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**An analysis of out of school youth who
have not completed matric: what can
available data tell us?**

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An analysis of out of school youth who have not completed matric: what can available data tell us?

Nicola Branson

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Abstract

This short report, commissioned by the IPSS Youth Focus Project funded by the Ford Foundation, investigates the extent to which available public data can inform trajectories of post-school youth and the critical gaps that the public data does not address.

1. Introduction

Youth who fail in academic programmes at high school often struggle to obtain further learning opportunities and represent some of the most vulnerable segments of society. “Work mapping post-school provision in the Western Cape, highlights an initiative by the provincial Western Cape Education Department to create learning opportunities for high school youth at risk of dropping out of the school system. Since 2013 around 2000 young people have been re-directed by the Western Cape Education Department’s Youth Focus project into TVET colleges and Adult Learning Centres”(FETI proposal). Yet, little is known about the learning trajectories and, more broadly, the pathways that those leaving school without completing grade 12 (matric) take. This paper is a component of research focused on the TVET and Adult Education sectors of post-school provision, aimed at providing a critical window into the learning trajectories of at risk youth, and their progression through post-school institutions.

Our intention with this analysis was to quantify the number of youth who have left high school without completing matric, including those that have entered TVET colleges and adult learning centres, describe their demographics, programme choices, progression through post-school institutions and performance within their programmes. In attempting to do this it became clear that there is insufficient data to answer many important questions. Specifically, there is no publicly available data to examine programme choice, progress through post-school institutions and performance within programmes. In addition, it is not always possible with the available data to identify whether a young person has completed matric or not, or more broadly their previous educational attainment prior to enrolment in post-school education. The analysis therefore includes a description of what can and cannot be done with the available data.

Our focus on youth who have completed compulsory education (grade 9) but have incomplete high school - both those in further education and those not enrolled - is motivated by the recognition that this group represents some of the most marginalised youth in South Africa and that there is a need to better understand whether the current provision of post-schooling education provides viable educational alternatives that can lead to a qualification that improves an individual’s life trajectory. Youth who have not completed matric are less likely to find employment and earn far less in the labour market if they do (Branson and Kahn 2016). Evidence shows that the return to completing a diploma or certificate – the post-schooling qualification that this group could, in principle, earn – is high, yet research currently available does not distinguish between those achieving diplomas and certificates after completing matric from those who enter into these qualifications as an alternative to matric. It is therefore not clear whether the labour market return to a diploma/certificate would be the same for these two groups.

Our analysis shows some improvements in the number and share of youth achieving matriculation, with the result that a smaller share of youth are found to have left school with between grade 9 and 11 in 2016 compared to 2011. In addition, we show that the ratio of TVET to university enrolment is more equal (36% in TVET: 44% in University) in 2016 than in 2011 (28%:52%), a shift that is in line (although the numbers remain well below the target) with the policy drive to increase TVET enrolment almost four fold by 2030 (DHET 2013). These positive changes aside, the group without matric represented about 3 million youth in 2016 and are shown to live in some of the most poorly resourced households, with the proportion NEET (not in employment, education or training) over 65%. While the TVET and ABET colleges are intended to provide these school leavers with an alternative route to a qualification and skills to be used in the labour market, fewer than 155 000 were enrolled in any form of post-schooling education in 2016.

The paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 defines our population of interest and describes some of the data available to analyse this sub-population. Section 3 provides a descriptive analysis of the size and

shape of this sub-population and examples of the average individual and household characteristics of youth by enrolment status. Section 4 provides a summary of the findings and provides some recommendations for taking the research forward.

2. Defining a group of ‘youth at risk’ using survey data

South Africa has a wealth of high quality publicly available nationally representative household survey data and collects detailed institutional data across the post-school education and training (PSET) system. Our sub-population of interest is youth (15-24) who have completed grade 9 but have not completed matric, hereafter defined as ‘youth at risk’¹. We therefore require, at a minimum, information on age, current enrolment by institution and highest school grade completed to define this group.

Table 1: Pros and cons of using different types of data for analysing youth at risk

| | Pros | Cons |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Census and Community Survey data | Nationally representative | Limited current or prior education information |
| | Publicly available | No performance measures |
| | Individual characteristics | |
| | Household socioeconomic information | |
| Household Survey data | Nationally representative | Small PSET sample |
| | Publicly available | Cannot accurately estimate PSET numbers |
| | Individual characteristics | Limited current or prior education information |
| | Household socioeconomic information | No performance measures |
| National Income Dynamics Study | Nationally representative | Tiny PSET sample |
| | Publicly available | Cannot accurately estimate PSET numbers |
| | Individual characteristics | No performance measures |
| | Household socioeconomic information | |
| | Prior socioeconomic information | |
| Individual level Institutional Data | Large PSET sample | Not publicly available |
| | Comprehensive information on current education | Less individual information |
| | Information on performance, including past performance | Limited information on family background |
| | Potential to link to other administrative sources or spatial survey information | |

Appendix A provides an analysis of what data are available and their potential to analyse youth as they transition out of school and into Post School Education and Training (PSET). Table 1 summarises the pros and cons of the four main information sources identified. The survey data has comprehensive

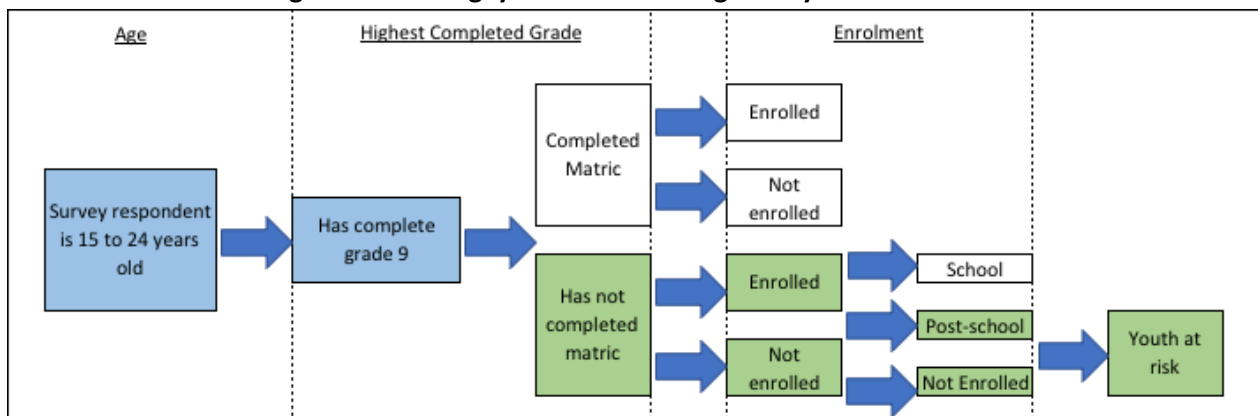
¹ Youth who complete matric and do not enter employment or further education or training, also form part of youth at risk given their NEET status. While our analysis focuses on ‘youth at risk’ as defined above, we include information on this post matric NEET group in the analysis.

individual information, but due to small PSET sample sizes, cannot be used to unpack differences across or within institutions. In addition, the cross sectional survey data has minimal information on prior and current information and therefore cannot be used to examine trajectories of youth. The 10% Censuses and the Community surveys have larger samples and therefore provide some potential but again do not have disaggregated institutional information or information on educational pathways. The National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) has information on educational trajectories, but has an even smaller sample than the cross sectional surveys.

