

The South African Experience in Increasing Local Content Production

Kethiwe Ngcobo, Head of Drama, South African Broadcasting Corporation.

Minki Thulo, Content Buyer, South African Broadcasting Corporation

Introduction

- Broad structure of the industry policy regulation
- Networks
- SABC structure
- SABC Drama
- Digital future
 - New Broadcasting Act
 - Developmental agenda /knowledge economy

Regulatory framework

S.A. Regulatory Framework

1993 and 1996 Constitution Act of S.A.

Section 192 provides that national legislation must establish an independent authority to regulate broadcasting in the public interest, and to ensure fairness and a diversity of views broadly representing South African society. since 2000 ICASA is the independent authority to regulate broadcasting and telecommunications in the public interest

ICASA's mandate is to perform duties and exercise powers under:

- the Telecommunications Act of 1996, re - telecommunications
- the IBA Act of 1993 and the Broadcasting Act of 1999, re - broadcasting
- from 19 July 2006, the Electronic Communications Act of 2005, which repeals the above laws except the Broadcasting Act.

Regulatory framework

- In respect of broadcasting matters, ICASA remained functionally independent, in respect of its licensing
- and regulatory powers, whereas in telecommunications matters the Minister retained some licensing
- powers and veto powers on regulations developed by the Authority.
- Electronic Communications Act (ECA) strengthens ICASA's licensing and regulatory powers over the
- entire electronic communications sector.
- Currently new public broadcasting bill under discussion, which will change the public broadcasting landscape

Internationally recognized structure of the broadcasting market:

- Policymaker and legislature – Government and Parliament
- Regulator – ICASA .
- Implements the Law
- Prescribe a Code of conduct for broadcasting services
- Prescribe Regulations
- Recognize Self-regulation (BCCSA – all broadcasters subscribe)
- Applications – Three-tiers (Public, Commercial and Community services category, including Community Radio)
- A 4th tier has emerged and that is

Television Networks In SA

- SABC public broadcaster Free to air (biggest audience reach)
- ETV free to Air
- ETV 24 hour news station on DSTV
- DSTV – subscription multichannel – 100 stations
- From April 2010
- On Digital Media – Subscription 55 channels
- Super five Media – Multichannel ownership questions
- Walking on Water Subscription multichannel (religious)

Local Content

■ To counter increasing 'foreign' content to protect local/national culture SA have local content quotas in license conditions.

Different for all types of networks (4 tier broadcasting, public, commercial, community , subscription)

- Attempts to stimulate a local production industry/sector.
- Problems of production skills and financing.
- Problems also of availability of production infrastructure.
- Increasing successes with local content

Funding for content

- Broadcasters own funds – currently SABC commissions to independent producers 1 billion. All other broadcaster increasing support
- DTI has fund of 400 million
- NFVF has 35 million
- IDC – industrial development corporation since started have injected more than n ½ billion rand
- Local film commissions – small funding
- Co-production

SABC Charter

The SABC's context has unique facets that also determine its positioning. These relate to South Africa's challenges as a young democracy and a society in transition. The challenges are captured neatly in the preamble to the Constitution, which sets out the objectives of the South African constitution as these:

- To heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights
- To lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by the law
- To improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person
- To build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

SABC Mandate

The SABC's mandate as a public broadcaster comes from the Charter, which defines its objectives. The Charter is laid down in chapter IV of the Broadcasting Act (as amended) and requires the SABC to encourage the development of South African expression by providing, in the official languages, a wide range of programming that:

- Reflects South African attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity
- Displays South African talent in educational and entertaining programmes
- Offers a plurality of views and a variety of news, information and analysis from a South African point of view
- Advances the national and public interest.

