand reservoir of ideas for possible policy measures to achieve agreed objectives or outcomes. Crucial in this method are indicators and benchmarks. This information has to bring national governments to change their national policies to achieve the common goals. The 'peer pressure' will stimulate governments to look for best practices and to learn from those cases. This will eventually lead to a convergence in national education policies (Kaiser, 2004: 4)

The use of indicators and benchmarks are meant to make progress easily visible and to break down the overall ambition into achievable goals in different policy areas. As such, the selection of indicators and benchmarks are made within the context of the European Union's strategic goals and objectives.

Indicators in the European Union context are defined and used in two ways: first, they are considered to be performance indicators because they are used to monitor progress towards goals; secondly, they are intended to be used as instruments for stimulating the exchange, between Member States, of good practice experiences and new ways of thinking about policy approaches. Benchmarks in this context function as reference points for where the European Union wants to be in 2004 and in 2010. They point to areas where special policy efforts may be necessary to improve education and training in Europe. The European benchmarks are defined as "reference levels of European *average* performance" and are not meant to be concrete targets for individual countries, although Kaiser points out that some countries have adopted these as targets in their national education policies.

In a useful contribution to the seminar, Kaiser described the following seven criteria that quality indicators should meet:

- The phenomena to be indicated should be *quantifiable*;
- The indicator should have *content validity* – meaning it should measure the phenomenon it refers to;
- The indicator should have *face validity* – meaning it should be easy to understand for all users;
- The data underlying the indicator scores should be *reliable* and trustworthy;
- Indicators should produce information that is *up to date*;
- Collecting data and calculating indicators that meet all requirements listed has to be *feasible*;
- Indicators should not be used in isolation. To combine the information from indicators a map of *relations between the indicators* is necessary.

Evaluating the 2002 EU indicators⁷ in terms of the above, he argues that feasibility was the main criterion used for the selection of indicators and that, while the data used was reliable, several of the indicators lacked content and face validity, information was out of date and there was no coherent framework that mapped out the relations between indicators. Many of these shortcomings have been acknowledged and the EU Commission has embarked on a process of developing new indicators and methods to obtain data on them. In particular, attention has been given to the development of composite indicators and a coherent framework to improve the selection of new indicators and to evaluate the list of existing indicators.

⁷ See the list of 29 indicators in Appendix 1 of Kaiser's paper. The indicators relate only to education and training and not to research. Kaisers paper can be obtained from F.Kaiser@utwente.nl

Kaiser concluded his paper with an illustration of how relations between indicators for one objective can be mapped so as to improve the interpretation one may construct of the scores on the indicators. He argued that mapping relations between indicators in this way may enhance our understanding of the phenomena we are trying to measure and may also lead to a concise set of composite indicators that meet most of the practical and technical criteria mentioned earlier (p16). According to Kaiser, the major challenge facing the EU Commission is to provide detailed specification of indicators that have a broad scope, to provide clearly specified and realistic targets, and to provide relevant time-frames in which to achieve and measure targets.

In response to questions from the floor, Kaiser pointed out that countries could use the indicators to show off their performance in the EU context or to get money from the EU to improve their performance. He also noted that while there are initiatives by some countries to come to some agreement on European standards of quality in education, especially to facilitate the mobility of students, the EU was not actively working towards achieving this.

1.3 Experiences in Mozambique – Arlindo Chilundo

Mozambique has developed a long-term strategy plan divided into three phases: 2000-2004, 2005-2008 and 2009-2010. The operational plan for phase one includes some benchmarks, but no indicators have been developed yet. Emphasis in phase one has been on the establishment of the Observatory, which works mainly on statistics and building up a database that has clear indicators for higher education institutions. Its main objective is to strive towards uniformity in information coming from HEIs. Strategic plans and institutional goals and benchmarks used in HEIs were consulted in the development of the database, although some institutions refused to release strategic information. Currently, there are no indicators yet that tell them what progress has been made in the system. There are plans afoot to establish a committee to consider indicators for measuring quality in HEIs.