The individual institutional level data overcomes many of these data challenges and therefore has great potential for the analysis of youth educational trajectories. Sample sizes are large and can, in principle, be linked across years and to other administrative data from the Department of Basic Education (e.g. LURITS, EMIS, NSC), South Africa Social Security Agency (SASSA) or even South African Revenue Services (SARS) records to construct information on the educational trajectories of youth. The data is however currently not publicly available to researchers, and information for the complete system, particularly the college sector, is patchy. Work to link institutional information between the school and the post-school system has begun (Van Broekhuizen et al. 2016) but is not yet available on an accessible platform. The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) publishes the Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa report on an annual basis. The report provides aggregated information on enrolment, graduation and staffing for the PSET system which includes public and private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Technical and Vocational education and Training (TVET) colleges, private colleges and Community Education and Training (CET) colleges previously called public Adult Education and Training (AET) Centres, but the report focuses on the full sector and does not provide information for youth specifically. Given these data constraints, in the subsequent analysis we use Census/Community Survey² and Survey data. While these data do not allow us to answer questions on the trajectories of youth at risk they can be used to map the broad context of this group.

We define our sample based on information about age, highest completed grade and institutional enrolment type. Figure 1 provides a graphical depiction of how the group is defined.

Figure 1: Defining ‘youth at risk’ using survey data variables



² We assess how similar the information from the Census/Community Survey is to that presented in the DHET statistics. Appendix B shows that the aggregates are comparatively similar, especially for those enrolled in Public TVET or HEIs. There are however discrepancies in the numbers and shares estimated in private colleges and CET/ABET. Two reasons for this include that the DHET statistical report does not provide comprehensive coverage of private college enrolment and the surveys changed the way the CET/ABET enrolment question was asked between 2011 and 2016.

- Panel 1 shows that the sample is restricted to youth between the ages of 15 and 24.
- In panel 2 information on the highest education attained is used to restrict the sample to youth who have completed at least grade 9 and to distinguish between those with and without matric.

Respondents are classified as having matric if they had grade 12, a certificate/diploma with matric and/or a degree. Those with a highest grade less than grade 12 or a certificate/diploma without matric are classified as not having matric. It was less clear how to classify the matric status of those with NCV/NTC and N qualifications, as while a matriculation may not be necessary to enrol for these qualifications, it is recognised that some students first complete their matric before choosing this route. We classify these respondents as not having matric if they were currently still enrolled and classify respondents who are no longer enrolled and whose qualification broadly equated to matric or higher (e.g. NCV4, N3-6) to the matric group.

- In panel 3 information on the type of institution a respondent is enrolled in is used to define individuals as enrolled in school, enrolled in PSET/ABET or not enrolled. We exclude those in literacy classes and those who did not specify an institution.

Figure 1 shows that we divide youth into five distinct groups: those enrolled in PSET after completing matric, those not enrolled after completing matric, those enrolled in school, those enrolled in PSET who did not complete matric and those not enrolled who did not complete matric. While the analysis presents results for each of these groups, the focus is on the latter two groups, youth who have left school without completing matric, both those enrolled and those not enrolled, our group of 'youth at risk'.

3. Descriptive analysis of youth aged 15-24 who have completed at least grade 9

3.1 Mapping enrolment by institution type in 2011 and 2016

Table 2 presents estimates of the number of youth 15-24 (including 95% confidence bands) who have completed at least grade 9 in 2011 and 2016. The number of youth in this category has increased from 7.6 million in 2011 to 8.5 million in 2016. In 2016, about 3.5 million of these youth were in school, and a further 3.2 million had completed matric. The remaining 1.75 million were youth who had completed grade 9 and could potentially enrol in TVET or ABET. Yet the table shows that only around 150 000 of this group did so, meaning that the remaining 1.6 million were not enrolled.

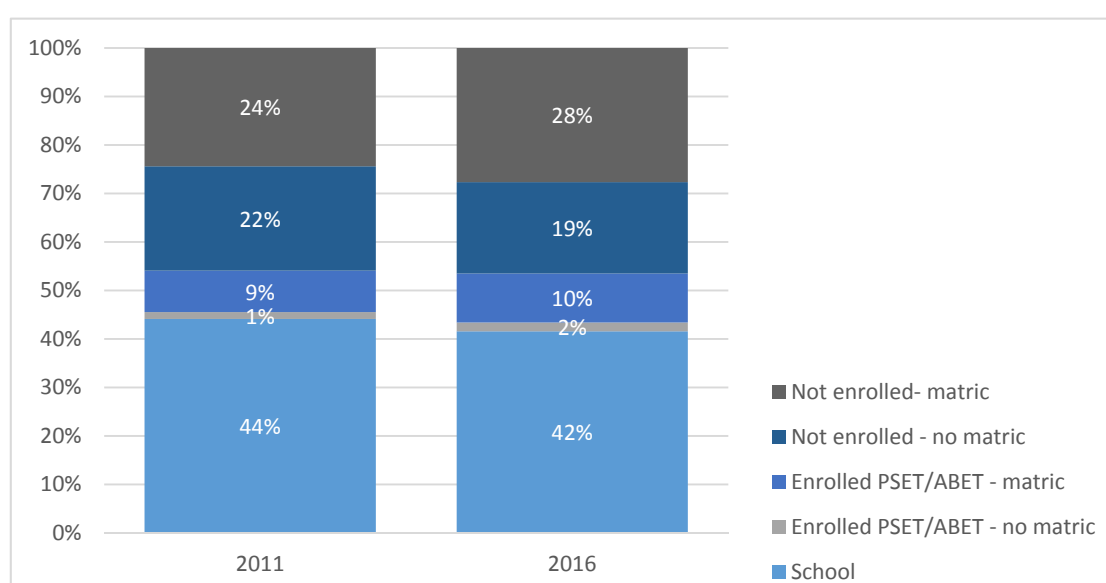
Table 2: Number of youth (15-24) with grade 9 by enrolment status

