INAUGURAL LECTURE

REFLECTIONS ON DEVELOPMENT STUDIES AS AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

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"Before, elephants attacked us, now it is development", (A Semai male laments).
1. INTRODUCTION

The quote above comes from the Semai who are a semi-sedentary people living in the center of the Malay Peninsula in Southeast Asia, known especially for their non-violence the quote is a useful starting point for a discussion that reflects on the nature of Development due to the pervasiveness of the Development Agenda in general and Development Studies in particular in the last 67 years.

I am delighted to have this opportunity to share some thoughts on Development Studies (DS) as an academic discipline and practice with you, and share my views and some experiences with DS. Before continuing the discussion further, I need to provide some historical background for this lecture. The motivation to write this lecture on DS as an academic discipline comes from my experience of implementing Development Studies as an Undergraduate Major programme in the School of Health and Social Sciences at this Campus (University, as it was then before the integration process). When I assumed my appointment in August 1989 at Mmabatho, Mafikeng, one persistent question that I was confronted with in Senate and by the students was: What is Development studies? What does it entail as an academic discipline in the social sciences? Why study and offer it at all?

When we tabled the motivation for the introduction of DS as an undergraduate major in Senate, Senate seemed to explode in a flood of emotions that seemed to question and challenge the possibility for the introduction of an inter-disciplinary subject called “Development Studies”. The Senators’ strong personal reactions ranged from intense hostility, to defensive mocking, and attempts at outright rejection of the introduction of Development Students. Some members of Senate even went as far as to argue that there was” no such thing as Development Studies”. On the contrary, with the students I encountered the opposite reactions: the majority of students appeared to be curious, keen, enthusiastic, and even passionate about the new subject. Subsequently, the popularity of Development Studies compulsory modules on the Campus had the unintended result of attracting the unwelcome attention of the Mangope Regime, across the road, in the Garona Complex. Their hostility and suspicion of Development Studies, and the motives of those who sought to promote it, led the constant harassment and occasional brief detentions of Development Studies Lecturers Ms Francina De Clerq, Mike Meyer– especially Mr. Paul Daphne was constantly harassed, arrested and locked up on suspicion of inciting and “polluting “ the students with “revolutionary and anti – regime ideas “. As a consequence, I found myself, as HoD spending an inordinate amount of time trying to get my lecturers released, as well as to convince the regime that there was nothing inherently “revolutionary, subversive and anti –regime” about Development Studies ,as an academic discipline.DS is emancipatory, normative and prescriptive, as such is bound to pose bound to raise awkward questions on poverty and inequality. As a result, the majority of the students were attracted to DS by some sense of commitment to social
justice and dreams of making a difference to the prevailing levels of poverty and inequality in their communities.

Furthermore, on a number of occasions that I have had to travel abroad, one of the most difficult things — besides facing unfriendly customs officials at airports - is on completing the ‘occupation’ category on the immigration questionnaire ,as “Professor of Development Studies”, Iam often still confronted with the question: “What is Development Studies?”

Finally, during the External Program Evaluation (EPE) process of the Department of Development Studies last year, it also became abundantly clear that most of the panelist had no idea at all what Development Studies as an academic discipline entails at all.

This lecture seeks to provide a reflection on the nature, scope and state of Development Studies. It provides a historical appraisal of DS as an academic discipline under the guidance of the following questions core questions of: (i) What is “Development”? (ii) What are the main Development Theories that have emerged over the past 67 years? (iii)How did “Development Studies” emerge as an academic discipline? (iv) What are the distinctive features of “Development Studies”? (v) Is DS still relevant today? and finally what are the challenges in promoting learning and teaching DS using Mafikeng Campus as a case in point.

In recent years, much has been written on the problematic state of DS, particularly regarding contestations on the nature and scope of DS, as well as its relevance to society today. This reflection on the nature and scope of DS is timely because of the expansion of taught courses at universities during the previous decade and a half globally in general, and in South Africa, in particular; and also because DS has entered a period of sustained introspection and critiques – since the late the 20th Century due to the shifting nature and scope of what “Development” entails .The “fate” of DS in the context of the 21 Century has therefore, become one of the main themes highlighted at International Conferences in recent years —including the DS Conference held at the end of September 2011 at UNISA on the “Need for Reflection on the Implications for the future of DS in South Africa.” Indeed, reflections on the fate and future of DS requires us in particular, to understand how “Development Studies” is understood as an academic discipline and implemented in learning and research institutions, as well as other development agencies.

2. WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT?

The question driving this lecture is: What is “Development Studies”? Answering this question requires answering the fundamental question for DS: namely – what is ‘Development’? This is not an easy task. The definition of “Development “is highly contested both theoretically and politically and carries with it layers of meaning. It has been in a state of flux during the past 67 years. Indeed, few other words offer such definitional difficulties as “Development”. Conceptualizing “Development” is struggle;
besides different meanings over time, there are different dimensions at any one given time. In order to appreciate the terrain of DS, we have to start, as The Development Dictionary (Sachs, 1992) does, by defining and examining the concept that is common currency in contemporary development discourse. We need to discuss how has “Development” been conceptualized during the past 67 years.

The dictionary definition focuses on the idea of “a stage of growth or advancement”. As a verb, “Development” refers to activities required to bring about change or progress and is often linked with economic growth. As an adjective “development” implies a standard against which different rates of progress may be compared, and it therefore takes on a subjective, judgmental element in which societies, communities or even countries are sometimes compared and then placed at different “stages” of an evolutionary schema. Bjorn Hettne, (2008: 6) points out that: “Development in the modern sense implies intentional social change in accordance with societal objectives”. As Chambers (2004:1) aptly puts it: “The eternal challenge of development is to do better”. In line with most scholars, we would insert the criterion of “improvement “and concur with Pieterse (2010:3) definition of development as “the organized intervention in collective affairs according to a standard of improvement”.

Discussions of development can be traced to discourse on human well-being dating from antiquity. So the concept of “Development “is as old as philosophy itself. Discussions on what makes a good life dates back at least to Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics and the Ancient Greek traditions. In fact, scholars have noted that much of ancient philosophy concerned itself with the question of eudemonia, i.e. ‘the state of having a desirable life’ (Clark 2002:1).

