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EXCITING SYNERGIES ARE DEVELOPING BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO’S TURFLOO P C AM PUS AND THE PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES. This issue of LIMPOPO LEADER explores in detail the catalysts for this process and some of the results.

The first catalyst is to be found in the way that South African institutions of higher learning are now being funded. State subsidies are shrinking. In consequence, universities are being forced to form creative partnerships with corporate business and the agencies of the state – and these partnerships can only be effective by looking much more closely at a university’s inevitable relationship with the socio-economic environment in which it operates. The University of Limpopo is beginning to move significantly in this direction.

The second catalyst is to be found in the design and detail of Limpopo’s provincial Growth and Development Strategy. This huge plan for the betterment of everyone in the province is throwing up training and research needs that the University is well placed to serve. Indeed, it is also throwing up opportunities for enriching and broadening the already significant intellectual capital existing at Turfloop.

Four areas in particular have received special attention in this issue. The first is the establishment, via provincial funding and Canadian expertise, of a centre of excellence for the appraisal of capital projects. The second is the continuing work on the establishment of a school of mining at Turfloop. The third is the probability of establishing a chair of transportation in the School of Economics and Management. The fourth is the need to create within the University’s already powerful agglomeration of agricultural expertise a chair of rural development. All these developments are arising out of the synergies that are strengthening between town and gown – in other words, between provincial government and the University.

Also in this edition is the story of Turfloop’s first ever Fulbright scholar, a political scientist who was once a civil rights activist in America, and who has some sobering ideas concerning the academic brain drain into lucrative government positions for young black political scientists.

Finally, LIMPOPO LEADER invites you to consider this question: when last did you go to bed hungry? Then read about a major nutritional survey that will provide health and welfare planners with a comprehensive database of child nutrition and health; and also, for the first time, some inkling of the nutritional status of women of child-bearing age.
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THE WHYS AND WHEREFORES OF THE THIRD STREAM

The future of the University of Limpopo is inexorably bound up with money. Is this stating the obvious? Not if we recognise the imperatives for a radical shift away from the old perception that in the case of higher education ‘the state should or must or will provide’.

The imperatives for the radical shift are well understood by senior financial management at Turfloop campus. Listen to a quote from the Turfloop campus 2005 budget overview, written by Herman Rhode who has been Executive Manager of the University of the North since 2001. ‘The new budget approach should be to move from a significant dependency on state subsidy to a budgetary model that mixes state subsidy with an increasing self-financing model.’

But why make this move? There are several salient reasons.

The first is simply that in a developing country like South Africa, particularly one that has endured the distortions of apartheid, the national education budget needs to concentrate on the primary and secondary levels to establish a solid base upon which tertiary education and its role in economically relevant human resource development can be built.
Herman Rhode has been involved on the Turfloop campus since 2001. The University of the North, by early 2001, was about to collapse financially, but under his guidance, it is one of the few previously disadvantaged institutions (created under apartheid) to emerge with a break-even budget. Rhode (now 48) is currently the Interim Vice Principal (Finance). He was born in Cape Town, obtaining his first degree from the University of the Western Cape, and his B.Com Honours in Financial Management at the University of Cape Town in 1999. He is registered as a general accountant with the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants, and he’s a Fellow of the South African Institute of Chartered Company Secretaries. Rhode has also attended a management development programme at the universities of Oxford and Warwick in the United Kingdom, and spent time in Cannes (France) on an international finance officers programme. He was appointed Director of Finance at the University of the Western Cape in 1992, and worked for several years as a consultant in the late 1990s and early 2000s. During this time he became involved with the South African Universities Vice-Chancellors Association (SAUVCA), Department of Education Higher Education Branch and the Council on Higher Education (CHE).
contribution towards creating our new democracy.

‘The period between 1998 and 2001 was particularly turbulent as the university teetered on the brink of financial collapse. The institution slid into chaos. In 2000, the Minister of Education requested an independent assessor’s report (which) listed “burning issues” and added that “the institution had been reduced to the level of a bad comedy.”

The situation in 2001 (when UNIN was placed under the care of an administrator) can be summed up as follows. The University employed three times as many support staff (1 200) as they did academic staff (450); it was R70-million in the red; and student numbers had declined from around 15 000 in 1994 to just over 6 000 in 2001.

Now compare the current (early 2005) situation. The authority of the University Council has been re-established. Staff numbers have been trimmed from 1 600 to 990 (420 academics and 570 support staff). Student numbers have risen again to 12 500 on the Turfloop campus, and that excludes the approximately 4 000 currently enrolled on the MEDUNSA campus of the new University of Limpopo). But most astonishing of all: that bruising deficit has been turned into a break-even budget for 2005. And all this has been achieved with less than an 8% increase in state subsidy between 2001 and 2004.

So let’s look at the contributions of first and second stream funding to the overall Turfloop campus budget for 2005:

- First Stream (state subsidy): R164-million or 55 per cent of total budget
- Second Stream (student fees): R104-million. Here’s another astonishment: most of the 12 500 students enrolled for the 2005 academic year had paid their registration and outstanding fees by mid-February or had made satisfactory arrangements to pay their outstanding fees. This income accounts for 35 per cent of the total budget. ‘This shows a huge commitment from parents,’ Rhode remarks, ‘who are now perceiving that there’s a future at Turfloop worth investing in.’

That leaves another 10 per cent or R30-million to be found through the category known as the Third Stream. Through this stream comes income from all other sources, most notably through fee-for-service teaching and research partnerships with provincial and local governments, and of course the corporate sector. In addition, though, support from the University’s alumni constituency could make a significant difference.

Says Rhode: ‘The University will have to develop the current base of alumni and supporters as a stream of income to address certain of its more pressing operational needs. As an example, a Donate a text book to the library could be funded by alumni. Every alumnus would receive a list of current prescribed books in their own field of study, and be asked to contribute. The name of the alumnus, with an acknowledgement, would be inserted into the books so purchased.’

Rhode continues, ‘Another example would be for alumni to contribute a minimum monthly amount of R250 for 12 months. In the current budget an amount of R4-million is set aside for library books and periodicals. If only 1 300 alumni could be persuaded to participate, and if the university invested these monthly contributions at a compound interest rate factor of 8 per cent per annum, then this line item on our budget would be more than covered. Indeed, the long-term net effect of such schemes and the new funding mindset that their success would imply is that the new institution would soon have balanced budgets and surplus cash.’

Indeed, Rhode believes that the third stream percentage should rise as soon as possible from the current 10 per cent to at least 25 per cent of the annual budget. This will reduce the dependency on state subsidy by 5 per cent and reduce the contribution from tuition fee income from 35 per cent to 25 per cent of total income.
Research is an important avenue to explore for third stream income. ‘But we need to be realistic,’ he says. ‘We don’t have to try to be another WITS. We need to concentrate on what we’ve got, on what we’re already doing. There’s huge scope. But we need a mindset change in the University’s management, students, and especially its academic staff.’