| | 2011 | | | 2016 | | |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Num | Lower | Upper | Num | Lower | Upper |
| <i>No matric</i> | 5 090 907 | 5 089 360 | 5 092 454 | 5 279 759 | 5 270 949 | 5 288 569 |
| School | 3 348 749 | 3 339 673 | 3 357 826 | 3 527 481 | 3 514 216 | 3 540 747 |
| Enrolled PSET/ABET | 108 284 | 106 064 | 110 504 | 153 615 | 150 136 | 157 095 |
| Not enrolled | 1 633 874 | 1 626 078 | 1 641 670 | 1 598 663 | 1 588 068 | 1 609 257 |
| <i>Matric</i> | 2 497 983 | 2 496 960 | 2 499 006 | 3 203 731 | 3 194 698 | 3 212 763 |
| Enrolled PSET/ABET | 647 875 | 642 625 | 653 125 | 857 359 | 847 732 | 866 987 |
| Not enrolled | 1 850 108 | 1 841 977 | 1 858 239 | 2 346 371 | 2 333 626 | 2 359 117 |
| <i>All</i> | 7 588 890 | 7 587 018 | 7 590 763 | 8 483 490 | 8 470 843 | 8 496 136 |
| School | 3 348 749 | 3 339 673 | 3 357 826 | 3 527 481 | 3 514 216 | 3 540 747 |
| Enrolled PSET/ABET | 756 159 | 750 533 | 761 785 | 1 010 974 | 1 000 838 | 1 021 111 |
| Not enrolled | 3 483 982 | 3 474 456 | 3 493 509 | 3 945 034 | 3 930 332 | 3 959 736 |

Notes to Table 2: Data sourced from the Census 2011 10% sample and the community survey in 2016. Population restricted to those aged 15+ in the bottom panel and 15-24 in the top three panels, who have completed at least grade 9. Enrolment status is constructed from the institutional enrolment variable, with classification of matric versus no matric constructed from highest educational attainment. Person weights provided in the data are used to estimate totals.

Figure 2, plots the share of youth with post-compulsory education by enrolment status in 2011 and 2016. Over 40% of the cohort are in school in both years. There have been shifts in the distribution over time, with the largest change an increase in the number of matriculants that are not enrolled. Table 2 shows that the number of matriculants grew from 2.5 million to 3.2 million between 2011 and 2016, faster than the growth in the number of youth without matric. However the growth in matriculants not enrolled was larger (32%) than the growth in the number enrolled (27%). On the other hand, the share without matric and not enrolled – potentially the most vulnerable – decreased from 22% to 19% over the period. While Figure 2 shows that the share without matric that are enrolled only grew from 1% to 2%, this represents an increase of 42% from 108 284 in 2011 to 153 615 in 2016, a statistically significant increase.

Figure 2: Enrolment by year



Notes to Figures 2: Data sourced from the Census 2011 10% sample and the community survey in 2016. Population restricted to those aged 15-24 who have completed at least grade 9. Enrolment status is constructed from the institutional enrolment variable, with classification of matric versus no matric constructed from highest educational attainment. Person weights provided in the data are used.

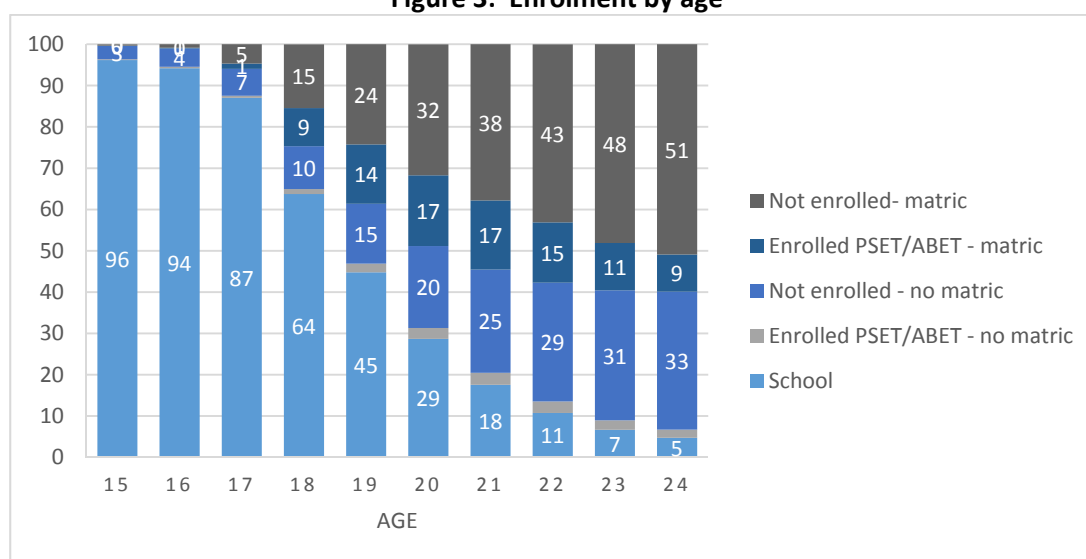
Figure 2 shows that in 2011, 46% of youth were not enrolled, 24% with matric and 22% without matric, representing about 3.5 million young people. In 2016, the share had increased to 47% representing close to 4 million young people, but a larger proportion had matric (28%) and fewer (19%) had no matric. A recent factsheet from DHET (2017) notes that 31.2 percent of youth between the ages of 15-24 in 2016 were NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) down from 33% in 2013. Table 3 presents the numbers and shares in our sample and for all 15-24 year olds (for comparison to the DHET numbers) by NEET status, distinguishing between those who have completed matric compared to those who have not for 2011³. 30% of our sample is NEET, slightly less than the 31% found in the full 15-24 year old group. This represents 2.4 million youth among those who have completed at least grade 9 and almost 3.2 million among the full 15-24 cohort. Table 3 shows a similar number and share of NEETs in the matric and no matric groups when the sample is restricted to those who have completed at least grade 9. However, this is a function of the large school cohort within the no matric group. Further restricting the sample to exclude those not in basic schooling, we find that 45% of those with matric are NEET and 67% of those without matric are NEET.

Table 3: Number and percentage of youth (15-24) NEET in 2011

| | grade 9 + | | All | |
|-----------|-----------|------|-----------|-------|
| | Number | % | Number | % |
| No Matric | 1 223 093 | 15,4 | 1 981 128 | 19,59 |
| Matric | 1 178 014 | 15 | 1 178 014 | 11,79 |
| All | 2 414 896 | 30,4 | 3 192 696 | 31,38 |

Notes to Table 3: Table 3 provides information on the number and share of youth 15-24 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) by whether they have completed matric for a sample restricted to those with at least grade 9 and for the full 15-24 cohort. Data Source: Census 2011 10% sample.

Figure 3: Enrolment by age



³ No employment information was available in the CS 2016 dataset.

Notes to Figures 3: Data sourced from the Census 2011 10% sample and the community survey in 2016. Population restricted to those aged 15-24 who have completed at least grade 9. Enrolment status is constructed from the institutional enrolment variable, with classification of matric versus no matric constructed from highest educational attainment. Person weights provided in the data are used.

