



South African Union of students(SAUS)
10th August 2016

PRESENTATION TO THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON FEE FREE EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

- ✘ The South African Union of students (SAUS) is the biggest federation of all Student Representative Councils (SRCs) and all student organizations in the country.
- ✘ We are a recognised structure of students in the higher education sector elected by SRCs from all the 26 universities in the country and we are a non-partisan union of students.
- ✘ Each and every year students will take to the streets in different forms such as protests, picketing, demonstrations and free education marches with which the agenda was always the demand for free quality and compulsory education.

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

- ✘ In 2015 all students having noted the continuous increase of fees in universities decided to be united with one voice to demand not only that fees must not increase but demanding for free education .
- ✘ The South African Union of Students was at the centre of the struggles termed the #fees must fall campaign to which many voices joined the cry for free education.
- ✘ The government established the free education or the fees commission to look at the possibilities of the introduction of free education.

WHY SAUS IS FIGHTING FOR FREE EDUCATION?

- ✘ Many students come from poor background.
- ✘ Increasing student debts which in our struggle we call it the black debt.
- ✘ Social Justice and transformation is in line with what we seek to achieve when free education is introduced.
- ✘ African Enrolment has been increasing over the years and majority of us as Africans are in the periphery of economic activities of the country
- ✘ Skills needed by the country.

CONT

- ✘ Human Resource capital for the private sector will be intensified.
- ✘ The social support system and its further development will be necessitated by the introduction of free education.
- ✘ Reduction of criminal activities through free education.
- ✘ Research output will be expand.

#We believe that it is possible to introduce free education as inspired by other countries that introduced it such as Germany, Norway and Cuba etc....

QUALITY OF THE FREE EDUCATION WE WANT

- ✘ Decolonization of the education system
- ✘ Decommodification of higher education.
- ✘ Curriculum content review.
- ✘ Eradication of structural issues.
- ✘ Broader transformation of the sector.
- ✘ Defeating institutional autonomy.

FREE EDUCATION FOR THE POOR OR FOR ALL?

- ✘ The two perspectives are under discussion and scrutiny around the question of free education
 - : The first perspective is that of free education for all
 - : second perspective is that of free education for the poor.
- ✘ As SAUS we have done some assessment of the two scenarios and came to a determination which we are sharing with the free education commission that we want free education for the missing middle and the poor.
- ✘ We are living in a capitalist country and therefore the gap between the rich and the poor continues to be wide.

COST OF STUDY VERSUS COST OF LIVING

- ✘ Table 1. Current average cost of study per student per year .

Residence costs	R40 000
Transport costs	R9000
Tuition fee	R26 000
Book and stationery	R10 000
Food	R15 000
Total	R100 000

Table 1 Above adapted from SAUS reports of 2005

- ✘ Table 2. Average salaries of civil servants adapted from business tech report 2016.

Teachers	R280 000-R600 000
Police officers	R105 000-R156 000
Nurses	R150 000-R350 000
Average salary	R180 000

THE FREE EDUCATION FOR ALL OR THE POOR?

- ✘ The reality of the matter is that when we look at the tables above, the cost of study is taking more than 50% of the family income.
- ✘ Taking into consideration that other expenses must be covered by the same salary including food at home, electricity, water, rentals and also other children as well who needs social support from the same salary
- ✘ This means that the working class cannot afford to pay for the tuition being charged by universities

THE FREE EDUCATION FOR ALL OR FOR THE POOR?

students are categorised as follows in terms of background;

