

What the new Community College system could achieve

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Questions we face

- ▶ Why do so many young South Africans remain untrained for anything?
- ▶ Why does unemployment remain so high in spite of our affirmative policies?
- ▶ Why do young South Africans think that getting into university is the only good option?
- ▶ Why do so few South African adults attend AET classes?
- ▶ How can CLCs be more relevant/ useful/ attractive?

We need a new shared understanding - of Community Colleges as places where:

- ▶ all kinds of training is offered to people at all stages of life;
- ▶ training relates directly to people's daily life, particularly to sustainable livelihoods;
- ▶ training links with all levels of schooling and includes stand-alone formal and non-formal options;
- ▶ people have free access to the internet, and learning options and resources;
- ▶ people meet for community activities and access mobile clinics, mobile libraries and services from Home Affairs, or whatever they need;
- ▶ people volunteer for community services and gain experience;
- ▶ local, provincial and national government departments, civil society organisations, businesses and NGOs / CBOs cooperate to serve ordinary people well.

THE MAIN OBSTACLE

- ▶ Our main obstacle to good community education is that we are still trapped in the 'Bantu education' / 'night school' image of adult education
- ▶ It is difficult to imagine investing in and running an adult and community system that has decent infrastructure, up to date technology
- ▶ We can't imagine how CLCs could be flexible
- ▶ We don't know how to be imaginatively responsive to needs of communities
- ▶ To change the system, we need to get our minds out of the apartheid era model
- ▶ Planners, organisers, educators - and importantly, learners, **must expect** an entirely new kind of institution

Women's opportunity centre Rwanda





An indigenous Rwandan spatial and social design. Circular forms radiate outward, from classrooms to a community space, to a farmer's market.

Structures are modelled after the historic King's Palace in southern Rwanda using rounded, perforated brick walls allowing for passive cooling and shade, while maintaining privacy.

Skills
training via
You tube
India





South African example

Farming school near Soweto
“The soil we walk on, spit on
and disrespect, is a giver of life” - Sabina Koza says
"I teach people to fend for themselves" Runs 40 day
training in vegetable growing, poultry production and
selling produce. Key learning is how to earn a living
from small scale farming.



Parents of school children learn about computers

Can we do it?

- ▶ An enabling policy environment exists
- ▶ South Africa does have the capacity to develop and run a thoroughly effective Community College system

Infrastructure needs

Community Colleges should be characterised by

- ▶ adequate learning spaces
- ▶ suitable and sufficient learning resources
- ▶ technological resources that enable secure internet connectivity, and have the capacity to rapidly access a range of learning resources.

A POWERFUL FIRST STEP

► Free Wi Fi

- ALL CLCs should be enabled to offer free WiFi and access to the internet to their learners as well as to members of the surrounding community.
- This may seem expensive, but it will save money, and is less costly, simpler, quicker and easier to implement than other interventions for radical transformation
- It will automatically bring other good changes that will shift CLCs away from the tradition of old style night schools and towards centres that work for all South Africans

ADVANTAGES OF OFFERING INTERNET ACCESS

- ▶ Access to the net would make CLCs instantly attractive - to everyone, especially youth;
- ▶ Limitations of educators / resources could be reduced by OERs - educational texts, interactive materials, recorded lessons, demonstrations etc on the internet;
- ▶ A free bank of electronic materials relevant to SA and geared to our Community Colleges could be set up, regularly updated and adapted to specific needs without the cost of print
- ▶ Communicating with learning centres and delivering materials would be cheaper and faster
- ▶ Administration (registration, appointment of educators, submission of marks) could be done online, improving accuracy and avoiding having to deliver packages;
- ▶ Access to the net would bring access to information relating to study, NSFAS, careers, business opportunities, non-formal learning, marketing opportunities, and so on.
- ▶ People in rural areas would be more easily included in the post school system
- ▶ Access to the net would bring the post school system out of apartheid into today

Funding

Investment in Community Colleges should not be seen as an unwelcome cost.

It is a worthwhile and needed investment. It could change the lives of millions of ordinary South Africans.

