

AN EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ETD P SETA FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2019



AT THE CUTTING EDGE OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

FINAL REPORT

31 MARCH 2023

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Acronyms

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
AET	Adult Education and Training
ACE	Advance Certificate in Education
ANA	Annual National Assessments
APP	Annual Performance Plan
APPETD	Association of Private Providers of Education, Training & Development
ATR	Annual Training Report
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CSS	Constituency Support Services
ETD	Education, Training and Development
ETDP	Education, Training & Development Practices
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurance
FET	Further Education and Training
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
NEET	Not in Employment, Education and Training
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HESA	Higher Education South Africa
ISPFTED-SA	Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
CET	Continuing Education and Training
WP-PSET	White Paper for Post School Education and Training
SDFs	Skills Development Facilitators
SSP	Sector Skills Plan
DBE	Department of Basic Education
NSA	National Skills Authority
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
SDLA	Skills Development Levies Act No.9 of 1990
SDA	Skills Development Act

MTSF	Medium-Term Strategic Framework
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
NDP	National Development Plan
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NSDS III	the Third National Skills Development Strategy
NGP	New Growth Path
NAISA	National Alliance of Independent Schools Association
NGO	Non- Governmental Organisation
NATED	National Technical Education
NC (V)	National Certificate (Vocational)
SDL	Skills Development Levy
SETA	Sector Education Training Authority
SP	Strategic Plan
TVET	Technical, Vocational Education and Training
WIL	Work Integrated Learning
UoTs	Universities of Technology
WSP	Workplace Skills Plan
WSPRs	Work Skills Plans and Reports
QA	Quality Assurance
NLPEs	Non-Levy Paying Enterprises
NLRD	National Learner Record Database
NPDE	National Professional Diploma in Education
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
WPE	Workplace Experience

Policy Summary

This section provides the results and their policy implications of outcomes under each of the four programmes.

Programme 1: Administration

Outcome: An effective organisation with good corporate governance practices

Some researchers have reported that in South Africa, there are imbalances between the skills developed and those needed in the world of work (Reddy et al., 2016). As stipulated in the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP), SETAs are critical intermediaries between education and training and the workplace. The result of this evaluation is that in the short term, the ETDP SETA has had improved performance levels of the organisation, which have resulted in improvement in employment levels within this SETA sample. There is also efficiency in using the organisation's resources to deliver on mandate and strategy to enhance a capable workforce in the ETD sector. The evaluation results have shown that the value for money is worthwhile, as reflected by the beneficiaries' monetary benefits, which outweigh the cost of the learning intervention. However, a fifth of the beneficiary households was still below the minimum wage in their monthly earnings. They are low-skilled workers, hence a need to relook into the type of courses the ETDP funds to produce high-skilled workers.

Outcome: Institutionalised monitoring and evaluation to comply with the relevant regulatory framework.

Although the ETDP SETA appears to be effective in achieving its intended purpose, there are shortfalls in monitoring a learner's process: enrolment, retention, stipends, equipment availability, workplace environment, and follow-up after graduation or any circumstance. The South African labour force comprises high and low-skilled workers. Therefore, the challenge for the economy's trajectory is to respond with the requisite supply of high and low-skilled jobs; hence, ETDP SETA needs to assess whether the skills produced are medium to high. Therefore, a Monitoring and Evaluation system is necessary to monitor the program's performance and the beneficiary's trajectory from enrolment to graduation to employment. The system will help determine if the skills produced match the real-world workplace demand and if the skills are high, which will translate to higher salaries. Under administration, this calls for ETDP SETA to decipher the good corporate governance and competent workforce stipulated in the strategic plan for effective service delivery into action and improved organisational efficacy.

Programme 2: Research and Skills Planning

Outcome: Labour market information mechanisms in place to inform sector skills planning through credible and empirical research.

The most important way to connect young people to the world of work more efficiently and at a large scale is to get them into "better skills" development programmes. The

programme's beneficiaries felt that it contributed to their enrolment, retention and exit from the programme and linkage to employment. However, from a strategic plan perspective, there appears to be an inadequate alignment of the ETDP sector skills supply with the national demand. The skills may not match the required critical skills in various industries.

In a nutshell, although the beneficiaries felt the programme is practical, from a policy point of view, without certification, as is the case with the ETDP SETA's learning programmes, most entrants into the programme will be left uncompetitive even though they may progress in their employment status. Although education strongly influences the chance of labour market participation, skilled labour can be challenging to find in most qualified and professional segments primarily due to the poor state of the public education system (The World Bank, 2018). Most often, employers prefer to employ those with previous work experience and a higher level of education. Unfortunately, for the youth, lack of work experience is a stumbling block that results in them finding it hard to secure employment (StatsSA, Q2: 2020). Against this backdrop, programme 2, outcome 1 of the ETDP SETA should allocate more funds to increase the production of high-demand occupations.

In South Africa, some imbalances occur between the types of skills developed and those needed in the world of work. Educational supply mismatch examines the skills produced by different levels of education and training systems and the degree to which they respond to skills demand in specific occupations (DHET, 2021). In this case, occupational qualifications become relevant and essential in bridging the imbalances mentioned above. In this respect, SETA's implementation of occupational qualifications through work-integrated learning opportunities with integrated cumulative assessments culminates in an occupationally aligned qualification award. The ETDP SETA learning programmes have shown that they are effective and have a net positive impact on the employment status of the beneficiaries. This impact is attributed to solid research and skills planning, as demonstrated by the SETA.

Programme 3: Learning programmes and projects.

Outcome: Increased number of graduates and the unemployed who successfully enter the post-school education and training system and the labour market, respectively.

One of the outcomes of the ETDP Programme 3 is to *link education and the workplace* through the provision of bursaries, learnerships, internships, Universities of Technology, and Technical and Vocational Educational Training (TVET). The following were the results by outcomes under programme 3. Research results show that one of the impacts of the intervention was that learners were linked to the programme through placement, which lowered the unemployment rate among the 2015-2019 cohorts of beneficiaries. Facilitating employability through reducing unemployment means reducing poverty and contributing to national goals (NDP 2030). In this study, the ETDP programme facilitation of skills development programmes and projects to both the employed and the unemployed in the sector seemed not to have enhanced occupational mobility, as the majority remained in their jobs (retained), which is a grey area that needs to be improved. The fact that the programme is perceived as effective means that this programme was relevant, efficient, and effective and

had an impact. ETDP SETA should not only look at increasing the output but aim at achieving desirable outcomes, certified quality learners who will be competitive in the job market.