1.4 Experiences in Nigeria – Sambo Abdulraman

The use and development of indicators and benchmarks in this country has occurred primarily in the context of quality assurance and accreditation of programmes within HEIs. Post 1983, Minimum Academic Standards for all programmes/disciplines were established and these were then developed into benchmarks used to judge and accredit programmes in any HEI. Six broad indicators have been used to measure the performance of HEIs. These indicators relate to academic standards, staff, students, employer's rating, library services and funding. Assessment teams are drawn from all the universities to assess programmes at all universities for accreditation. Universities, irrespective of ownership, must be accredited. Two systems of external accreditation are used – one for academic programmes and one for professional programmes. Accreditation lasts six years and interim accreditation two years. Institutions also get the opportunity to assess their own performance. Benchmarks, for example staff-student ratios, apply to the

same programmes in all institutions. Other benchmarks relate to ranks of staff, expenditure within units, female enrolments, geographical spread of admissions, science enrolments and annual growth rates. A set of management performance indicators are also used in annual audits of HEIs.

1.5 Experiences in Egypt – Kamal Kamel

In 2000 a Quality Assurance Project was started, run by a national committee on quality assurance. They undertook a study of four universities sponsored by the Ford Foundation and others. Now they are looking at assessing HEIs at programme level. They have embarked on a system of building capacity between 2003 and 2007. They have established a National Quality Assurance Agency (NQAA) which is part of the office of the President, not the Higher Education Ministry. A 'hearing' session for feedback on the NQAA from all stakeholders will be held shortly.

1.6 Experiences in Botswana – Richard Niell

There is only one university in Botswana which has operated in a very resource rich environment up to now. A Tertiary Education Council oversees higher education and they have been involved in the benchmark project of the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU). The benchmarks are to be used to develop performance indicators for comparisons across commonwealth countries. The performance indicators relate to current performance within certain focus areas and the benchmarks are the projections into the future. They have developed a system that includes a profile of twelve 'vital signs' of an institution's performance. The 'vital signs' are derived from the performance indicators and can be used on a regular basis to 'test the pulse' of the institution.

1.7 Experiences in Kenya – David Court

Not much data on the performance of higher education institutions has been produced and quality has not been on the agenda. There is no legal framework governing programmes within HEIs and no regulative framework for trans-national provision. Quality issues are only beginning to be considered and there is a recognition of the need to set some targets. They are supportive of the re-vitalisation of the Inter-University Council for East Africa, and will put quality high on its agenda, and are also looking to the establishment of a regional body for quality assurance of HEIs.

1.8 Experiences in Tanzania – Daniel Mkude

The University of Dar es Salaam has embarked on a programme of developing quality performance indicators for the prime functions of teaching, research and community service. They started with a very participatory process of establishing widely acceptable quality indicators for research. Their starting point was to identify six broad quality assurance indicators for research based on a survey of relevant literature. These six broad indicators related to research planning, research training, staff participation in research,

research students, research outcomes and research impact. University staff were then asked to rate the suitability of these indicators on a five point scale. The results from this survey were then used to identify and rank the top ten indicators. Staff then suggested a few additional indicators that would measure customer satisfaction. These included for example, indicators that measure society's perception of research at the UDSM and the number of local/international research assignments that UDSM wins in a competitive environment. It was acknowledged that this process of developing reliable performance indicators at UDSM has only just begun and still has a long way to go.

2. Performance Indicators in South Africa⁸

2.1 Earlier initiatives: 2000-2003

In 2000, CHET published a short book entitled: *Higher Education Transformation: Assessing Performance in South Africa*. The book offered an assessment of the performance of the higher education system in SA relative to the goals contained in the 1997 White Paper⁹ on higher education transformation¹⁰. The model used in the CHET 2000 publication held that the main elements of a higher education performance measurement system are the following:

- Sets of government-determined goals for the HE system¹¹;
- Sets of properties which can be derived from these goals, and which the HE system will possess if these goals are achieved;
- Sets of indicators which can be used to refer to these properties.

