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of 2002 in Parliament. Currently, the Child Justice Bill is still pending before Parliament and there is no clear indication when - or if - it will be passed into law, and if it is passed, the extent to which the proposals finalised by the South African law Commission will remain unchanged.

It may be thought at first blush that because the Child Justice Bill continues to languish in the Parliamentary process, South Africa has not made progress in establishing a separate justice system for children in trouble with the law. However, by describing the development of an array of advances, especially related to the contribution of social development (even after the demise of the IMC and under the helm of a new Minister), the article attempts to show that measurable and substantial advances have nevertheless been made, even in the absence of a separate legislative framework. The main objective of this article, therefore, is to assess the overall eventual impact of the IMC work ten years after it was formed, and with that, to illustrate the contribution of social development to the child justice sector and the advancement of the ultimate goal of separate child justice system for children in trouble with the law. An underlying premise is that documenting the developments of the last decade are necessary in view of the fact that a final IMC report was not completed and adopted by the government, and thus little in the way of concrete points of reference is to be had. Therefore, the information provided in this article is based on draft reports, pilot project reports, personal knowledge, workshop reports and so forth, much of which is not available electronically, which renders it rather inaccessible to contemporary scholars.

The approach followed in the ensuing sections is issue-based – the themes of assessment, pre-trial incarceration in prison, developments in residential care, probation and probation-related services, and (to a limited extent) diversion are addressed. Less attention is accorded the development of diversion services, because a substantial literature is already in existence on this topic (Wood, 2003; Open Society Foundation for South Africa, 2005; Gallinetti & Sloth-Nielsen, 2004).

ASSESSMENT

The use of the practice of “assessment” cannot be directly ascribed to the IMC. It is by now well established that the concept of a social work intervention to provide a limited social background report to functionaries in the judicial system deciding on release or custody, and to a more limited extent, the possibility of diversion, was pioneered provincially in the Western Cape mainly via the provincial Department of Social Development (Sloth-Nielsen, 1995:333). This occurred shortly before the formation of the IMC, in 1994, and the desirability of pre-trial assessment at police stations, before court appearance or otherwise, was first advocated at the international conference on juvenile justice reform held in 1993 (Report on the International Seminar, 1995:52, 54, 83). As initial positive reviews of assessment interventions were compiled, the initiative was expanded in the province. More importantly, though, given the occasional view that the Western Cape was isolated from national developments, and moreover better resourced insofar as social service delivery was concerned, assessment was taken up via the IMC policy formation process at a national level as a desirable best practice (Sloth-Nielsen, 1995). One of the eight IMC projects analysed the implementation of assessment services in the Durban Magistrate’s court (Sloth-Nielsen, 1997; IMC, 1998). An early IMC workshop held in Cape Town in late 1996 concluded that the efficacy of assessment should be recognised and promoted (IMC, 1996c).

Moreover, the IMC added a further theoretical dimension to the practicalities of assessment, namely that this intervention would be based on the concept of developmental assessment, focusing on the child’s strengths and abilities rather than the pathology attached to the offence or

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family environment from which the child had come. It is therefore rightly argued that "assessment is a process rather than a single event in time - and taking this into account is even more important when assessing children whose growth and development have not yet reached an adult stage and whose changes may be rapid and also strongly influenced by context and caregiver. It is therefore essential that an in-depth psycho-social assessment of a child takes place over time, and to include the collection of collateral information from as many contexts in which the child has some place as is possible" (Van Niekerk, 2005:8). This, in this author's view, was an important adjunct – not only did it lend some depth to the practice, but it linked more broadly to general shifts in social welfare theory emerging at the time, and subsequently concretised in the 1997 White Paper on Social Welfare. Furthermore, it enabled practitioners to embrace assessment as something new, something more meaningful that the pedestrian collation of (more or less the same) information *after* conviction for the purposes of preparing pre-sentence reports. Also, because developmental assessment as a conceptual and theoretical paradigm shift was viewed as being premised on the quality of a personal interaction, rather than one which focused on physical or geographical attributes (such as the venue or building where the service was to be undertaken), the basis was laid to expand access to assessment even in the absence of significant formal budgetary allocations that are most usually required to pave the way for the introduction of a new service (e.g. pension payout points, prisons, primary health care facilities).

