

South African Innovation Survey 2008: Perspectives and Impressions

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INTRODUCTION

- Innovation redefined
- Sector participation & innovation focus
- Interaction and coordination
- Effects of innovation / lack thereof

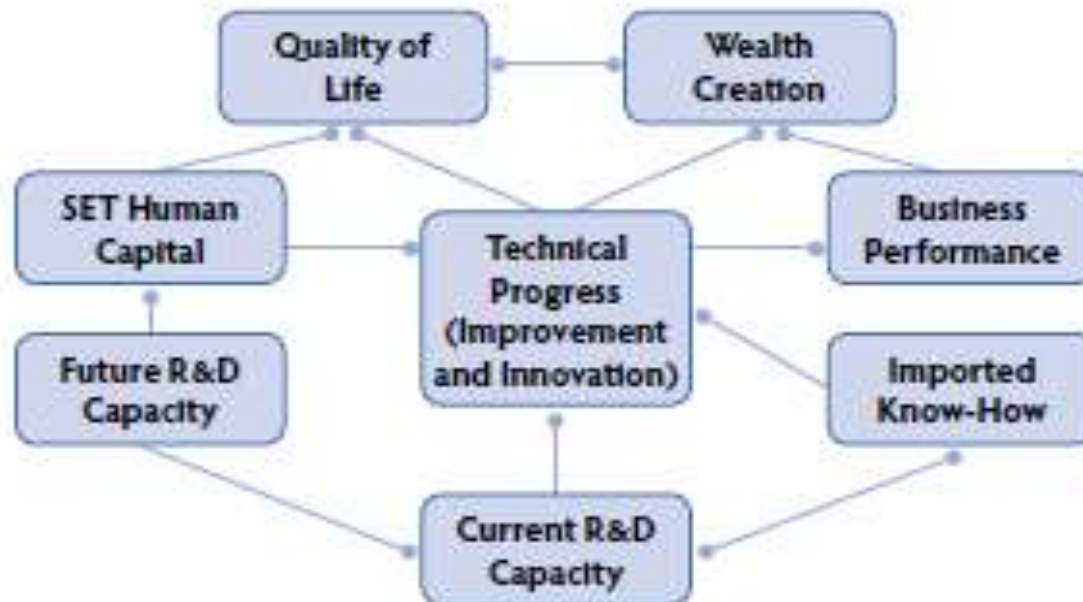
INNOVATION REDEFINED

- Traditional definition: product (goods and/or services) or process innovations - Science, Technology Innovation (STI) mode
- Reality: In the majority of sectors innovation rarely requires R&D
- Attention needed: innovative & absorptive capacities of business, public sector, research sector, how innovation is done, knowledge flows
- Thus: the “Doing, Using and Interacting” (DUI) mode of innovation