The belief in the promotion of “progress” arose during the period the Enlightenment in the 18th century in northern Europe. During this era the rise of competitive capitalism undermined prevailing feudalism and ushered in a period in Western thought which emphasized rational knowledge, the rise of technology and science and the dichotomies of “backward” and “advanced” societies. Consequently, a common theme within most definitions is that development encompasses “change” in a variety of aspects of the human condition. During the colonial period, it was common for the colonizer to present themselves as rational agents of progress, while local people were portrayed as child-like or backward or primitive.

In its modern usage the term “Development” first came into official prominence after it was used by United States President Truman in the 1949 Declaration as part of the motivation for post-War reconstruction in “underdeveloped” areas of the world, based on the provision of international financial assistance and modern technology transfer, that:

"we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas" (cited in Esteva, 1992: 6).

As a consequence, after 1945, in Europe and North America, “Development” was increasingly presented in terms of economic growth and modernity. The benefits of economic growth, it was presumed, would “trickle down” to the poor, while the transfer of new technology would bring forth material benefits. Consequently, the most common definition of “Development” that emerged in the early 1950s held development to be
synonymous with economic growth. Development was understood to mean economic growth which would be manifested in rising living standards, which would in turn translate into improved, health, nutrition, education and personal autonomy. Although economic growth remains an underlying factor in many contemporary definitions of development, it has been widely challenged.

In the early 1960s emphasis shifted from viewing development in terms of economic growth to ‘employment’ and ‘redistribution with growth’ (Seers, 1969). This was followed by a focus on Basic Needs. The Basic Needs Strategy emphasized uniform foundation of development: sufficient food, clean water, adequate shelter, functional sanitation, primary health care and at least some elementary education. Thus Basic needs was initially construed in terms of inputs - the provision of goods and services (ILO,1977) and later the focus shifted to emphasis on outcomes - basic opportunities with specific concentration on poverty reduction (Steward, 1985).

In the 1980s two radically different perspectives on development emerged: the Human Development and Neoliberalism approaches. First, the definition of development as ‘capacitating’ following Amartya Sen’s work on capacities and entitlements. In his book Development as Freedom, Sen. (1999), suggests that development entails the removal of “unfreedoms” which constrain people’s choices and opportunities. Freedom requires people to live lives free from starvation, under-nourishment, morbidity, premature mortality, illiteracy and innumeracy. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP’s) Human Development Report, published in 1990 adopted Sen.’s core definition and broadened the conceptualization of development thus “The basic purpose of development is to enlarge people’s choices”. According to this perspective people value access to knowledge, better nutrition and health services, more secure livelihoods, security against crime and physical violence, satisfying leisure hours, political and cultural freedom and a sense of participation in community activities.

Human development suggests that the focus of development is not the achievement of economic well-being in itself; rather it should be the expansion of people’s choices and the realization of human freedom and rights. Thus “the objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives”. Thus the emphasis is on incorporating a full range of human capabilities and freedoms people have reason to value and viewing development as “the enlargement of people’s choices”. This definition “put people back at the centre of development”. Human development and capability approaches, therefore, concern themselves with the development of people rather than the development of material things. Consequently, the “human development” perspective defined development as “the expansion of human capabilities and entitlements. In this specific context “Development” is not something which is bestowed upon passive beneficiaries by benevolent benefactors, but it is a process driven by people themselves — a process of wellbeing: a process of being and doing. This approach reminds one of the titles of a thought-provoking book of Eddie Bruwer (2001), “Beggars can be choosers.”

Secondly, Neoliberalism eliminated the notion that developing countries represented a “special case”. According to this perspective. What matters is to ‘get the prices right’ and let market forces do their work. Development in the sense of government intervention is anathema for it means market distortion. Development is to be achieved
through deregulation, liberalization, and privatization – which entail to rolling back government and reducing market-distorting interventions and which in effect annul development’. In other words, this perspective retains one of the conventional core meanings of ‘development’, economic growth, while the “how to” and agency of development switch from the state to the market. The Neo- liberal approach and the structural adjustment programme it entailed, believes in the free market as the engine of development. Whereas development practice in the 1950s and 1960s was animated by a vision of liberation of people; neo-liberalism replaced it by a vision of the liberalization of economies.

The turn of the Millennium in 2000 witnessed the creation of a set of development objectives and targets called “Millennium Development Goals” (MDGs) (Rigg, 2008). Development came to be defined in terms of simplified measures. These include a framework of eight goals, 18 targets and 48 indicators. Under the over-arching goal of reducing global poverty, specific quantified targets address income, poverty, hunger, disease, shelter, exclusion, especially that related to gender inequality, as well as education, and environmental sustainability by the year 2015. Underlying the series of goals and specific targets is a commitment to addressing basic human rights in terms of the rights of everyone in the world to health, education, housing and security. The MDGs are effectively a summary of the key issues affecting global development since the development project emerged 67 years ago. These targets which are encompassed within the MDGs have come to dominate the entire functioning of international development policy since 2000. In short, this definition of development is policy related and evaluative or indicator led, based on value judgments, and has short- to medium-term time horizons.

The above definitions do not cover all the definitions and work carried out under the rubric of development, but they capture major perspectives. Whichever way one looks at it, the common theme within most definitions is that development encompasses “change, or progress” in a variety of aspects of human condition. Though development was initially associated primarily with economic growth, subsequently there has been a growing recognition that while the well-being of an economy may form the prerequisite for development it is not sufficient on its own. Therefore, attention has to be paid to issues such as income, asset redistribution to reduce poverty and inequality, support for human rights and social welfare and the sustainable stewardship of environmental resources.

In simple terms ‘development’ means making a better life for everyone. As Wroe and Doney (2005:13) point out in their book, Rough Guide to a Better World development is about:

“Making sure that the most basic things that we take for granted can also be taken for granted by everyone else in the world”.

Scholars (Shenton and Cowen 1998, Thomas, 2004) also make a distinction between different uses of the term “Development” by highlighting the difference between “immanent development”, which is spontaneous and unconscious, and “intentional development”, which involves deliberate policy and actions by different actors or stakeholders. Hart (2001) amends it slightly to talk of development with ‘with a big “D”
and development with a little"d".Development with a big “D" involves deliberate policy and action intervention usually overseen by large organizations such as the state, international development agencies, as well as state and other development actors to try to improve conditions or people in the developing countries; while development with a small “d" refers to spontaneous and unconscious development, as well as development that produce both improvements and setbacks depending on the place or actors involved(Potter,etal,2008).