Amidst high youth unemployment, there is a need for self-employment through entrepreneurship. The results show a very low intention to pursue entrepreneurship among beneficiaries, against outcome 6 of programme 3 needs: skills development support for entrepreneurship and cooperative development. It is an excellent initiative to train and develop the unemployed beneficiaries to establish sustainable cooperatives; however, their learnership should culminate into a certificate before they venture into the cooperative business. Identifying relevant programmes in demand for entrepreneurship; will help achieve desirable results (high throughput), especially in the township economy. There is also a need to restructure the curriculum to include entrepreneurship, business planning and management, and agribusiness. This is an area most neglected by the youth.

Lastly, there seems to be a mismatch between the type of skills produced by different levels of education and training systems in South Africa and the degree to which they respond to skills demand in specific occupations. There is, therefore, the need to enrol and graduate higher numbers of STEM graduates from both universities and TVET colleges.

Outcome: Skilled personnel to improve teaching and learning.

One of the long-term outcomes of the ETDP is skilled personnel to improve teaching and learning. The programme led to improved access to post-secondary education and training for the unemployed in this sample, which may not translate to employability as national youth unemployment has been on the rise within the study period.

Although the beneficiaries perceive the programme effective, the improved competencies of teachers and government officials for quality of learning and teaching outcome in this programme seems to be challengeable, as some Stakeholders (Training institution) indicated that there are so many teachers who need funding, yet they do not have access. This is against the outcome for improved ETDP sector workers' skills and competencies intended intervention.

Outcome: Increased number of skilled practitioners and employees in ECD, NGOs, trade unions, political parties, SETAs, professional bodies, etc.,

The return on investments of the financial resources (funding) to ETDP SETA is perceived to be positive by the beneficiaries, meaning that every R1 spent contributed to a unit increase in employment in this ETDP sample. Key informants from the colleges mentioned that they get very little funding for the college, untimely most of the time. ETDP SETA should look at this outcome from a bigger-picture perspective, and the Theory of change and the unintended and intended consequences should be checked. A nationally coordinated approach between the SETA and key stakeholders in supporting the growth of the public college system remains strategic for future programming and the success of the SP.

Programme 4: Quality Assurance

Outcome: Improved quality of service delivery and performance through the implementation of a quality and monitoring system

Outcome 4 of the ETDP SETA addresses this problem by aiming to increase access to occupationally directed programmes, emphasising accredited *quality* learning programmes for priority skills in the sector offered through various modes of learning programme delivery. The quality of throughput, the beneficiaries who completed the programme and received a formal certificate, determines how far the SETA has achieved the outcome. Since half of the beneficiaries got certificates, we can conclude that this outcome was partially completed. It is encouraging that the trickle effect of the programme was the quality of employment among the majority of beneficiaries; they were in formal contract employment that offered the standard benefits (medical aid, PAYE, UIF, paid leave), which are in line with the Department of Labour conditions of employment. We can, therefore, conclude that this programme was relevant, efficient, and effective as beneficiaries benefitted through retention in their jobs or got employed in positions where they signed formal contracts.

There is also a low certification rate of those who graduate, an issue that could be related to finance, supply chain management, and assets in the production value chain of certificates. Secondly, there is a mismatch between the qualifications required by workers in medium and higher-level occupations to perform their job effectively and the actual type of qualifications held by the ETDP beneficiaries. Our findings confirm that although the ETDP programme impacted the beneficiaries (employment rates increased after graduation), their average salaries were those of low-skilled workers. ETDP-SETA should guard against delayed accreditation, a risk that could disadvantage a beneficiary who has qualified and shortlisted or got another better employment that needs the certificate. It was reported that in 2019/2020, fewer workers and unemployed youths who completed the programme were regarded as non-completions at the time of reporting due to a lag between the completion of the training programme and the final release of results.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. BACKGROUND TO THE INTERVENTION

This Strategic Plan Evaluation Final Report is a culmination of a series of reports prepared by Africa Chartered Managers (ACM) for the Education Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA) from the inception phase up to this point.

Globally there is recognition of the crucial contribution that a skilled workforce plays in advancing economic transformation (World Bank, 2018). A lack of training or entry into skilled occupations is associated with adverse future employment (Bradley & Nguyen, 2004) and earning outcomes. The most important way to connect young people to the world of work more efficiently and at a large scale is to get them into “better skills development programmes (CDE, 2021). As stipulated in the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP), SETAs have critical roles as intermediaries between education and training and the workplace. Each SETA is mandated to coordinate skills development in its specific sector, ensure that employees acquire the skills needed by employers, enhance the skills of those already employed, and ensure that training takes place according to standards within the national framework (DHET, 2019). Among others, the ETDP SETA programme aims to facilitate skills development programmes and projects for both the employed and the unemployed people in the sector to enhance occupational mobility, organisational productivity for the employed people and graduation and employability for the unemployed people (ETDP SETA Strategic Plan: 2020-2025). Accordingly, the SETA implemented its five-year Strategic Plan for the 2015-2019 period this evaluation relates. During the period under review, the ETDP SETA implemented several programmes to empower the beneficiaries with relevant skills to achieve competence in occupationally directed programmes from intermediate and high-level skills to enhance employability and sectors’ performance and productivity. The programmes also ensured that the ETDP SETA achieves its key strategic outcome-oriented goals approved by the Accounting Authority and the Minister of Higher Education and Training.

Background to the Evaluation

The ETDP SETA appointed Africa Chartered Managers (ACM) to evaluate the effectiveness of the ETDP SETA five-year Strategic Plan 2015-2019. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the extent of the progress and achievement in the implementation of the ETDP SETA Five-Year Strategic Plan, concerning the delivery of outcomes and impacts during the period under review. The following evaluation criteria were applied: *evaluability, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, management mechanisms and arrangements, impact and sustainability*.

