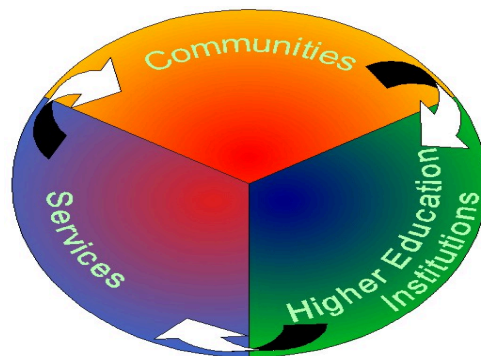


UNIVERSITY OF THE  
FREE STATE  
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE  
VRYSTAAT  
YUNIVESITHI YA  
FREISTATA



# Overview of the scope and work of the Community Engagement Directorate

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## **1. Introduction**

The Directorate for Community Engagement was established in 2010 to continue the work which was initially done by the Chief Directorate: Community Services. The Chief Directorate included all the elements of community engagement, namely: community service learning, community service, research through community engagement, partnerships and volunteerism in community engagement.

Community Service Learning is incorporated into the Centre for Higher Education Support and Development (CHESD). This approach brought about a dispensation where there was specialization in areas of operation between the Directorate and Community Service Learning Unit. There are scheduled meetings to share information between the two and to effect alignment to approaches where necessary.

Furthermore, the Directorate implements Community Engagement Policy as main the contributor to the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment, which is one of the strategic imperatives of the university.

Since the beginning of 2011, the Directorate was placed under the line management of Vice-Rector: External Affairs. This move meant that the Community Engagement had to support the strategic direction within External Affairs.

## **2. Community Engagement Directorate**

The Directorate for Community Engagement is responsible for the overall management, implementation and coordination of the Community Engagement programme and policy of the university. Continuously negotiated collaborations and partnerships between a university and interest groups that it interacts with, aimed at building and exchanging the knowledge, skills, expertise and resources required to develop and sustain society

The above is achieved through the following objectives:

- Constantly review CE policy.
- Monitor the implementation of CE policy.
- Support to faculty CE programmes
- Budgeting
- Manage CE partnerships agreements
- Manage CE partnerships

- Support CE partners

Since the beginning of 2011, the Directorate was placed under the Vice-rector: External Affairs and had to therefore support the new vision within External Affairs of linking Community Engagement with External Affairs. Planning for 2011 was done jointly with the university's Internal Affairs Office under the leadership of the Vice-rector: External Affairs.



### 3. Programmes

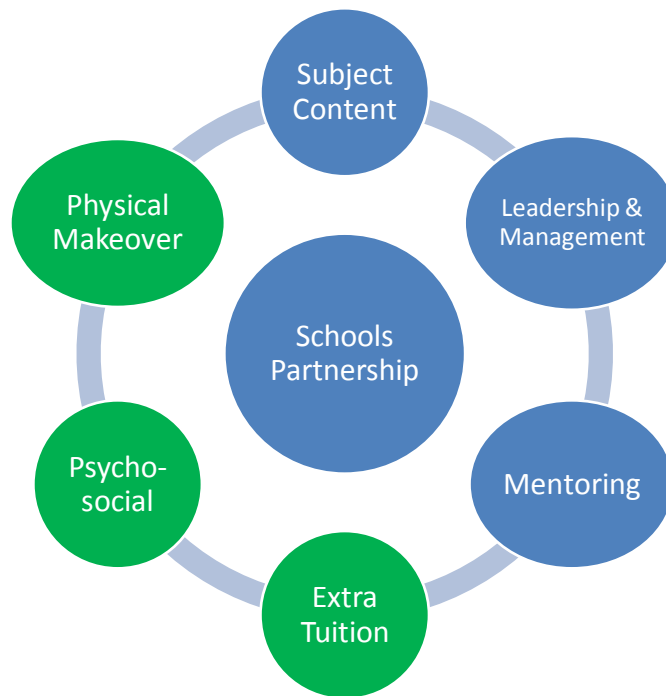
#### 3.1. The Schools Partnership Programme