Overall, then, development can be described as a vision of the state of being a desirable society, a historical process, and/or comprising deliberate improvement policies on behalf of various agencies and governments. However, what constitutes, “positive change” or “good change", is bound to be contested. As Kanbur (2006:5) rightly points out there is no uniform or unique answer. If development means “good change”, questions arise about what is good, and what sorts of change matter, or whether bad change should also be viewed as development at all. What constitutes “good change" is bound to be contested. This raises a number of questions: what to improve; how to improve it; and the question of who decides. Thus defining development remains one major area of controversy. And values including making value judgments and adhering to a particular ideology are central to this controversy. Views that are prevalent in one part of the community are not necessary shared by others in that community or in society more widely (Tribe, 2008:10). This results in disagreements over the goals, objectives and priorities of development. Views have differed, and perhaps always should and will differ, about what is good and what sorts of change are significant and progressive. These differences influence and express conditions, ideologies, perceptions, practices and priorities. Since development depends on values and on alternative conceptions of the good life, it therefore follows that there is no uniform or unique answer about what constitutes “good" development or “desirable "society. Consequently, there are no correct or easy answers to questions about the nature of desirable development. In turn, ideology also plays a major role in the conceptualization of development since politics, culture, religion and so on shape the nature of thinking about development. Defining development has, therefore, increasingly becoming a bone of contention and a source of conflict.

However, what we need to recognize is that most definitions, of "development" seems to have two aspects: it is normative; and it involves change. So the underlying meaning of development has been good change. That is the sense in which it is used in this lecture. Furthermore, development is rooted in ideas of morality and benevolence. The development agenda is value-laden, and to some extend involves moralizing. It is rooted in ideas of morality and benevolence, attracting activists who wish to “make a difference" in the world. Development fills a space in today's society; it is part of a moral, righteous crusade found in politics and the media and a moral call to ‘save' the other. This is reflected at international fora with resolutions “to make poverty history”. The former British Premier Gordon Brown, for example, illustrates this moral crusade when in his 2005 speech regarding the “make poverty history” campaign he said: “Let this be the generation of whom it is said we had the vision the courage and the moral strength to do the right thing, to make poverty history” (BBC News 2005).
To sum up thus far, since the end of World War II in 1945, the concept of “development” has become one of the dominant ideas of the 21st century which embodies a set of aspirations, visions and techniques which seek to bring about positive change or progress in the developing countries. There is a general consensus that “Development” encompasses continuous change in various aspects of human society. These dimensions of development, as we have pointed out above, include, economic, social, political, legal and institutional structures, technology in various forms, the environment, religion, the arts and culture.

3. WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT THEORY?

What is the relationship between the way “Development “is defined and Development Theory? The simple answer is that development theories explain development. Development theories are sets of propositions which seek to explain how development has taken place in the past and how it might occur in the future. Development theory includes analyses of how development problems have come about and the best ways to deal with them. Development theories do not just reflect images of improvements or desirable change but rather ways in which ideas about development are grouped into a discourse or ways of thinking that influence a range of different political, social and economic positions. In other words, theories of development are needed in order to obtain a better understanding of development process. Just as there is no fixed definition of development, so it is not bound by a single theory. Instead, there are several suggestions of what development should imply, or has implied, in different contexts. What we need to note is that development brings with it a set of confusing, shifting notions and is prone to rapid change. It is always in a state of flux. Just as there is no fixed definition of development, so it is not bound by a single theory. Instead, there are suggestions of what development should imply, or has implied, in different contexts. These are constantly redefined as understanding of “Development “ changes. So understanding development theory in context means understanding ‘development’ as a response to problems and arguments at a particular time or epoch. Takes particular meaning in the specific historical the process deepens and as new problems emerge (Potter, 2008). In an attempt to understand tackle the development problems and issues of developing countries, coupled with the ever changing material conditions of the post-1945 World Order, a vast body of theory on development emerged. Consequently, major development theories have been originated to explain differential patterns of development throughout the world since the 1950s. The theories and issues they entail are large and so to keep the sweep and flow of this lecture, I have refrained from elaborating them. I will merely raise them here, without being able to go into detail. For our purposes, we need only identify the major theories without getting bogged down in providing a review of what each one entails. Although there is no strict chronology in the emergence of development theories during this period, a high degree of overlap and contestation, exists. It is however, possible to identify several broad and overlapping phases (Willis, 2005; Potter, 2008;Summer & Tribe,2008). The main theories that shape the field of DS are ,amongst others , are listed in the Table below.
Table 1. The Development Theories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Perspective</th>
<th>Meaning of Development</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950&gt;</td>
<td>Modernization Theory</td>
<td>Growth, political &amp; social modernization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960&gt;</td>
<td>Dependence Theory</td>
<td>Accumulation – nationally, autocratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970&gt;</td>
<td>Alternative Development</td>
<td>Human flourishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980&gt;</td>
<td>Human Development</td>
<td>Capacitation, enlargement of people’s choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990&gt;</td>
<td>Post Development</td>
<td>Authoritarian Engineering, disaster.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000&gt;</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
<td>Structural Reforms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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(Source: Adapted from Summer & Tribe, 2009; Pieterse, 2010)

Today several theories and approaches coexist and are expounded in different arenas. However, we what have to bear in mind that each development theory has a historical context, and cover political different circumstances. Therefore, each theory unfolds in a particular historical setting. Development theory thus serves a number of functions. Theories are therefore, are not only explanatory but also agenda setting, mobilization and coalition building. Development theory also includes analyses of how development problems have come about and the best ways to deal with them, as well as register “perceptions of development” or how different stakeholders perceive and represent their interests in the development process.

Table 2. Dimension of Development Theory
In short, development theories reflect images of improvement or desirable change and perform a critical role in setting agendas, framing priorities, building coalitions, justifying policies. Development theories, therefore, can be considered as normative, since they generalize about what desirable change should or could be in an ideal world (Potter 2008: 67).