Approach and Methodology

The evaluation was conceptualised as an implementation evaluation with a significant clarificatory design component intended to guide a theory-driven approach to the

evaluation. In addressing the study objectives, several research methodologies were employed, including a literature review and reconstruction of Theory of Change (ToC) and Results Log-frames regarding each programme outlined in ETDP SETA Five Year Strategic Plan (2015 – 2019). The units of analysis for the beneficiaries are the learnership programmes: bursary, learnerships, internships, WIL TVET and WIL UoT Learning Interventions.

The evaluation employed a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative surveys for the beneficiaries, qualitative interviews with some key informants (n=13) who were stakeholders, and a semi-structured questionnaire with stakeholders (n=31). Systematic random sampling was used to select beneficiary respondents from a pool of more than 7000 respondents. The inclusion criteria were those with email contacts and telephone, as the online surveys were emailed. The total realised population of learners with contact details was 1933, as extracted from the ETDP SETA Management Information System (MIS). For qualitative interviews, convenience sampling was done for the Managers whom we sent a guide of questions seeking an in-depth expert explanation. Lastly, semi-structured interviews were sent to ETDP SETA 31 stakeholders for their insights on implementing the learnership programme. Quantitative analysis was conducted in SPSS version 27, providing tables and graphs with frequencies and counts, while Atlas.ti software was used to analyse the qualitative data. Reconstruction of Theory of Change (ToC) and Results Log-frames was done through a workshop on outcome harvesting and document review. In line with the government's normative orientation towards partnership, ownership and utilisation of the evaluation results, the evaluation further adopted a participatory approach, including continuous in-process consultation with and inputs from the Project Steering Committee. All cited data sources were then analysed and integrated to produce findings relating to the evaluation questions and criteria. Finally, a draft report of the emerging findings and recommendations was presented to the ETDP SETA for review before being finalised.

II. PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FROM THE DESKTOP DOCUMENT REVIEW

The desktop document review covered the ETDP SETA annual reports, Sector Skills Plans, ETDP SETA evaluation framework, annual performance plans, review of the SETA beneficiary constituency's Profile, Strategic Plans, Management mechanisms and arrangements and the organisational mandate. Based on the desktop study, the evaluation team reviewed the ETDP SETA's overall performance, the organisation's corporate Theory of Change and Theories of Change for different programmes and their interventions for the period under review. Furthermore, the team also reviewed how these programmes are supposed to work and generate evidence regarding intended outcomes. Subsequently, the review made the following key points:

- The ETDP SETA Strategic Plan (2015 – 2019) and subsequent APPs were compiled in line with the National Development Plan (NDP) Vision 2030, NSDP (2019), Department of

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans (2019).

- The review established that six programmes were initially implemented until 2016 when the Department of Higher Education and Training issued circular No. 1 of 2016 informing SETAs of changes in programme structure that resulted in the reduction of programmes from six to four, effective from the 2018/19 financial year. In the review, six programmes are reflected in the 2015/16 to 2017/18 period, followed by 2018/19-2019/20, with four programmes as fully described in the main body of this report.
- The Strategic Plan can be reported as a success wherein the SETA over-achieved many of the planned targets, despite minor challenges observed from the study.
- The study also revealed that budgetary constraints remain a challenge to financing various programmes undertaken by the organisation, resulting in the underachievement of some targets.
- The ETDP SETA organisational level programmes are presently not grounded in a Theory of Change; resultantly, the entire Strategic Plan for the period under review at an institutional level was not evaluable until the organisational level Theory of Change was re-constructed in retrospect during the Theory of Change development phase and subsequent ToC workshop that the stakeholders convened to validate the draft theories presented to guide the evaluation.

III. KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

The research findings are presented in response to the broad objectives of the study. In presenting the findings, the report addresses the key research questions in this section. The key findings report evidence the following indicators: employment status of the beneficiaries (employed, self-employed and unemployed); employment rates; nature of employment (access to benefits); career progression for beneficiaries; and employer perceptions of the value of learning interventions (employable people; increased productivity of the company) and key achievements and challenges. These are measured in line with the evaluation matrix components of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact.

The following section provides a summary of the assessment along the lines of the key questions of the evaluation.

a) Evaluability

Is the strategic plan (SP) evaluable?

Is the strategic plan (SP) evaluable?

Relating the question, "Is the strategic plan evaluable" and the line of inquiries for the sub-questions therein; Notably, the wording of the activities in most indicators and across the years is inconsistent, which could affect the definition of achievement (subjective) and ultimately the SMARTness of the indicators. The indicators need to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound across time (2015/16 -2019/20).

The evaluation found that the ETDP SETA organisational level programmes were not grounded in a Theory of Change; as a result, the entire Strategic Plan for the period under review at an institutional level was not evaluable, and neither was the SP developed with a results-based approach. This lack of organisational-level Theory of Change has resulted in bottlenecks and impediments to the general understanding of progress. However, it is important to note that there was sufficient information to establish a line of sight and assist with the reconstruction of the ToC in retrospect, which would guide the evaluation based on clear performance indicators elicited from the annual performance plans, although implicit. Furthermore, the study revealed that the SP did not have an effective monitoring and evaluation strategy and the research agenda. However, there were monitoring and evaluation reports that the SETA was conducting at periodical intervals.

Furthermore, the APPs are clear about planning, targets, outcomes and budget programmes but do not give rationales to programme design which serve as outcome drivers, such as those referenced in the DORA (see DPME, 2013), which gives limited clarity of how the SP is designed to produce measurable results. However, to proceed with the evaluation exercise, the team elicited data from the SETA's APPs to retrospectively reconstruct the organisational-level Theory of Change; this was then subjected to the evaluation committee for validation.