With this as a foundation, provinces set about appointing staff – probation officers and others – to undertake the pre-trial investigations required for the assessment phase to have the perceived benefit for children in trouble with the law. Although the advantages of assessment chiefly related to more informed decisions about pre-trial incarceration or release, diversion decisions were also furthered through the early intervention of social workers performing this task. From an extremely low base in double digits in 1996, mention was made in 2005 of more than 600 probation posts countrywide having been created since 1996. A large measure of this was driven by the need for assessment services, rather than for other conventional probation services, such as the compilation of pre-sentence reports or the supervision of probationers. Moreover, Arrest, Reception and Referral centres staffed by probation officers, assistant probation officers and (most recently) volunteer assistant probation officers have been established in a number of jurisdictions: in May 2005 there were already 54 Arrest Reception and Referral Centres throughout the country, and this number may well have grown since (Department of Social Development, 2005). Although it cannot be said that coverage is universal in South Africa, there can be no doubt that substantial achievements have been made to mainstream assessment services at local level, and that the IMC process contributed in no small way to this development.

Underscoring the penetration of the assessment concept in South African child justice development has been the enactment of legislative reform via the Probation Services Amendment Act of 35 of 2002, put into effect in 2003. Among other things, as a (new) legal concept, the Act defines "assessment" under section 1 as a "a process of developmental assessment or evaluation of a person, the family circumstances of the person, the nature and circumstances surrounding the alleged commission of an offence, its impact upon the victim, the attitude of the alleged offender in relation to the offence and any other relevant factor." Further, an amendment to section 4(1) of the principal Act ensures that the duty of performing assessments and the related issue of reception of accused persons and their referral form part of the core mandate of the Probation Service.

Most importantly, the amending legislation makes provision for a new clause 4B, which provides for the assessment of any arrested child by a probation officer as soon as is reasonably possible,

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but before his or her first appearance in court, with the proviso that if a child has not been assessed before first appearance, such assessment must take place within a period specified by court which may not exceed seven days following his or her first court appearance. Thus assessment, and the requirement that arrested children must be assessed as soon as reasonably possible, now has a legislative basis even in the absence of the enactment of the relevant provisions of the Child Justice Bill 49 of 2002. By some accounts, the legislative mandate for assessment was an important drive in the increased provincial budget allocations for probation posts (Mouton, 2006).

As stressed previously, it may be a surprise to many that assessment as a dedicated phase in youth justice is worthy of the extensive remarks made above. Assessment is, after all, regarded by many practitioners as axiomatic in contemporary child justice practice in present-day South Africa. Yet, equally, it must be considered that (to the best of the author's knowledge) this is a uniquely home-grown legal step, initiated a short ten years ago, and already concretised in legislative form. There would appear to be no international equivalent to this concept in comparable child justice legislation. It can be regarded as a progressive step in the transformation of our youth justice services, although internationally, comparable but different models of early intervention in regard to children in conflict with the law have been developed (such as the youth justice board system introduced at the end of the last decade in the United Kingdom, and the Scottish Children's Panels).

Hence, the development in law, theory and practice of assessment and assessment-related services would appear to the author to be a prime achievement in the ten years since the IMC Draft Interim Report on the Child and Youth Care System was released, and one that shows all the signs of further growth.

PRE-TRIAL INCARCERATION

Pre-trial incarceration was the very issue that ostensibly brought about the formation of the IMC, established in mid-1995 explicitly to address the crisis around the release of children awaiting trial in May 1995. The legislation re-amending section 29 of the Correctional Services Act promulgated in May 1996, and once again allowing the pre-trial detention of children in prison in specified circumstances, was intended to be in effect for two years only, to give government – i.e. the IMC – the breathing space needed to organise or sort out alternatives to incarceration in prison for youth who could otherwise not be released. The amendments were supposed to fall away in May 1998, resuscitating the previous position which entailed a complete ban on pre-trial incarceration in prison, in accordance with desirable international standards, such as those contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Recently released indicators on juvenile justice developed by UNICEF (2006) indicate the ongoing international concern with the deprivation of liberty of children, as core indicators are identified as being the number of children deprived of their liberty whilst awaiting trial, and the length of time that such deprivation of liberty endures.