Figure 3 presents the distribution across enrolment status by age in 2016. The proportion enrolled in school decreases steadily with age. Yet it is noticeable that the proportion enrolled in school is over 85% for ages 15-17, and 64% of 18 year olds remain enrolled in school, indicating that there is very little enrolment in alternative forms of education at these ages. In fact, the share enrolled in school remains above the share enrolled in PSET/ABET up until age 21; 45% of 19 year olds and 29% of twenty year olds are still enrolled in school compared to only 16% of 19 and 20% of 20 year olds enrolled in PSET/ABET respectively. On the other hand, the share not enrolled increases steadily with age for both the group with and without matric as would be expected. Focusing on the group without matric, we see that the share enrolled in PSET/ABET is below 3% at each age, with most youth transitioning directly from school to being not enrolled.

Table 4 zooms in on students enrolled in PSET including ABET. The table shows the number and proportion enrolled by institution type as well as the share with matric, without matric or where information on whether the respondent has matric is not clear, for each institution type. As mentioned in section 2, information on whether someone completed matric is estimated from the highest completed grade information. Where someone has completed an N type qualification, it is not clear whether they completed matric prior to enrolling for this qualification. This is evident in table 4 where 22% of TVET enrollees have unknown/unclear matric status. Those who stated that they did not know their highest education or refused to answer, were also included in this group.

Table 4: Number enrolled by institution type for those with and without matric by year

| | Census 2011 | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|------|-----------|--------|---------------------|-------|
| | Num | % | No Matric | Matric | Unknown/ Unclear | Total |
| TVET | 220 284 | 28% | 12% | 66% | 22% | 100% |
| Other College | 138 040 | 18% | 10% | 79% | 11% | 100% |
| HE | 407 668 | 52% | 1% | 95% | 4% | 100% |
| CET/ABET | 16 512 | 2% | 68% | 32% | 0% | 100% |
| Total | 782 504 | 100% | 7% | 83% | 10% | 100% |
| | | | | | | |
| | Community Survey 2016 | | | | | |
| | Num | % | No Matric | Matric | Unknown/ Unclear | Total |
| TVET | 373 271 | 36% | 11% | 70% | 19% | 100% |
| Other College | 163 561 | 16% | 7% | 80% | 13% | 100% |
| HE | 461 711 | 44% | 0% | 96% | 4% | 100% |
| CET/ABET | 45 517 | 4% | 42% | 48% | 10% | 100% |
| Total | 1 044 059 | 100% | 7% | 82% | 11% | 100% |

Notes to Table 4: Data source: Census 2011 10% sample and the community survey in 2016. Population restricted to those aged 15-24 who have completed at least grade 9. Institutional category is constructed from the institutional enrolment variable, with classification of matric versus no matric constructed from highest educational attainment. Person weights provided in the data are used. Unknown/unclear matric status includes those who refuse, don't know or where highest completed grade does not require matric and therefore matric status cannot clearly be defined.

The composition across institution type is quite different from the composition observed for all students in Table B1 in Appendix B. For students 15-24, the share in TVET and HEIs is more similar, with 36% of students enrolled in TVET compared to 44% in HEIs in 2016. The drive to shift the

distribution between TVET and HEIs is evident in the differences observed since 2011, where the share in TVET/HEIs was 28%/52%.

Information on current program/educational level is only available for respondents enrolled in school⁴. We can therefore not determine whether those individuals enrolling in TVET who have completed matric are enrolling in a post-matric course or not.

There has been an apparent shift in the skill set that enrollees are bringing into TVET and CET/ABET colleges between 2011 and 2016, although it is unclear how much of this is a function of a change in the way the question is asked across the years. In 2011, 66% of TVET enrollees have completed matric, while in 2016, this share stands at 70%. Some of the difference is accounted for in the undefined category which decreased from 22% to 19%, with a 1% point decrease in the proportion without matric from 12% in 2011 to 11% in 2016. Once again, Table 4 suggests that the CET/ABET group is measuring different populations between 2011 and 2016, which could either signal a real change or a change in measurement. The share with matric in this group has increased from 32% to 48% over the period. In addition, the share with undefined matric status has increased from 0% to 10% in 2016, suggesting that more students who have completed an N-type qualification are now enrolling or continue to be enrolled in CET/ABET colleges.

3.2 Characteristics of youth by enrolment status

Table 5 presents average individual and household characteristics by enrolment type for youth 15-24 who have completed at least grade 9 using pooled General Household Survey data. As evident in Figure 3, the group in school is the youngest, followed by those enrolled in PSET/ABET, with the group not enrolled the oldest on average. The youth population has a 52% – 48% female-male ratio overall, with the share of females higher in the completed matric group than the group without matric, reflecting higher matric pass rates among females than males in general. In addition, the share of females enrolled in PSET/ABET is higher than among those not enrolled – 54% versus 51% in the group without matric and 56% versus 55% in the group with matric. The racial composition of the different groups is distinct. Within the group with matric, the share African is 67% for those enrolled and 76% for those not enrolled. This compares to African shares of 86%, 90% and 86% in the enrolled in school, other and not enrolled groups within the group without matric. Whites and Indians are over represented in the completed matric group, especially among those enrolled. Focusing on the racial composition of our youth at risk group, the enrolled group is 90% African, 5% coloured and 5% Indian or white and the composition is 85% African, 12% coloured and 3% Indian or white among those not enrolled.

Next we examine years of completed education and employment. Overall, the average number of years of education completed is 10.8 and only 15% of youth indicate to be in wage employment. While a higher share of those not enrolled are employed – 22% among those without matric and 34% among those with matric – these shares are low. Very few youth are found to be working while enrolled, only 5% in the group without matric and 9% among those with matric.

Examining household characteristics, it is clear that our ‘youth at risk’ group are vulnerable on a number of dimensions, with those enrolled better off than those not enrolled. Average per capita monthly household income is R1299 for the group that have not completed matric and are not enrolled, 44% live in households receiving social grants and although 63% of households are in urban areas, rates of access to electricity and water are only 78% and 66% respectively. Using a poverty line of only R534 per capita per month (Budlender et al. 2015), 42% of these youth live in households in

⁴ Information on field of study is collected but cannot be used to distinguish program level. or

poverty. This percentage increases to 65% if the upper poverty line of R1042 is used. Those enrolled within the group without matric, live in households with characteristics that are, on average, better than those who are not enrolled. For example, the average per capita monthly household income is R1854 and 28% of households receive social grants. Poverty rates are also lower at 33% using the lower poverty line and 49% using the upper poverty line. Access to electricity and water is also higher at 79% and 89% respectively.

Examining the school group, it is noticeable that the share living in non-urban areas is higher than the average, as is the average household size and receipt of grants. Poverty rates are similar to the group without matric that are not enrolled.

