



The courage to continue
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The only way that we can live is
if we grow. The only way that
we can grow is if we change.
The only way we can change is
if we learn.

C. Joybell C



The beginning

- ❖ Initially the Tertiary Education Fund of South Africa (TEFSA) was established to fund historically disadvantaged students with academic ability
- ❖ In 1996 TEFSA was requested to manage NSFAS in 1996 and it resulted in the establishment of the [National Student Financial Aid Scheme Act \(No 56 of 1999\)](#) which incorporated TEFSA and the first NSFAS board was convened in August 2000
- ❖ According to the NSFAS website NSFAS challenges were
 - Enormous backlogs in access to higher education.
 - Requests from institutions for increased funding.
 - Huge expectations that transformation would immediately bring higher education within everyone's reach.
 - Conflict between students and higher education institutions' administrators over the payment of fees
- ❖ Institutions had to establish Financial Aid offices to administer NSFAS



2001 - 2010

- ❖ Most processes were manual but communication was excellent during this period
- ❖ Application numbers were manageable
- ❖ Funders (donors were limited)
- ❖ A radical restructuring of the higher education sector took place. The number of universities was cut from 36 to 23 through incorporations and mergers - some creating huge universities - aimed at breaking down apartheid's racial divides and transforming the sector. Challenges included not only fair distribution of funding but also combining rules and procedures
- ❖ FAPSA was established in 2001
- ❖ The National Credit act of 2005 was introduced.
- ❖ 2007 FET Colleges were added to NSFAS mix
- ❖ Funza Lushaka Bursaries
- ❖ 2010 Ministerial report on the review of NSFAS



2011 - current

- ❖ Donors were added rapidly – adding bursaries and Seta
- ❖ Increase in FET Funding
- ❖ Introduction of the final year programme
- ❖ Rapid increase in applications and protests
- ❖ More exposure in the media
- ❖ Introduction to on-line LAF submissions at UJ, TUT and Boland College
- ❖ Various CEO's – high staff turnover
- ❖ Piloting CAP system



Institutional Challenges

- ❖ Less communication from NSFAS due to the number of institutions served
- ❖ Later/non payments from NSFAS
- ❖ Increase in student demand for funding/allowances
- ❖ Short deadlines eg final reports
- ❖ Additional reports and information needed by NSFAS
- ❖ Changing Policies without notice and workshops
- ❖ Increased applications but less funding and more donors
- ❖ Doing more with less staff
- ❖ Late receipt of means test



What we achieved

- ❖ The NSFAS budget increased from R3.1 billion in 2009 to R8.1 billion in 2013
- ❖ 2014 budget over R9 billion for more than 430 000 students at all 25 public universities and 50 public FET colleges.
- ❖ Across SA countless students who would normally not qualify for loans are studying through NSFAS in partnership with Universities and FET's.
- ❖ Institutions invented ways through card service providers to allocate allowances
- ❖ We survived the credit act, the final year programme, new donors and currently most funds are paid by NSFAS in answer to claims submitted by Institutions.
- ❖ Pilot institutions survived CAS (more or less)



Way forward

- ❖ Make sure that top management is aware of the challenges of NSFAS



- ❖ Learn from mistakes – strategic planning

- ❖ Insist on communication from NSFAS



- ❖ Communicate clearly with staff, students and SRC

- ❖ Find ways to introduce the new changes that NSFAS insist on

- ❖ Find inventive ways to train, retain and reward your staff



“Success is not final, failure is not fatal; it is the courage to continue that counts” Winston Churchill

