

'Socio-economic benefits of 2010 set to disappoint'

2009/09/08

Sibonelo Radebe HERALD REPORTER

THE 2010 Fifa World Cup will most probably disappoint in the delivery of socio-economic benefits sold to the South African public by its promoters.

That was the message from Rhodes University vice-chancellor Saleem Badat during a speech at the 2009 Highway Africa annual conference yesterday. The three-day conference, held at Rhodes, drew more than 500 journalists from all over the continent.

It was designed to chart the future of journalism within the context of increasing digital media platforms.

Badat cited a Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) study which raised doubts about the development benefits to flow out of the World Cup. Quoting from the study, he said "the event will unfortunately fall far short of (crucial socio-economic development) objectives".

Badat was addressing himself to the 2009 Highway Africa theme of *Reporting 2010, Development and Democracy*.

Journalists and academics shared the need to discriminate, make judgments and separate facts from opinions and perceptions from reality, he said. This thinking should be applied in covering the World Cup. Although supposedly an African event, it remained to be seen how it would benefit Africa rather than the usual dominant European perspectives, he said.

In a separate presentation, 2010 local organising committee chief communications officer Rich Mkhondo tried to salvage the situation. He listed five direct benefits for Africa which would flow out of the World Cup. These included Fifa's commitment to roll out 53 artificial turfs and a number of community service centres across the continent.

Mkhondo said Africa would be showcased to 26 billion viewers around the world, which should benefit the tourism industry.

Badat noted the positives of the World Cup as captured in the HSRC study. These included the development of public transport in major centres, and an opportunity to enhance the country's identity and patriotism. But the other conclusions of the study were a cause for concern, he said.

"Contribution to economic development, including tourism, job creation and poverty mitigation, has almost certainly been overstated.

"In a country like South Africa, where disparities are among the highest in world, inequality may even be exacerbated by the event." Some considered the event a failure to prioritise expenditure in a developing economy, he said.

[Old Mutual Saving Account](#)
Invest as Little as
R150/Month &
Receive a Tax Free
Lump Sum Payout!
www.oldmutual.co.za/

Ads by Google

[Old Mutual Saving Account](#)
Invest as Little as
R150/Month &
Receive a Tax Free
Lump Sum Payout!
www.oldmutual.co.za/

Ads by Google

~oO Article End Oo~