A limitation of CHET 2000, however, was the absence of any systematic link between these main elements of a systemic performance measurement system. As a result, it was not always self-evident what the systemic properties were that had been derived from the national goals, or what indicators had been selected to refer to these properties. A further major weakness of CHET 2000 is that it did not permit an overall evaluation to be made of the SA higher education system. Instead it could only offer a series of 'comments' on the performance of the higher education system. It could not say how well or badly the system was doing because no targets or benchmarks were set against which to measure the system. The model also did not allow for internal or international comparisons to be made.

⁸ More details with respect to this will be found in the forthcoming CHET publication.

⁹ Released by the National Department of Education

¹⁰ The book used data available for the period 1997-1999

¹¹ CHET 2000 identified 18 goals. These goals were grouped into four broad objectives relating to

- (i) increased and broadened participation;
- (ii) responsiveness to social interests and needs;
- (iii) co-operation and partnerships in governance;
- (iv) funding.

A second initiative can be seen in the attempt by a National Working Group (NWG) established by the South African Minister of Education in 2001, to develop a set of performance indicators and benchmarks designed to “provide a framework for assessing quantitatively the equity, sustainability and productivity properties that in the NWG’s view should characterise healthy and well-functioning higher education institutions.” (NWG 2001:12) In their model, they outlined expected features that HEIs are expected to have in terms current government policies and linked these to performance indicators that described the properties that an institution or the system actually possesses and, in turn, linked these to benchmarks which described the properties an institution or system ought to have. The model was used to measure an institution’s or the system’s performance against the set benchmarks, which allowed for internal comparisons across institutions or sectors, as well as an evaluation in terms of meeting ‘fitness for purpose’ criteria and hence whether institutions or the system can be described as ‘well-functioning’ or not¹².

While some decisions on the restructuring of the higher education system, and especially merging of higher education institutions, were based on reports from the NWG using this model, a number of objections were raised against the model which caused some scepticism and trepidation regarding the further use of this model as a performance measurement system. Objections included the following:

- The NWG used problematic data from the new national Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) that contained some definitional ambiguities, which had not yet been settled and refined.
- No clear distinction was made between statistical indicators and benchmarks.
- It did not draw sufficiently clear links between policy objectives, indicators and benchmarks.
- Indicators and benchmarks should be developed on a time-series rather than a ‘snap-shot’ basis.
- The use of undifferentiated sets of benchmarks for all public higher education institutions could lead to a process of homogenisation across all sectors, which would be contrary to government policy that favoured institutional diversity.
- Some of the indicators were technically flawed, and could not serve the functions intended by the NWG.
- The benchmarks did not represent reasonable aspirations for most SA universities and technikons.

A third initiative in 2003 saw CHET develop a new model for performance measurement of the SA higher education system that was based on the methodology of the NWG, but which did not accept all of the NWG’s sets of expected properties and benchmarks. CHET 2003 began with the formulation of a set of policy-derived features, indicators and benchmarks, which could be used to determine to what extent the evaluation ‘well-functioning’ can be

¹² The NWG used radar graphs to compare an institution’s or the system’s performance against the benchmarks.

applied to individual higher education institutions¹³. Objections similar to those raised against the NWG model were again raised to CHET 2003. These included technical flaws with some of the indicators, the use of undifferentiated benchmarks across the higher education sectors, the absence of qualitative indicators and the use of 'snap-shot' indicators based on averages across time. Further objections included the following:

- The purpose of the indicators proposed in the model are not clear. A distinction has to be drawn between the use of indicators for monitoring performance against sets of national goals and for grading institutions.
- The notion of a 'well-functioning' institution is difficult to understand and define.
- The model confuses indicators and benchmarks which can reasonably be applied only to the system with those intended for the evaluation of individual institutions.
- The radar graphs used to measure performance against the benchmarks are misleadingly simple. They do not allow for different weightings to be given to different properties and indicators.
- The use of the 'benchmarks' in the model is misleading since they were not based on a standard benchmarking exercise, but are in effect national policy targets.