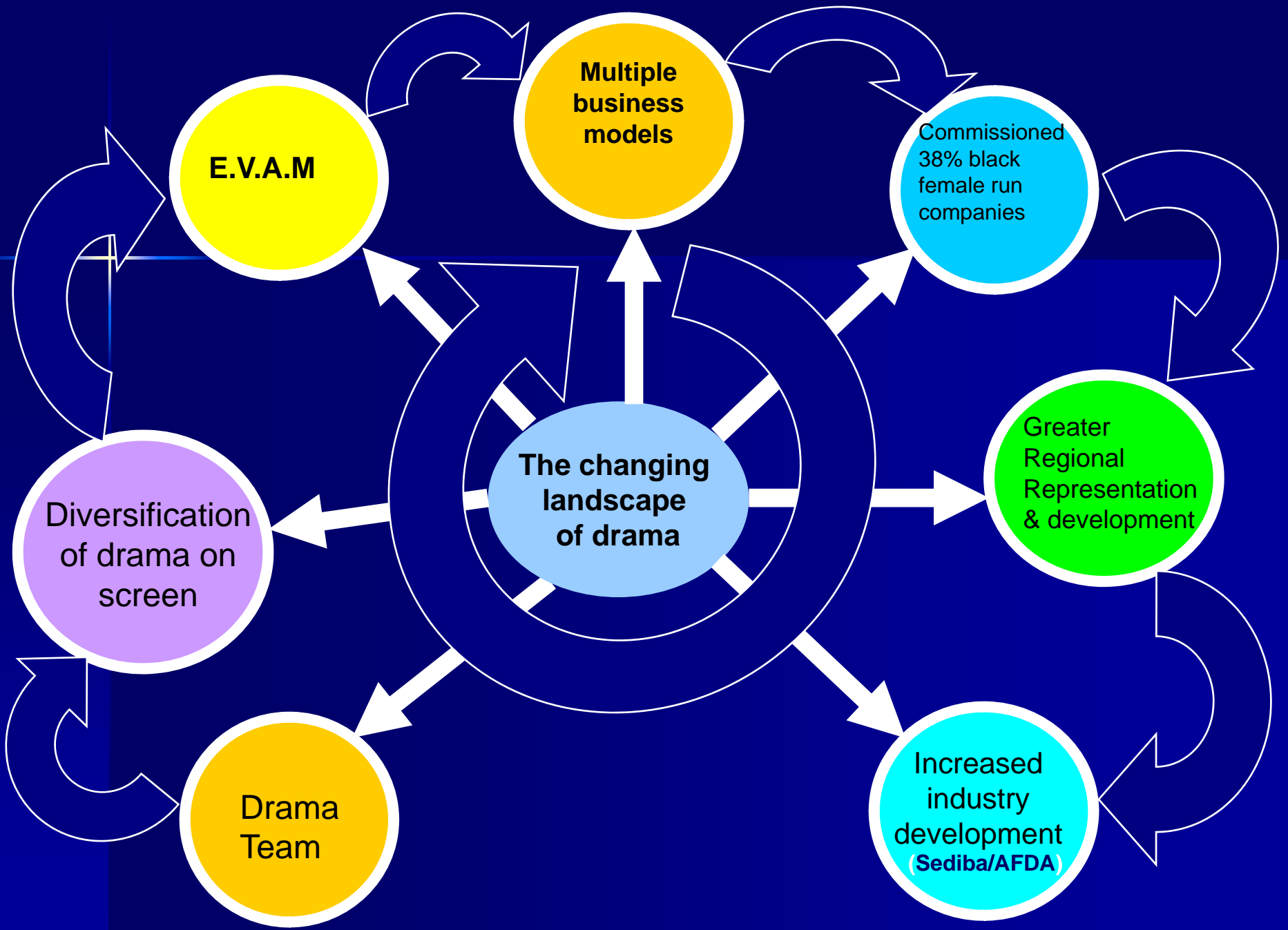
SABC Content Aggregation

- Content Hub
 - Drama
 - factual
 - Entertainment
 - Religion
 - Reversioning
- Sports
- Education
- International Acquisitions

Drama delivery to strategy 2005-2009 : The Past

In 2005 at the presentation of the first Drama strategy, we characterized South African drama as having:

- A lack of differentiation in tone and style;
- A limited range of stories;
- Weaknesses in diversification: only focused on educational drama;
- Limited brand identity;
- A lack of industry capacity and specialised skills; and
- A conservative approach to the genre and to the medium.