This need is forcefully brought out in a proposal for Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Development at UNIN that Rhode asked the University of Twente in The Netherlands to put together in 2003.

‘The University’s development,’ says the proposal, ‘can be described as suffering from a degree of detachment from its socio-economic environment. This deficiency is partly due to UNIN staff’s hesitancy in seeking and exploiting external linkages. This situation cannot be changed only by top-down strategies and plans for institutional development. These must be matched by a complementary development of staff ideas, competencies and motivations for a more proactive and enterprising approach to engagement with the external environment.’

The proposal goes on to define specific objectives for various sectors and functions within the University:

- For institutional management: To establish an internal institutional environment that stimulates sustainable and enterprising staff and student initiatives.
- For academic staff: To enhance the entrepreneurial capacities of staff to identify potential commercial products, identify market opportunities for academic products to the province, local municipalities and private sector and commercialise academic products.
- For curriculum development: To develop student competencies in respect of active learning and gaining experience for finding a job for income, finding a career job, adding value to a job, and starting a business.

‘All this behind-the-scenes activity,’ Rhode says, ‘is designed to assist the institution in its new merged guise of University of Limpopo. We’re moving towards a self-financing model. The Turfloop campus went through a restructuring process in 2001/2 when the old 69 departments were reduced to three faculties and 11 schools. Now in 2005 we’re into our merger and consolidation phase. The growth of our third stream income is a crucial component. An essential in this phase is the challenge to obtain the necessary resources from government to give effect to the idea of creating this university as a ‘flagship’ African university.’

Rhode made reference to Limpopo province’s growth and development strategy that had emerged from a summit held last October. ‘There are emphases in the strategy that we should take note of. In fact, in several instances, we have already responded. We should run with this strategy, and particularly the three main legs upon which it rests. They are mining, tourism and agriculture. It will be within these spheres that improvements to the third stream will be found.’
JOSEPH MATSO QO LAPA MAMABOLO FILLS HIS CLUTTERED OFFICE WITH AN OBVIOUS ENTHUSIASM FOR HIS JOB. He’s the Senior Manager of Planning Co-ordination in Limpopo’s Office of the Premier; and he’s the man who thinks, eats and sleeps the province’s Growth and Development Strategy.

He leans forward to say: ‘The Strategy adopted at a summit held on 15 October 2004 is a culmination of discussions with all stakeholders. Several sector summits were held earlier in the year. The whole point of the exercise is to move towards the dream of sustainable and integrated development through economic growth and deliberate measures aimed at improving the lives of our citizens.’

He passes the Strategy document across his desk: 60 pages of facts and figures, of concrete objectives, implementation plans and all
the rest of it. On the cover is the fundamental strategic principle: ‘Development is about people.’

Mamabolo nods. ‘Our vision is of a peaceful, prosperous, united, dynamic and transformed province. And to get there we need to stimulate, promote and sustain an environment that is conducive to economic development, social justice and improved quality of life. Actually, the quality of life aspect stands squarely at the centre. It’s where we started our deliberations as we began to hammer out the Strategy’s objectives.’

Mamabolo listed the three most important objectives of the Growth and Development Strategy for Limpopo as being to:

• **Improve the quality of life.** This is now the central principle of development all over the world. It has been found that development endeavours of even the most elaborate and technical kind don’t succeed unless they are ‘people centred’. The emphasis on people is what has brought the possibility of ‘sustainability’ to development.

• **Grow the economy.** This is the fundamental prerequisite for improving the quality of life. In fact, improving people’s life

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**PROVINCIAL PROFILE: LIMPOPO IN BRIEF**

- Territory: 123 910 km², which is nearly twice the size of Sierra Leone, and comprising just over 10% of South Africa’s total area.
- Population: Around 5-million (slightly less than Sierra Leone’s 5.3-million), and comprising just over 12% of the national population.
- Just under 90% of Limpopo’s population live in rural areas.
- Around 45% of economically active people are unemployed with no apparent cash income.
- The public sector is the largest provider of employment.
- There is an under-supply of school facilities.
- The province is characterised by under-developed electricity supply and telecommunications, and inadequate water supply and sanitation.
- More than 17% of the sexually active population are HIV positive.
- The province has opportunities in mining, agriculture and tourism.

**PROVINCIAL PROFILE: WHAT’S NEEDED IN LIMPOPO**

- Redirect the current poverty alleviation and eradication interventions to target income generation and job creation.
- Develop micro, small and medium enterprises, with a special emphasis on manufacturing.
- Absorb more youth and women into new jobs.
- Increase investment in job creation to R485 million a year.
- Improve service delivery rating from 34% to 80% by 2009.
- Reduce the level of illiteracy by half by 2014.
- Implement a comprehensive HIV/AIDS programme in all health facilities by 2009.
- Extend transport services to within 2 km of all provincial residents.
- Bring household water to within 200 metres of all residents.
- Address backlog of classrooms as a matter of urgency.
- Facilitate infrastructure provision in support of economic development (building of dams, rail links etc).
chances is impossible without wide access to an economy that offers real opportunities to a great many people. It did not take the authorities long to identify the three mainstays upon which the Limpopo economy currently stood. They were:

(i) Tourism. The attractiveness of Limpopo is being enhanced by the northern reaches of the Kruger National Park. Of particular significance is the province’s control of the main access routes to the huge Trans-Frontier Park that includes some of the wildest corners of Mozambique and Zimbabwe within its borders.

(ii) Mining. The mineral wealth in Limpopo means that the province can compete on the international stage. Platinum constitutes the real strength of this sector, with 75% of world production already being undertaken in Limpopo and North West provinces. Coal, diamonds, copper and vermiculite add versatility to the powerful mining sector.

(iii) Agriculture. Food production is enhanced by downstream food processing opportunities. But the potential needs to be weighed against existing support infrastructure such as transport and water, and also in relation to the job-creation coefficient of R1-million = 50 jobs in agriculture as against R1-million in mining = 3 to 4 jobs.

- **Raise the efficiency of the Public Service.** It is accepted as a fundamental principle that unnecessary red tape and general inefficiency can stifle the best-laid growth and development plans. Permit applications, business licensing procedures need to be speeded up. ‘Namibia is already quicker than we are,’ says Mamabolo. ‘And Mozambique is the quickest of all. We need to become competitive with these countries. Efficient and innovative service delivery is crucial.’