2.2 CHET 2004: Approaches to Measuring Performance In Higher Education

The CHET 2004 model¹⁴ is a further attempt to set out a performance measurement model for higher education in the African context, which takes into account all the criticisms raised against earlier models. The main features of CHET 2004 are the following:

- It draws a distinction between systemic and institutional goals and hence produces two sets of indicators and targets – one set for the system and one set for institutions.
- Systemic and institutional goals are again derived from national policies.
- Systemic and institutional indicators are not linked to benchmarks. Instead they are linked to quantitative targets, which have been directly or indirectly derived from national policy documents.
- Targets are permitted to differ across sectors within the HE system.
- Wherever possible, time-series data rather than snapshot or average data is used.
- All indicators are still quantitative.
- It does not attempt to grade institutions. At best, it can be used to check institutional performance against approved targets.

¹³ CHET 2003 listed 14 properties which a well-functioning HEI institution in SA could be expected to have. These properties were grouped into the following five subsets: (i) academic programmes, (ii) students, (iii) administrative staff, (iv) academic staff and (v) finances.

¹⁴ See Approaches to Measuring Performance in Higher Education: A South African Case Study – <http://www.chet.org.za/papers/PIDraftPaper.pdf>

- Since it does not attempt to make value judgements about the system or institutions, it does not use the notion of 'well-functioning' institutions.
- Data is reported in a series of bar graphs which shows performance against the expected target.

CHET 2004 links indicators and targets for the higher education *system* to ten systemic goals. These ten systemic goals have been clustered into four groups relating to (i) the size and shape of the system; (ii) student equity; (iii) staff equity and (iv) graduate and research output. The indicators for these goals include head counts, success rates and proportional calculations.

Indicators and targets for higher education *institutions* have been linked to ten institutional goals. These ten institutional goals have been clustered into four groups relating to (i) student equity; (ii) student efficiency; (iii) staff equity and (iv) staff qualifications and outputs. The indicators for these goals again include head counts, success rates and proportional calculations.

2.3 Responses to CHET 2004

The responses to CHET 2004 during this seminar can be clustered around predictable themes relating to the use, selection and limitations of performance indicators, targets and benchmarks and whether performance measurement models for higher education systems and their constituent institutions are 'exportable'. The responses ranged from general comments and questions on these issues to very technical and practical suggestions to improve the model. While the debate was clearly taken forward, many questions remained unanswered. The technical suggestions were noted by the authors, and so only some of the general issues that were discussed are reported here.

2.3.1 Performance indicators

There was general agreement that it was useful to separate systemic indicators from institutional indicators. This being the case, it was also important to differentiate between measurement of the performance of the system and performance of the policy (or intervention). In other words, it would be dangerous to attribute any causality to performance and one should rather look towards correlations of performance on different indicators. One suggestion was that instead of comparing institutions' performance as a whole, institutions should be compared on particular indicators. For example, compare the top performers for publication outputs or the top performers for efficiency etc.

It was acknowledged that many of the PI measures are already built into the funding formula for HEIs, yet there are also some things in the system that just cannot be measured. At the same time, there should be a recognition that some PIs work at certain levels of aggregation and some do not. Some PIs are proxies at some levels and not at all at others. For example, publication outputs cannot be a proxy for research productivity at universities. It is problematic when institutions translate this to the level of the individual – it

encourages dishonesty by academics to increase their research output counts. A counter argument to this, was that manipulating research outputs will be detected as the system goes on.

It was noted that, although there have been mixed reactions from academics to performance indicators, the performance regime is here to stay and there are benefits and risks attached to PIs. Whether things are called PIs, targets or benchmarks, they all become benchmarks of performance. Talk about performance is about the viability of the system. Hence, past performance, key drivers of future performance and what the rate of change should be in future should be identified. In addition, the rationale or motivation for using PIs has to be made clear at the outset and their scope should be expanded to benefit the system. The attitude should be that what can be counted, counts. The danger of relying on 'simple' quantitative measures should be avoided, since this often does not help the system. It could be more beneficial to use composite measures. One suggestion was that performance measurement models should differentiate between PIs geared towards securing funding for the HE system, PIs geared towards accreditation of institutions and PIs geared towards helping institutions develop and manage themselves.