However, there can be no gainsaying that the bulk of IMC work in the initial phases of its existence by and large ignored the issue of pre-trial detention and need for alternatives to prison. Instead, the focus of the IMC, indicated also by the documentation that emerged, for instance the Interim Discussion Document (1996d), was on reshaping the model for social work intervention in both child welfare and youth justice settings. The (by now well-known) framework propounded by the IMC was the inverted triangle with the widest level focused on early intervention and prevention services, then statutory intervention, followed by a continuum of

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care, forming the narrowest, and hence least used, option. Therefore, prevention, early intervention, statutory processes and continuum of care were the four levels into which the policy was divided. This model was bolstered by both constitutional principles relating to deprivation of liberty as a last resort, as well as slogans which have happily become embedded in everyday practice, such as the use of the least restrictive forms of deprivation of liberty in both child protection and child justice practice. Apart from this signal policy, the other principal output of the IMC during the initial phase of its operation was the infamous report on places of safety schools of industry and reform schools (IMC, 1996b) undertaken explicitly in response to the (unwelcome) suggestion by the then Minister of Correctional Services that awaiting trial children could rather been accommodated in those care institutions than in the prisons falling under his jurisdiction. The report, detailing a litany of human rights infringements and areas of abuse and neglect and inappropriate services to children in care, effectively put paid to that avenue of thought. However, an alternative proposal for pre-trial accommodation for awaiting trial children was not actively promoted at that stage.

It was not until the looming deadline for the expiry of the 1996 amendments to section 29 of the Correctional Services Act was nigh, i.e. in 1998, that the IMC started to actively consider that suitably secure accommodation for high-risk awaiting-trial children or those charged with serious offences was not only necessary, but that this would be the only acceptable alternative to detention in prisons for justice officials. Places of safety would simply not fit the bill for certain children charged with serious or violent offences. Hence the development of the concept of "secure care facilities".

By the March of 1998, a short while before the May 1998 deadline for the expiry of the amending legislation permitting pre-trial detention of children, the pressure on the IMC to deliver on the core mandate upon which it was originally established had been to some extent alleviated, as a drafting error ensured that the applicable sections did not, in fact, fall away after the legislatively specified two year period. Indeed, they continue to govern pre-trial detention of children in prisons. Nevertheless, the realisation had by then dawned that the need for alternatives was an inescapable imperative. That the Justice and Constitutional Development Portfolio Committee busied itself throughout 1998 with a complex and detailed bill to regulate pre-trial juvenile incarceration emphasised this all too graphically. Consequently, the secure care programme really only began to take off after that, and some valuable years were lost in the process. When the IMC disbanded in early 1999, the concept had been received into child justice practice, but (to the best of this author's recollection) no functioning secure care facilities existed, save former places of safety which had been upgraded with additional security. "Secure care", as envisaged in IMC policy, would refer to an environment and level or form of child and youth care work, rather than focusing on a particular (architectural) form of facility. Thus they were not in any way to be regarded as "kiddie prisons" and moreover, were not in the view of the IMC, intended exclusively for awaiting-trial children, but rather for any child who was the subject of statutory intervention who required a secure environment of care. After the demise of the IMC, the secure care programme was further developed at provincial level.

Currently, the idea that secure care facilities are more appropriate for the detention of children awaiting trial seems to have taken root. For instance, the Child Care Act was amended to provide for a definitional clause regarding secure care facilities and, just recently, the principle of detention of children as a last resort was also embedded in the White Paper on Corrections (Department of Correctional Services, 2005). By February 2006 there were about 2199 secure care beds throughout the country (Nevill & Dissel, 2006). Some time during late 2004 and early

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2005, the numbers of children detained in secure care began to outstrip the numbers held in prisons awaiting trial. Possibly in some part because of the increased availability of secure care placements, there has been a marked drop in the numbers of children awaiting trial in prisons. Latest figures indicate that fewer than 1000 children await trial in prison on any one day, down from 3000 a short two years ago (Office of the Inspecting Judge Annual Report, 2005/2006). In addition, there is still scope for improvement (Nevill & Dissel, 2006). Recent reports indicate that on the 28th of February 2006 only 71% of the 2199 secure care beds available were in use which means that "another 643 children could have been accommodated in secure care facilities rather than in prison" (Nevill & Dissel, 2006:11). The reasons for under-utilisation of secure care facilities include the fact that some courts are not inclined to refer children to secure care facilities in certain regions, lack of resources for transporting children to secure care facilities, and structural issues (Department of Correctional Services, 2006). It is also a source of concern that we do not know how many children are detained (illegally) in police cells after their first appearance in court. Nevertheless, despite these implementation problems, there still is cause to reflect on the enormous strides that have been made since the secure care programme got off the ground, and measurable benefits can now be recorded.