To sum up this section, development theories have constantly been redefined as the understanding of "Development" put forward during the course of the "development decades" since 1945 in the earlier decades, changed. Thus the range of development theory could be seen as responding to "paradigm shifts" as one development paradigm replaced another as the "dominant paradigm."

4. WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT STUDIES (DS)?

The emergence of DS as an academic discipline in the second half of the 20th century is largely attributed to, in part, to the increasing concern about the socio-economic development after 1945 in developing countries. The term “Development Studies” did not come into use until after World War II (Einsiedel and Parmar, 2004). It was born out of the decolonization process in the 1950s and 1960s, as newly independent states sought development policy prescriptions to “catch up” economically with industrialized Western nations (Bernstein 2005; Shaw 2004). However, the term “Development Studies” came into being as a teaching course title relatively recently - in the 1960 and 1970s (Summer & Tribe, 2008).
The fundamental question in this is what “Development Studies” (DS) is what it primarily entails. DS is a multidisciplinary branch of social science which addresses development issues of primary concern to developing countries. It has historically placed a particular focus on issues related to socio-economic development in developing countries. However, its relevance also extends to communities and regions outside that of the developing world, which have an impact on the former. To this end, therefore, DS also takes an interest in lessons of past development experiences of Western countries, as well as the impact of the relationships between the developed and developing countries. Thus we can say that DS denotes a holistic approach to the enquiry of processes, which seek to transform people’s lives throughout the world. Bjorn Hettne in his book Development Theory and the Three Worlds (1990:4) defined DS as:

"...a problem –oriented, applied and interdisciplinary field, analyzing social change in a world context, but with due consideration with to the specificity of different societies in terms of history, ecology, culture, etc".

However, with the collapse of socialist Europe, the scope of DS has changed accordingly. DS is not only confined to the study of the South but also focuses on the North. Since the former Eastern bloc countries have become countries in transition toward market economies and democracies, development policies also apply there. Consequently, changes taking place in advanced economies – deindustrialization, flexibilization, migration, urban problems, and regionalization – also lead to development policies, albeit at different economic and institutional levels. Accordingly, the line between “developing” and “developed” countries has been blurring. As a result, the North now faces similar questions on social exclusion, empowerment, good and the renewal of democracy. In addition, there is a growing convergence of advanced western countries and Newly Industrialized countries (NICs) due to the technological changes and globalization, NICs have been developing faster much like advanced western countries though they emerged from developing countries.

There is a growing consensus on what constitutes DS (Clark, 2004; DSA, 2006; Loxely, 2004; Summer & Tribe, 2008). The following are the distinctive defining characteristics of DS:

- It is about ‘development’ – however, defined;
- it is theoretical, policy – related and instrumental concerned with real-world problems;
- the primary focus is on developing countries per se;
- it is cross – regional and cross country, comparative foci with emphasis on development; and
- it is inter-disciplinary in nature.

DS tends to be interested in knowledge generation not for its own sake but for its applied or instrumental value for development. DS is therefore a key subject within the social sciences due to its important practical and policy implications – its instrumentality. Indeed, understanding the process of development can really help to influence the lives of people throughout the world. As Pieterse (2010:4) points out, the strength and the weakness of DS is its policy orientation character:
"This is part of its vitality and inventiveness. It is problem driven rather than theory-driven. It is worldly, grounded, street-smart, driven by field knowledge, not just book knowledge."

In other words, DS is theoretical, policy-oriented and empirical. It seeks to systematically cultivate critical reflections and discourse on critical issues pertaining to human wellbeing, sustainable livelihoods, poverty alleviation, quality of life and human capabilities and empowerment. DS, therefore, incorporates not only the substantive components (interdisciplinary subject matter) but also the praxis component (‘doing’ development through for example, immersion and advocacy) in order to make the study of development a socially responsible and relevant field in the socio-economic development process in the world.

DS also has a strong normative and prescriptive orientation; it not only elaborates on what is (in a descriptive sense), but also on what ought to be. It seeks to improve people’s lives. It has a strong concern for the importance of addressing local and global inequality and poverty. It thus views development as an emancipatory project which seeks to solve the problems of the poor, marginalized and exploited people in the developing countries.

DS is thus a normative undertaking with inherent value judgments about change for the better. Such a concern by DS opens up a plethora of opportunities for engaged with other stakeholders to internalize the numerous development challenges of human hardship, poverty and underdevelopment of the communities. Value judgments about change for the better are thus inherent and central to DS. Just as we have noted above that the conceptualization of development has been in a state of flux, so the focus of DS has accordingly, gone through major changes since the 1960s due to the shifting meanings attached to development and what it entails.

5. IS DS AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE?

What is not in dispute is the fact “Development Studies” involves the blending of analytical approaches and insights from several “disciplines”. Consequently, the debate that had occupied the scholars during the last century was the question of whether DS could be viewed as “a distinct field of enquiry “- as “a discipline in it”- as opposed to a rapidly expanding “subject” area that cuts across disciplines (Tribe & Summer, 2004).

Although “subject” and “discipline” are sometimes used interchangeably, the accepted definition of discipline as an academic should possess the following characteristics(Krishnan,2009:9;Goodlad,1979:11): 1) disciplines have a particular object of research (e.g. law, society, politics), though the object of research may be shared with another discipline; 2) disciplines have a body of accumulated specialist knowledge referring to their object of research, which is specific to them and not generally shared with another discipline; 3) disciplines have theories and concepts that can organize the accumulated specialist knowledge effectively; 4) disciplines use specific terminologies or a specific technical language adjusted to their research object; 5) disciplines have developed specific research methods according to their specific research requirements; and maybe most crucially 6), disciplines must have some
institutional manifestation in the form of subjects taught at universities or colleges, respective academic departments and professional associations connected to it.