Mamabolo (38) was born in Limpopo province, in Mselaphaleng, a village not far from the Turffloop campus, and went to school in Seshego. He has a B.Com degree from WITS and UNISA, and is currently completing a Development Master’s through WITS. He brings all this expertise – including academic and work-related excursions to Canada, the Netherlands and Japan – to the task of managing the Growth and Development Strategy (LGDS) for Limpopo province.

‘The life of the LGDS will take us to 2014,’ he says. ‘This aligns our province with the national effort of reducing both poverty and unemployment by at least 50% by that date.’

In practice, Mamabolo explains, the three mainstays of the Strategy – mining, agriculture and tourism – will be supported via the creation of seven ‘development clusters’ that follow the value-chain approach adopted in the Growth and Development Summit last year. The clusters will be used to create jobs, to raise international competitiveness, to raise the investment rating of the province, to combine public and private sector contributions to development, and to align and group the various interventions for greater impact. The clusters are:

- Platinum mining cluster on the Dilokong Corridor in Sekhukhuneland and Mokopane
- Coal mining and petrochemical cluster in the Waterberg district
- Fruit and vegetable cluster in Vhembe, Mopani and Bohlabela
- Logistics cluster in Polokwane
- Red and white meat cluster throughout the province
- Eight tourism sub-clusters at a number of high-potential destinations
- Forestry cluster in the Mopani and Vhembe districts.

‘These clusters,’ explains Mamabolo, ‘are critical masses that are spatially concentrated and of unusual competitive potential in a particular field. They are linked into the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) of local authorities, and they encompass an array of linked industries, from suppliers and providers of infrastructure to downstream activities and service organisations. They will also include training, research and governmental institutions.’

An obvious question arises...
from these references to training and research.

Mamabolo is immediately enthusiastic. ‘The university, yes. Absolutely! It has a huge role to play in growth and development. The university is already doing a great deal. Nevertheless, we would welcome a meeting with senior university management to outline our strategy to them.’

But the strongest indication of the synergies to be got between Limpopo province and Limpopo University – and the imperatives of vigorously exploring them – has been articulated by Limpopo’s Premier, Sello Moloto.

‘There must be a finer correlation,’ he asserts, ‘between the job markets in these three sectors (mining, agriculture and tourism) and education. Universities must train appropriately. In the past, our tertiary institutions were concentrating on the social services: on general administration, on lawyers and teachers. This was because in apartheid times there was no correlation between state-driven economic development and the universities. Now, there’s an urgent need for more and specific skills in our key development areas – so as to press home our competitive advantages.’
‘Since taking office as Acting Vice-Chancellor in 2003, one of the things I have most wanted to do was to steer the University away from those old notions of institutions of higher learning being ivory towers.’ So says Professor Mahlo Mokgalong, now the University of Limpopo’s Interim Vice Chancellor.

‘The University is ideally placed to get its hands dirty in many of the pressing issues that face the developing world. We’re in the middle of a rural hinterland. In that sense we’re different from other universities, especially the urban-based ones. In addition, we’re in a rapidly developing region – in fact Limpopo province is the fastest growing of all South Africa’s provinces – thanks to huge mining potential, as well as major agricultural and tourism opportunities. We have unique opportunities here.

‘In fact,’ Mokgalong admits, ‘I’ve always had this dream: that we become one of Africa’s premier universities. Now that the old University of the North and MEDUNSA have merged, we certainly have the range and expertise to achieve this.’

Mokgalong talks of the core business of the University being teaching and research – and community service. ‘We must never forget that third component of our mission,’ he says. ‘Contact with and service to the communities in which we are situated. This is why we have worked so hard at establishing relationships with church and traditional leaders in an effort to better understand community needs.’

This idea of partnership and service underlies the University’s relationship with the province. The relationship is still being defined – understandably so – because before 1994 no such relationship existed. Both parties have had to feel their way. But it’s a very different story today. As Mokgalong insists: ‘Now that the Growth and Development Strategy is in place there will be a significant integration of effort between the University and the provincial authorities.’

And it’s not simply a matter of the University doing its duty – although this looms large in Mokgalong’s thinking. ‘By providing appropriate teaching and research we will be helping the growth and development effort in our own region,’ he says. ‘This is what is expected of us, this relevance to the needs of the socio-economic environment in which we operate. We will be doing what is expected of us, and we will be able to look back on our achievements with pride.

‘If that was all, it would be quite a lot. But to pursue all three components of our mission – particularly in partnership with the provincial government on its Growth and Development Strategy – will also open huge opportunities for tapping into new sources of third stream income.

These opportunities are already being taken; others are there for the taking. In the pages that follow, we examine how the new merged University is finding ways to make money out of its support for the province while at the same time advancing towards Mokgalong’s dream of becoming a major intellectual resource not only for Limpopo, but for Africa and the entire developing world as well.'
Apart from the three main preoccupations of the Limpopo Growth and Development Strategy – mining, agriculture and tourism – there are obvious supporting services that require special attention. They are: transportation, water and sanitation provision, and the ability to evaluate capital projects – especially the larger ones like roads, bridges, dams, water and sewage reticulation schemes, schools, and so on – upon which the process of growth and development is often contingent.

So simply at a first glance, the provincial Growth and Development Strategy is providing real opportunities for the University for partnerships and third-stream income in six areas of academic activity. These are:

- **Mining**: Through the University’s School of Physical and Mineral Sciences.
- **Agriculture**: Through the University’s School of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. (See the article that begins on page 23)
- **Tourism**: A possibility exists for the introduction of tourism management as a subject in the existing Bachelor of Public Administration degree within the School of Economics and Management.
- **Transportation**: A transport management degree course was introduced at the beginning of the year in the School of Economics and Management. (See the article that begins on page 15)
- **Water provision**: Through the independent National Community Water and Sanitation Training Institute (NCWSTI) housed on the University’s Turfloop campus.
- **Appraisal of Capital Projects**: A ‘centre of excellence’ in this important sphere is currently being installed at the University’s Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership. (See the article that begins on page 20)

The on-campus activities that relate to mining and to water provision have been documented in recent issues of Limpopo Leader. However, it is worth briefly summarising the work going on in terms of development-related activities in the School of Physical and Mineral Sciences and the NCWSTI.

On the mining front, the situation is as follows: in 2000 a study examined the feasibility of setting up a School of Mining at the University. The study was strongly supported by the provincial government; and the main finding was that such a school should definitely be established. A Mining Certificate Course got underway in 2002. To date, over 300 students have graduated from the month-long course. In the pipeline are more advanced courses and a full BSc Mining degree, designed at Turfloop and already passed by the Council for Higher Education. Collaborations with other mining-focused universities in Canada and Zimbabwe, plus a powerful research component at Turfloop, provide important support for the
establishment of a School of Mining at the University of Limpopo.