RESIDENTIAL CARE AND CHILD JUSTICE

Unsurprisingly, a significant thrust of IMC policy work concerned the residential care sector (the facilities of which were managed by the Department of Social Development and the Department of Education). Not only was this presaged by the formal report on conditions in places of safety, reform schools and schools of industry presented to Cabinet in November 1996, but key staff of the IMC were drawn from the residential care sector in the first place, and had, prior to the establishment of the IMC, expressed concerns about a crisis in child and youth care facilities (IMC Manager, 1997). This to an extent also explains the lack of initial focus on developing alternatives to prison, given the ills already identified in the residential care system.

Two main IMC-driven outputs that can be singled out for mention are the development of children's rights-compliant norms and standards for the administration of care institutions, concretised in extensive amendments to the regulations to the Child Care Act 74 of 1983, shepherded through the legislative process shortly before the cabinet reshuffle that saw the chairperson of the IMC move to another Cabinet post. The regulations adopted provided evidence of a much modernised, developmental approach to children's rights in residential care, as well as to developments in the field in practice internationally. Corporal punishment and other unacceptable forms of chastisement were prohibited, management structures broadened and made mandatory and children in care were required to be provided with a proper developmental plans aimed at ensuring their growth and wellbeing, amongst the host of issues addressed in the extensive amendments and new regulations. As a blueprint for mainstreaming children's rights, the amended regulations cannot be faulted and must be regarded as a signal indicator of success of the IMC process. Augmented and detailed primary legislation provisions build on this precedent in the chapter on child and youth care centres in the Children's Amendment Bill 16B of 2006, currently under debate in Parliament.

The second innovation pioneered by the IMC was the notion of developmental quality assurance (DQA) in the residential care sector. DQA was intended to be the enabling tool for the reorientation, reskilling of staff and upgrading of children's care institutions. Described as "a recognized means of assessment aimed at the production and implementation of an organizational development plan", the whole idea has recently been given a judicial imprimatur of approval in relation to a challenge to conditions in a school of industry by the Centre for Child Law and

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others vs MEC for Education and Others (Case No. 19559/06, 2006). This case concerned a School of Industries to which children placed there by a children's court could be sent in terms of section 15(1) of the Child Care Act 74 of 1983. The physical condition of the hostels the children were housed were totally dilapidated, with broken windows in freezing conditions, there was a lack of access control, facilitating children's ready access to drugs. There was absolutely no psychological support nor therapeutic services at the school. After considering the relevant provisions of the Constitution and the Child Care Act, the Court gave an order compelling the authorities to provide each child with a sleeping bag, and to put in place proper access control and psychological support structures. It also ordered the MEC for Education, the first respondent, to be directed to make immediate arrangements for the school to be subjected to a DQA process to address the poor functioning of the institution and retained a supervisory role to ensure progress, in particular pertaining to the DQA process.

However, both as regards state-run alternative welfare facilities and as regards the institutions managed by provincial education departments (schools of industry and reform schools), the results of this ten-year overview cannot be said to have been sufficient, despite the apparent adequacy of the IMC policy proposals put in place, as noted above.

In the Western Cape a process of rationalisation of the former reform schools and schools of industry was a direct consequence of the 1996 IMC report, and the amalgamation and rationalisation resulted in five new institutions called child and youth care centres, being established in the period 1998–2002. Coetzee noted that "as a result of the implementation of the recommendations of the IMC on young people at risk by the relevant departments, the enrolment figures at schools of industry and reform schools have dropped markedly, as alternative placements or programmes have been found for learners who until then would have been sent to these schools… There were two reasons for changing the schools of industry and reform schools. Firstly, they were part of an outmoded and ineffective system, and secondly, they were grossly uneconomical to run. Transforming them, while at the same time rationalising them, had become an urgent necessity. The new approach, which involves the Department of Justice, Social Services and Education, among others, envisages the child and youth care system as an integrated one that emphasises prevention and early intervention and minimises residential care" (Coetzee, 2003:6-7).

However, in practice it seems that huge difficulties continue to prevail. These include the adequacy of educational and vocational programmes for children sent to reform schools (or child and youth care centres, the new name for these institutions), maintenance of safety and security; inability to affect the domination of gangs and drug control; staff perceptions of extreme vulnerability; and lack of effective reintegration techniques. Moreover, the centres are disproportionately expensive to run, and are standing emptier and emptier, perhaps testimony to the lack of faith that the justice system has in both their containment and rehabilitative capacity.