E.V.A.M

**Multiple
business
models**

**Commissioned
38% black
female run
companies**

**Greater
Regional
Representation
& development**

**Increased
industry
development
(Sediba/AFDA)**

**Drama
Team**

**Diversification
of drama on
screen**

**The changing
landscape
of drama**

Drama delivery to strategy 2005-2009: The Promise

We promised that the future of drama would be different and there would be:

- Stylistic and tonal variation and diversification: not only focussed on educational drama;
- Increased drama propositions that showcased diverse community stories and a common history;
- A broad range of stories which represented the African and South African world;
- Representations of the nation would include the promotion of our common values and be a leader in transformation;
- An iconic South African drama brand identity;

Drama delivery to strategy 2005-2009: The Promise

- Creative innovations in structure, medium and technology;
- Better delivery on mandate without compromising entertainment value;
- Implementation of forward-looking strategies: R&D and concomitant investment.
- Exportable formats and content;
- Adaptation of African literature to screen;
- Exploration of the use of satire; and
- A clear shift to an Afro-centric point of view, borne from the African continent.

Drama delivery to strategy 2005-2009: Key Deliverables

- In order to achieve this vision the following was required:
- Investment in skills development both internal and external to the SABC;
- The development of specialist skills;
- Script training initiatives for comedy, mini series drama and long running series
- The diversification of those who produce drama.

Drama delivery to strategy 2005-2009

The outcomes

- The implementation of the strategy has resulted in the broadcast of internationally benchmarked drama that has garnered previously elusive local and international awards. The success of the drama department and delivery of content can be outlined by the following achievements:
- Diversification of the portfolio – a wider bouquet in both form and in the world of story;
- Diversification of the industry's drama producers;
- Training and the tools to enhance quality assurance;
- Deeper, more resonant stories;
- Higher ratings; and
- Awards and recognition.

Drama delivery to strategy 2005-2009

Diversification of the Portfolio

- In the 2005 SABC Brief Book, a number of innovative new briefs went out to the industry that aimed to achieve a diversification of the kinds of stories that would be told. It not only included the introduction of miniseries on the schedule, but also of 'themed' miniseries:
 - Shakespeare in Mzansi;
 - His story, Her story;
 - Mini series on 2;
 - Commandments Project.
- These mini series have performed remarkably well on the platforms. Audiences have returned in bigger and bigger numbers as the series continue on the allocated slots. (*More on this under ratings*).

Drama delivery to strategy 2005-2009

Diversification of the Portfolio

Another achievement has been the introduction of a range of worlds in which the stories take place. This has resulted in a more realistic reflection of South African life and our audiences have once again reacted extremely positively to this development. Among the dramas, the worlds they reflect are:

- Umtunzini.com (.com detectives)
- The Lab (investment banking)
- Hard copy (newspapers)
- Bay of Plenty (Durban lifesavers)
- Sokhulu and Partners (legal firm dealing with Constitutional affairs)
- Home Affairs (serendipity in interwoven stories about women)
- City ses' la (young multiracial friends)
- Nomzamo (single mother negotiates life)
- Redemption (Gospel singers)
- Place Called Home (homeless people learn to write), to name just a few.,

Diversification of Producers that Produce Drama

- In 2004 there were a limited number of companies that produced drama for the SABC.
- In fact, the production of drama was in the hands of only seven companies that produced 95% of all the drama output. Further to this, very few black-managed companies received SABC's drama contracts. The aim was create plurality in the voice of those who managed drama so as to achieve a much wider range of voices contributing to the output of drama. At the time many were very sceptical that this diversification could be achieved, as drama is the most difficult of all genres to produce.
- But today, as an example of diversification, the SABC receives content from more than 18 black female producers. Of course the diversification is not only limited to black female producers, but also includes a very broad range of all other producers

Training and Tools to Enhance Quality Assurance

- Critical storytelling skills have been enhanced by creating a partnership with **Sediba**, which is the script development programme run through the NFVF.
- In 2006-7, over 90 individual writers were trained in story development and 50 in 2008-2009 underwent the same training. It was not just the writers that gained from the year-long training process but also producers, directors, script editors and commissioning. From this development process a number of critically acclaimed miniseries have been made and screened on SA TV, including *Society, When We Were Black, Umtunzi We Ntaba, After Nine*, Four adaptations of Shakespeare plays (*Entanbeni, Izingane Zo Baba, Death Of A Queen* and *UGugu No Andile*), with many more in the pipeline ready for 2010 schedule

Training and Tools to Enhance Quality Assurance

- We also introduced the means to assess and evaluate the required corrective action for the production model. Entertainment Value Assessment Matrix 'EVAM'. It identifies and then ensures that the areas of
 - Narrative,
 - Performance,
 - Medium
 - Aesthetics
 - Control (productions)
- are clearly investigated by both the commissioning team and the producer. Firstly, this happens at the pitch and then again during development, at preproduction and then once the product has been delivered the same tools measure how successful the drama has been. EVAM has allowed Commissioning Editors to effectively manage properties which ensures delivery of the highest quality drama. Simultaneously, it assists with the development of the industry by providing producers with probing questions and supports the process of creation by forcing the mind of creative's to thoroughly interrogate and find novel solutions to dramatic and logistical challenges.