The Rector and vice-Chancellor, Prof. Jansen initiated a programme aimed at assisting 21 struggling schools within the region to improve their teaching and learning skills, mastering of maths, science and English subjects, improvement of leadership and management in schools as well as the general support towards these chosen schools. Although this programme is managed outside of the institutional Community Engagement framework, the Directorate for Community Engagement contributes to this initiative by rendering the following projects:

- Extra Tuition. The faculty of Education students, offer these classes under the supervision of qualified teachers from the affected schools. At the end of these classes, students receive certificates of attendance which are considered by the faculty as part of their Community Service Learning portfolio.
- Physical Make-over – The Directorate organises interventions that assist identified schools by repairing some of the broken facilities within the schools. Where possible, the physical facilities are renovated and buildings painted. The programme is organised and presented jointly with Kovscom, a voluntary student programme located in student affairs division.

- Psycho-social services – Programmes that assists schools with addressing some of the social and psychological challenges are rendered to reduce the negative impact of such challenges. We currently offer motivational sessions to the identified schools. Learners are also invited to attend university graduations and other university functions which may inspire them to achieve greatness. Both lecturers and successful students run these programmes.

### Schools Partnership Programme



The above sketch depicts different elements of the School Partnership Programme and the contribution of the CE Directorate is painted in green.

### 3.2. Town and Gown Programme

The university has embarked on a strategic relationship building initiative with municipalities within the strategic areas of its operation. This initiative is geared towards the following:

- Strategic partnerships
- Capacity building of municipalities
- Identification of research opportunities
- Establishment of knowledge hubs
- Augmentation of service delivery through Community Service
- Recruitment of top students

In line with the university's strategy of External Affairs as well as identified areas of interest within research clusters, the Directorate facilitates the signing of Memoranda of Understanding with such municipalities.

### **3.2.1. Dihlabeng Local Municipality**

The university has entered into a partnership agreement with the Dihlabeng Municipality. The content of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) highlights the following areas of collaboration:

- Support to struggling schools
- Training and capacity building of municipal officials
- Research
- Local Economic Development

Work has already began and the Community Engagement work will be driven by academics from Sustainable Agriculture, Centre for Development Studies, Faculty of Education, Centre for Business Dynamics, Directorate of the Cluster on Sustainable Development as well as municipal officials.

### **3.3. Mangaung Community Partnership Programme**

The Mangaung University of the Free State Community Partnership Programme (MUCPP) commenced in 1991 as a local community partnership health development programme. The partnership was formed between the Mangaung community, the University of the Free State and the provincial authorities. It is located in the township of Mangaung, adjacent to Bloemfontein in the Free State Province. The partnership's first aim was to make health, the broader community development, services and the university more accessible to the disadvantaged majority. MUCPP is a non-governmental organisation that provides non-financial

support services to both emerging and existing entrepreneurs, health programmes, sports, women development.

The partnership was established to pursue the following objectives:

- To speed up the process of partnership development and sustainability.
- To have a focused interest in economic growth.
- To sustain the already very successful health growth activities.
- To have a proper and integrated training back-up system.
- To develop a high level of internal organizational structure and efficiency.
- To refine the marketing role, internally and externally.
- To make the MUCPP model replicable and transportable.

### **3.3.1 Basic Entrepreneurial Skills Development**

The Basic Entrepreneurial Skills Development (BESD) approach forms part of the work undertaken with the Department of Labour (DoL) within the framework of the Active Labour Market Strategy (ALMS) to address current skills shortages in South Africa with special reference to the informal economy. It is an innovative approach to skills development targeting small and micro enterprises (emerging entrepreneurs) and is geared to contribute to making business more sustainable and creating more jobs.

Key features of the approach include:

- Demand-led training and support
- Integration of business, technical and other skills
- Long term non-disruptive on-site training and situational learning
- Mentorship support
- Networks and co-operation with other organizations (private and public)
- Utilizing local resources.

