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THE BATLAGAE TRUST
1994 FUNDING PROPOSAL

1. INTRODUQTION:

February 1990 saw the unbanning of the liberation movements in South Africa. In May 1991, the Oversight Committee (comprised of representatives from the NCCR, various liberation movements and churches) was set up to help facilitate the repatriation and re-orientation of political exiles back into South African society. Of particular concern to the Oversight Committee were the potential social, economic and academic problems that returning scholars and students would have to cope with. In response to this concern, the Oversight Committee established the . Batlagae Trust (an equally non-partisan committee) in July 1991, to co-ordinate the educational re-integration of exiled youth and to raise the necessary funds required to do so on a fairly extensive, national level. The following proposal documents those objectives of the Batlagae Trust that have been achieved since it became operational in October 1991, and outlines the long-term role it foresees for itself over the next few years. A general budget for 1994 is also included and can be found at the end of the document.

2. INITIAL OBJECTIVE:

Although several agencies exist in South Africa which provide bursary support to students, the scale and specific focus of the Batlagae Trust .on the educational and related needs of returned exiles was unparalleled in the country at the tlme of its inception, and remains so. The Trust was initially established with three relatively short-term objectives to fulfil:
i) to set up and administer a comprehensive bursary programme that would provide . the necessary financial support for both the educational and welfare needs of returning scholars and students at all levels of study (pre-schools, primary and secondary schools, universities, technicons as well as technical and vocational courses at the adult education level). In order to cater for the considerable welfare needs of the returnees, an extensive counselling programme and advisory service has been implemented on a national level;
ii) to arrange the acquisition of a reception centre with educational facilities for repatriated children and students who could not be located with parents and families;
iii) to facilitate the return of educational archives from abroad and to arrange their safe custody to South Africa. Linked to this objective has been the initiation and administration an information and research project on educational institutions established by the liberation movements in exile, and the documentation of some of their experiences.

3. EVOLVING MISSION:

It has been through endeavouring to fulfil these initial objectives that the Batlagae Trust has begun to develop its distinctive relevancy. As a natural consequence to this, the long term mission of the Trust has evolved and widened considerably.

Since its inception, it was envisaged that the Batlagae Trust would remain in operation for at least three years, in order for returning scholars and students to be given time to integrate into a new social and educational system. It was hoped that after three years, democratic changes in the country would have led to the re-structuring and re-financing of the education system in South Africa, whereby the educational needs of the returned exiles would be catered for, and there would no longer be a need for the Batlagae Trust to exist. Due to recent developments on South Africa, the Trust now recognises that its anticipated life expectancy of three years was slightly premature. The needs of returned exiles will clearly have to be catered for until at least 1995. It would be idealistic to believe that the expected changes in the country will realise a rapid restructuring that will serve all of the needs of all of the people concerned.

It is therefore evident that the Batlagae Trust (or a similar committee that will evolve from it) will increasingly have to focus on assisting, in an ongoing and practical way, those students who have been disadvantaged by the structures of apartheid education. It will have to commit itself to a programme that will allow it to constantly assess this role in the rapidly developing educational scene in South Africa. In pursuance of this broadened mission, the functions of the Batlagae Trust will include among others:

- helping students to gain access into suitable educational institutions at all levels and providing them with various types of support once they have done so;
- accelerating the desegregation process in general by continuing to act as a strongly representative pressure group and ensuring that all empty spaces in state "open" schools are filled through the careful monitoring of all educational institutions;
- assisting community schools which show a likelihood of providing an education of sufficient quality to acquire the necessary registration and subsidisation, by representing their interests with the authorities.

The Batlagae Trust will also need to undertake to influence education policy in a practical way, by taking up issues with the respective education authorities on behalf of the students, their families and the institutions. In these functions it will need to liaise with the various education bodies of the liberation movements, the churches and the independent sector which are sympathetic to its mission.

4. THE BATLAGAE TRUST IN 1994:

4.1 BURSARY PROGRAMME:

As has been mentioned, the initial primary focus of the Batlagae Trust was to cater for the considerable educational and welfare needs of political exiles returned to South Africa. Dedicated adherence to this objective has entailed the re-orientation, career guidance, financial support as well as personal and academic counselling of returnee students on both a regional and national level.