Table 5: Individual and household characteristics by enrolment type – GHS 2010-2016 pooled data

| | Youth 15-24 (with at least grade 9) | | No Matric | | | | | | Matric | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------|--------------|--------|-----------------------|--------|--------------|--------|-----------------------|---------|--------------|--------|
| | | | School | | Enrolled in PSET/ABET | | Not enrolled | | Enrolled in PSET/ABET | | Not enrolled | |
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| Individual characteristics | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Age | 19,93 | 2,65 | 17,73 | 1,92 | 20,88 | 1,97 | 21,49 | 2,01 | 20,77 | 1,79 | 21,63 | 1,86 |
| Male | 0,48 | 0,50 | 0,49 | 0,50 | 0,46 | 0,50 | 0,49 | 0,50 | 0,44 | 0,50 | 0,45 | 0,50 |
| African | 0,82 | 0,39 | 0,86 | 0,34 | 0,90 | 0,31 | 0,85 | 0,36 | 0,67 | 0,47 | 0,76 | 0,42 |
| Coloured | 0,09 | 0,28 | 0,06 | 0,25 | 0,05 | 0,22 | 0,12 | 0,32 | 0,07 | 0,26 | 0,10 | 0,30 |
| Indian | 0,02 | 0,15 | 0,02 | 0,13 | 0,01 | 0,09 | 0,01 | 0,10 | 0,05 | 0,23 | 0,04 | 0,20 |
| White | 0,07 | 0,26 | 0,06 | 0,23 | 0,04 | 0,21 | 0,02 | 0,15 | 0,21 | 0,41 | 0,10 | 0,30 |
| Years of education | 10,79 | 1,35 | 9,88 | 0,82 | 10,96 | 1,14 | 10,11 | 0,81 | 12,21 | 0,75 | 12,25 | 0,75 |
| Employed | 0,15 | 0,36 | 0,00 | 0,05 | 0,05 | 0,21 | 0,22 | 0,42 | 0,09 | 0,29 | 0,34 | 0,47 |
| <i>Sample Size (individuals)</i> | <i>90159</i> | | <i>37743</i> | | <i>1412</i> | | <i>20562</i> | | <i>6517</i> | | <i>23097</i> | |
| Household characteristics | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Household size | 4,03 | 2,53 | 4,65 | 2,50 | 3,16 | 2,07 | 3,89 | 2,71 | 3,17 | 1,94 | 3,84 | 2,49 |
| Monthly income | R6 985 | R8 638 | R6 602 | R8 707 | R5 495 | R7 893 | R4 133 | R5 293 | R10 433 | R10 385 | R8 580 | R9 263 |
| Per capita income | R2 120 | R2 841 | R1 590 | R2 252 | R1 854 | R2 645 | R1 299 | R1 639 | R3 572 | R3 337 | R2 902 | R3 595 |
| Grant receipt | 0,42 | 0,49 | 0,57 | 0,50 | 0,28 | 0,45 | 0,44 | 0,50 | 0,14 | 0,35 | 0,35 | 0,48 |
| Poor (lower poverty line) | 0,36 | 0,48 | 0,48 | 0,50 | 0,33 | 0,47 | 0,42 | 0,49 | 0,16 | 0,37 | 0,26 | 0,44 |
| Poor (upper poverty line) | 0,55 | 0,50 | 0,67 | 0,47 | 0,61 | 0,49 | 0,65 | 0,48 | 0,31 | 0,46 | 0,42 | 0,49 |
| Urban | 0,68 | 0,47 | 0,55 | 0,50 | 0,75 | 0,43 | 0,66 | 0,47 | 0,87 | 0,34 | 0,77 | 0,42 |
| Connected to electricity mains | 0,87 | 0,33 | 0,90 | 0,30 | 0,90 | 0,31 | 0,78 | 0,42 | 0,94 | 0,23 | 0,89 | 0,31 |
| Piped water | 0,74 | 0,44 | 0,66 | 0,47 | 0,80 | 0,40 | 0,67 | 0,47 | 0,91 | 0,28 | 0,82 | 0,39 |
| <i>Sample Size (households)</i> | <i>11297</i> | | <i>4056</i> | | <i>236</i> | | <i>2689</i> | | <i>1185</i> | | <i>3016</i> | |

Notes to table 5: Data source: GHS 2010-2016 data pooled. Survey weights used to account for the survey design. Sample restricted to youth 15-24 who have completed at least grade 9. Enrolment status is constructed from the institutional enrolment variable, with classification of matric versus no matric constructed from highest educational attainment. Poverty lines as per Budlender et al. (2015) R534 (lower) R1042 (upper) in 2011 rands.

4. Summary and discussion

The analysis has highlighted some positive changes with regard to youth who have left school without completing matric. First, the number of youth in this vulnerable group has remained fairly constant, especially if contrasted against the 12% increase in youth (with grade 9) overall. In addition, the composition between those enrolled and those not enrolled has shifted with the number enrolled growing by 42% from 108 284 in 2011 to 153 615 in 2016. This is encouraging given that youth without matric who do not enrol live in, on average, some of the most vulnerable households. For example, 65% of households that contain youth in this group are defined as poor using a poverty line of R1042 per capita per month in 2011 rands. Youth without matric are also found to have poor employment prospects and 67% were shown to be NEET in 2011.

On the other hand, we see that the increase in the number of youth overall has resulted in higher numbers and shares of youth with matric. While this is a positive change, the growth in the number of matriculants enrolling in post-school is lower than the growth in the group enrolling, suggesting that increasing the matriculation rate has not directly translated into a one-for-one increases in PSET enrolment.

Finally, the analysis showed that it is not evident from the data that the TVETs are being used as a post grade 9 option, in other words used as an alternative to completing school outside of the basic education system. Enrolment in school remains high until after age 18, with less than 20% enrolled in PSET/ABET at any age and less than 3% enrolled in PSET among those who had not completed matric. In addition, a large share of students enrolled in TVET, have completed matric prior to enrolling, signalling that they are first completing conventional schooling and then entering a TVET college. Indeed, we show a balancing out of the share enrolled in TVET versus HE between 2011 and 2016 in line with the policy drive, but also further suggestive evidence that the TVET route is beginning to be considered alongside HE as a post-matric.

Positive changes aside, the data presents a stark picture of the vulnerability of the circumstances in which many youth in SA live. The number of youth 15-24 who have completed at least grade 9 has increased from 6.3 million in 2011 to 7 million in 2016. In 2016, about 2.5 million of these youth were in school, and a further 3.2 million had completed matric. The remaining 1.3 million were youth who had not completed matric and could potentially enrol in FET or ABET. Only 143 840 did so, meaning that the remaining 1.19 million were not enrolled. NEET rates are high, resources in the home limited and the educational option available to youth failing to complete matric only being utilised by few. Further unpacking the life trajectories of this group of young people who leave school without completing matric, especially those who do not enrol in PSET/ABET, is important for the design of a post-school education system that provides school dropouts with a second chance.

4.1 The extent to which public data can inform trajectories of post-school youth and the critical gaps that the public data does not address

The DHET Statistical Reports

The DHET statistical reports are published from individual level administrative/institutional data. Currently the report provides tables on enrolment, graduation and staff content by institution (both type and institutional name), public versus private provision, population group and sex. In addition, TVET information is disaggregated by province and HEI information by contact versus distance learning.