In addition, a new discipline is usually founded by the way of creating a professorial chair devoted to it at an established university. However, a discipline need not possess all of the aforementioned seven characteristics. But the more characteristics it has, the more certain the field of academic enquiry is a recognized as an academic discipline. A discipline should also be capable of reproducing itself and building upon a growing body of own scholarship. Additionally, more emphasis is placed on the fact that in order to qualify as a “discipline”, a field needs an “identity” in order to achieve political status, for example as a university department, in a sufficient number of universities (Turner; 2000; Strober; 2006). So departmental status in a sufficient number of universities could be a proxy for whether a field is thought to be a discipline. In short, what counts as a discipline is as much a “political” consideration as a purely epistemological one. It reflects the departmental structure of universities, university career and reward structures, and the nature of professional associations, journals, library classifications, and research funding bodies that shape and frame career and organisational incentives.

Disciplines also have distinct ontological and epistemological approaches – to problem definition, to axioms and assumptions concerning the nature of reality and of human beings, to analytical methods and techniques (Haddad, 2006:3; McGregor, 2006:33). In other words, a discipline possesses a body of theory, discipline specific assumptions on the nature of reality and knowledge and possibly favoured methodological approaches and methods or techniques. Finally, if a discipline is called “studies”, then it usually indicates that it is of a newer origin; it is a post 1945 Second World War (Krishnan, 2009:10).

DS possesses almost all of the above characteristics and hence is accepted as an academic discipline in its own right globally, albeit reflecting its cross-disciplinary nature (RAE, 2008; Clark, 2008; Turner, 2000). Indeed, in recent years, a consensus has emerged that, it is possible to separate DS from other fields of study. It is now generally accepted that DS as a field of study has attained sufficient departmental, institute, school status in a number of universities, and research institutes (Turner, 2000:5). Several countries and universities world-wide have centres, departments, institutes or schools of development studies, offering degrees in development studies, or engaged in research. As Corbridge (1995:x) acknowledged over a decade ago: “DS as an intellectual discipline has expanded so much in the past twenty or thirty years that it is in danger of losing its claim to distinctiveness.”. As an academic discipline DS three main areas of focus:

- The first is *theoretical* in that it covers the main theories of development that have been established to explain uneven and unequal patterns of development across the world;
- The second is *thematic and empirical* in terms of outlining a series of key issues that provide the basis for understanding development processes;
- The third is *policy-oriented* in that it examines how development problems have been addressed by various governments, international agencies and civil society.
DS is an interdisciplinary field that addresses development issues generated in the real world. In addition, as an applied field and an engaged form of academic entrepreneurship, DS informs and enriches policy development and also the praxis of development - i.e. the plans, programs and projects that should guide interventions. In short, as a discipline DS focuses on the conceptualization of development, the planning of development, mobilization of resources for development, the implementation of development, the measuring of development, the evaluation and monitoring impact of development, as well as the facilitation and conflict management in the development process. Put differently, as a discipline DS focuses "on theories, analyses, interpretations and evaluation of processes of change, their outcomes, their management and their contribution to development policy" (RAE, 2005:41). Development studies capture the twin objectives of understanding and action, of analysis and advocacy, of policy analysis and policy prescription. In short, it embraces the divide between "thinkers" and "do-ers".

6. REFLECTION AND RETHINKING OF DS: THE RELEVANCE OF DS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

From the 1950, up to the, 1970s DS flourished and enjoyed unquestioned legitimacy. However, from the mid - 1980 and throughout the 1990s, with the ascendancy and dominance of neo-liberalism and the structural adjustment programmes, the legitimacy of DS came to be questioned and criticized. This criticism could be attributed to two developments. First, the universalist claims of neo-liberalism and structural adjustment policies undermined the foundation of DS, the notion that developing countries formed a special case. Secondly, the blurring of the Three Worlds with the collapse of USSR and the Berlin Wall. This led some scholars to ask whether all these developments did not mean the "end of development." So everything that development used to represent appeared to be in question, in crisis. The subsequent resulting big push towards liberalization, deregulation and privatization in development policy and the pervasive influence of the neo-liberal ideology on scholarship, with its thesis of the minimalist role and the retreat of the state, resulted in the undermining of the development agenda. DS was seemingly pushed into a "dead-end". DS was said to have reached its theoretical "impasse" (Schuurman, 1993; Booth, 1994), or "a cul de sac". It was said to be facing a "crisis" (Hettne, 1990); and to be incapable of understanding or explaining the crisis in development. Consequently, the ability of DS to explain and understand the development problems confronting the world was in doubt. Some neo-liberal scholars such as Fukuyama (1992) even proclaimed the "End of History" which entailed the emergence of a neo-liberal order. This period thus reflected disappointment at the lack of progress in addressing development problems in developing countries, as well as well as a shift towards accepting that no one theory of development is possible or desirable. In short, the very notion of development, and the whole enterprise of development, was questioned. Consequently, from the mid - 1980 DS has been under going a period of introspection and reflection to identify its limitations, address criticisms and adopt new future directions. Since then calls for reflection and introspection on the implications for and the future of DS during the 21st Century has been a dominant theme in development discourse.
Foremost on the agenda was the question: will DS as an academic discipline remain a worthwhile endeavor? Does DS have a place in this new world order? What challenges need to be tackled for DS to thrive and avoid becoming irrelevant? With the benefit of hindsight, it is evident that predictions of the imminent demise of DS were greatly exaggerated. Unlike the skeptics and prophets of doom, who proclaimed the end of DS, we subscribe to the view adopted by those who maintained that it is not “time to give up Development Studies” (Hettne 1990:246). As Sen (2001:2) powerfully argued: “It is important to remember that development studies is certainly not dead regardless of the obituaries that have been written”. Like Hettne and Sen, we argue that DS is still useful in explaining current development issues and problems; and that as Hettne (1990:249) explained“ DS is not a discipline in disintegration”. We belong to the school of thought that subscribe to the view that what we have been witnessing (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009; Rahimah, 2004) is a new development era and a re-affirmation of the relevance and legitimacy of DS. We need also to acknowledge that crisis is intrinsic to development; that from its nineteenth-century beginnings, development thinking was a reaction to the crises of progress. DS therefore has weathered many storms, ever since its appearance in the 1950s. Hence questioning, rethinking and crisis are part of development and not external to it. Indeed, we should accept not only that questioning is part of development but to consider it as its spearhead. DS entails ongoing questioning critique and probing alternative development options. Development then is a field in flux, with a rapid change and turnover of alternatives. It is precisely because of its crisis predicament that DS is a high-energy field.