At the core of the application of the BESD concept on the operational (site) level are the Entrepreneurial Development Practitioners (EDPs). They are previously unemployed young people from local communities who are trained (combining theory and workplace experience) by a training provider (TP-EDP) as coaches for basic business skills. After having finished their

training they are to be employed by a different provider (TP-EE) which then has the overall responsibility for organizing and co-coordinating the business skills transfer by the EDPs to emerging entrepreneurs (EEs) in the informal economy. The EDPs implement a flexible and needs oriented training course for EEs following a one-on-one coaching methodology in their on-site (at the business premises) delivery. The first fully fledged BESD pilot site where a trial run of this approach has been implemented is the Mangaung Municipality in the Free State.

### **3.3.2. MUCPP Sport and Recreation Programme.**

#### **3.3.2.1 Disability Sports**

MUCPP Wheelchair Basketball team is registered in the Super Sport series league under the name Wild Cats. The wheelchair basketball programme is on a more satisfying progress with regards to the accomplishments that has been reached so far, currently the team is performing well to which is now ranked number five on the national Supersport league. The team compromised of about 15 players who are all coming from MUCPP development programme

Recreation programme has managed to reach 600 Participants who on monthly basis participate in the different centers , currently there are 40 assessed participants who will join teams under MUCPP to become professional players and they will receive training and coaching skills.

#### **3.3.2.2. Soccer Coaching Clinics and Tournaments**

MUCPP has been given a grant to facilitate Soccer Coaching and support for the Motheo Region. This task of developing soccer talent will be done in collaboration with the South African Football Association and the university's academics and High Performance Centre will be drawn in.

#### **3.3.2.3 Grassroots Football**

This programme is an educational programme using soccer as a way and means of educating and sensitizing young people about HIV and AIDS. Grass Roots Football aims to identify and nature talent between ages of 8 to 14 in schools. The programme beneficiaries are youth, woman and school children from Primary to high school. The benefits for the youth will be to create awareness, education and training on how to live healthy life style. The target group is



also those that are still at school and the out of school youth. The additional outcomes are job opportunities created in the communities, SMME's Festivals and Tournaments.

### **3.3.3. Community Investment Fund**

The Community Investment Fund is a joint venture between the Standard Bank of S.A. and MUCPP. The project is aimed at unlocking the potential of Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises in the informal economy through the provision of a sustainable community driven revolving loans. The Standard Bank provides funding for the project and MUCPP will be the beneficiary of economic success made.

MUCPP is lobbying relevant academic departments to be involved as part of Community Service Learning programme.

### **3.3.4. Developing Families Project**

This project is a collaborative project between MUCPP and the Columbia University, Bank Street College. Exchange students from the University of Columbia, Bank Street College are placed in MUCPP as part of their community engagement and research obligation for their Masters degrees.

The following are the project objectives:

- Improve quality of group care for infants and toddlers
- Integrate HIV prevention, education, and stigma reduction strategies with training in "under 3s" development, education, and care
- Strengthen community capacity to train and support practitioners and parents around issues of very young children and HIV/AIDS
- Motivate health and NGO staff, preschool practitioners, parents, and the wider community to advocate for policy changes
- Strengthen the link between MUCPP Health Center and pre-schools in the Mangaung community

The Faculty of Education academics are co-researchers in this programme.

### **3.3.5. Badi ba Toka**

The Badi ba Toka Project is an initiative of the faculty of Law aiming at making law accessible to the poorer communities. As part of Community Engagement, the faculty of Law has partnered with MUCPP to train community members as paralegals.

### **3.3.6. MUCPP Computer Training Programme**

MUCPP has partnered with the Office of the Free State Premier, Nashua and Motheo Further Education College to train out of school youths by placing them in this learnership programme. The university's Computer Science Department uses this project to present their Community Service Learning modules

### **3.4. Khula Xhariep Programme**

The organization was established with the purpose of creating a partnership between the university and the three towns (Springfontein, Phillipolis and Tromsberg) in the municipal district of Xhariep. The organisation is actively involved in the hosting of the university's Community Service Learning programmes of the faculty of Health and Allied Sciences. A multi-lingual research programme is also part of this partnership.

There are plans underway to assist the organisation to develop a business plan which will profile it as the major developmental agency within the region.