Innovative business models

to support transformation:-

- **Cluster model**- clustering SMMEs together to provide support and maximise investment (Lightbox Entertainment and GBR Productions);
- **Mentorship**-grouping large companies with new entrants and ensuring measurable agreed outcomes are achieved e.g. Black Brain and Endemol;
- **JV's** –a number of joint ventures have been commissioned;
- **Executive Producers**- EPs with experience have been placed on projects to limit SABC's risk and has helped increase the transfer of skills;
- *These business models ensured that new entrants would be able to produce drama but also reduced the inherent risk of delivery.*

Drama delivery to strategy

Training and Tools to Enhance Quality Assurance

- In 2006, we created the 'Commandments' project in conjunction with The NFVF and the Binger Film Lab (Netherlands). The Commandments is a ground-breaking feature and television drama project which spotlights the new generation of SA filmmakers using Krzysztof Kieslowski's Dekalog as a creative starting point and point of inspiration.
- The project has secured the very best South African writers, producers and directors currently working in SA. The talent assembled have been nominated and awarded worldwide, including for Oscar and Emmy awards, and collectively their previous work has been selected and screened at every major festival around the world. The talent and stories are being nurtured in a custom-made development process of writing labs and directing workshops in Johannesburg and Cape Town by the Dutch Binger Film lab.

Drama delivery to strategy

Training and Tools to Enhance Quality Assurance -Comedy

- Comedy was another area in which rigorous development work was required. As a result, in 2006 and 2007, the 'Mark Blake Comedy Workshops' were selected to achieve this. These workshops looked at the various areas to improve the resonance of comedy on screen and debated the fundamentals to create and construct a sitcom that would work for South African audiences.
This would include
 - the avoidance of stereotyping;
 - developing sustainable and resourceful areas or situation; i.e.
 - using relationships;
 - using comedians in their own shows.
 - This initiative immediately increased the quality of comedy on our screens and was not only useful for the industry, but also for internal commissioning staff.
 - The success of Citysesla, Nomzamo, Family Bonds

Drama delivery to strategy 2005-2009

Training and Tools to Enhance Quality Assurance -**Soaps**

: Maintenance And Management"

- The industry work shop examined the following areas
- Soap and long running series character bible grid
- Story structure
- Story development
- Persuasion
- Subtext
- This workshop all though held in January 09 is already having an impact on the types of stories being produced for the sub-genre

Drama delivery to strategy 2005-2009

Internal skills enhancement

- has been critical to the success of the overall strategy. Just as the industry's storytelling skills have grown and diversified, so the story skills of the drama department have deepened and strengthened - often one step ahead of the industry. The internal SABC team have benefited from: EVAM, Sediba, the Ken Danzinger course on Genre, and the Marc Blake comedy workshop. The editorial management of product is now less by chance and more by plan and applied craft skills.

Drama delivery to strategy 2005-2009

Specialisation

- In drama we have also introduced specialization
- Head of Story,
- Senior Commissioning Editor Comedy ,
- Senior Commissioning Editor Long- Running Series and
- Senior Commissioning Editor for special drama projects .
- Each of these has specialist commissioning editors working to produce internationally benchmarked dramas

Drama delivery to strategy 2005-2009

Higher ratings

- SABC 1 & 2 drama audience share has continued to rise and now continually exceed the targets set for the genre. Drama, as television content, now dominates the South African ratings' war and it is common for drama shares to sit in the 50% & 60%. For instance:
- **Generations** now regularly achieves 66% share – which is in fact the whole networks target for any one slot. This average has shot up over the last year.
- The introduction of the **miniseries** was not without risk. It was a relatively new format to South Africans, but as a team we built our audiences systematically and now the ratings of Miniseries are exceptionally high. In 2007, with the introduction of miniseries on Thursdays, ratings reached 54% share. However the second round of the Miniseries rose to an unprecedented 63% share for six part series. '**Death of a Queen**' has been critically acclaimed as a watershed series.
- Many other series have seen huge improvements on their shares including **Tshisa**, which is now getting 60 % share, up by 12 shares points
- '**Hillside**' on SABC 2 commands the highest ratings for the channel. Comedies have also seen steady increase in share and subsequently revenue. **City Ses' la** commands extremely high ratings and is the key driver for SABC 1 before the 19h30 news.