This reflection and rethinking brings us back to the core question: Does DS have a place in contemporary world? What challenges need to be taken on for DS to thrive and avoid becoming irrelevant? As we have noted the concept of development has over the past sixty-seven years been in a state of flux, as a consequence, the nature and scope DS has changed dramatically and continues do so. The changing meaning of development means that new issues and priorities are emerging all the time. The changing meaning of development means that new concerns and priorities are emerging all the time. The challenge for DS is how to deal with these emerging issues. DS as a field of enquiry will needs to rethink and reflect about how it addresses emerging issues within the 21st century and how it opens space for alternative “voices”, as well and their interrelationships with conventional development issues.

**The Reasons why DS will remain relevant in the contemporary World**

DS will remain relevant for several following reasons.

**First, the persistence of old problems.** Due to the continued presence of age old problems such as poverty and inequality, unemployment and social dislocation, the development effort is still needed. The development effort in the past 67 years can be said to have been less successful in achieving its objectives to generate growth and promote well-being among the majority of the world’s population. Past reports have shown that living standards in most countries have been rising - and converging - for several decades now. Yet the Human Development Report 2011 Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All (UNDP,2011) projects a disturbing reversal of those achievements if environmental deterioration and social inequalities continue to intensify,
with the least developed countries diverging downwards from global patterns of progress by 2050. The report shows further how the world’s most disadvantaged people continue to suffer the most from environmental degradation, including in their immediate personal environment, and disproportionately lack political power, making it all the harder for the world community to reach agreement on needed global policy changes.

In addition, as poverty reports (DeRivero, 2001:186; HDR 2011) point out more than 5.3 billion people live in developing countries, constituting about five – sixth of the world population. About 1.1 billion of these people are estimated to be living below the international poverty line and more are vulnerable to becoming poor. Indeed, the poverty reduction agenda was resurrected in the 1990s and into the 21st century mostly due the fact that the neo-liberal prescriptions around structural adjustment programmes created greater social inequality and poverty around the globe. The majority of the people in developing countries in general, Africa and South Africa in particular, continue to experience gross deprivations in terms of basic human capabilities, such as life expectancy, child mortality and adult literacy (World Bank, 2012). As Clark (2008: xxx) had observed such a depressing reality provide a “strong moral case for an interest in development issues”.

**Secondly crisis of global capitalism.** Following the crisis of global capitalism since 2008 and how to deal with the crisis it entailed has forced a re-consideration of the role of the state in development. This has signaled the return of the developmental state. Furthermore, development discourse, during most of second half of the twentieth century was characterized by a tension in the two broad views: the developmental state approach favoring state-led growth dominated over the 1950 to 1970 period, and the latter gained hegemony between 1980 and 2000. Until 2008 the Washington Consensus seemed to have prevailed. However, both the lack of success during the past decades of neo-liberal strategies especially in Africa and the success of industrialization in Southeast Asia in the NIC, coupled with the rise of emerging societies with large public sectors such as China, India and Brazil (BRICs), have put back the developmental state on top of the development agenda.

In other words, the era of neo-liberalism has faded and in its stead a reform platform in development thinking has emerged with an emphasis on reconstructions of development agenda. The state in Africa in general and South African in particular is increasingly seen to have a crucial role to play in tackling current and emerging development challenges. This is reflected in Economic Report on Africa 2011 – the Role of the State in Economic Transformation (ECA, 2011) and The Vision 2030 (Presidency, 2011). To-day more effective states are needed if development is to succeed in the world’s poorest countries. Even in the developed countries the role of the state in the development process is no longer consider an anathema. Consequently, the notion of state intervention will continue to be indispensable for understanding development practice and DS should rethink its relationship to it. Thus we can surmise that issues of poverty and inequality remain as important and relevant to the state and society today as they were before and form a critical part of the development agenda.
Third, war, conflict and violence. New thinking on war, conflict and everyday violence. Another area which has been receiving increasing attention in recent years from a development perspective, is that of violence and conflict of varying natures at a range of different scales. As the *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development* (World Bank, 2012) points out, violence threatens development, locally and regionally and is responsible for the deficit in meeting MDGs. The prominence of violence has been precipitated by several events and processes. Of critical importance were the attacks of “9/11” and “7/7” in 2001 and 2005 respectively, the consequent “war on terror” and the recent invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. In addition, the rise of “war- lordism” and of many ethno-nationalist conflicts, border and civil wars, and political transitions in developing countries have provided for increased interest in how conflict contexts shape the development agenda (Pieterse, 2010). Linked with these, as well as other conflicts around the world, it is now acknowledged that war, conflict and violence are important development issues. Indeed, violence interrelates with development processes causally, in terms of outcomes and in relation to finding solutions to reducing violence. This applies to violence occurring at all levels, including so-called “everyday violence” referring to the crime, delinquency and routine acts of violence that are now commonplace throughout the Global South, especially in cities. Thus, violence in all forms undermines sustainable development (WB, 2011).

Fourth emerging new issues. A number of new issues have been thrust onto the development agenda. These newly emerging and challenging issues in development discourse include amongst others:

- **Climate change and environmental issues.** Climate change is one of the most pressing global environmental challenges facing humanity in the 21st Century. A greater realization has emerged that climate change tends to have a greater impact on the poor sectors of the populace. Consequently, the fight against poverty and climate change has come to be viewed as interrelated (UNDP, 2007; World Bank 2010). This realization has caused a shift in the focus of the climate change discourse from being primarily concerned with environmental issues, to include issues of poverty and sustainable development. Indeed, the *Human Development Report for 2007 Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World*, for the first time established a direct linkage between climate change and poverty, and is unequivocal in arguing that stabilization of greenhouse gas emissions should be an essential part of the overall fight against poverty and for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This view was re-affirmed by the *World Development Report 2010: Climate and Development*. For Africa climate change enormous challenges presently and in future, notably in areas such as achievement of MDGs, growth and employment, as well as peace and security.

- **Post-conflict reconstruction.** The rapidly spreading conflict and war has lead to an increasing focus on post-conflict reconstruction issues. There is an increased interest in development discourse on how to establish good governance and capacity building in the post-disaster and post-conflict societies; and on the need to create effective institutions for collaboration between state, civil society, and market. In the post-conflict context, this interest is premised on
the recognition that recovery of war-torn communities is a pressing development challenge.