Regarding planning with gender-disaggregated data collection, the study revealed that the SETA was compliant in this area, as this was well documented in the datasets provided by the SETA. However, there is a greater need to ramp up the numbers on gender disaggregation in beneficiary recruitment to support the marginalised and vulnerable groups. To this effect, in reviewing the ETDP SETA's constituency profile, the evaluation established that the labour market in South Africa remains characterised by a shortage of job opportunities due to slow economic growth. At the same time, racial and gender disparities also remain predominant. The racial profile of the participants shows that the majority were Black (81.1%), Coloureds (11%), 4.5% were Whites (4.5%), and the least were Indians (1.7%). The gender distribution shows the inclusion of more female beneficiaries (66%) in this programme. These results resonate with the overall national goal of ensuring that women are included in all critical spheres of the economy. Most of the beneficiaries in this representative sample were from relatively large households composed of between 3 and 4 people. A fifth (20%) of these households had a monthly gross income of R3500 and below, almost just the minimum wage.

The distribution of learnership respondents in the drawn sample was as follows: relatively more support is targeted to bursaries (33%) and skills development (28%), followed by internship (18%), learnership (15%), with less than 5% of support targeted on the WIL TVET and WIL University of Technologies (WIL UoT). Very few (4%) had some form of disability, and low inclusion rates among people with disabilities. The composition of youths in this evaluation sample was 47.6%-less than half, against the high employment rate among youths in South Africa. Youth aged 15-24 and 25-34 years recorded the highest unemployment rates of 63,3% and 41,3%, respectively (StatsSA, Q2:2021).

b) Relevance

To what extent is the SP consistent with the national development strategy/plan and the sector priorities?

The second key evaluation question addressed under this heading is: "To what extent is the SP consistent with the national development strategy/plan and the sector priorities? In response to this question and its associated sub-questions, the evaluation found that the ETDP SETA SP was broadly relevant and appropriate as a mechanism of policy reform to the South African PSET system designed to provide the beneficiaries with relevant skills to achieve competence in occupationally directed programmes from intermediate and high-level skills in order enhance employability and sectors' performance and productivity as guided by the following MTSF (2014-2019) outcomes: Outcome 6.1: Quality basic education and Outcome 6.5: Skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path.

The study measured the aspect of the strategic plan's relevance across the programs for the strategic plan for the period under review as designed based on the data and documents provided. Although there is evidence that links program design to the positive results established in this study in some way, there are concerns about inconsistencies in performance over the five years for the period under review. For instance, the results across programs show that the program levels of relevance demonstrated a 100% level in 2015/16 and 2016/17, respectively. Thereafter in the preceding years, the levels dropped to 80% in 2018/19. The study, however, establishes that the programs saw an improvement rising again to 75% in 2019/20. The net effect of such inconsistency is that it becomes difficult to conclusively measure the program's relevance with these variances in the level of relevance demonstrated over the years as established.

The perception-based survey from 1933 beneficiaries' results shows that the 2015-2019 Five-Year Strategic Plan was consistent with the national development strategy/plan and the sector priorities. By inference, the objectives and design of the Programmes respond to beneficiaries' needs, and the programme will continue to do so even if circumstances change. The quantitative results reflect overall programme relevance, the programme was perceived as relevant to the needs of the target population, and there is coherence at the strategic and operational levels. 80% of our respondents agreed that the learning intervention met their expectations. They reported that the training and mentorship they received on the learning intervention was relevant to a great extent, while interviews with the Managers confirmed these results. The policy implication of the results is that the objectives and design of the ETDP-learning interventions are sensitive to the economic, environmental, equity, social, political economy, and capacity conditions in which it takes place (OECD, 2022).

c) Effectiveness

To what extent have the results of the SP been achieved so far?

Effectiveness helps in understanding the extent to which an intervention achieves or has achieved its objectives. It can provide insight into whether an intervention has attained its

planned results, the process by which this was done, which factors were decisive in this process and whether there were any unintended effects (OECD, 2022). The evaluation sought to establish the extent to which the results of the SP have been achieved as a key evaluation question for this criterion. In this key question, the study sought to establish further to what extent SP results have been achieved by reviewing data regarding achievement levels and no achievement.

Effectiveness was measured by Programme 2: Quality teaching and learning in schools, TVET Colleges and HEIs data from the ETDP SETA Annual Performance Plans. Generally, there has been improvement in the performance and effectiveness of this programme since the 2015/16 financial period. The overall indicators' performance in the financial period 2015/16 was 63%, improved to 80% in 2016/17, and dropped drastically to 50% in 2017/18. There was an improvement in overall performance indicators since 2018, with 100% overall programme effectiveness in the 2019/2020 pre-Covid-19 period.

The quantitative study revealed that in most instances, the Strategic Plan is reported to have been a success wherein the SETA over-achieved many of the planned targets with superior quality of services rendered and products delivered to the target group, despite minor challenges observed from the study. Triangulated results of both quantitative and qualitative findings are further conclusive that the ETDP SETA learning interventions were effective. The exact inference can be made about SETA's management, disbursement, and allocating of grants to stakeholders for skills development within the different sectors. ETDP SETA Managers and stakeholders interviewed were positive that ETDP SETA was on the right trajectory in prioritising critical skill shortages and critically dealing with people with disabilities.

On the other hand, to measure programme effectiveness based on the beneficiary perspective, the study assessed the learners' expectations from the interventions residing in programme three by examining baseline data against results post-intervention. Overall, the learning interventions were noted to have been effective to a great extent by most of the beneficiaries. Interventions from programme three, in particular, were perceived to be effective in bridging the gap (79.7%) between beneficiaries' theoretical learning and practical workplace, in contributing to the development of multiple skills (85.4%), in making them more efficient at doing their job (79.2%), and in increasing productivity in the organisation (82.3%) and in raising their earnings to some extent.

It is universally recognised that higher levels of educational attainment are associated with better health and well-being, higher employment rates, better labour market opportunities, and higher earnings (Reddy et al., 2016). Further findings in this evaluation study reveal that the learning programmes positively affected promotion upon completion of their programme accompanied by a pay rise. However, those who received certificates were just above half. 47.8% did not receive certificates, yet accredited certification is needed for young people seeking work to be shortlisted for interviews. This could be viewed as a negative outcome if we consider the DHET (2021) report that some young work-seekers are not well educated and do not possess sufficient skills and previous work experience demanded by

employers in the labour market. The economy demands skilled and experienced work-seekers. We argue that not obtaining a certificate makes it difficult and lessens the chances for young people to find employment, ultimately resulting in some losing hope of ever finding a job (thereby becoming discouraged work-seekers). The policy should respond to diverse levels of skills development and occupational pathways shortfalls (such as certification). It should effectively allocate resources in a manner that targets inclusive development (Bhorat et al., 2020). In other words, ETDP SETA should allocate adequate funds for learnership that will be attended for a period commensurate to a certificate.

