

Fees Commission Submission by the Someleze Give Us Strength Women & Girl Education Right's Movement-Advocacy for ensuring that Access & Quality and Qualifying Tertiary Students is achieved.

'Education is the only tool out of poverty & only vehicle to the knowledge Economy'

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What we do:

Offer extramural school activities for high school learners, afterschool and weekend school programmes from grade 8.

We also support under grade students in their transition to university academic requirements and transition from undergraduate to post-graduate studies.

1: # Feesmustfall Problem Statement

Last year a group of different South African University students embarked on a protest demanding free tertiary education for all. This was after the Universities proposed a fees hike for 2016.

Which resulted in fees not being raised but the reality is that someone paid for that, the Skills Levy was dipped at so that the promise was realised.

The #FeesMustCall was, is a noble call by our children, but it must be context specific. It must be informed by thorough investigation. It must never be informed by our current unhappiness in our country. What is happening in our country should be resolved but it must not be at the expense of our children's future especially children of the majority of poor children.

Submission to Fees Commission:

As a mom, beneficiary of a Tesfa Loan Scheme in 1991 who has two children at university and at University myself, I would like to propose that Fees debacle be addressed from all positions and be thoroughly interrogated. The trajectory of inequality is starring us here learners from township and informal settlements are unable to access higher education institution. We need to put this on means tested approach. We therefore need to interrogate if our trajectory will not be self-inflicted though others were legacy inflicted. Hence we need not to be emotional when making these decisions.

I am a member of GWI-Graduate Women International, member of SAAWG-South African Association Women Graduate, in Cape Town. We are part of International Federati

on of Women who are advocating for student to receive quality education so that we can be able to compete. I presented a paper during our 32 nd Triennial Conference which was hosted by Cape Town South Africa-24-26 August 2016. Currently I will be submitting to the SAELA-South African Education Law Education, 21 Annual International Conference underway 4-7 September 2016.

In 1989, I was accepted at University of Cape Town (BA Law) of which I struggled financially and academically. I attended Khanya College in Observatory as a post matric that prepared us. In 1991 I enrolled at University of the Western Cape. The reasons for presenting my background is to share my personal experience and perspective and contribute to this pivotal subject.

(1)

We should be careful of a blanket approach when we call for reduction of fees. Those who can afford fees must be able to pay for their students & children.

(2) The current dysfunctionality of township school should be prioritized. I am currently in consultation with parents in the impoverished area to play an active role, the SATU & Neptosa discussing some intervention that would assist with the current factors that are facing basic schools. I have challenged the issue with reference to the writing of ANA.

(3) The other concern that I would like allude to is with the current gap transition between school system and university. Instead of fees falling why don't we use some of the funds to repair the current existing gaps within our curriculum?

(4) I would like ECD-Early Childhood Education and Basic Education be priorities, but we are faced with controversial issue of compulsory school going till finished primary and high school education.

As an education rights activist, I resonate well with our children, students in their call for a different model to be pursued. However, as a new, young democracy with aspirations, with dreams particularly with our history of Apartheid government, I would have that we should be enjoying the fact our democracy has brought this important right to access institutions of higher learning. I want to caution my children in my both capacity as mother and as a postgraduate student at UWC that we need to guard against cutting our nose to spite our faces.

Maybe we need to inculcate a new culture of hard work, self-reliance, value-driven outcomes, to call for free education to need's student's takes away responsibility that goes with the right. Having been involved in empowerment and transformative projects in Cape Town townships school created by free school education and the indictment of the poor quality education provided by our public school. The high levels of both school and tertiary drop out reaffirms that the route of no fees is not a conducive and sustainable one. We need to deal with both structural and systemic problems that are hindering our students to cope and even pass at these institutions.

As a country that is in the process of reconstruction after the mess of the apartheid government of centuries of dispossessions, and the mess of the democratic government of rampant corruption, incompetent officials which can be fixable, let us work out a plan that will take us to the next level. The current instability in Universities will result in brain drain and will promote private universities which will secondary dispossess the poor that must still be educated. I'm pleading with you not to gamble with Ours that is the reality that has no solution, which also affects the transitional period at undergraduate level which.

Problems that are envisaged: with blanket approach

(1) This will not be sustainable and will impact on the quality of tertiary education and will not encourage people in taking responsibility of their development.

Universities will lose its autonomy, we do not need government intervening with how knowledge is acquired. We need to come up with a funding model that will be funded by Government and by the Corporate Sector.

(2) Brain drain will impact on the quality that poor children requires.

(3) The current instability at tertiary institution will disadvantaged the very same injustice that we are currently fighting against as most of the academics who are currently in universities moves to private universities which will weakened the public universities which are only afforded by the poorest of the poorest.

(4) Take lessons from other African countries like Kenya and Ghana who once had best fees universities, look at what happened when the fees were dropped, who was disadvantaged.

Recommendations

(1)

We need to explore funding models that will accommodate poor students to access universities and to support the transition programmes so that they do not fail.

(2)

We need to encourage Contingency loan system that will be payable at the end of studies, so that we can be able to accommodate more poor children like Tefsa I paid my loan that is why I valued that investments. So if we are serious about developing and sustaining economy we must start taking responsibility so that we can educate more disadvantaged learners.

(3) Not to compromise the quality of our tertiary education but to finance programmes that will prepare students for a brighter future-improving literacy levels and

(4) The current huge wage bill by Cabinet to be addressed as it creates an emotional reality in our country.

(5)

We need to make sure we do not alienate those who benefitted from the investment of a partheid, they need to be sharing those proceeds with the generations that were disadvantaged and grandchildren of those who were excluded. It would be an indictment to allow them to leave the country with all that investment.

(6)

Bursaries and Scholarships who are awarded on merit, should be encouraged that the current model which is not sustainable and is not yielding the desired outcome.

(7)

We cannot be localising tertiary education while we are globalising everything else. How are we expected to compete at global level if we want to receive inferior standards? Our children have a right to aspire to compete with Harvard and Oxford Universities.

(8)

These call will reverse all the opportunities presented by our hard earned struggle.

Regards

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