- **Information communication technology (ICT).** In the context of the widespread use of new ICTS, especially the Internet, and the increasing digital divide within and across nations, in 2002, the *Journal Development* dedicated an issue to exploring how ICTS may serve as a transformative development tool. Rather than focusing on the question of universal access, it explored "how to ensure the necessary fundamental changes in political, social, and economic processes that would allow people to participate fully in the new information and communication society". It is now widely acknowledged that whatever development paradigm one may prefer, development requires information and knowledge; that information is essential to human empowerment and that if people have better access to this basic resource it would greatly benefit their standard of living (Guice and Eischen 2002; Hamelink 2002; Harcourt 2002).

- **Globalization.** Globalization has become one of the ubiquitous concepts used not only in the world today but also in development discourse. It has become what Riggs (2007:10) calls the:"the defining process of our age". Most definitions of globalization emphasize the interconnectedness of the world in terms of both physical distance and the flow of goods and people. This interconnectedness as resulted in the "shrinking world" albeit in a world that remains deeply divided (Willis, 2005:17). Thus globalization intersects with the historical, social, cultural and economic circumstances which have now come to be referred to as globalization. However, although the scale of the contemporary interconnectedness is unprecedented, and the process is complex, contradictory and uneven, we subscribe to the view that this process is not new. It is a continuation that has been occurring for centuries. Nonetheless, new thinking on, globalization has brought about the need for current rethinking and exploration of both development theory and practice.

While the newly emerging issues may not be new in themselves but the emphasis they are receiving is novel and some issues have acquired a new significance over time. Thus novel relations are emerging and novel policies are required.

DS is not only a field in flux but is a motherhood discipline that is able to adapt and nurse an almost infinite number of "new issues" whenever they arise, and absorb perspectives from other interdisciplinary fields. Consequently, for DS ‘there are many angles to take and arguments to fit the occasion” (Summer &Tribe, 2008:13). As Angeles (2004:74) observed:

“Development is a motherhood concept that is able to nurse an almost infinite number of "new issues" whenever they arise, and absorb perspectives from other interdisciplinary fields”.

The strength of DS lies in its ability to include new and emerging issues into its area of study. Since the late 1940s DS has shaped, and been shaped by, these "new" issues and concepts. Development studies is certainly well equipped to take on this new challenge due to its tradition of interdisciplinary analysis, of combining different
methods and drawing on the tools developed by other disciplines. It is thus important to have faith that DS will easily accommodate the emerging issues and thus provide the foundation and focus for an invigorated discipline. The challenge for DS is to maintain its continued relevance to study and to understand processes of poverty, exclusion, emancipation and development “without giving up its normative basis, i.e., the awareness that only with a universal morality of justice is there a future for humanity” (Schuurman, 2000:1). As Pieterse (2010:190) perceptively observed studying development is”, an undertaking that, like the horizon, recedes and changes as we approach”.

7. DEVELOPMENT STUDIES AT MAFIKENG CAMPUS

Since its establishment the University sought to identify itself with the realities of the surrounding predominantly rural communities in North West Province. The University sought to achieve a paradigm shift in higher education provision, in order to tackle entrenched socio-economic challenges in surrounding communities by adopting an innovative approach to higher learning. As a consequence, the University had progressive policies towards student involvement in the development process. The University encouraged the establishment of close linkages between teaching and learning with the surrounding marginalized communities. To this end, as part of its vision as a “New Type of University”, the University policy demanded that learners be involved in “Community development”. As the Calendar pointed out (UNIBO, 1988:27; 1994:25):

"A logical extension of the University’s vocational emphasis and bias towards development is that students should experience the problems of development and contribute their own solutions. In this plan of service and study, students are encouraged to participate in development programmes.”

The university’s commitment to community development and the empowerment of surrounding poor and marginalized communities resulted in an innovative, first of its kind set of Development Studies programmes.

Recognizing the need for DS, the University established the Department of Development Studies in the School of Health and Social sciences. DS was introduced first as compulsory two-semester course for all Schools on the Campus and subsequently as a major at undergraduate and post graduate levels. The rationale (UNIBO, 1994:23). was that:

"Development studies are aimed at instruction in the factors and processes of development…Students gain insight into the social and economic structure of their society from the level of the village up to that of international relations, and into the factors that determine and restraint development”. 
The Department of Development Studies on this Campus was not only the pioneer but also trend setter for best practice in the designing, introduction and teaching of DS in South Africa. We were one of the first Departments to introduce an integrated DS curriculum at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels in 1989. The structure and curriculum of DS encompassed the following elements:

- The first was theoretical in that it covers the main theories of development that have been established to explain uneven and unequal patterns of development across the world.
- The second was thematic and empirical in terms of outlining a series of key issues that provide the basis for understanding development processes.
- The third was policy-oriented that sought to examine how development problems are addressed by various governments, international agencies and other stakeholders.

Taking the above elements into consideration the academic curriculum, DS was organized into the following programmes.

**The Two –Semester Compulsory Course in DS**

A mandatory two – Semester Compulsory Course in Development Studies was introduced which all learners were obliged to take otherwise they could not graduate (except for Nursing & Social Work students) who were exempted. The modules offered were as follows:

Table 3 Modules for the Two – Semester Compulsory Course in DS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; Management</td>
<td>Development Studies for Economic &amp; Administrative Science: DEV105 &amp; 155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Development Studies for Agriculture: DEV133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Development Studies for Education: DEV125 &amp; 175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Social Sciences</td>
<td>Development Studies for Economic &amp; Administrative Science: DEV105 &amp; 155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>Development Studies for Law: DEV 105 &amp; 165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Development Studies as a Major

In addition to the university – wide Two – Semester compulsory modules an Undergraduate DS major which could be combined with any major offered in the School of Health and Social Sciences was designed.