Whilst the provincial Education Department freely acknowledges these shortcomings, and has sought expert assistance in an effort to address them, if truth be told the ideal alternative rehabilitative institution in an African context is still a long way off, and the "what must be in place" provided by the IMC has not answered the question of "how this can be done". (This comment holds for countries other than South Africa on this continent, as other countries in the region are also beginning to grapple with juvenile justice development and the institutions or facilities that need to be put in place to support reform. In this regard, Mozambique, Lesotho and Malawi can be mentioned.)

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As regards education-managed facilities in other provinces, the position after ten years is rather dire. Most provinces have failed to grasp the nettle entirely as an ever increasing number of judgments, for instance, *S v Zuba and 23 similar cases* (Case No. CA40/2003 and 207/2003, Eastern Cape Division, judgment handed down on 2/10/2003) and *S v M* (Northern Cape Division, Case No. 435/04 and 237/04, judgment delivered 11/11/2005, bear witness to (Skelton, 2006). In the *Zuba* case, the matter concerned the absence of reform schools for young offenders in that province, and the plans of the Department of Education to build or commission such a facility to enable the proper use of this sentence for the province's young people. When the Department of Education and the Department of Social Development failed to respond appropriately (file a report) to a decision of the Court previously made, counsel in Zuba requested the Court to structure a "more detailed and focused order in respect of the state of juvenile justice in the province and how the authorities plan to improve it". The remedy of a structural interdict, which enables the court to exercise supervisory powers to oversee the implementation of the reform school proposals, was then imposed. At the time of writing, in mid-2007, there is still no functioning facility, however, and it seems that the court process will have to be re-activated. Even so, it is not altogether clear that the State is in fact able to deliver on the required brief, i.e. skills-oriented, modern, safe, constitutionally compliant and caring institutional confinement for children deprived of their liberty outside the prison setting. This has been recognised in one province, KwaZulu-Natal, where a contract is in the process of being awarded to the private sector to erect, maintain and provide the services in four facilities to awaiting-trial and sentenced children in trouble with the law. The proof of private sector superiority in this sphere, however, lies in the future and must be largely speculative at this time.

Similar observations can be made regarding progress in the transformation of welfare facilities since 1996. A 2004 review of facilities in the Western Cape (commissioned by the provincial Department of Social Development) found numerous ills besetting the management and functioning of the places of safety that were reviewed and unfavourable comparisons were drawn with the outsourced secure care facility that was used by the researchers as a benchmark. For instance, the review found that "[t]he average salary per member of facility staff in all the Department's facilities was between 11% and 55% higher than the average salary of staff at the outsourced facility. Furthermore, at the outsourced facility, 54% of current expenditure was being expended on staff costs, the remaining 46% was used to fund food, clothing, educational materials, maintenance, etc. In other words, 46% was being spent on care of the children. By contrast, at one departmental facility, 80% of the current expenditure went towards staff costs, and a mere 20% on other items" (PAWC, 2004). The review could be considered as providing at least initial evidence that outsourcing of facilities is the way forward.

In conclusion, the IMC can be said to have charted an initial way forward for the transformation of the residential care system, but the progress since 1999 has been halting and partial. Considerable scope for further research and staff skills upgrading remains to improve the delivery of children's rights in this sector.

PROBATION

Probation services are not only important once the child enters the criminal justice system, but they are also critical to prevention and to programme delivery (Kassan, 2004:130). The fact that the IMC considered probation a key priority issue led not only to the Probation Services Amendment Act 35 of 2002, but to huge expansion in this sector. Skelton records that "[t]he Department has taken various measures to strengthen probation services, including the establishment of a separate personnel administration standard, training of probation officers,

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discussions with universities, to enhance graduate and post graduate learning in the field, and the establishment of professional board for probation work" (Skelton, 2005:406).

Accordingly, the Probation Services Amendment Act 35 of 2002 concretised the role of probation officers as investigators, supervisors, crime "preventers", planners and implementers of programmes, and with the Child Justice Bill in mind, convenors and mediators in restorative justice initiatives (Kassan, 2004:131). Therefore, a previously Cinderella field populated by a mere handful of active probation officers is now a vibrant and well-established area. The idea that probation would move from reactive services delivery (the old-style pre-sentence reports) to a far more proactive role, was concretised both in legislation and in practice as probation officers began to be directly involved in programme delivery. The professionalisation of probation services and confirmation of their centrality in child justice processes was a significant consequence of the IMC process. However, the revelation of the overall scarcity of social workers that was unearthed by the costing process that was undertaken in relation to the Children's Act 38 of 2005 poses a threat to the continued development and skilling of a dedicated cohort of social workers performing probation work. Whilst the legislative mandate remains to effect assessment, compile and present pre-sentence reports and to become active in programme design and delivery, the possibility that probation workers will continue to function as a separate job class may change in the future (Vol. 8(2) Article 40 (October 2006)). At minimum, the proposed Board for Probation Work has for the time being been put on hold, although this does not necessarily mean that ongoing professionalisation and training of social workers performing probation services cannot continue.