- ▶ Funding cannot come from course fees.
- ▶ It could come from SETAs and the National Skills Fund
- ▶ With the introduction of access to the internet, there could be income from advertising and sponsorship. BUT careful control should be exercised here, particularly in view of South Africa's recent history of how people can use electronic information to take money from grant recipients.

Getting more value from spending on staffing

The system of contracting and paying staff is uneven between centres and across provinces

The claim system is haphazard and vulnerable to fraud

Educators frequently must endure delays in payment or lack of payment

Where contracts are for a few hours a week, educators will take on the work only as a stop gap or extra work option

To attract and retain committed educators, the new Community College system must offer attractive contracts

Staff development

DHET is investing in the development of new qualifications

This investment will be worthwhile only if there are good chances of getting decent contracts in Community Colleges

Existing staff will need training in:

- ▶ Meeting particular learning needs
- ▶ The value of non-formal learning
- ▶ Using electronic devices - tablets, smart phones, etc
- ▶ How to use the internet
 - ▶ How to find suitable learning material
 - ▶ How to select, download and adapt material;
 - ▶ How to deal with internet dangers

What should CLCs offer as formal programmes?

- ▶ AET levels 1 - 4
- ▶ NQF Level 1 General Education and Training Certificate for Adults (GETCA)
- ▶ NQF Level 4 National Senior Certificate for Adults (NASCA)
- ▶ Skills, vocational / occupational programmes funded by SETAs /the NSF.

Policies and regulations should work with those of TVET Colleges and Higher Education

We need a system of credit recognition and transfer - RPL

NON-FORMAL LEARNING AT CLCs

We must recognise that many adults value non formal education more than formal qualifications.

We should offer whatever non-formal options appeal to people near a CLC

Some non-formal options

- ▶ Citizen and public education programmes
- ▶ community organisation - training for ward committees, school governing bodies, community policing
- ▶ voter education and political tolerance
- ▶ resolving conflict in homes and communities without resort to violence
- ▶ useful skills for home making and managing a household
- ▶ optimal use of social grants
- ▶ driver training and road safety
- ▶ skills - plumbing, hairdressing, TV repairs, installation of DSTV receptors
- ▶ community health care, home-based care for the aged; care for people chronic illness
- ▶ living with alcoholism, drug abuse or other addictions;
- ▶ understanding legal issues

Non-formal learning (continued)

- ▶ support for small businesses and self-employed people, including use of current technology to manage buying and selling, and finances
- ▶ ICT skills, especially for smart phones and all the ways they can make life easier, (eg cell phone banking for grant receivers)
- ▶ parenting and childcare; early childhood development;
- ▶ Using the internet
- ▶ Gardening - with a community garden at the CLC / cooperative crop growing / animal health and management
- ▶ how to live in a drought
- ▶ training to keep pace with fast technological change - both for individuals trying to keep up and for employers who need to retrain their workers;
- ▶ general interest classes on world politics, history, music, ...and so on...

Links with community life

CLC and satellite centres could be run with local initiatives - e.g.