The issue of input and output measures of the system were also discussed. Here 'unit of funding' was identified as a measure of input and it was proposed that more input measures at the system level as well as the sub-institutional level should be considered for inclusion in a performance measurement model for higher education. For example, it was suggested that it might be worth measuring costing and viability of change within the system.

A few questions, relating to performance measurement, remained unanswered. One of these pointed to matriculation pass rates as a measure of school success and how this measure gets manipulated to push up rates. In this context, can pass rates be measured accurately, or the 'value added' of going to higher education institutions? The other questions related to the issue of measuring employability. Questions related to this issue included:

- How long after graduation do you measure?
- What if there are no jobs for graduates – does this reflect on the institution?
- Where is information to be obtained on labour market absorption?

2.3.2 Targets

On the question of whether different targets can be set for different institutions, an analogy was drawn with the Equity Act, whereby employers are measured against different national targets in different levels of employment. The idea of including negotiated institutional targets was accepted as a good idea – these targets should be set at the time of an institution's strategic planning. The question was raised, however, as to who will set targets at the sub-institutional level, and whether there is a danger of losing comparability at this level. It was argued that targets at this level also have to be negotiated with the units. A concern raised in relation to all of the

above was whose targets will ultimately determine the rate of change – those generated bottom-up or top-down?

An open question posed was whether targets or benchmarks remain constant over a few years or whether they shift relative to population growths in the country. In response, one suggestion was that perhaps targets should be prioritised for the next five years and phased in. Another suggestion was to add weightings for prioritising targets at the institutional level.

It was noted that in the current model there are few targets that relate to inputs, processes or outcomes. One recommendation was that targets for graduation rates of cohort studies should be included.

In response to the bar graphs used to report the data in CHET 2004, it was noted that the graphs show past performance and do not guarantee future performance. The targets on the graph show the hope for future performance. What is missing in the model are the drivers in the future that will help to achieve the desired targets.

2.3.3 Benchmarks

Comparing benchmarks to targets, the following distinction was made: benchmarks are measures of good-practice from which institutions want to learn. They also have to be set up for appropriately comparable institutional peers since you cannot compare apples and pears! Targets on the other hand, could be rates of achieving something as well as the measure of actually achievement. Targets do not necessarily say anything about good practice.

On the utility of benchmarks for an institution, the suggestion was that three benchmarks be considered – a benchmark to measure performance against the national system, a benchmark to measure performance against developing countries and a benchmark to measure performance against the international community. It was pointed that the benchmarks used by the NWG were not really benchmarks since they were not based on good practice experiences anywhere. They were often arbitrarily and erratically set.

It was further argued that benchmarks provide useful comparative information. By stating benchmarks, debates about standards are taken out of the hands of institutions. If no benchmarks are stated, these debates have the potential to destabilise institutions. The benefits of benchmarks are that they have the potential to set high levels of expectation and attainment by institutions and the system, they enable institutions to make choices (e.g. to 'play in the same leagues'), they create confidence in the public mind about the performance of institutions, and they are forward looking, thus framing a space for collaboration between institutions.

The big question, never explicitly answered, was whether benchmarks or targets should be used to show Treasury or the National Department of Education that the system is working well.

3. African Performance Indicator Project

This discussion was kicked off by Ahmed Bawa of the Ford Foundation with a brief description of the aims of the US funding partnership project on African higher education that initiated case studies of universities in several African countries. These case studies revealed the lack of a common understanding of performance indicators for higher education institutions and hence the difficulty of talking about common indicators across countries. There was a realisation that any attempt by the funding partnership to build a benchmarking association across countries for quality assurance will need to ensure there is a common understanding of performance indicators for higher education systems and institutions.

The discussion that followed was fairly brief and limited to considering arguments for having an African Performance Indicator project. In that case, what should the project do, who should participate in it, and what should be the way forward.