‘The problem,’ says Professor Ntali Mollel, acting Executive Dean of the Faculty of Sciences, Health and Agriculture, ‘is that we need a dedicated academic to head up the school. Ultimately, we’ll need a chair of mining. We even have a person in mind to fill this position. But who will fund it?’

Earlier this year, Mollel and other senior staff from the School of Physical and Mineral Sciences met with senior University management. ‘I am convinced that the University will give us the green light,’ says Mollel, ‘and we are hopeful that the government is also ready to support us.’

(See Limpopo Leader 2: Summer 2004 for fuller coverage of the University’s involvement in mining in Limpopo.)

On the water side, the NCW STI is recognised as the leading community water and sanitation training agency in South Africa. Between 2000 and 2004 the institute trained more than 4,000 students (drawn largely from local authorities in Limpopo province – and elsewhere in the country) at various National Qualification Framework levels, nearly 450 of whom are at BSc degree level.

The influence of NCW STI on water services delivery is significant, particularly in the developmental context. Says Dr Abbas Shaker, NCW STI’s Chief Executive Officer: ‘Recently we’ve been appointed by the national Department of Water Affairs and Forestry as the implementing agent for gender mainstreaming in the country’s water delivery services. This programme addresses not only gender quotas, but also mainly institutional issues – procedural and those relating to human resources and the changing of traditional mindsets.’

Preparations are currently underway by the NCW STI for the introduction in 2006 of unique Honours and Master’s degree programmes in the field of the management of municipal water services. Such expertise – and the accompanying research capacity – will be crucial in the context of Limpopo’s Growth and Development Strategy.

(See Limpopo Leader 1: August 2004 for a fuller coverage of the work of the NCW STI.)

This leaves for us still to explore the partnerships that the University is forging with the Provincial authorities in the fields of agriculture and transportation and the appraisal of capital projects. Tourism will be dealt with more fully in Limpopo Leader 5, due out in August 2005. For the rest, read on ...

(Reference has been made to material published in earlier issues of Limpopo Leader. Why not subscribe? If you quote the name of the article you’ve just read, we’ll send you a complete set of back numbers so you can build from scratch your collection of these important magazines. This offer is subject to availability. See subscription details on page 1.)
Transportation:
GOING PLACES TOGETHER
Nobody would disagree that effective growth and development strategies couldn’t get off the ground without effective transportation systems. This much is universally understood. What is less well known is what these systems look like on the ground.

Certainly, rail and air transport systems are important – especially when thinking in terms of large-scale investment in mining, agriculture, and manufacturing. But in rural settings, road transportation is even more important. And we shouldn’t think only in terms of lorries and taxis and luxury buses full of tourists. There are 4.5-million rural dwellers out there in the Limpopo countryside who, after all, form the bulk of the target for the quality-of-life improvements that underlie the Province’s Growth and Development Strategy. What are their transportation needs?

Such a question leads us straight into the world of ‘non-motorised transport’.

Talk to Phuti Mabelebele, senior communications manager at Limpopo’s Department of Transport, and she’ll provide all the detail you need of this fascinating world. Actually, Limpopo Leader went to see her about the partnership being established between her department and the University. She knows a lot about that partnership as well – and we’ll get to that. But the work that the
Department of Transport is doing in the field of non-motorised transport is too fascinating to ignore. And almost certainly it could have a significant bearing on the University partnership as it develops.

‘We have two non-motorised pilots going right now,’ says Mabelebele. ‘One is our bicycle project, the other is our animal-drawn cart project – and both are taking place in the Waterberg district.’

Take the bicycle project first. It was launched last October. The incentive to place it in the Waterberg, says Mabelebele, was because the district is dominated by farm schools to which learners must walk long distances. The district is also characterised by high numbers of pedestrian deaths, not least among children walking to school. So the project seeks to minimise the risk and also the length of time required for pupils to get to and from school.

‘The pilot consists of a consolidation of the routes,’ explains Mabelebele. ‘We have provided around 100 bicycles to pupils who ride on the footpaths from their various villages to “bicycle stations”, from which they are taken by subsidised taxi or bus – with special training for the drivers – to the various schools. The bicycle stations are country shops and trading stores where the bicycles are locked up for the day, to be collected by the pupils on their way home.’

But the pilot is doing much more than getting children off the verges of country roads in the early mornings, Mabelebele explains. ‘We are going all out to resuscitate the concept of bicycle shops where bikes can be supplied, repaired and maintained. To consolidate the bicycle shops into the bicycle stations is what we’re aiming for. Our MEC has also been overseas to investigate the possibility of bringing a bicycle assembly plant to Limpopo with a view to selling at subsidised prices to school-going users.’

How’s that for growth and development? Job creation at plant and repair shop level while at the same time improving the quality of life for school learners and reducing the number of pedestrian deaths.

The animal-drawn cart project deals with a fundamental rural reality. Such carts are widely used for the transportation of people and goods, as well as fundamentals like firewood and water. The downside is that these carts are a major factor in road accidents - largely due to poor visibility. Motorists often don’t see these vehicles before it’s too late.

Mabelebele says: ‘So our pilot consists of various elements that are all based on the compulsory but free registration of animal-drawn carts. Carts are then issued with ADC (animal-drawn cart) numberplates, and at the same time with high-visibility reflectors for carts - and for the animals that pull them. We’ve also taken the opportunity of upgrading on animal care. Working with the NSPCA, we’ve established minimum standards for harness and are trying out an arrangement that protects the animals from the sun.’

It doesn’t take much imagination to see the possibilities for academic research - not to mention the fee for service opportunities – in and around such pilot programmes. Indeed, the pilot programmes force the attention towards the partnership that has already been established between the Department of Transport and the University of Limpopo.

‘When the provincial government launched the Growth and Development Strategy for the province,’ says Mabelebele, herself a graduate of the University at Turfloop, ‘a great deal was made of the need for skills and human resources development. The Department of Transport, as one of the essential services to growth and development, certainly recognised this – so much so that human resources development emerged as a priority from the Transportation Summit convened in 2003.’

What was recognised as the greatest need was comprehensive managerial expertise with a special emphasis on transport.

‘We wanted a degree course that provided this, so we asked the CSIR to design one and we asked the University of the North
Transportation:
GOING PLACES TOGETHER

Professor André de Villiers

This partnership between the provincial Transport department and the University, which includes the part-time and the full-time students, is worth more than R17-million to the University over the next seven years.

Professor Andre de Villiers, Director of the School of Economics and Management, reports that all 50 Transport Department bursary holders who began their studies at the beginning of 2005 have matric mathematics - a major advantage. A further 20 self-financing students also joined the course.

‘The transport specialisation has been added to our regular Bachelor of Administration degree, originally designed to empower councillors and officials at local government level, so that the transportation students will graduate with a B.Admin (transport management) degree after their three years of study,’ De Villiers explains.