Drama delivery to strategy 2005-2009

Revenue

- Both **Generations** and **7 de Laan** continue to drive revenue to unprecedented levels.
- In fact, in 2007, Soap and Drama were placed first and second respectively as the key revenue drivers for the SABC, beating News, Sport Movies and Magazines. Thus the strategies employed and implemented by us are delivering on the SABC's bottom line.
- 2007/8 Soap sub genre number one in driving revenue in the SABC
- 2007/8 Drama subgenre is number two in driving revenue for the SABC
- 2007/8 Comedy subgenre is number six in driving revenue
- Thus drama is critical for the economic health of the SABC.

Drama delivery to strategy 2005-2009

Awards & Nominations

- Home Affairs Nominated For International Emmy's twice
- Sokhulu & Partners selected for International Emmy's
- Gugu No Andile Selected for Rotterdam international Film Festival
- Gugu No Andile Won three awards AMAA
- Gugu No Andile selected for Pan African Film & Arts Festival - California, USA
- A Place Called Home And Umthunzi Wentaba Selected For Input 2008.
- Unsung hero selected for INPUT 2008
- When we were Black Won Award For Best Drama Tv/Film At The International Tv Encounters Festival In Reims, France 2008. He Has Also Been Invited To Lecture At Brown University USA
- **Stokvel V Nominated In "Best Sitcom" Category Rose D'or Awards 2008**
- **SAFTA's every year are a virtual white wash with SABC Drama winning most awards including this year.**

Growth of local Drama

- Other channels are now investing heavily in local drama as it has proved to drive audience and thus the revenue base.
- DSTV – used to buy 95% of their content, now they have created a local commissioning department which has poached staff from our drama department to start the innovation of drama at M-net
- ETV is investing in more and more local drama a higher increase than in any other genre

Developmental state

- *“Technology by itself won’t change the lives of the disadvantaged,” says Goldstuck, MD of Worldwideworx. “For that you need a commitment from Government, and that commitment must run from top to bottom. In the absence of meaningful policy leadership, access to technology will remain the domain of the privileged.”* *Broadband in South Africa to double up, Broadband Report, Worldwideworx 2005*

Change in Landscape (1)