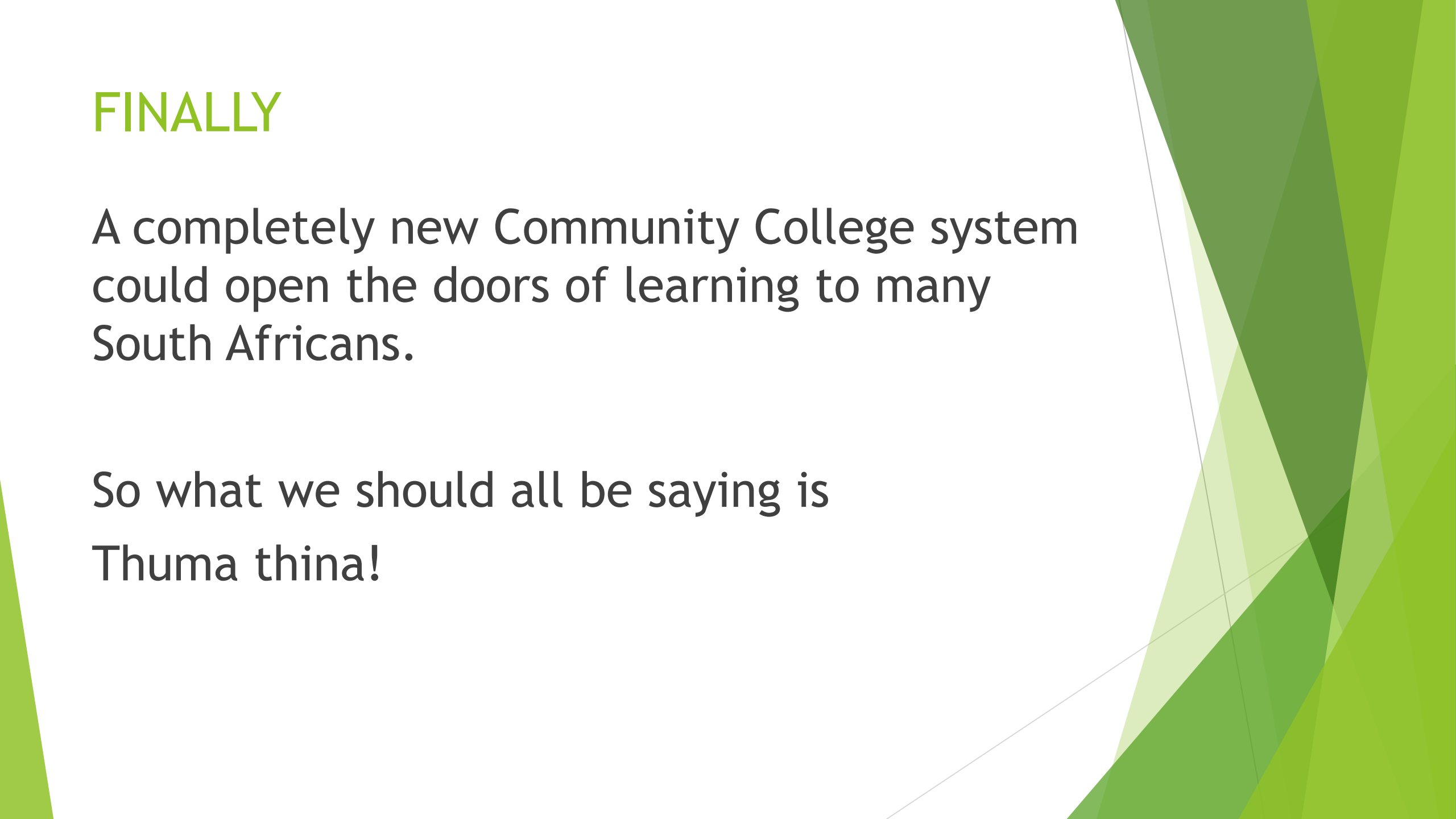
- ▶ crèches / cooking schools / soccer clubs / running clubs / savings club / gospel choirs / sewing groups
- ▶ Any interest groups who need to access learning facilities - or the net!
- ▶ Anything that helps local community health, sustainable livelihoods, income generation
- ▶ Any community group that is healthy and attractive in a particular community

Flexibility and responsiveness are key to interest learning groups

- ▶ ... e.g. people learning computer skills / how to use apps on smart phones / manage budgets, keep track of expenses / cope with debt
- ▶ or needing support for helping children with homework, or hoping to reduce crime in their communities, and so on.
- ▶ Community radio and newspapers / national radio and TV could publicise options, show success stories, tell about learning options and the potential they afford, AND broadcast non-formal course content.
- ▶ Anything that would improve the life experience of people living within reach of the centre.

CLCs IN COMMUNITIES

- ▶ CLCs must locate themselves firmly within local communities, meet local needs and contribute to local development.
- ▶ Good communication with all stakeholders is essential for CLCs to function effectively.
- ▶ Government departments should use the services of Community Colleges for upskilling their workers.
- ▶ Community Colleges should strive to offer educational options that appeal to business enterprises within their reach.

The background of the slide features abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes, primarily triangles and polygons, in various shades of green, creating a modern and dynamic visual effect.

FINALLY

A completely new Community College system could open the doors of learning to many South Africans.

So what we should all be saying is
Thuma thina!