We therefore have information on:

- The stock of enrolees and graduates at a detailed institutional level
- The racial and gender composition by institution
- Financial and staffing information

But no information on:

- Grade completed prior to enrolment
- Age
- Result of prior year
- Socioeconomic information such as household income, parental education and access to funding

We can therefore not ascertain from the report:

- How institutional compositions are shifting by age over time
- The characteristics of enrolees across different institutions
- Analysis of the cohort of youth who failed to complete matric
- Progress through programs
- Who is not accessing PSET/ABET and the reasons why

The Survey and Census Data

The post-schooling education variables collected in survey/census data typically only include highest completed education, current institution of enrolment and field of study for HEIs and TVET colleges separately.

We can therefore:

- Examine enrolment by institution, disaggregating by an estimate of those who have and have not completed matric.
- Examine the individual and household characteristics of respondents across institutions and between those enrolled and those not enrolled.
- These analyses can be restricted to specific populations of interest e.g. 15-24 year olds.

We do not however have information on:

- Current enrolment level, progress (only completed information is collected) and
- Whether someone has completed matric needs to be estimated for those who have completed a qualification where matric is not an entrance requirement.
- In addition, sample sizes from national surveys tend to be relatively small.

We cannot therefore:

- Identify pathways within or between institutions
- Accurately assess whether TVET and CET/AET enrolees have completed matric prior to enrolment. This makes it difficult to assess whether these alternative programs are being used as a pathway and whether students with matric are entering at the level designed
- Examine field of study choices of the enrolled
- In addition, these data do not have sufficient sample size or institutional detail to examine differences across institutions within the same type of institution.

4.2 Recommendations

The individual level institutional data from the Department of Basic Education and the Department of Higher Education and Training has many possibilities for furthering this work (e.g. cohort studies within and between institutions, mapping to other data sources such as matric records, SARS data and census area specific data) but is currently not easily available. That being said, data from HEMIS and the National Senior Certificate, for example, is in a format that can be easily shared with researchers (van Broekhuizen et al. 2016) and institutional data from the TVETS and the LURITS (schools) systems are improving.

We therefore see the publication of an integrated national individual level youth⁵ database that is updated annually and available on a platform that would maximize institutional, policy and academic research that promotes student access and success, and informs policy, as a recommended way forward. An integrated national database would allow a system wide examination of trends in education over time. Students could be followed as they transition into institutions, across institutions and exit institution, enabling a life cycle approach to student based research. Information on lagging and leading indicators could be developed that can feed into institutional research and support programs.

That being said, youth who leave school (especially those who do not complete matric and are least likely to find employment) are likely to be invisible in a system of data constructed from administrative records. These vulnerable youths could be examined using panel data from the NIDS or using other focused study techniques (targeted surveys and qualitative or ethnographic study).

⁵ Youth would initially include public university enrollees only but the intention would be to expand this to all youth in school and students in all post-schooling institutions as data becomes available.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Which data can be used to analyse ‘youth at risk’?

Table A1 maps out South African data available to potentially study our population of interest. These data can be broadly categorised as household survey data and the census data, longitudinal data from the National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) and the institutional data collected by the TVET and HE sector. All the data included is publicly available with the exception of the individual record institutional data. Summary statistics from the institutional data are published in the Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa (DHET 2017). A key difference between the survey information and the institutional data is that the survey data are nationally representative while the institutional data focuses specifically on those individuals enrolled in PSET. Given that only about 4%⁶ of the population is enrolled in PSET, nationally representative household survey data have a small number of respondents enrolled in PSET. This is particularly the case in the NIDS, where the full sample is only around 28 000 individuals (compared to around 90 000 individuals in the General Household Survey (GHS) surveys or over 3 million in the Community Survey and over 4 million in the 10% Census). This makes any disaggregated analyses limited and/or impossible. Note that even the GHS data does not result in accurate estimates of the number of individuals in PSET. A comparison of totals from the GHS to those in the PSET or Census/CS data, shows that while the GHS finds similar shares by institutional type, the GHS data severely underestimates the number enrolled in all forms of PSET. Nationally representative data, especially those collected on an annual basis, allow us to compare the characteristics of individuals who do and do not attend/complete PSET education and examine trends in the shares enrolled by institutional type over time. Therefore these different sources of data provide complementary information that can be used together to provide a complete picture; the national data to set the context and the institutional data to examine progress within and across the post-school sector.

The second panel of the table identifies which of the datasets enable us to define our sample of interest specifically as youth 15-24 who have completed grade 9, but have not completed matric. The survey datasets include information on age and other individual characteristics including sex and race. While the individual level institutional data would include demographic information, the majority of tables in the DHET report do not condition on age; the focus of the report is the full PSET sector rather than any specific age groups. In the majority of survey datasets information on matric completion has to be approximated from the highest educational attainment variable. While this is straight forward for respondents who have only completed school grades or have completed a degree from a university (which has matric as an entrance requirement), assumptions are required to assign individuals from other categories e.g. Ns, NTCs etc. For example, it is recognised that some NCV2/3 or N4-5 enrollees enter the program after completing matric, yet using highest educational attainment there is no way to identify which respondents have matric. In wave 5 of the NIDS (currently in field) the questionnaire has been modified to specifically ask respondents whether they have completed matric. On the institutional data side, individuals are identified on ID numbers and therefore there is the potential to link students to their schooling history (via Lurits or EMIS) or matric records (via NSC) and therefore identify which enrollees have completed matric (including their marks), as well as other information on the individual's educational trajectory.

Panel 2 also shows the availability of socioeconomic data across the data sources. The survey data is rich on this dimension and while the cross-sectional surveys only contain concurrent socioeconomic data, the longitudinal data has historic information as well, important for understanding current educational decisions. The institutional data is limited on this dimension, however it is once again

⁶ StatsSA mid-year population estimates and DHET PSET enrolment 2.24/54.96

possible to augment the institutional data with area level information from the census/survey data or other administrative data if desired.

Panels 3 and 4 discuss the availability of educational variables specifically. We divide these into current education (panel 3) and highest completed education (panel 4). For current education the cross sectional household survey data is very limited, only collecting information on enrolment by broad institutional type. NIDS and the institutional data cover all the areas specified. The institutional data is particularly rich in terms of performance measures, a dimension not well addressed in the survey data. While test scores or GPA scores are not recorded in the HEMIS data for example, institutional records contain this information. The survey data fares better in terms of highest completed education. Identified surveys include the highest completed education variable that can, in most cases, be separated out into school grades and PSET qualification. Some of the surveys also include field of study and the institution where the qualification was obtained. The institutional data has information on qualification, field of study, performance and institution type (and can be further disaggregated). In addition, by linking records across sectors and years you can construct the full spectrum of information required.

Table A1 shows that the current data publicly available to analyse the educational trajectories of youth who have left high school without completing their matriculation is fairly limited. While institutional data is routinely collected and used to produce annual aggregate reports, these data are not available to researchers at the individual level or in a form that differentiates between those who have and have not completed matric. The survey data provides us with useful information to contextualise the circumstances of our subpopulation of interest on an annual basis, but sample sizes are too small for an analysis of educational trajectories at a disaggregated level and estimates of number of enrollees underestimate PSET enrolment when compared to the institutional or Census data. The Census and Community Survey data can be used to obtain estimates of the number enrolled by institution type for our specific population of interest and the number who have completed by field of study but are only administered every five years.