### **3.5. Basa Magogo Project**

As a method, Basa Magogo is quite simple: instead of starting the fire with paper and wood at the bottom and then adding coal on top, the opposite procedure is followed. That is, the paper and wood is placed on top of the coal, and the fire burns from the top downwards. It must, however, be done correctly. The University of the Free State, QwaQwa Campus, and community engagement office in partnership with Nova took the initiative to involve students in this project. As part of monitoring and evaluation the students visit different households in the areas where the fieldworkers have demonstrated. When the students arrived at each household they are given a set of questions to ask the respondent which they found as per household. This then helped to make an evaluation on the work that was done by the fieldworkers. It then again gave students the opportunity to get to know the community better, because the questions that they had to ask at the households were structured in way that they

would be able to understand the current household state of living.

### **3.6. Beyers Naude Schools Development Programme**

The Beyers Naude Schools Development Programme (BNSDP) was established in response to the challenges facing our national education system, with the aim of restoring the culture of learning and teaching in schools, while at the same time developing functional and sustainable relationships between key stakeholders within the school community. The BNSDP includes the following projects:

- Debating Competition
- Memorial Lecture Series
- Computer Centre
- Sports tournaments

The partnership between UFS and Kagiso Trust through the Beyers Naude Schools Development Programme is to sustain and promote local schools to be amongst the top achievers in the country. This is again to promote creativity and innovative ideas amongst our grade 12 learners in local schools.

At the end of the memorial lecture series, a book will be produced compiling all inputs made by different speakers.

### **3.7. Career Advisory Project**

The main aim of the project is to empower Industrial Psychology skill students with the development of training programmes, while on the other hand learners are trained on how to make proper career choices and making informed career decisions. This is a CSL project runs in collaboration with TRG 314 students.

### **3.8. Lengau Agricultural Development Centre**

The centre aims to undertake systematic small farmer training, tackle local development issues and enrich the curriculum in terms of research and training at the UFS on a simultaneous basis. The Lengau Agricultural Development Centre's Agricultural Skills Development, Training and Mentorship Programme is an initiative aimed at being an engaged faculty of the UFS by utilizing

its academic capacity and facilities to face the challenges of a sustainable agriculture in the region, country and continent.

One of the three experimental farms of the UFS is earmarked for agricultural skills development and training of emerging farmers, farm workers and entrepreneurs in agricultural business. The buildings, facilities and a portion of the land of the Sydenham Experimental Farm are used for animal and crop production and alternative natural and agricultural skills development opportunities in value-adding and marketing.

The UFS, Mangaung Local Municipality, Free State Provincial Department of Agriculture and National African Farmers Union embraced the programme as partners in agricultural transformation. The facilities at Lengau Development Centre are utilized in an extensive manner to address the needs of newly settled and prospective emerging and commercial black farmers. Services range from livestock auctioneering, herd improvement, branding, dehorning, castration, primary herd, ordinary and advanced food gardening. The centre also serves as a centre for education of under- and postgraduates, mentors, farmers and black entrepreneurs in many aspects of livestock, crop farming and agri business.

### **3.9. Boyden Observatory**

Boyden Observatory is an educational centre providing optical observations and access to sophisticated studies of the skies. The Observatory runs regular educational programmes to schools, community members as well as university students who are pursuing careers in this field.

There are several research programmes run through Boyden.

### **3.10. Students In Free Enterprise**

The aim of the project is to educate and help our participating school learners in Grade 10, to grow as inspired entrepreneurs. Shifting Focus is an entrepreneurship sustainability project with the goal of highlighting the relevance of developing entrepreneurial culture within our province. The project goals are to have imparted

- Business and entrepreneurial skills
- Investment skills
- Awareness about the South African environment and their future in it.
- Personal Development of learners in this grade.

Senior students are trained how to mentor high school learners on how to become entrepreneurs.

### **3.12. Sustainable Learning Environments**

The Sustainable Learning Environments is a research project initiated by the faculty of Education to research through Masters and PHD's programme. This project investigates ways and means in which sustainable learning environments can be created in schools.

An advisory panel consisting of respectable and knowledgeable community leaders plays a critical role in advising research on the content and methodology of acquiring information as well as how to implement their recommendations