DIVERSION

In South Africa diversion services have been offered since the beginning of 1990s (Wood, 2003). However, the first attempts to incorporate diversion into an official document was through the inclusion of recommendations on diversion in the Interim Policy Recommendations of the IMC (IMC, 1996a:40-47). Thus, the Interim Policy Recommendations was the first government document to formally acknowledge the limited availability of diversion programmes and the unequal access children have to these programmes (IMC, 1996a:40-47). In order to remedy this situation, the IMC recommended that an effective referral process be developed; that diversion should be offered at range of levels; and that a new diversion option, Family Group Conferencing, should be piloted (Sloth-Nielsen, 1999:469-489; Wood, 2003).

An issue paper (SA Law Reform Commission Issue Paper No. 9, 1997), a discussion paper (SA Law Reform Commission Discussion Paper No. 79, 1998) and a Report (SA Law Reform Commission Report on Juvenile Justice, 2000) of a project committee of the South African Law Reform Commission to draft proposals for a child system followed closely on the recommendations of the IMC in proposing for legislative inclusion of diversion (Sloth-Nielsen, 2000:423-428).

Currently, diversion is an ever expanding and diversifying field, even in the absence of a legislative base (it is currently effected through the temporary withdrawal of the case by the prosecutor, a withdrawal which becomes permanent once the child has completed the programme to which he or she is referred.) The fact that tens of thousands of children access diversion every year is a substantial achievement in a very short period of time (one NPA figure was that 125 000 children have been diverted since 2000 (Tserere, 2006). The provincial departments of social development have supported, mainstreamed and diversified diversion services to the extent that implementation of article 40(3)(b) of CRC (requiring that cases be diverted from formal criminal

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proceedings wherever possible) is a signal characteristic of child justice services in South Africa. The development and expansion of diversion services has been well documented of late (Wood, 2003; Open Society Foundation for South Africa, 2005), and the very word has become part and parcel of the everyday lexicon of the courts dealing with children in trouble with the law. In this field South African developments can be regarded as pioneering in Africa, and our neighbours in the region are looking to us for cooperation and technical assistance (indeed, such assistance to Namibia occurred already in the mid 1990s). Our success in mainstreaming diversion as the first option for children in conflict with the law (where the offence class permits this, and where the child has not re-offended) is, it is submitted, evident in the data related to deprivation of liberty, as not only the numbers of awaiting trial children have dropped significantly, also in addition, the numbers of children receiving sentences of imprisonment have diminished as diversion figures have escalated.

CONCLUSION

The contribution of the social development sector to child justice development as described in the preceding sections is in my view a substantial and measurable one, notwithstanding the fact that the development of children's rights-compliant alternative facilities remains an area of challenge. The array of transformative and reconstructive advances discussed above extend from policy and programmatic progress, through legislative reform, to increased human resources capacity and skills development. Physical infrastructural expansion can also be highlighted as regards secure care facility provisioning, particularly since the turn of the millennium.

The consequence is that child justice practice today has been deeply enriched through a more multi- modal and diverse (as opposed to linear) range of service-delivery interventions. Whilst the contribution of other stakeholders to child justice development (especially the various elements of the justice sector such as various national and provincial NPA units, individual prosecutors, the magistracy, Justice College, and the office for vulnerable groups in the National Department of Justice) are in no way to be minimised or ignored, it is this author's contention that the contribution of the IMC has not only been sustained, but that it has been surpassed, and that the social development sector can look back on this with pride.

As the author has endeavoured to show in this article, the decade since 1996 has seen "assessment", "diversion", "secure care", and "probation" become firmly ensconced in theory, practice, policy, law and fiscal planning. It is therefore submitted that, even if the Child Justice Bill does not eventually pass into law, there is now no turning back to the pre-1996 position. Social welfare services to children in trouble with the law have expanded to the extent that there is now an identifiable, distinct, developmentally appropriate and more progressive child justice system, if not universally, then in many parts of the country.

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