Should the next step for the University be to establish a transportation chair?

De Villiers: ‘I would say that we should test the water this year. Is the new transport emphasis useful? Is it what the Department wants? After that, the next step should be to design a fully-fledged transport degree. A chair would then become a necessity. After that, Honours and Master’s courses can be designed, and the door to postgraduate research will be pushed wide open.’

So one returns to the bicycle and non-motorised transport pilots within the Department of Transport. The opportunities for serious research beckon. Then there’s the Department’s Traffic Training College in Polokwane that currently trains traffic officers not only for Limpopo province, but also for various local authorities in KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga, as well as students from Swaziland and Mozambique. The teaching, research and consultancy synergies with a university chair of transport are obvious.

In the words of Phuti Mabelebele: ‘The opportunities for further cooperation between the Department and the University are huge. It’s our university. We want to use it. We want to see it become a real centre of excellence in the transportation field.’
TRANSPORTATION ISN’T THE ONLY AREA IN WHICH THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO’S SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT IS ACTIVELY WORKING WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES TO BRING THIRD-STREAM INCOME INTO THE UNIVERSITY’S COFFERS.

The School has already undertaken a baseline study for the Polokwane local authority. Last year, they tendered to do a similar study for the Capricorn District Municipality with its five local municipalities. They won the tender: work started in September and was completed in March, right on schedule.

Professor de Villiers, Director of the School of Economics and Management, explains the reasoning behind the studies. ‘Before 1994, the Pietersburg municipality looked after the needs of 45 000 townspeople. These days, the Polokwane municipality has a responsibility that is 12 times that size. Their problem: they simply didn’t have the data to do effective planning to fulfil their IDP requirements.

To complicate matters further, the municipal area comprises both urban and rural areas, each with their own distinctive needs.’

So the baseline study starts off with a demographic profile that provides information on numbers, levels of income, housing arrangements, educational levels, and so on. From there it moves on to establishing existing levels of municipal services, particular needs, and also people’s ability to pay for those needs.

‘The work entails an extensive door-to-door survey that makes use of a specifically designed questionnaire,’ says De Villiers. ‘For the Capricorn study, we’re using 93 students, mostly undergraduate, who after training go into the field. Of course, they get paid for their pains. They will be visiting 70 households each and recording the answers to all 30 questions that are asked on the questionnaire. In total, that’s over 6 500 households.’

Meanwhile, another 13 students will be trained in data analysis. They’ll input the results on the computer and help to crunch the numbers.

‘But even before we start, we engage with local communities. We talk to the local authorities in the various areas, as well as tribal leaders, chambers of business, agriculture and health authorities – and the local land claims commissioner. All this liaison provides us with a valuable picture of the district we’re working in,’ according to De Villiers.

The survey team comprises six academics: four from Economics and Management (one of these being De Villiers), one from Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, and one from Psychology (Professor Sylvester Madu). Together, they’re doing the sort of fee-for-service work that provides a valuable boost to the quest for third-stream income upon which the future well-being of the University will in part be built.

In the conclusion to the survey report undertaken for the Polokwane Municipality, five major challenges facing local authorities in post-1994 South Africa – and Polokwane in particular – are listed:

• To change from an apartheid style ‘white enclave’ style of municipality to a much larger non-racial entity
• To provide services (identified as basic human rights) to all inhabitants
• To act as a point of delivery and to coordinate the services and inputs of various development agencies
• To involve civil society in the planning and implementation of development activities
• To actively facilitate socio-economic development – rather than simply providing services.

Obviously, this hugely expanded ‘job description’ for local and district authorities provides the University with wide-ranging opportunities for productive partnerships in a significant range of academic fields.

An example of how third-stream income is earned: WORKING FOR POLOKWANE AND CAPRICORN
SERIOUS OVERSPENDING ON CAPITAL PROJECTS IS A COMMONPLACE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. The case of the Scottish Parliament building being erected in Edinburgh comes to mind. Originally priced at around R460-million, the cost has spiralled to well over R4-billion – and it’s not finished yet. Expert appraisal might have prevented some of this nightmarish escalation.

In Limpopo, a province committed to growth and development, capital projects both large and small will remain the order of the day for years to come. To cope with the challenges in this sphere, the University of Limpopo, supported by a Canadian university, has entered into a partnership with the provincial Department of Finance.

The result will be the development of a ‘Centre of Excellence for the Appraisal of Capital Projects’. It’ll be situated within the University’s Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership (TGSL) that operates out of the Edupark facility on the eastern outskirts of Polokwane.

‘The idea of a centre for capital projects appraisal was the brainchild of Professor Peter Franks when he was Executive Dean of the University’s Faculty of Management Sciences and Law. There is a real shortage of these skills in the province – and the region. The provincial Treasury expressed an interest in increasing capacity in this field; and discussions also took place with academics from Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario, who are experts in this field.’

This is Professor Lawrence Buberwa talking. He was Director of TGSL before moving into the position of Acting Executive Dean of the Faculty of Management Sciences and Law when Franks was promoted to Interim Campus Principal at Turfloop.

‘By the time I arrived in 1997,’ Buberwa goes on,
'A Queens professor had already been twice to the University of the North to conduct short courses on the subject, and the provincial treasury was keen to invest money in a more permanent arrangement. Inevitably, as TGSL Director, I became closely involved.'

Buberwa set about doing feasibility studies and ‘playing around with the figures’ until he had come up with a workable plan. What’s more, he produced a plan that would virtually guarantee financial sustainability for a Centre of Excellence for the Appraisal of Capital Projects after five years of operation.

This must be music to the ears of everyone interested – and who isn’t? – in third stream income and the medium-term stability of the University of Limpopo.

Here is an outline of Buberwa’s plan:

• For five years, the provincial Treasury will provide the basic funding for the centre.
• For five years, Queens University in Canada will provide a skeleton teaching staff.
• For the first two years, two short courses in capital project appraisal will be held per annum. The capacity of each course will be 60 students.
• For the next three years, as local teachers join the Canadians, capacity will be raised to 70 students per course and three courses per annum. Thereafter, the courses will each accommodate 80.
• The calculations have been done with 60% attendance of courses as break-even point.

‘Our market will begin with people from Limpopo government departments and local authorities,’ says Buberwa. ‘Then we’ll be expanding our marketing into neighbouring provinces like North West and Mpumalanga. Then into the whole of South Africa. And finally into the southern SADC countries like Zimbabwe, Botswana, Mozambique, Swaziland, Lesotho, Zambia and Namibia.’

The project began at the beginning of 2005. By 2006 the Centre will be ready to enroll Master’s students, probably under the existing ‘development degree’ umbrella, but with a ‘capital project appraisal’ speciality focus. The number of post-graduate students would grow from an initial 10 – 15 to 30 by 2009 when the numbers would stabilise.