Chung-gye Brook in Seoul

1960s



2000s

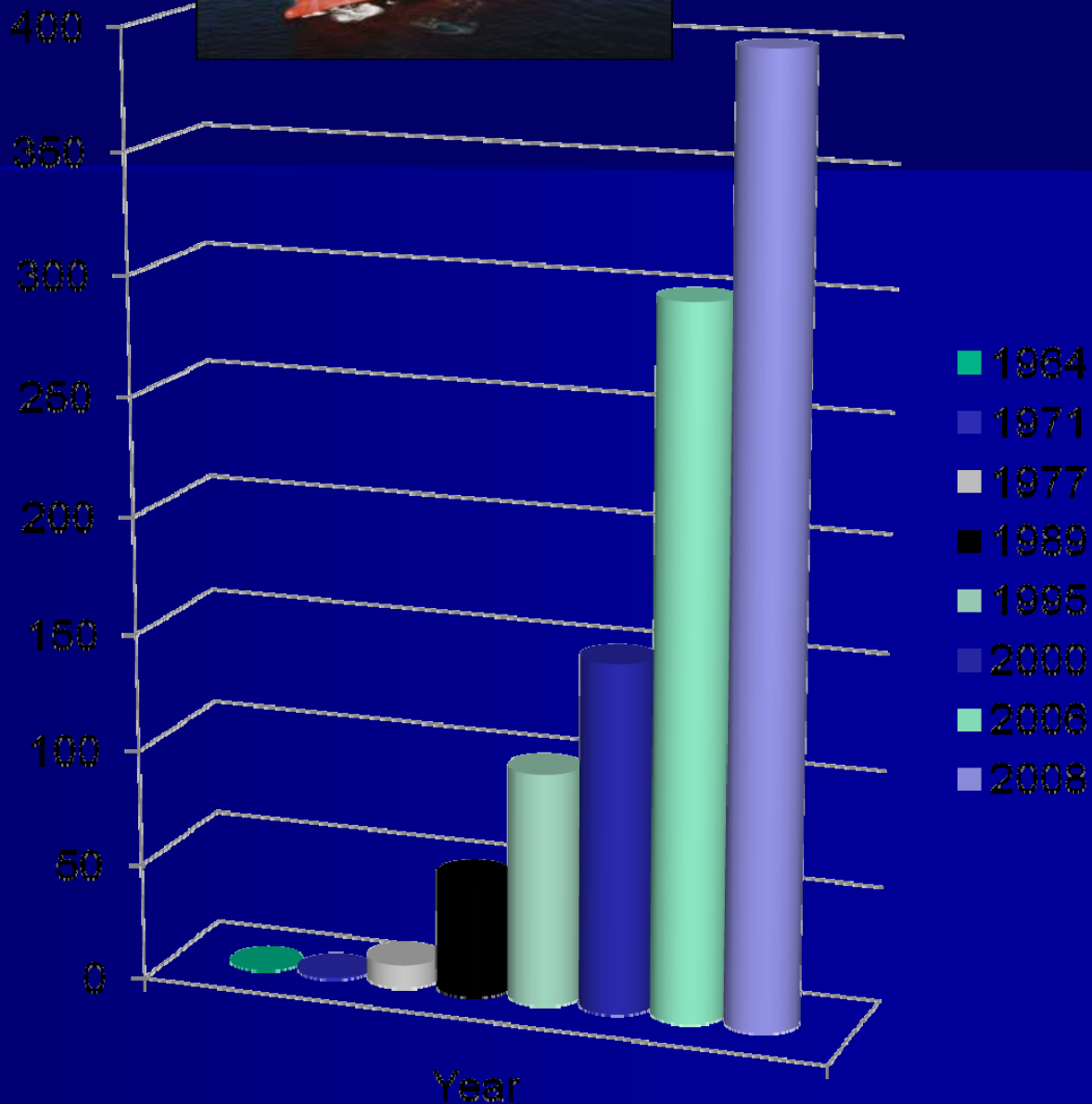


Exports

(USD billion)



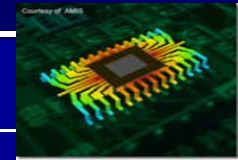
Year	USD billion
2008	400
2006	300
2000	150
1995	100
1989	50
1977	10
1971	1
1964	0.1



KOREA Export Structure

Top 10 Exporting Items

Rank	1962	2005
1	Rice	Semiconductor
2	Raw Silk	Automobile
3	Iron Ore	Mobile Phone
4	Fisheries	Ship & Vessel
5	Tungsten	<i>Petroleum Products</i>
6	Coal	Computer
7	Minerals	Plastics
8	Dry Fish	Steel Products
9	Shell	Automobile Parts
10	<i>Pig Fur</i>	Video Products



Knowledge Economy Framework (World Bank)

Provides incentives for efficient creation, dissemination, and use of existing knowledge