StatsSA data indicates that during the 2016-2020 period, there has been some significant year-on-year increase in the proportions of young people who have disengaged with the labour market and are also not building on their skills base through education and training. They are not in employment, education or training (NEET). While there are many notable results, the study further revealed that budgetary constraints remain a challenge in financing various programmes undertaken by the organisation, resulting in the underachievement of some specific targets.

In terms of drivers of success and results achieved, the study establishes that there has been a considerable effort and significant improvements in applying "SMART" principles to strategic planning and indicator protocolling, thereby resulting in the achievement of the SP outputs and outcomes year-on-year.

d) Efficiency

Were the results achieved efficiently in relation to the cost of the activities undertaken?

Were the results achieved efficiently in relation to the cost of the activities undertaken?

The evaluation considered this key question: "Were the results achieved efficiently in relation to the cost of the activities undertaken?" In addressing this question, the study established that although the SETA did not fully exploit Results-based management principles in terms of programme design, the SP overall provided good value for money in that the SP was implemented in the best possible way given the other existing possibilities.

The value for money for Programme 3: Improving public service delivery in the ETD sector was worthwhile. This programme performed well between the 2015/16 and 2019/2020 periods, with over 75% performance in all periods except 2017/2018, where the programme was underperforming. The conversion of financial inputs into activities support seems low, as there was under-expenditure throughout the study period (2015/15-2019/20).

However, this has improved since 2017/18 and is most efficient in 2019/2020. The social returns on the financial investments resulted in a higher percentage of employment after the intervention (quantitative results). In terms of programme outcomes realised from the effects of interventions under programme three, the results indicate that most participants completed their learning interventions across all the categories and value for financial resources spent. Although still significantly high, the 18.4% who did not complete their programme represent a loss to both the SETA and the participant in terms of resources, time

spent and unfulfilled targets. These results imply that in implementing the ETDP SETA 2015-2019 SP, the conversion of inputs (funds, expertise, natural resources and time) into outputs, outcomes, and impacts, was done in the most cost-effective way possible. This may include operational efficiency, which refers to how well the intervention was managed. Most ETDP SETA Managers were confident that the administration and disbursement of the funds to beneficiaries were done timely. At the same time, in isolated cases, one Stakeholder from a training institution cited challenges related to untimely disbursement of the funds and low coverage (too few loans disbursed against the high demand) which affected performance.

StatsSA data between 2016-2020 indicates that there has been some significant year-on-year increase in the proportions of young people who have disengaged with the labour market and are also not building on their skills base through education and training – they are not in employment, education, or training (NEET). The SETAs role is to promote the employability of beneficiaries and not necessarily their employment directly. The general sentiment is that the ETDP SETA has helped fast-track the process, which previously took much longer. There is noticeable progress made regarding implementing the programmes, and ETDP SETA continues to provide bursaries to employed, unemployed youth registered with various Institutions of Higher Learning. However, we still reason that there is a need for ETDP SETA to relook into the funding model and placement targeting youths and Black females who are most disadvantaged in terms of higher-income employment.

From a gender lens, it is reported that males are likely to study the so-called masculine science, technology, and engineering-based subjects. In contrast, females are focused on so-called feminine subjects, such as Health, Education, and Social Sciences (Reddy et al., 2016). The value for money would also be realised if ETDP SETA ensured more female beneficiaries are enrolled and graduated in STEM subjects from both Universities of Technologies and TVET colleges, which seem not to benefit much from the ETDP SETA WIL programme.

In terms of results delivery timing, the study established that while in most cases, results were achieved on schedule, there were notable cases where delays were generally experienced due to procurement processes that were misaligned with divisional plans and coordination with key suppliers to the SETA. The financial analysis also revealed significant challenges in the financial resource mobilisation strategy failing to meet certain targets in the implementation of the SP.

e) Management mechanisms and arrangements

Are the management modalities and governance arrangements of the SP adequate? Are the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved clearly understood?

Are the management modalities and governance arrangements of the SP adequate? Are the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved clearly understood?

Concerning the above question: The study established that the SETA has put in place adequate and meaningful management modalities and governance processes and arrangements that are aligned to guidelines in King II report and guidelines The Revised

Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans (RFSPAPPs) (2019) which adequately addresses its governance needs.

The review of data established that the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans (RFSPAPPs) (2019) provide guidance on government planning and reporting processes for institutional Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans. Chapter 8 of the RFSPAPPs (2019) provides for Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation of the plans and programmes of government. The RFSPAPPs (2019) provide mid-term and end-term progress reports on Strategic Plans for a five-year planning cycle. The mid-term progress report must reflect performance during the first two and a half years of the planning cycles and the first half of the financial year; this will be in addition to the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) Mid-Term Review of Government Performance for the relevant period. Implementing Strategic and Annual Performance Plans must be monitored to measure progress towards achieving planned targets. The monitoring findings can improve performance and future planning and budgeting decisions. Monitoring of plans must be conducted continuously by collecting data on specified indicators, verifying, storing the data, analysing and reporting on progress against the achievement of targets. Findings must be used to provide management, oversight institutions and the public with information about the extent to which implementation of the plans has progressed and the extent to which government priorities and development results are being achieved. Reporting is a vital component of the monitoring process and is used to inform management and oversight decision-making. Reporting tracks progress against a plan, improves accountability for the delivery of government priorities and provides information about the use of allocated budgets. It also allows institutions to describe measures that will be taken to ensure that the implementation of plans remains on track. The review has revealed considerable data indicating that the SETA has employed various mechanisms to support management structures to effectively monitor the performance and results of the SP as prescribed by the Revised Framework for Strategic and Annual Performance Plans.