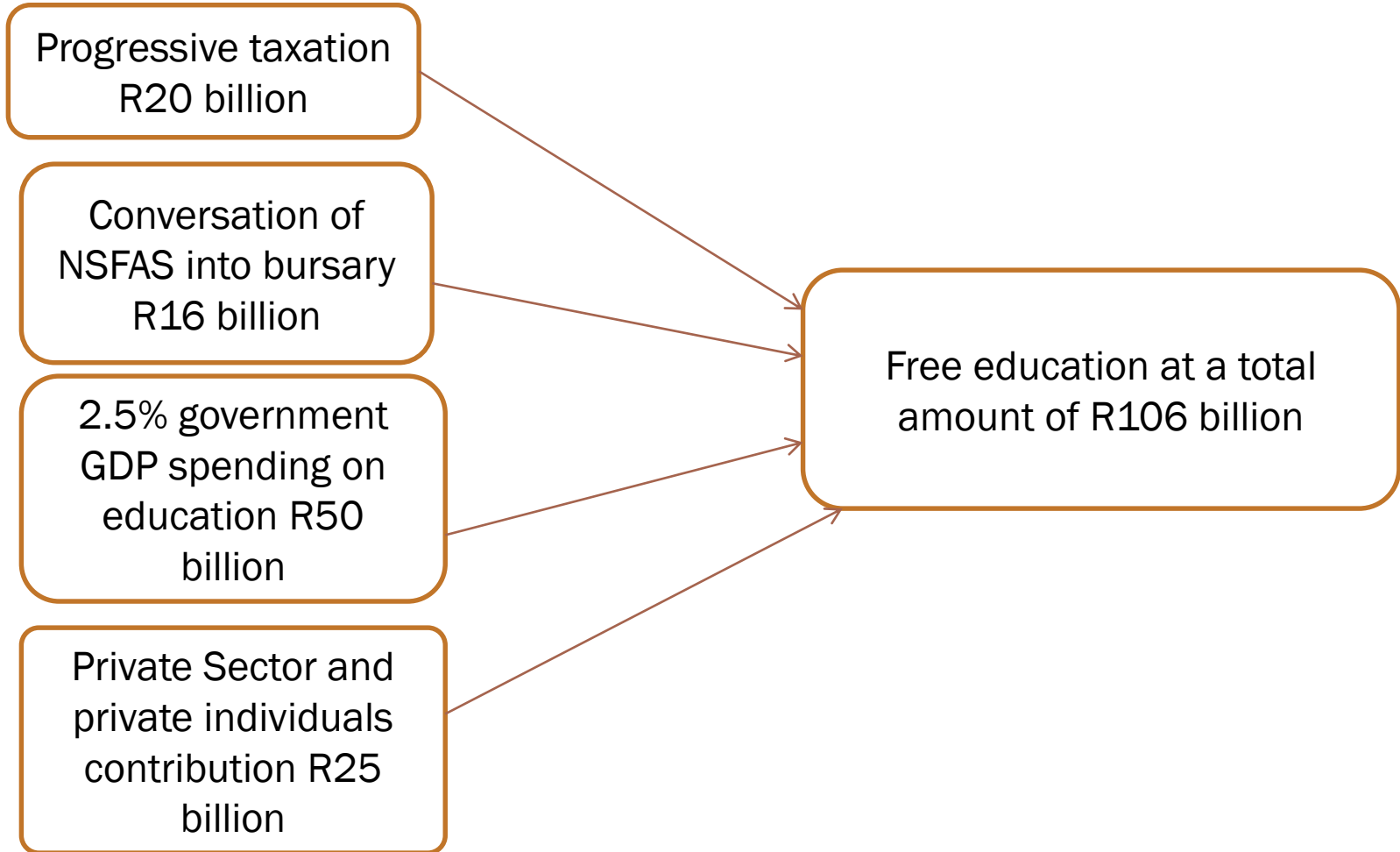
- ✘ Students with parents but they are earning less as reflected above
- ✘ Students with parents but they are not working due to unemployment.
- ✘ Students who do not have parents at all and do not have any person to pay for them or to provide social support.
- ✘ Students who leave with above age guardians surviving on a social grant.
- ✘ Students with parents who are rich but these parents neglected them and these parents are not supporting them.

#SAUS is therefore advocating for free education for the missing middle and the poor.

SAUS PERSPECTIVE ON HOW FREE EDUCATION CAN BE FUNDED AND INTRODUCED

- ✘ Cutting the wage bill
- ✘ The wealthy tax for education
- ✘ International Solidarity.
- ✘ Adjusting government spending.
- ✘ The Private Sector involvement
- ✘ Reduce government spending in some sectors
- ✘ Deal with corruption
- ✘ Private individuals and the general public wishing to contribute to free education can be mobilised through government systems to fund free education
- ✘ Increase government GDP spending on education by 2.5 %.
- ✘ Nationalization of mines.

THE SAUS MODEL OF FEE FREE EDUCATION



SUMMARY OF SAUS APPROACH TO FREE EDUCATION

- ✘ The struggle for fee free education is a justified struggle that we will not betray.
- ✘ We want fee free education for the poor and the missing middle in the short run and fee free education for all in the long run.
- ✘ The free education we envisage must be of good quality.
- ✘ A multi-dimensional approach must be used to fund fee free education.

WAY FORWARD AND CONCLUSION.....

- ✘ We envisaged to see the country introducing free education for the poor by 2017 because the demand for free education is an urgent demand that all the people knows by now as witnessed during the fees must fall
- ✘ Students are the primary stakeholders in institutions of higher learning and therefore our submission supersedes all other submissions made by any other person hence we are optimistic that with the proposal we have put forward we are going to receive free education.
- ✘ That we are not entertaining any fee negotiations or any attempt to increase whatsoever up until this commission make a pronouncement about its outcomes because entertaining fee increase debates in campuses is interfering with the work of the highest commission on fee free education

WAY FORWARD AND CONCLUSION

- ✘ The Student protest was suspended only when this commission was pronounced because we said we want to give this commission to do its work on free education. Students from time to time expect to hear progress about how far with the work of the commission.
- ✘ The South African Union of Students is optimistic that the free education commission will conclude its business and subsequently pronounce on free education.

END

Thank You