‘Obviously,’ Buberwa says, ‘as we build the post-graduate programme so we will begin to build the research and consultancy component. Another result of the post-graduate programme will be that by 2009, the Canadian staff will be entirely replaced by local people. And we’ll be able to pay the sort of salaries that will prevent them simply from drifting away to the cities.’

In support of this, Buberwa reveals that by 2009, when the Canadians leave and the Treasury funding ends, the Centre of Excellence for the Appraisal of Capital Projects should be comfortably in the black – thanks to a combination of training, research and fee-for-service consultancy work. ‘Based on conservative figures, the Centre will have a surplus of around R700 000 by 2009, and this should double to R1.4-million by 2014.

What a return on the original investment of around R25-million (R5-million per annum) from the Limpopo Department of Finance. They’ll not only have several hundred trained officials at provincial and local level to avoid unnecessary waste on capital projects, but they’ll also have created a major research and consultancy resource – and one that is fundamentally self-perpetuating – right on their doorstep. That’s real value for money. It’s also a classic example of what can be achieved by judiciously employed third stream support.
IN ANYBODY’S LANGUAGE, PROFESSOR LAWRENCE BUBERWA IS A FORMIDABLE FIGURE. He’s currently acting Dean of the Faculty of Management Sciences and Law. But he’s probably best known as the man who has guided the University’s Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership in recent years. And if his general presence isn’t convincing enough, try his curriculum vitae.

He was born in Tanzania and did his first degree – a B Com (Honours) – at Kenya’s University of Nairobi in 1971. Thereafter he went to America, ultimately to study at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. By 1975 he had completed his MBA and five years later he emerged from that university with a doctorate in business administration. He then returned to Tanzania and took up a teaching post in the Faculty of Commerce at the University of Dar-es-Salaam, finally becoming Dean of the Faculty. During the 1980s he worked in Lesotho as an economic consultant to the government there. In 1992 he was offered a post at the University of Cape Town, but elected to stay on in Lesotho where he became the UN’s Chief Technical Advisor on microcredit at the Bank of Lesotho. Five years later, the UN wanted to send him to West Africa. He decided to stay in southern Africa. In fact, he chose South Africa because it was multi-racial, it offered good schools for his three children, and it was relatively inexpensive. That’s how Buberwa (now 56) landed up at the then University of the North. ‘It was a wise decision,’ he says now. ‘The University has been great.’

It was certainly under his directorship that the Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership’s MBA degree came under the scrutiny of the national accreditation drive for such degrees. Of the 28 institutions that applied to have their MBAs accredited, 10 were rejected outright, six received full accreditation, and 12 were granted conditional accreditation. The problem with regard to the latter was that all our students were black.’

The TGSL has recently formed a partnership with the Group of Five parastatals under the leadership of Trade and Investment Limpopo to assess their training needs and design a series of short courses to assist with staff development. The first course on strategic planning was a resounding success. Now, many provincial departments have approached the TGSL for similar programmes. ‘Like the Centre of Excellence for the Appraisal of Capital Projects, the whole of TGSL could rapidly become self-sufficient. The kind of partnerships that are presenting themselves would ensure a surplus of several million rands over operating costs in a relatively short period of time,’ Buberwa concludes.

Professor Lawrence Buberwa
Agricultural sciences
AN IRRESISTIBLE ARGUMENT FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT
the three main economic struts of its recently established Growth and Development Strategy. But Limpopo province is largely underdeveloped rural land upon which 89% of its people still live. Subsistence agriculture is widespread – and it’s frequently unsuccessful due to a variety of factors. Witness the 50,000 vulnerable households in Limpopo province who receive regular food parcels coupled with efforts to help them to generate their own income.

So let’s see what is happening in the School in response to these rural imperatives. The best place to begin with this examination is with Dr Tsakani Ngomane. Since early in 2004, she’s been the senior manager and then general manager of Districts, Research and Extension Services in Limpopo’s Department of Agriculture.

‘When I started in this position,’ she says, ‘the first thing I realised was that there had been no in-service training for our agricultural extension officers since 1994, and also no formal training tailored to provide the expertise necessary to deliver an efficient service. Before approaching the University, however, I went on a tour of the province, holding a series of meetings with our clients, the farmers themselves. I listed the complaints against our extension officers. Then we held an extension summit in November last year. Every extension officer in the province attended. There were hundreds of them. People said they never knew we had so many. The theme of the conference was simple: ‘Agricultural Extension: on the verge of extinction or distinction?’ There we thrashed out the problems and the needs.’

These needs have now been translated into special in-service courses designed and delivered at the University’s School of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Those already in use are:

- The management of soils in semi-arid and semi-tropical environments.
- A plant protection course combining elements of plant production and soil science.
- Poultry and small stock production.
- Farm record keeping and budgeting, with a marketing component added.

The relationship between province and University is definitely on the up, but there’s still a long way to go. The University’s Professor Phatu Mashela, who occupies the Land Bank Chair in Agriculture, says: ‘The relationship is too loose. The provincial authorities tend to purchase university services from institutions outside the province. For example, in aquaculture they went to Rhodes in Grahamstown, even though we have a programme here.’

And Abenet Belete, Professor in Agricultural Economics, adds: ‘There are as yet no strong linkages between the University and the various government departments in Polokwane.’
Now listen to Ngomane again. ‘We need the University to be more interactive in research. It would be really great to run research programmes from Turfloop. We are looking forward to such a relationship. But the University needs to strengthen the essential three-way linkages between themselves, the province and the farmers.’

While it seems there is still a sense of the province and the University ‘talking past each other’, it is remarkable how similar are their overall perceptions on the importance of small-scale agriculture in the overall rural development setting.

Ngomane’s background powerfully illustrates this. She was born and grew up in Lillydale, Bushbuckridge, a teeming ‘home-land’ area not far from the major tourist attraction of the Kruger National Park where her father was a truck driver. Her mother was a toiling small-scale farmer. There were eight children. ‘My interest in agriculture,’ she recalls, ‘developed simultaneously with my growing understanding of poverty, struggle, and a view of my parents trying to eke out a living on land without water.’

Finally, in 2000, after years of dogged pursuit of her dreams through a number of tertiary institutions, and thanks to a Fulbright scholarship, Ngomane went to Penn State University in America. She stayed for four years, crowning her remarkable academic tenacity with a doctorate, cum laude. Her dissertation was on ‘Youth civic engagement: the emergence of local political leadership in South Africa’. This multidisciplinary dissertation complemented very well her visionary assertion of youth as future custodians of the agricultural economy.