Table 4 Modules for Development Studies major

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Semester</th>
<th>2nd Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEV 105</td>
<td>DEV 155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Development Studies</td>
<td>Development Issues and Problems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3rd Semester</th>
<th>4th Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEV 205</td>
<td>DEV 255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Theories and Strategies</td>
<td>Political Economy of Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5th Semester</th>
<th>6th Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEV 305</td>
<td>DEV 355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Planning and Administration</td>
<td>Rural and Urban Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above three year undergraduate program laid a solid interdisciplinary foundation in DS. DS, therefore, was therefore designed to offer opportunities for learners to engage in empirical research, to evaluate theory in the light of what is happening in reality, and to test the efficacy and impact of various development policies.

However, although the Department of Development Studies had the best DS Undergraduate Programme in South Africa since 1989 and the programme was appearing in the University Calendars, no learners were actually admitted to the programme until the 1996 academic year. DS was thus not offered as a major at undergraduate level until after 1995 due to the resistance of mono-disciplinary “chauvinism” and Academic “gate keepers” in Senate, and who kept on arguing that “there was no such thing as Development Studies” and thus felt urgency to admit learners to the programme. As a result the enrolment of learners to the DS major kept on being deferred. The memorandum I sent to Senex, motivating the admission of students to the DS major (Chikulo, 1995:1) speaks for itself:
“The Department of Development Studies was the pioneer in the field of Development Studies, when it drew up a comprehensive Development Studies Programme in June 1989 which was subsequently set the tone of Development Studies at most South African Universities offering Development Studies today. Yet, it is ironic that although UNIBO was among the first, to introduce such a programme, and DEV5 major has actually been appearing in the UNIBO calendar for the past five years no students have actually been allowed to register or this programme at all”.

After much heated arguments in Senate, the first cohort of learners to the DS major was admitted in 1996. Since then DS has experienced a remarkable, albeit uneven, growth in the past 16 years at both undergraduate and post-graduate levels, growth as reflected in the increasing numbers of learners in the programmes. There has been an encouraging growth of interest in, and commitment to DS since the first cohort of learners was admitted to the programme in 1996 both from the learners and employers.

However, as a result of the “rationalization” process which was initiated in 1999 at this Campus, the School of Administration and Management was the first to request Senate to exempt their learners from the compulsory DS modules; they were subsequently followed by other Schools. Consequently, by 2002 the Two –Semester Compulsory DS modules ceased to be mandatory, although the Department still offers service modules to other Faculties on request. DS is still an increasingly attractive option for learners who desire to engage with some of the most pressing development issues of our time.

Although we were one of the first Departments to introduce an integrated DS curriculum at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels in 1989 our achievements is rarely acknowledged. In most discussions on the nature and genesis of the study of DS in South Africa, there is no acknowledgement of this University or Department of Development Studies at all. For instance in an analysis of the "burgeoning of post-graduate programme offerings in Development Studies and related areas" in the 1990s, Haines (2003:184) makes no reference to UNIBO nor the fact that our Department provided external examination services to RAU,UNISA and WITS when those institutions eventually established DS programmes

8. CHALLENGES OF LEARNING AND TEACHING DS.
We have noted above that development is not only a contested and complex process but that as a concept, development has been in a state of flux. As a result, the 21st century is witnessing a distinct reconfiguration of the terrain of development and, more specifically, of development theory and praxis. As a consequence the reflection, introspection and rethinking in DS is likely to increase as global development issues become more pressing.DS has to address old and new emerging issues in development
This results in the context and scope of DS being in constant state of flux. These developments pose a number of challenges in teaching DS.

**Curriculum design.**

- As part of the reflection, introspection and renewing DS there is a need to take into account the shifting terrain in development in the formulation of “appropriate” curriculum. The new global and local emerging issues have to be continually incorporated in the DS curriculum. On our part, revising the substantive is in theories and praxis, at all levels there is one dedicated module entitled “Development Issues” which allows us to continually include new emerging issues in the teaching of DS.
- Many pedagogical difficulties have also emerged because of the need to incorporate university wide courses such as “understanding the world”, without stripping away too much of the disciplinary backgrounds needed to make development debates meaningful.
- The issue of what mix should there be of theoretical and practical learning? and how to balance a growing emphasis on case studies and problem orientated teaching with a need to offer theories.
- The need to meet the ‘employability” of our graduates demands introduction of experiential learning requiring learners to undertake practical work in the form of field work during which all students are required to live and work in the field environment periodically for specific periods over three years. Hence the need for a practical orientation to the curriculum challenges on DS than was previously the case. Experiential learning is critical particularly in light of the growing professionalism of development practice.
- The field work should involve close interaction with the community that is assisted to prepare its profile, identify and prioritize its needs, and formulate interventions to deal with their development challenges. The field work should not only reinforce the spirit of solidarity between students and the communities, but also expose learners to the complexities of development beyond the classroom.

The challenge is thus one of how to put together an effective, appropriate and successful DS programme that can meet learner needs those of other stakeholders. The fundamental question facing our Department is: What are the most effective ways of teaching DS to ensure that learners have the best possible learning experience and that they become active agents in the advocacy, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, as well as conflict management and social facilitation of development? In recent years we have faced the challenges concerning what curricular content should be emphasized and how should it be organized.

**Resources**

The curriculum changes entailed by the reflections, rethinking of DS demand investment of resources due to the following:

- rapid growth in learner enrollment has brought with it the need to recruit more Departmental members; and
- provision of mobility in the field so as to provide learners with sufficient supervision, monitoring and assessment.
Financial constraints mean that program implementation may be affected by a variety of logistical and administrative difficulties including transport, limited learner-lecturer interaction in the field, and inadequate incentives for supervising Departmental members. Unless the serious funding constraints are tackled prudently, however, the resource limitations could dent the enthusiasm of all the stakeholders and impair the gains made over the last 16 years.

9. CONCLUSION
Let me briefly conclude.

DS programme at Mafikeng needs to adapt not only to fulfill the needs of the university but it needs to accommodate and satisfy a variety of stakeholders vested interests, knowledge building and marketability. It is incumbent on us how best to prepare our learners to be able to cope effectively with the complex nature of today’s socio-economic development environment. There is hope, nevertheless, DS to make its presence more conspicuous and relevant in South Africa as an academic discipline as well as re-invigorate in its role as an agency to bring about progressive change, social justice and sustainable development. With enough commitment and investment of adequate resources DS has the potential to become the Flagship Programme not only for the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences but the Campus as a whole.

THANK YOU

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