Necessary for creation & effective use of knowledge

Economic and Institutional Regime

Education

Regime

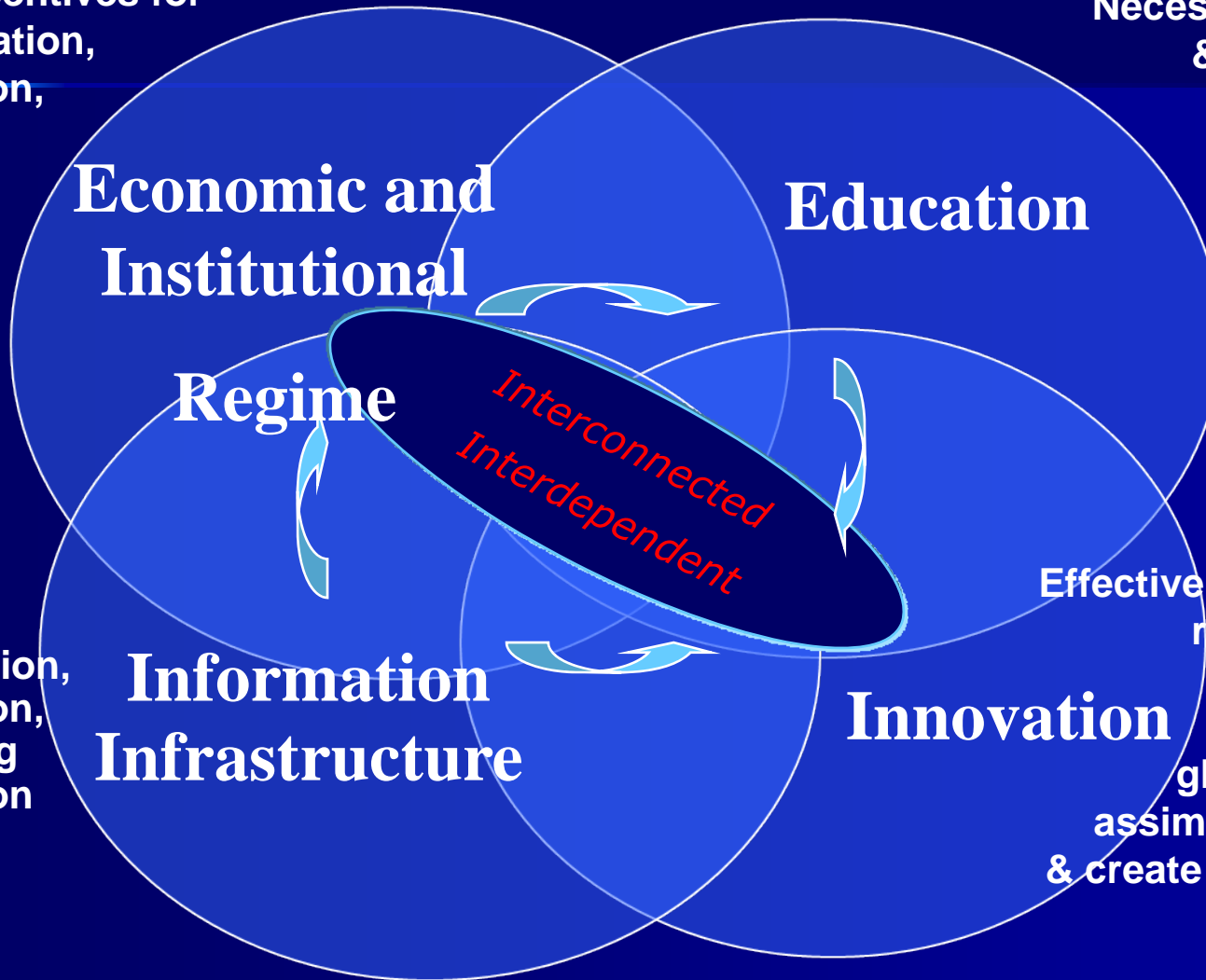
*Interconnected
Interdependent*

To facilitate effective communication, dissemination, & processing of information

Information Infrastructure

Effective system of firms, research centers, universities that can tap into global knowledge, assimilate and adapt it & create local knowledge

Innovation



Knowledge Economy

- Knowledge & Economic Growth as a concept needs to move the centre of the state's agenda and national priority to facilitate and create a suitable environment for the implementation of the imperatives of Digital Migration Policy.
- Thus state will drive development of ICT in the country through introduction of new Public service broadcasting Act
- The draft Bill proposes a number of radical things Including raising tax to fund public service broadcasting

The Draft Bill

- The draft Bill proposes a number of radical things. Including raising tax to fund public service broadcasting. The Public Service Broadcasting Fund would be a key driver to the roll-out of this Act.
- The rapid innovation in digital technology has allowed for the proposed increase of broadcast channels which require massive injections of local content.
- It is aimed at increasing the base of content development away from traditional centers,
- increased localized access to ICT technologies, skills and human resource development in outlying areas of the country
- The development of community-based information gathering and content production and a massive increase of local production of content are aligned with the notion of the developmental state and the diversification of the economy.

The Draft Bill

- The Act will take into account future digital platforms that are relevant to Public Broadcasting service including
 - Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT)
 - Internet and Broadband Based Services
 - Internet Protocol Television (IPTV)
 - Mobile Television (Digital Video Broadcast Handheld (DVB-H))