Evidence from the study shows that the SP receive significant administrative, technical and even responsive political support from relevant constituent structures and oversight bodies (DPME, provincial treasuries, policy departments, and the AG) for improvements in applying the framework. Still, the implication is that the SETA receives technical and adequate financial resources to fund priority areas to accomplish the SP outcomes.

f) Impact

What concrete changes have the implementation of the SP brought, or is likely to, to the constituencies and final beneficiaries?

What concrete changes have the implementation of the SP brought, or is likely to, to the constituencies and final beneficiaries?

The impact is the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects (OECD, 2022). It addresses the intervention's ultimate significance and potentially transformative effects, and

the results show a net positive effect of the programme on employment and employability, but not entrepreneurship. ETDP SETA is one of the role players supporting the NSDS III policy by prioritising the skills development programmes in the education sector as the Education training authority.

In relation to the key question, "What concrete changes has the implementation of the SP brought, or is likely to, to the constituencies and final beneficiaries?"

The impact of the ETDP SETA programme was measured through Programme 4: Access and progression into high-level skills and support for work experiential learning data from APPs. This programme performed well, improving from 66% in the financial year 2015/16 to 100% in 2018/19. The 2018/19 period recorded a high performance (100%), and a decline in performance (66%) was recorded for 2019/2020. These results reflect moderate to high impact of the ETDP SETA programme in reducing unemployment and including youths and those with disabilities. We observe that, unfortunately, the target for people with disabilities lowered in 2018/19 and 2019 /20.

The study reveals that, although it would be premature to assess, at this moment, the programme's impact in terms of concrete changes to the constituencies and final beneficiaries, including its potency to strengthen the capacities of national constituents and institutions and the environment (policies, laws, skills and attitudes) that promote the sustainability of results, the ETDP SETA has contributed significantly to the realisation of some of these indicators including the employability outcome, when we consider the net transitions into employment and out of unemployment. The study reveals a positive net transition, as more targeted beneficiaries of the SP moved into employment than unemployment. Overall full-time employment rates increased from 49.7% before participating in the learning programme to 59.1% post-intervention. Unemployment reduced from 30.8% to 22.8% before and after participation in the learning and skills programme, an 8-percentage point decrease in the unemployment rate in this cohort.

Based on the baseline data, employment rates were more likely to significantly increase among bursary recipients (62.3% vs 75.6%-after) before and after the learning intervention, compared to other forms of support. Although skills development had the most significant positive effect on employment, there was no improvement before (83.8%) and after (82.8%) the learning intervention.

Unemployment was more likely to decrease significantly among learnership (53.4% vs 46.1%-after) and internship (72.2% vs 38.2%-after) modes of learning beneficiaries in the two periods. Notably, the WIL TVET programme had high unemployment rates before (65.7%) and after (62.9%), without any significant improvement between the periods, while unemployment slightly increased among the few in the WIL UoT.

Through inferential analysis[1], we can conclude with a 95% level of certainty (95% CI, $p < 0.05$) that there was a significant improvement in employment status before and after the intervention, which is a substantial change the implementation of the SP has brought.

g) Sustainability

How sustainable are, or are likely to be, the results of the SP?
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How sustainable are, or are likely to be, the results of the SP?

Sustainability, in this sense, shall refer to the extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue. This includes an examination of the financial, economic, social, environmental, and institutional capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time (OECD, 2022)[2]

Programme 5: Supporting ETD constituencies for skills development. This programme was dropped in the 2018/19 and 2019/2020 periods. The programme performance was poor in 2015/16 but improved drastically to over 80% in 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Programme 6: Enhancing organisational management and administration for quality service delivery. This programme was also dropped in the 2018/19 and 2019/2020 periods. The programme performed moderately in the 2015/16 period; it improved to 79% in the 2016/17 period and 100% in the 2017/18 period. The programme dropped in performance in the period 2019/2020 period when it was renamed Programme 4: "Quality Assurance".

The findings in this criterion address the key question related to the likelihood of the SP results being sustainable beyond the funding of the SP for the period under review. This section also includes broader considerations around the main factors that influence SP's viability or non-viability, including the level of ownership of the products and results by partners and target groups. The section further probes whether or not the strategies envisaged to ensure that constituencies at various levels (provincial & national) will take lasting ownership of the results. The study recognises the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and its disruptive nature, which could have affected the sustainability of results thereof in the context of national responses and how stakeholders responded to advance ownership of the project results. Given the above context, qualitative results show that the ETDP SETA learning programme is sustainable. The Managers and Stakeholders interviewed felt that sustainability is guaranteed as the programme is well thought out and in alignment with activities already on the ground. They, however, felt that planning involving all stakeholders and constituencies is crucial as the SETA implements multiple programmes simultaneously for its future programming of the SP. Further assessment revealed that the ETDP SETA's mission-critical functions were largely affected by the pandemic in terms of service delivery for hard-to-reach constituency areas resulting in compromised organisational resilience to deal with the effects of the pandemic. The practical implication of these results is that although ETDP SETA is adequately resourced, there is a need for establishing a robust business continuity plan and building institutional capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation assessed subjective assessments of the SETA's beneficiaries and key informants of the role of the ETDP's interventions in assisting students in securing employment. Based on the concrete triangulated results, we conclude that, among other factors (both external and internal), ETDP SETA's learning interventions appear to be making a positive contribution in facilitating the postulated transitions as per the 2015-2019 Strategic plan. The body of evidence assembled in this report is compatible with a hypothesis of programme impact, relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, and these are summarised below:

Relevance: The programmes were found to be relevant towards contributing to the overall outcomes of the ETDP SETA strategic plan for 2015/16- 2019/20 period. Relevance was measured based on assessing the relevance of the activities of the EDTP-SETA across different programmes. For example, Programme 1: Administration activities' performance data indicates that programme relevance was generally positive over the years. Although performance declined to 57% in 2018/19, it improved to 75% in 2019/2020, contributing to the national development strategy/plan and the sector priorities.