Not too surprisingly, Professor Mollel also talks lucidly about youth involvement in agriculture and rural development as a whole. ‘Thanks to the past,’ he says, ‘the youth tend to look down on agriculture. They look at the struggles of their parents, and for themselves they want something better. It is going to be of crucial importance that their perceptions change. The need is to make agriculture – a career in the rural areas – much more interesting.’

One of Mollel’s agricultural Master’s students has recently done a study of youth attitudes in Limpopo province. The conclusions? That agriculture needs to be repainted as potentially enriching, an area of enterprise where people can make fast money not only through poultry and small stock production, but also through downstream processing of basic agricultural products.

Mollel: ‘What we are doing at the moment is to identify some high schools where mentoring schemes can be installed. We are homing in on the agriculture teachers. One of the problems is that agriculture is seen as a soft subject option. Morale among the teachers is not particularly high. Such perceptions need to be changed. Teachers need to be shown that agriculture in the vast rural areas of this province will be fundamental to any successful growth and development strategy.’

In the United States, Mollel relates, the highly successful 4H ‘stay on the land’ programme has been operating in schools for many years. One result has been the popular competitions at agricultural shows where rural learners of all ages show their animals. Agricultural projects chosen by the learners are also funded and encouraged.

‘We’re talking to South Africa’s Umsobomvu Youth Fund about something similar here, particularly with regard to projects identified by the youth themselves. An evaluation will reveal what skills are lacking so that special training initiatives can be developed to enhance the chances of the project’s success. There is great potential here.’

Mollel mentions one funder who is looking for ways for groups of young people to start their own farms. Another funder, currently working with a Turfloop agricultural Master’s student, is working on the economic agricultural production for local consumption. The potential synergies between University and
funders – not least the provincial government – seem endless.

The School of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences has tendered for the design and delivery of specialised training of rural people in poultry and vegetable farming. The School has also tendered to do a comprehensive agri-business survey in the province. Projects that the School is currently working on include:

- The design of teaching modules to train existing agricultural scientists in research methodology – this for Dr Ngomane’s provincial division of District Research and Extension Services.
- The development of fish farming, an activity to which some small farmers are turning.
- A study on the impact of HIV/AIDS on labour productivity on farms.
- A signed contract with the Nzalo to undertake research and community outreach activities in Sekhukhuneland area – covered by the province’s massive RESIS (rehabilitation of smallholder irrigation schemes) project. The work will involve extensive soil analysis and crop production, and the establishment of agri-business centres to assist the smallholders served by the various irrigation schemes.
- The successful completion of the Olifants River Study that also examined the viability of small irrigation schemes in one of South Africa’s driest and poorest provinces.
- The extensive research work being done by post-graduate interns at the School’s Centre for Rural Community Empowerment at two sites in particular. One is at Ga-Mampa, which is irrigated and where diversification – into dairy goats and eco-tourism – is being studied via a combination of research and intervention. The other site is at Ga-Mothiba, where dry land agriculture is studied in conjunction with the sustainable management of soil, water, vegetation and other natural resources.

The interconnectedness of agriculture and sustainable rural development is everywhere plain to see. If we take Dr Ngomane’s assertion that ‘it would be really great to run research programmes from Turfloop’ and combine it with Mollel’s original statement that ‘what we need most urgently here is a chair of rural development’, we come up with a single compelling answer.

A chair of rural development housed within the School of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences at Turfloop is as necessary for Limpopo province as the next good rains.
But it was to be some time before her dream was fulfilled. Meanwhile, during her holidays as a Fort Cox student, she worked as a student extension officer in rural Gazankulu, one of the first women ever to do so. Tribal leadership was suspicious at first, saying: how can we work with a girl? She will disrupt our families. Nevertheless her work in the Hoxane area was highly productive. She started women’s groups. She encouraged vegetable production, food production and income generation. In fact, she had begun to practise a simple form of holistic rural development.

In 1988 she realised her higher education dream by being admitted to the University of Zululand where a four-year Bachelor of Home Economics Extension had just been launched. Wherever she could, she took extra courses in mainstream agricultural subjects. After obtaining her degree, she stayed on an extra year to complete her Honours.

‘Meanwhile, I had been trying for a scholarship to go overseas,’ Ngomane says. ‘Pretoria lost my files. So I tried again. I got to the interview stage. The interviewers asked how I had achieved such high marks with all the late 1980s boycotts going on. I said luckily universities have libraries and that’s where I spent most of my time.’

She took her Master’s degree in agricultural extension at the University of the North, establishing a firm relationship with Professor Mollel. At the same time she was appointed a deputy manager in the Northern Province’s Department of Agriculture, Land and Environment. Her Master’s thesis was on small-holder irrigation management. She studied schemes that had been built in apartheid times but that had failed due to lack of technical training and community ownership. Her thesis proposed a model designed to instil ownership, demarcate responsibility, and maximise the resource through scientific marketing. Ngomane’s model now forms the basis of provincial government policy.
Rebone Tlandinyane
Another national nutrition survey will help to answer this question in Limpopo province: WHAT ARE OUR CHILDREN EATING?

HERE’S SOME FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

According to a study undertaken by the South African Vitamin A Consultative Group in 1994:

- One in four South African children aged six to 71 months was stunted.
- One in ten was underweight.
- One in three had a poor vitamin A status, a condition associated with impaired resistance to infection, decreased physical growth and increased childhood mortality.
- One in ten was iron depleted.
- One in 20 had iron-deficiency anaemia, the consequences of which include increased susceptibility to infections, increased tiredness, poor physical growth, reduced work and mental capacity, and retardation of psychomotor development.
- Children living in rural areas and whose mothers had low levels of formal education were the most disadvantaged.

This was the first ever nutritional survey conducted across the whole country, and the results offered a bleak insight into what South African children were not eating.

Five years later (in 1999) the National Food Consumption Survey was undertaken. Once again the results were hardly encouraging. They showed that one in ten children between one and nine years old was underweight, and that just over one in five was stunted. Once again, as well, rural children, and particularly those living on commercial farms, were the most severely affected.

The 1999 survey also established that the average dietary intake of children aged one to nine years had only two-thirds of the recommended daily allowance (RDA) of energy and nutrients like calcium, iron, zinc, selenium, riboflavin, niacin, folate and vitamins A, B6, D, C and E. In addition, three out of four households in the country were food insecure; and the five most commonly eaten foods were: maize, white sugar, tea, whole milk and brown bread.

Responsibility for the Limpopo provincial segment of the National Food Consumption Survey – Fortification Baseline (NFCs-FB) – began during the first quarter of 2005. The Survey was once again funded by UNICEF and is being conducted by a consortium of universities and the Medical Research Council, directed by Professor Demetre Labadorios at the University of Stellenbosch.