The bursary programme of the Batlagae Trust will be ongoing in 1994, and 1995. In 1994, the Batlagae Trust will continue to support its present case load of 2300 beneficiaries in educational institutions at all levels (pre-schools, primary and secondary - schools, technicals, universities, as well as technical and vocational courses at the adult education level). The Batlagae Trust is expecting the number of its bursals to increase by approximately 300 students by the end of 1994.

New and revised guidelines for the awarding of bursaries are adopted every year. The following provisional guidelines have been established for 1994, but are subject to revision:

A. FEES

Pre-school R 2 250.00

Primary R 3 300.00

Secondary R 4 500.00

Vocational/Technical R 4 500.00

Tertiary R 14 000.00

B. UNIFORM

Pre-school/Primary students R 300.00

Secondary students R 500.00

C. BOOKS

.Primary students R 200.00

Secondary students R 400.00

Tertiary students R 700.00

D. DISCRETIONARY FUND:

For 800 scholars and students in
exceptional need R800 000.00

4.2 DISCRETIONARY FUND:

In the past, the NCCR has provided retumee scholars and students with vital primary assistance

(transport, f , maintenance etc) in terms of allowances covering basic needs. With the dissolution of the NCCR in April 1993, returnees have been unable to rely on this financial

assistance, and in desperation have been turning to the Batlagae Trust to provide them with

maintenance in addition to educational and welfare support. The Trust has co-ordinated with

.various relief agencies in an attempt to alleviate this situation, and has utilised its own

contingency fund in emergency cases.

Despite having directed needy scholars and students and their families to other agencies providing financial assistance, the majority have been unable to secure any additional funding. The Trustees of the Batlagae Trust have therefore decided to establish a discretionary fund to assist retumee families who are finding it impossible to provide adequately for the needs of their children. In these special circumstances, favourable consideration will be given to the provision of some maintenance funding to cover transport and

basic food costs.

4.3 YEOVILLE COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROJECT:

In August 1992, the Batlagae Trustees decided .to remove a number of students from several

street academies where their working environment was proving intolerable and the standard of

education unsatisfactory. Street academies are independent schools established as an immediate

and short-term response to the education crisis and the general collapse of the bantu education

system. Some of these street academies have been set up by responsible and genuinely concerned

members of the black community , and are doing relatively well given the difficult circumstances in which they have to operate. Others, however, have been started by

opportunists who are doing nothing but exploiting the crisis in order to make money. The education provided in the latter type of street academy is not much better than the education

in the townships.

The partnership between government and private institutions in realising the Yeoville Community

Education Project has been a pioneering venture which has set an important precedent for future

educational provision in the country.

4.3.1 YEOVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL:

In order to constructively address the problem of where to place these students, the Batlagae

Trust, in close collaboration with several education institutions in Johannesburg (in particular Sacred Heart College, a leading, independent school) consulted with the state, with

the support of the local community, in order to establish a much needed local primary school in

Yeoville, an inner city area of Johannesburg. The proposal was approved, and official permission was given to establish the school.

The Yeoville Community School is a state-aided, community, pre-primary and primary school with

a present roll of 242 students, and a potential roll of 450 students on completion. The school

is largely self-financing because teachers' salaries are paid by the state and a substantial

proportion of the running costs are covered by the fees which the local children are required

to pay. (The Batlagae Trust bursars will continue to be subsidised). Subsidisation of the school by the state does not jeopardize the autonomy of the school in any way. The school will

aim to meet the urgent educational and social needs of the returned political exile children,

as well as those of the local black community.

The working group established as an interim decision-making body responsible for staff appointments, student assessments, selections and enrolments as well as general administrative

procedures, will soon be replaced by a properly elected and constituted management committee.

4.3.2 YEOVILLE EDUCATIONAL POLYCLINIC:

An integral part of the Yeoville Community School's design has been the establishment of an

educational polyclinic to provide vital academic and social support to students. The concept

of the educational polyclinic is a unique one, and forms part of a broader programme of community outreach envisaged by the Yeoville Community Education Project.

The educational polyclinic is centrally located and functions as an autonomous, though integral

clinic, providing vital social and academic services to the students from both the community

school and surrounding local schools. The polyclinic is a non-governmental organisation falling under and accountable to, the Batlagae Trust.

There is a significant need for the educational polyclinic and the services (assessment, psychological counselling and remedial assistance) and expertise that it aims to make accessible. This was confirmed by a task force of educational experts who visited Tanzania in

1991 in order to perform a situation analysis before the repatriation of exiles began on a mass

scale. The task force was unanimous in its prediction that it would be vital for the returning

exile children to receive considerable counselling support if they were to overcome the psychological and educational difficulties that would inevitably accompany their re-integration

into South African schools and society.