Effectiveness: The effectiveness of the programmes was also measured according to the achievement of the activities. Generally, there has been improvement in the performance and effectiveness of this programme since the 2015/16 financial period reaching 100% overall programme effectiveness in the 2019/2020 pre-Covid-19 period.

Efficiency: The efficiency of the programmes has been generally positive since the 2015/16 financial year. However, the conversion of financial inputs into activities support seems to be low, as there was under-expenditure throughout the study period (2015/15-2019/20) in most of the programmes; however, it has been improving since 2017/18 and is most efficient in the 2019/2020 period. The social returns on the financial investments resulted in a higher percentage of employment after the intervention, as demonstrated by quantitative results from the beneficiary survey.

Impact: The impact of the ETDP SETA strategic plan was overall positive. The impact of programmes reflects a moderate to high impact of the ETDP SETA programme in reducing unemployment and including youths and those with disabilities.

Sustainability: The ETDP SETA strategic plan demonstrates that sustainability, as measured by the achievement of programme activities, is certain. The major driving factors for sustainability include the high demand for learning programmes, allocation of resources to support recipients of bursaries and placement at appropriate institutions. Therefore, as long as unemployment remains a national challenge, the learning programmes will remain prioritised and be resourced to contribute towards reducing unemployment.

Given the above, therefore, the evaluation concludes by pointing out a summary of the key achievements while highlighting key shortfalls respectively as follows:

Key achievements

Increased employment rates and retention in the same company

Overall, the findings indicate that the programme has had a positive effect on the employment rate. In addition, in many instances, the beneficiaries continued working in the same companies or organisations where they completed their programme. This is a positive outcome when viewed from a career progression point of view.

Quality and relevance of training/mentorship received.

The majority (92.7%) of the participants indicated that the quality of the training and mentorship received was of an acceptable standard and good quality, with 42.9% stating that the service received was excellent. It is, therefore reasonable to conclude that the quality of all ETDP SETA programmes, Administration, Research and Skills Planning, Learning programmes and Projects, and Quality Assurance are necessary and generally good. These programmes also meet the standards and expectations of most of the beneficiaries as they advance the agenda for a developed and improved skills profile of the sector's workforce for the benefit of employers, workers and employees in the sector.

Key Shortfalls

Evaluability of the programme

The five programmes used different indicators over the years, with different phrasing. There were six programmes between 2015/16 and 2018/19 and four in 2018/19 and 2020/21. This makes it challenging to measure the performance of indicators with a standard yardstick, as there is an internal inconsistency in the measurements of the indicators. Based on the interactions with relevant stakeholders, a need arises to review and standardise the indicator definitions in the 2020/21 to 2024/25 strategic plan period.

Low entrepreneurship intentions

In South Africa, some imbalances occur between the types of skills developed and those needed in the world of work. This is against the backdrop of a high unemployment rate. Few beneficiaries (19%) in our study sample showed the intention to start a business after the learning intervention.

Low certification rate

When learners attend any programme, they are supposed to be retained, complete and employable. In this study, the survey results that show that at least four out of every ten learners in the programme did not receive certificates should be of concern to ETDP-SETA. Due to underspending, the target number of certificates printed and issued in the financial year 2019/2020 was not achieved

Low Inclusion of special groups (disabled)

The learning intervention is gender-responsive but not disability responsive. In 2017/18 and 2018/2019, the target for unemployed people with disabilities enrolled in skills programmes was not achieved. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) to enhance opportunities for employment for people with disabilities through ETD learnership programmes is therefore urgent.

Inadequate funding for the Colleges

Qualitative results indicate that there seems to be inadequate funding for the various programmes. There is, therefore, a need for increased funding and more effort expended in offering more skill-based programmes by continuously offering bursaries and graduate internship opportunities. By and large, the sampled respondents in the study felt that closing all the gaps in education is always a challenge when implementing programmes due to budget constraints.

Covid-19 negative effect

The unpreparedness for Covid-19 and poor organisational resilience strategy supporting mission-critical functions affected the desired outcomes in 2020 because there was no immediate intervention for business continuity. Most people were infected or affected by Covid-19, and the morale of the people was equally affected.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Improve and expedite the certification process.

Most beneficiaries recommended that the SETA expedite the certification process to ensure that all those who complete their learning programmes are awarded appropriate certificates. There is a need for the ETDP SETA to fast-track the process of developing qualifications. This must take cognisance that the issuance process of SAQA and QCTO-aligned qualifications take longer.

Recommendation 2: Additional resources

Other recommendations include allocating additional resources to the learning programmes, increasing funding/stipends, providing post-intervention support and increasing the scale of the programme. Managers suggest long-term learnership for 12 months for both theory and practice so they can get higher certificates. To improve public sector ETD workers' skills and competencies, the ETDP SETA should increase the budget allocation to programmes and utilise it in increasing the number of TVET Colleges and universities funding for skills development and career and vocational guidance. This is evidenced in many of the targets underachieved in the 2019/2020 financial year.

Recommendation 3: Development of Organisational Resilience Strategies in the context of COVID-19 related COVID-19 Pandemic

Managers indicated that the organisational unpreparedness for the Covid-19 pandemic affected the desired outcomes in that there was no immediate intervention for organisational resilience for mission-critical functions supporting business continuity. Most people were infected or affected by Covid-19, and the morale too. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic will remain a threat to the South African economic and education sectors in short to medium term. Rasool (2020b:1) contends that its impact on students, employers, employees, and the unemployed should be continuously researched to avoid the risk of sending misleading signals for public investments in skills development. In this regard, it is recommended that the SETA develop Organisational Resilience Strategies to support business continuity and protect itself from all threats against mission-critical functions.

Recommendation 4: Longer training period and employment

Graduates need more than 12 months of experience to land a higher-paying job. Internships are not a panacea for unemployment because if you are not lucky enough, you are still unemployed after the internship. Graduates need long-term exposure to the work environment. The programme's success is dependent on the successful performance of the organisation. Areas of weakness in the 2019/20 financial year included incomplete contracts and a lack of up-to-date ICT resources. Overcoming challenges include capital investment into ICT resources, staff training, and performance management.