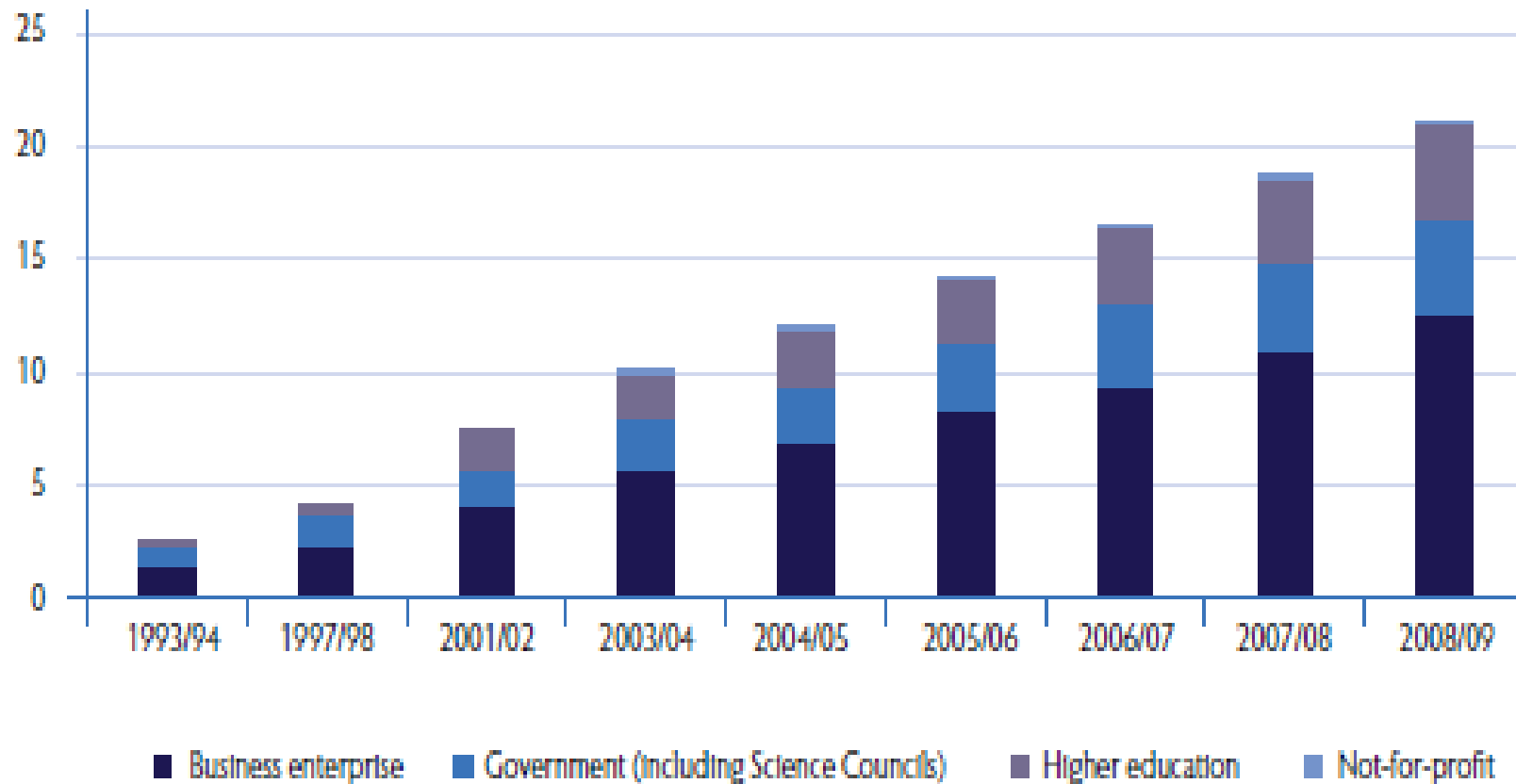
SECTOR PARTICIPATION & FOCUS

Survey cover business sector as instrument to measure level of national innovation activity; business performance just one component of NSI:

Key components identified by the national R&D strategy



SECTOR PARTICIPATION



INTERACTION, COORDINATION

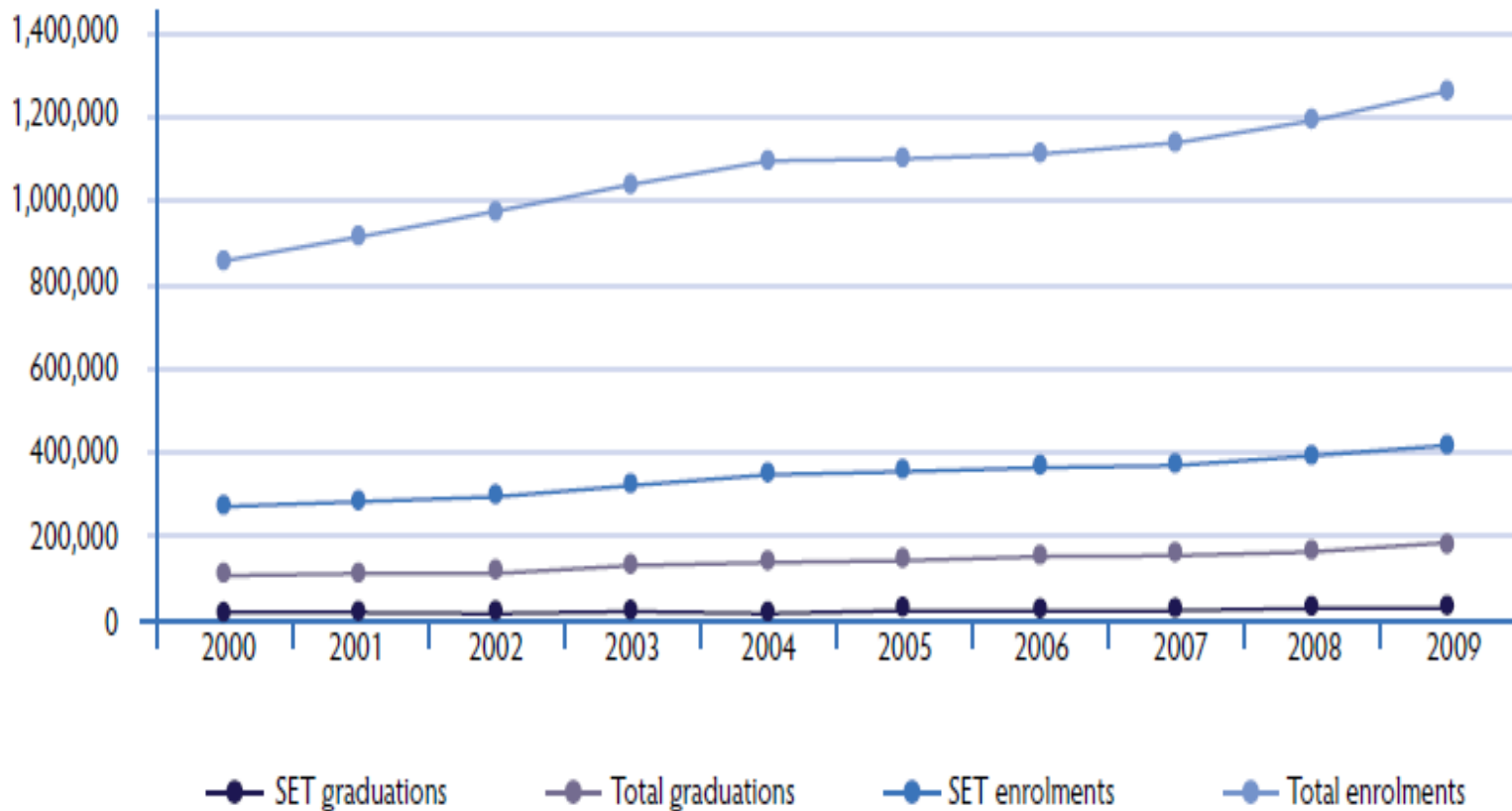
- Lacking information on:
 - Cooperation between government departments
 - Government & academic institutions
 - Business & academic institutions
 - Between academic & research institutions
- Survey can show effects of cooperative relationships or lack thereof
- Eg: Accord signed on 1/11 for target of 75% local procurement to protect & create jobs; depts of education, labour, S&T not actively involved - what will the result be for future capacity?

EFFECTS

- Measuring the effects of innovation, resulting from and affected by:
 - Sufficient pool of suitably qualified people, employed directly in R&D
 - Also support - management, administrative, clerical
- Influence of SET education on innovation (thus keep in mind expanded definition)

TRENDS IN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

SET enrolments and graduations 2000 - 2009



EFFECTS

- Other essential resources
 - finance
 - equipment
 - back-upMeasured by survey only in business sector
- Innovation culture – can the perception survey measure this?

SUMMARY

- expanding the definition of innovation,
- sector focus – govt and research institutions were excluded from the survey,
- the need to show what interaction is taking place (or not) and how this is impacting on innovation,
- the effects of innovation should be followed in order to inform policy

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Include business, government, academic institutions in survey – to strengthen perceptions of the importance of public & academic participation, better facilitate policy & strategic alignment
- Distinguish between ongoing and abandoned innovation activities – results are different
- Address the strong perception basis of the survey
- Lags in innovative activities can be better measured (between investment and invention, market acceptance, depreciation / obsolescence, etc)
- Attention to non-traditional mode (DUI) of innovation
- Productivity- generating processes deemed NB in SA context; suggest follow-up in light of low priority given to this from business in the 2008 survey

THANK YOU