Tlandinyane explains that by using the 2001 census maps, 22 enumerated areas had been randomly selected in Limpopo province: 18 rural, one commercial farming, two urban formal and one urban informal – in line with the definition of areas for the Survey as a whole, while at the same time ensuring that the number of areas accurately reflects the situation in the largely
rural Limpopo population. To give an idea of total numbers of respondents, the Survey will penetrate around 264 households in the Province, giving a total of over 500 children and women.

‘The survey consists of a set of comprehensive questionnaires and blood tests to measure nutrients,’ says Tlandinyane. ‘Of course we’ve needed to train our field workers to work to the following formula. First, they need to ask for consent to conduct the survey. When this has been obtained, there is a set of questions on basic socio-economic conditions within the household, followed by an important segment dealing with food fortification knowledge, attitudes and beliefs. Once these foundations have been laid, the focus turns to food procurement, and then the field worker makes a household inventory. The data emanating from this segment will assist in the development of a training tool.’

Tlandinyane explains that the answers to the various questions will provide an accurate indication of how much fortified food is being consumed. There are still people using maize meal and salt that is not being fortified. ‘This unfortified food comes largely from small millers and from self-milled produce,’ she says.

Hunger levels will also be established by such questions as: Do any of your children ever go to bed hungry because there is not enough money to buy food? If yes, has it happened in the past 30 days? Has it happened five or more times in the past 30 days?

This information will be verified or contradicted by the blood samples taken from the two targeted population segments.

‘The results of the survey,’ Tlandinyane goes on to explain, ‘will supply the state with crucially important base-line data against which to measure the effectiveness of any new interventions deemed necessary, while at the same time presenting an added management tool to provincial health, social welfare – and economic planning – authorities.’

To give an indication of the scale of the problem in Limpopo, it should be noted that according to the Limpopo Growth and Development Strategy dealt with in an earlier article in this magazine, ‘the provincial government has also embarked on a programme focusing on individual household food security through which 50 000 vulnerable households who receive food parcels are assisted to become economically active and generate their own income from agricultural produce.’

According to Tlandinyane, who has a Master’s degree in dietetics from MEDUNSA, the most important results and opportunities emanating from the NFCS-FB will be:

• To provide nationally compatible base-line data.
• To assist in designing interventions to reach people still eating significant quantities of unfortified food.
• To establish what other foodstuffs could be fortified – assuming that the current fortification programme is shown to be working.
• To establish, for the first time in South Africa, the nutritional status – and the folic acid status – of women of child-bearing age.
• And to have established a permanent resource in communities across the province of trained field workers capable of assisting in other research projects of importance either nationally or provincially. The field workers trained for the NFCS-FB were largely women, only three of whom had the grade 12 minimum requirement. All the rest had post-school qualifications, including a healthy percentage of university degrees.

A last word from Tlandinyane: ‘It’s going to be hard work. But it’s fantastic for us from the University of Limpopo to be involved in this national initiative to measure and protect the health of the nation.’
much was going on in the streets. Civil rights was in the air; and I couldn’t remain immune.’

Particularly not when young black males were being forced by the draft out of school, a situation that conspicuously did not impact to the same extent on their white counterparts.

‘I refused to go,’ Kadalie recalls. ‘I became fiercely opposed to the war. I realised I was a psychologist who had for years concentrated on experimental and physiological issues in dogs who had now become an activist. I was working more on the streets than in the lab. The war became a civil rights issue. Finally, I was forced as a refugee, a draft evader, to Canada. It was either that or submission and Vietnam. The Canadians were very supportive.’

But wait. What’s a man like this doing at Turfloop? The short answer is that he’s a Fulbright Professor of Political Science doing a stint of teaching and research at the University of Limpopo. ‘I particularly wanted to come to what was then called the University of the North. I was particularly struck by the fact that it was described as a “disadvantaged university”. So with a lot of help from friends here – particularly from Professor
Nana Kirk, Director of the University's School of Social Sciences – I applied and went through a selection process. This University wasn’t on the Fulbright list of eligible institutions before I applied. I’m happy to say that it now is.’

Kadalie will spend a year in South Africa, dividing his time between Turfloop and the University of Venda, as part of his arrangement with Fulbright, and he says that the experience is proving to be a real challenge. ‘I’m working with rural students. They’re fantastic students – some of the most committed I’ve ever taught. And I feel I have something in common with them.

‘I grew up in the segregated South, in a small town 40 km south of Savannah in the state of Georgia. I was very fortunate. My father was the principal of a black high school; my mother was a librarian. I read and read and read all through my early years, and then I went to the best black schools and colleges.’

But what happened in Canada where Kadalie had gone to evade the draft?

‘Oh, I didn’t stay long. A white man from my home state of Georgia – his name was Jimmy Carter – gave all draft evaders amnesty.’ Kadalie’s expression reveals his enjoyment of the irony. ‘So back I came early in 1968. I stayed in Detroit, which is on the border with Canada – just in case – and I became involved in organising black workers in the motor industry there. I was in the thick of things. And I was working and hiding in Oklahoma when Martin Luther King was assassinated …’

His switch from psychology to political science hardly needs an explanation. As soon as America’s involvement in Vietnam ended, Kadalie went back to university, this time in Georgia’s capital city of Atlanta. By 1977 he had graduated with a Master’s in political science in which he had concentrated on the American constitution, political theory and urban politics. Fifteen years later he gained his doctorate from the same university, adding African, African American and comparative politics to his specialities.

Kadalie (now 61) looks out of the third floor office window at the trees and walkways of Turfloop and remarks: ‘My view is that this is a university of the future. Before I came, I had thought of it as a “bush college”. So I was surprised. Physically it’s impressive. If this campus existed back home it would be one of the largest HBCUs (historically black colleges and universities) in the USA, if not the largest.

‘But there are weaknesses. In the field of political science, postgraduate students have been cut off from the thought and writings of a previous generation of exiles. Of course, apartheid deliberately created this discontinuity and the resultant intellectual vacuum. I see my role as helping to collect the material of the missing generation of political writers and make it readily available to the students here.’

Another issue that concerns Kadalie is that black political scientists in South Africa, since 1994, are too rapidly being absorbed into government positions as advisors and administrators. ‘There are too few serious black academics and critics,’ he declares. ‘So long as universities like WITS and UCT hold the research ground in political science, so they will also set the ideological tone. South Africa needs serious black political scientists to contest that ground, and my view is that the University of Limpopo should be in the forefront of such an endeavour.’

Kadalie’s Fulbright research project is covering precisely this subject. He will make a comparison between South Africa’s HDIs (historically disadvantaged institutions) and America’s HBCUs, in relation to the career-orientated emphases that pervade both sets of institutions and at the same time marginalise serious black research that should be helping much more substantially to shape the ideological attitudes of the future.
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