3.1 Arguments for having the project

The main arguments in support of the project centred on the need to develop 'continent relevant' indicators for HE, especially to facilitate regional integration and co-operation and to enable African countries to compare themselves to their 'peers' – other African countries. While there was acknowledgment that countries were at different stages in the development of measuring strategies, it was felt that this project would allow African countries to learn from each others' experiences – to recognise common features and generic categories for measuring performance, and to set benchmarks for good practice. It was argued that if performance for higher education systems is defined broadly for the benefit of the countries, then it will also benefit the continent.

3.2 What should the project do?

Issues raised in this discussion were mainly concerned with national versus continental indicators and targets, and data collection procedures. Suggestions were sometimes contradictory, but were raised in the spirit of putting ideas on the table. For example, one proposal was that the project starts with generic indicators and then breaks these down to country specific contexts, while another proposal was that the project starts with fine-grained institutional indicators and then looks at what can be used at the national or regional level.

First it was suggested that a distinction should be made between indicators for quality and indicators for monitoring HE systems. The project also has to identify what problem is being addressed that requires regional indicators or regional monitoring. There were proposals, for example, to start by considering indicators developed for the region by NEPAD and UNESCO. Another proposal was that new core indicators be developed that will work

across all the countries. Here it was noted that the South African indicators currently all relate to equity and efficiency, and these should be applicable generally to other countries.

A general concern, of course, was that targets for different countries might be different, and although comparison at national level still seems feasible, the question was whether the range of institutions in each country would allow for meaningful comparability at this level. It was also questionable, whether, if each country unpacks its own national plans into goals and targets, this will result in generic targets and common goals.

In this regard the important distinction made between targets and benchmarks will be very useful. Targets allows to set policy goals, based on current situation and what is achievable, while benchmarks is more for comparative purposes.

A final word of caution was that the project has to beware of indicators, targets or benchmarks being used for unintended purposes – it has to be clear what the project wants to do with the targets or benchmarks.

With respect to data collection, it was felt that the biggest challenge will be to make sure that information from different countries is comparable and that systems are set up for data collection for agreed performance indicators in different countries. It was proposed that a data specialist has to investigate how data is translated into indicators in different countries, for example, in the use of head counts or not. The data specialist would need to look for differences and similarities. Another issue to be considered is the size of biases in data collection processes in different countries, and how to ensure that data collection minimises biases.

3.3 Who should be part of the project?

There was some debate about whether the project should consider only SADC countries, or countries involved in the African partnership case studies ('Ford' countries), or whether it should be continent-wide and include Franco-phone countries. Consensus was that the project should stick with countries currently involved. These were SA, Nigeria, Tanzania, Botswana, Kenya, Egypt and Mozambique.

3.4 Way forward

It was agreed that a small group from among the participants would get together to specify deliverables and budget for a project proposal. The CHET report and country case studies will be used to inform the proposal. The project proposal will be submitted to Ford and Carnegie for their next funding cycle in Oct/Nov 2004.

**Report by:
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March 2004**

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CHET POLICY / CHANGE DIALOGUES SEMINAR

9 & 10 March 2004

**Victoria Junction Hotel,
Corner Somerset and Ebenezer Road,
Greenpoint, Cape Town**

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR PROJECT SEMINAR

Tuesday, 9 March 2004

- 10h30 Welcome and Aims of Project—Nico Cloete (CHET)
11h00—13h00 Examples of Performance Indicator Projects
EU—Frans Kaiser (CHEPS)
Selected Country Examples
Chair: Ahmed Bawa (Ford Foundation)
13h00—14h30 Lunch
14h30—17h00 CHET Project Proposals—Ian Bunting (CHET)
19h30 Dinner

Wednesday, 10 March 2004

- 09h00 Response to CHET Report—Maurice Kogan (Brunel)
Chair: Johan Muller (University of Cape Town)
10h30 Tea
11h00 Panel:
Hugh Amoore (University of Cape Town)
Larry Popkas (University of Western Cape)
Daniel Mkude (University of Dar-es-Salaam)
Chair: Arlindo Chilundo (University of Eduardo
Mondlane)
13h00 Lunch
14h00 Constructing an African Performance Indicator
Project
Chair: Nico Cloete (CHET)
16h00 Closure

RSVP before 23 February 2004

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