The multi-disciplinary staff of the Yeoville educational polyclinic will include a Director

(who is a social worker), a psychologist, two remedial teachers, a bursaries officer, a secretary, an additional psychologist and an occupational therapist. Services provided include

counselling, educational remediation, psychometric testing, social and health issues in

schools, speech therapy, and whatever related services are needed. Where necessary, the services of outside professionals are commissioned and paid for on a part-time basis. Many schools in the city are "opening" their doors to the more talented black students, but continue to exclude the majority of the black population. These schools have already signalled their urgent need for assistance in social integration and educational issues. The Yeoville Community School aims to develop a profile of expertise in these areas, and will generally assist in the desegregation process in other Johannesburg schools. In summary, the Yeoville Community Education Project offers a unique opportunity to meet the urgent academic and social needs of both returned exile children as well as inner city community children. In meeting these needs, available physical facilities will be maximised and the considerable experience and expertise which has been built up in integrated education will be drawn together. The school is able to support itself in terms of government subsidies and fees and has an excellent chance of offering high quality education and a supportive environment to its students, at a minimal cost to the community. This school and its network also serve as a model for other inner city groups in South Africa. The educational polyclinic not only provides the returnee and local students with vital remedial and counselling support, but also makes these and related services accessible to the community, thereby fulfilling the broader community outreach programme envisaged by the Yeoville Community Education Project.

4.4 ARCHIVES PROJECT:

As has been noted, one of the initial objectives of the Batlagae Trust was to facilitate the return of educational archival material belonging to the liberation movements from abroad, and to arrange for their safe return to South Africa and placement at Fort Hare University. The Batlagae Trust was instrumental in co-ordinating the return of a container of educational archives from Tanzania in September 1992. With the help of FINNIDA, the Batlagae Trust has also arranged to fund an archivist to work at the university where the material is being unpacked, catalogued and indexed. A museum has also been established in addition to the archives centre at Fort Hare University. The Batlagae Trust is also involved in a major research project on the work done by the liberation movements during their time in exile, and the documentation of some of their experiences. Of particular interest to the Batlagae Trust in the light of its expanded mission, are the educational institutions that have been established, and the possibility of transferring the more successful models to South Africa.

5. CONCLUSION:

The Batlagae Trust was established in the wake of the unbanning of the liberation movements in February 1990, as a direct response to the considerable work that was needed to be done to effect the repatriation and re-integration of political exiles back into South African society. The special focus of the Batlagae Trust was to cater for the educational and related needs of returning scholars and students by co-ordinating on an ongoing basis, their re-orientation into a complex education system. Concerted and well co-ordinated national and regional planning as well as dedicated perseverance by a highly motivated, skilled and committed staff have been necessary to successfully implement the initial mandate given to the Trust. Over the past two years, the mission of the Batlagae Trust has had to evolve and expand alongside its growing relevancy and potential to influence macro-level policy decisions concerning the future of education in South Africa.

6. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS:

The budget which follows on page 7 is provisional and is based on estimates from the ongoing programme as well as anticipated increases and inflation. The budget attempts to account for the overall needs of the Trust in 1994, but is still subject to revision. As is the case in 1993, the Batlagae Trust envisages that it will be supported by a number of donors in 1994. Individual donors will be approached with a detailed funding request in addition to this general proposal, requesting them to support a specific portion of the budget.

6.1 BUDGET FOR 1994:

A. Bursary programme

- Estimate based on 1993 caseload R 6,500 000.00
and 300 additional scholars. R 1 120 000.00
(Includes an element for a
discretionary maintenance fund, and
allows for inflation)

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B. Support teachers

salaries for 16 months

C. Yeoville Community School

- Stationery
- Reading aids
- Science equipment
- Sporting equipment
- SOMAFCO Link Project

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D. Yeoville Education; Polytechnic

- Staff salaries
- Staff development
- Educational equipment
- Office administration

E. Archives project

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- Archivist

F. Administration

- Capital costs

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- Office administration R 69,

- Salaries R

TOTAL

R 7,720,000.00

R 40,000.00

R 18,000.00

R 379,500.00

R 54,000.00

R 508,100.00

R 8,719,600.00