Table A1: Post 2010 data available to study post school education among youth

| | StatsSA Household Survey Data | | | Longitudinal Survey data | Institutional Data | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| | GHS | QLFS | Census/ Community Survey | NIDS | Publication | Individual records |
| Publically available | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| Population | SA | SA | SA | SA | PSET enrollees and graduates | |
| Size of PSET enrollee cohort | Small | Small | Med-Large | Tiny | Large | Large |
| Appropriate to calculate #'s in PSET | No | No | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |
| Individual characteristics | | | | | | |
| Age | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes |
| Sex and Race | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes |
| Matric information | Partly | Partly | Partly | Yes | No | Link |
| Socioeconomic information | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No/limited |
| Current education: | | | | | | |
| Qualification | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Field of Study | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Progress | No | No | No | Yes ¹ | Yes | Yes |
| Performance | No | No | No | Yes ¹ | Yes | Yes |
| Institution type | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Highest Completed education: | | | | | | |
| Highest school grade | Subset | Subset | Subset | Yes | No | Link |
| Qualification | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Field of Study | No | Yes | Yes2 | If completed in the panel | Yes | Yes |
| Performance | No | No | No | | No | Link |
| Institution type | No | No | Yes | | Yes | Yes |

Notes to Table A1: The table provides a brief overview of the availability of information across known data sources. Further details on the specific data sources are provided in section 2 and Appendix A. GHS: General Household Survey, QLFS: Quarterly Labour Force Survey and NIDS: National Income Dynamics Study.

Appendix B: How comparable are the DHET and 10% Census/Community Survey enrolment numbers?

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) has published the Statistics on Post-School Education and Training (PSET) in South Africa report on an annual basis since 2012⁷. The report provides information on enrolment, graduation and staffing for the PSET system which includes public and private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Technical and Vocational education and Training (TVET) colleges, private colleges and Community Education and Training (CET) colleges previously called public Adult Education and Training (AET) Centres. In addition, the report documents levels of workplace-based education and training centres, and financial statistics on the National student Financial Aid Scheme, the skills levy and other funds allocated to the PSET system. Data analysed comes from routinely collected administrative records (e.g. the Higher Education Management Information system (HEMIS)) and therefore includes all students enrolled or graduating in the system. Statistics are reported at the institutional level and, in some instances, by province (TVET), historical population group and sex. There is limited analysis by age group and no information on student characteristics prior to enrolment (for example, whether they have completed matriculation or another qualification prior to enrolment). It is therefore not possible to examine the outcomes of out of school youth who have not completed matric specifically. The report however provides the broad context on the PSET system into which our subsequent analysis falls.

Table B1 presents the number enrolled and the distribution across institution type in 2011 and 2015/2016. To align the two data sources all public further education and training (FET) colleges and other public colleges were grouped as TVET, while private FET or 'other college' was grouped as private college. Table B1 shows that the numbers accord fairly well between the DHET administrative statistics and the Census 2011 and Community Survey data 2016, especially for enrolment in HEIs and TVET colleges. The number of enrollees grew from around 1.05 million enrolled in HEIs in 2011 to 1.1 million enrolled in HEIs in 2015/2016. Enrolment in TVET has grown most rapidly from around 400 thousand in 2011 to over 700 thousand in 2015/2016, an 84% increase. Measurement of numbers in private college and CET/ABET are less consistent across the data sources. This is partly a function of different measures used and the fact that the 2015 DHET statistics reports on only 97 of the 252 private colleges (p45). Using the DHET statistics, we see a marginal decline in CET/ABET enrolment from 297634 to 283602 between 2011 and 2015. On the other hand, the Census 2011 finds almost an additional 100 thousand enrollees in CET/ABET in 2011 compared to the DHET statistics, but then in 2016, the Community Survey finds only 187698 students enrolled in CET/ABET, 100 thousand fewer than the DHET statistics. The CS 2016 educational institution type question had used a code 'community education and training college (including adult)' whereas the Census 2011 has a comparable category 'adult basic education and training college'. It is therefore possible that respondents are understanding these categories differently.

⁷ The reports have a two year publication delay. There is therefore currently information from 2010 until 2015.

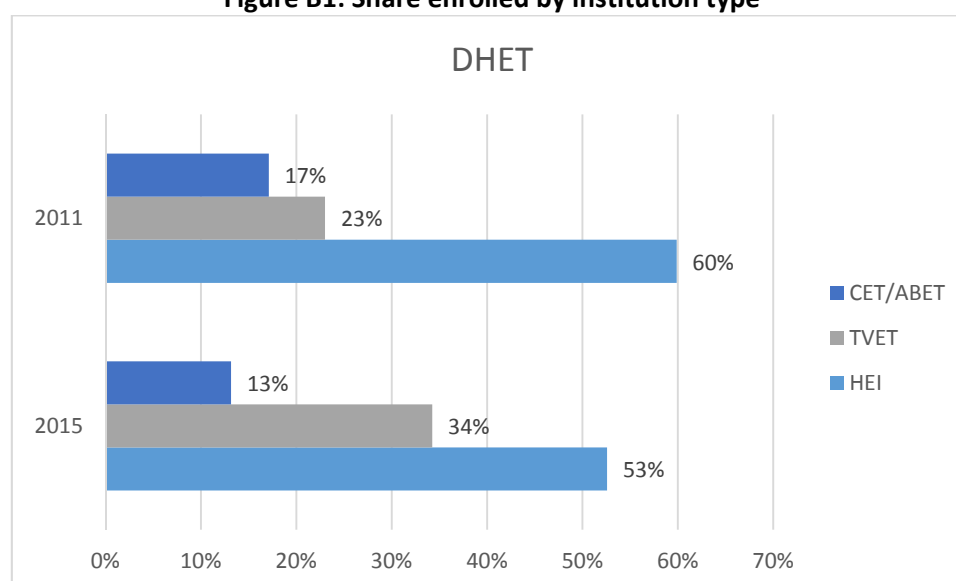
Table B1: Aggregate enrolment by institution type

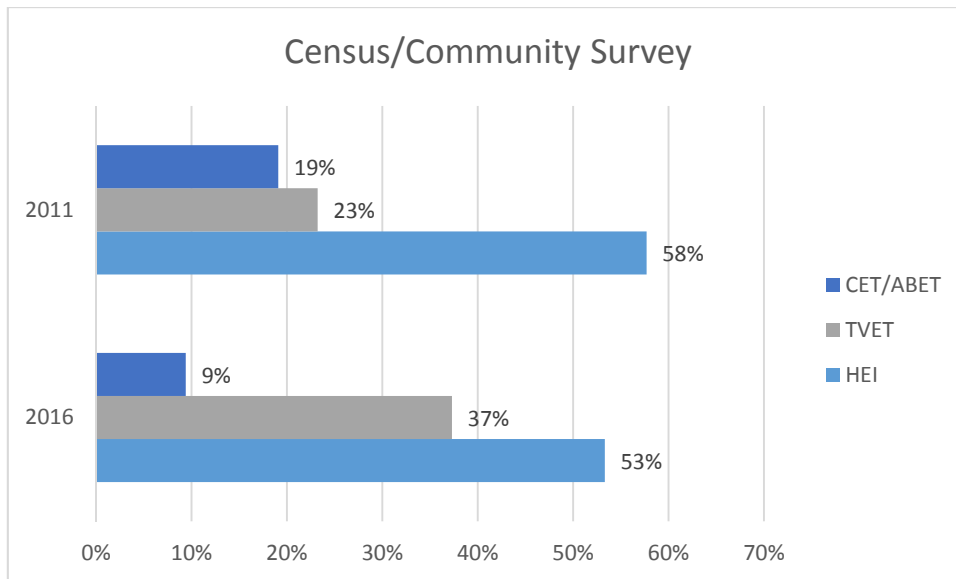
| | Census 2011 | | | | DHET 2011 | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|------|-----------|------|
| | Number | Lower CI | Upper CI | % | Number | % |
| HEI (public and private) | 1 144 159 | 1 139 035 | 1 149 284 | 51% | 1 041 237 | 56% |
| Public TVET or other college | 460 374 | 456 256 | 464 493 | 21% | 400 273 | 21% |
| Private College | 239 004 | 235 859 | 242 148 | 17% | 134 446 | 16% |
| CET/ABET | 378 690 | 374 886 | 382 494 | 11% | 297 634 | 7% |
| Total | 2 222 228 | 2 221 233 | 2 223 222 | 100% | 1 873 590 | 100% |
| | Community Survey 2016 | | | | DHET 2015 | |
| | Number | Lower CI | Upper CI | % | Number | % |
| HEI (public and private) | 1 065 256 | 1 055 752 | 1 074 760 | 47% | 1 132 422 | 51% |
| Public TVET or other college | 745 179 | 738 821 | 751 537 | 33% | 737 880 | 33% |
| Private College | 263 266 | 258 360 | 268 172 | 8% | 88 203 | 13% |
| CET/ABET | 187 698 | 184 225 | 191 170 | 12% | 283 602 | 4% |
| Total | 2 261 398 | 2 237 158 | 2 285 639 | 100% | 2 242 107 | 100% |

Notes to Table B1: Data sourced from the Census 2011 10% sample, the community survey in 2016 and the DHET 2017 report on Statistics on Post-school Education and Training. Institutional categories constructed from the institutional type and public versus private variables in the survey/census data to align most closely to the description provided in the DHET report. Numbers in the survey/census calculated using the person weights provided in the data. Population is all enrollees.

Given the limited information on private colleges in 2015 in the DHET statistics, Figure B1 presents the share of students enrolled by institution type excluding private college enrollees, from the DHET statistics (top panel) and the Census/Community survey data (bottom panel). There has been a shift in the share of students enrolled in HEI versus TVET versus CET/ABET between 2011 and 2015/2016 that reflects the policy drive to diversify the PSET environment away from HEIs only, with a focus on growing the pool enrolled in TVET. The DHET data finds a reduction in the share enrolled in HEIs from 60% in 2011 to 53% in 2015. The share enrolled in TVET has increased from 23% to 34%. Enrolment in CET/ABET has fallen as measured in both the DHET and Census/Community Survey data. In 2015, this sector held 13% of enrolment.

Figure B1: Share enrolled by institution type





Notes to Figure B1: Data sourced from the Census 2011 10% sample, the community survey in 2016 and the DHET 2017 report on Statistics on Post-school Education and Training. Institutional categories constructed from the institutional type and public versus private variables in the survey/census data to align most closely to the description provided in the DHET report. Private college data excluded given the limitations in the 2015 data noted in the DHET report. Numbers in the survey/census calculated using the person weights provided in the data.

Appendix C: Details of data included in Table A1

Community Survey 2016

The Community Survey is a nationally representative, large-scale household survey designed to provide Census type information on the extent of poor households in South Africa, their access to services, and levels of unemployment, at national, provincial and municipal levels. The sample survey is conducted by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) at 10-year intervals between each of the censuses. The last CS was undertaken in 2016 and achieve a realised sample of around 1 million households.

General Household Survey 2002-2016

The GHS is an annual household survey which measures the living circumstances of South African households and has been administered since 2002 by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA). The GHS collects data on education, health, and social development, housing, access to services and facilities, food security, and agriculture. The sample includes between 20000 and 30000 households and information on all household residents are collected through the household roster.

Quarterly Labour Force Surveys 2008-2017

The Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) is a household-based sample survey conducted by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA). It replaced the biannual Labour Force Surveys conducted between 2000 and 2007. It collects data on the labour market activities of individuals aged 15 years or older who live in South Africa. The sample size for the QLFS is roughly 30 000 dwellings and these are divided equally into four rotation groups, i.e. 7 500 dwellings per rotation group.

The National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS)

The NIDS is South Africa's national longitudinal study and has been providing empirical data on the changing lives of South Africans since 2008. NIDS is an initiative of the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) and is implemented by the Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU) at the University of Cape Town (UCT). Four waves are data from 2008, 2010/2011, 2013 and 2014/2015 are publicly available. The initial sample included about 28000 household. Each 2008 household member (XXX) became part of the panel and has been tracked since. The survey covers a wide range of topics including demographics, education, labour markets, income, health, wealth and well-being.



SALDRU

Southern Africa Labour and
Development Research Unit

The Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU) conducts research directed at improving the well-being of South Africa's poor. It was established in 1975. Over the next two decades the unit's research played a central role in documenting the human costs of apartheid. Key projects from this period included the Farm Labour Conference (1976), the Economics of Health Care Conference (1978), and the Second Carnegie Enquiry into Poverty and Development in South Africa (1983-86). At the urging of the African National Congress, from 1992-1994 SALDRU and the World Bank coordinated the Project for Statistics on Living Standards and Development (PSLSD). This project provide baseline data for the implementation of post-apartheid socio-economic policies through South Africa's first non-racial national sample survey.

In the post-apartheid period, SALDRU has continued to gather data and conduct research directed at informing and assessing anti-poverty policy. In line with its historical contribution, SALDRU's researchers continue to conduct research detailing changing patterns of well-being in South Africa and assessing the impact of government policy on the poor. Current research work falls into the following research themes: post-apartheid poverty; employment and migration dynamics; family support structures in an era of rapid social change; public works and public infrastructure programmes, financial strategies of the poor; common property resources and the poor. Key survey projects include the Langeberg Integrated Family Survey (1999), the Khayelitsha/Mitchell's Plain Survey (2000), the ongoing Cape Area Panel Study (2001-) and the Financial Diaries Project.

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