Recommendation 5: Improving the administration and quality of programmes

Approximately 52% of the beneficiaries felt that ETDP SETA should improve the administration of its programmes, while 48.3% stated that the quality of the programmes could be improved. Quantity (number of students funded) may not be the ideal outcome under programme 1, as the quality of the certificate and degree is important, as this weakly links or strongly link the graduates to high-earning jobs. However, results from the 2019/2020 financial year report show a 29% average under-expenditure. A low percentage of audit findings were resolved on time in the same period, reflecting efficiency issues.

Recommendation 6: Increase TVET College students' placement.

It is recommended that the SETA invests in strategies for increased student placements. Programmes offered are of high value leading to employment but are not attached to a qualification. Therefore, the number of TVET College student placements should be increased to enable beneficiaries to gain experience through internship programmes. Beneficiaries suggested that the SETA should provide post-intervention support. We further recommend that in order to overcome underperformance, a strategy for improved monitoring, collection and reconciliation of learners' results timeously be put in place

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In March of 2022 Africa Chartered Managers (ACM) was appointed by the ETDP SETA on to evaluate the *effectiveness of the ETDP SETA five-year Strategic Plan 2015-2019*. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the extent of the progress and achievement in the implementation of the ETDP SETA Five-Year Strategic Plan, with reference to the delivery of outcomes and impacts during the period under review. The following evaluation criteria were applied: evaluability, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, management mechanisms and arrangements, impact and sustainability.

This document constitutes the full evaluation report which is a culmination of a series of reports prepared by ACM from the inception phase up to this point. Earlier reports include the Inception Report, which provided preliminary findings based on the review of documents provided by the ETDP SETA, which included Annual Performance Reports (APP) and several other statistical reports from STAT SA and DHET to give an initial picture of the evaluation being conducted. The preliminary findings were further revised, updated and complemented with results from the quantitative analysis of data gathered from the beneficiaries of the ETDP SETA learning programmes. This final report supersedes all earlier reports and provides a more detailed account of the evaluation of the ETDP SETA's five-year strategic plan (2015 – 2019). The final report is based on data and information gathered from all relevant stakeholders (both internal and external) as well as the beneficiaries of the learning programmes designed to fulfil its mandate of creating pathways to the post-schooling system and transitioning into the workplace, especially for previously disadvantaged communities in order to contribute towards reducing the triple threat of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

1.1 Background to the evaluation

The Education Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA) is a public entity established in terms of Section 9(1) of the Skills Development Act, no 97 of 1998, to advance skills levels following the National Skills Development Skills Plan (NDSP). The mandate of the ETDP SETA is to promote and facilitate the development and improvement of the skills profile of the sector's workforce to benefit employers, workers and employees in the ETD sector. Accordingly, the SETA implemented its five-year Strategic Plan for the 2015-2019 period for this evaluation. During the period under review, the ETDP SETA implemented several programmes to provide the beneficiaries with relevant skills to achieve competence in occupationally directed programmes from intermediate and high-level skills to enhance employability and sectors' performance and productivity. The programmes also ensured that the ETDP SETA achieves its key strategic outcome-oriented goals approved by the Accounting Authority and the Minister of Higher Education and Training.

The ETDP SETA skills planning and implementation is guided by the following MTSF (2014-2019) outcomes: Outcome 6.1: Quality basic education and Outcome 6.5: Skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path. In responding to these outcomes, the ETDP SETA has set for itself the following strategic goals:

• Strategic Outcome-Oriented Goal 1	Expanded research to inform sector skills planning and employability for economic growth.
• Goal Statement	Empirical research conducted to inform labour market forecasting and scenario planning in the post-school education and training system
• Strategic Outcome-Oriented Goal 2	Adequately capacitated educators and lecturers for effective teaching and learning in schools, TVET colleges and higher education institutions.
• Goal Statement	Capacity building for teachers and managers in schools; researchers and lecturers in higher education institutions; and lecturers and managers in TVET colleges to drive transformation and improve teaching and learning.
• Strategic Outcome-Oriented Goal 3	A skilled public service personnel to improve service delivery in the institutions/organisations targeted.
• Goal Statement	Enhance the skills and competencies of public service personnel with a special focus on practitioners, administrators and support staff.
• Strategic Outcome-Oriented Goal 4	Increased number of students who successfully enter the post-school education and training system.
• Goal Statement	Ensure access to and articulation of learning pathways within the schools, TVET, HEI and workplace placements to allow for a seamless career path that leads to the successful completion of programmes in the ETD sector.
• Strategic Outcome-Oriented Goal 5	Enhance capacity in constituent employers for skills development
• Goal Statement	Build human and institutional capacity within the non-schooling ETD sector constituencies
• Strategic Outcome-Oriented Goal 6	A highly effective, professional, efficient organisation informed by good corporate governance practices.
• Goal Statement	Improve organisational performance through effective and efficient governance leadership, management and administration

The ETDP SETA, therefore, sought to conduct an end-of-term review of the strategic plan as outlined in terms of Reference.

1.2 Purpose and scope of the Evaluation

The Terms of Reference (ToR) concisely set out the purpose of the evaluation to assess the extent of the progress and achievement in the implementation of the ETDP SETA Five Year

Strategic Plan (2015 – 2019), with particular reference to the delivery of outcomes and impacts during the period under review.

The evaluation was therefore intended:

- To gather data about each programme's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impacts outlined in the five-year strategic plan.
- To generate evidence-based data on key achievements and challenges in the ETDP SETA strategic planning processes and delivery mechanisms to ensure programmes' relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

The evaluation was guided by the following Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) set out in the Terms of reference, which informed the evaluation and framed how the evaluation was conducted:

Table 1: Questions for the evaluation from the TOR

Criteria	Key questions
Evaluability	• Is the strategic plan (SP) evaluable? • Was the SP developed with a results-based approach? • Does the SP present an explicit or implicit Theory of Change? • Were the indicators and targets sufficiently defined and measurable? • Does the SP have a monitoring and evaluation strategy? How effective is this strategy? • Is gender-disaggregated data collected and compiled?
Relevance	• To what extent is the SP consistent with the national development strategy/plan and the sector priorities? • How well does the SP meet the needs of the target population? • Is there coherence at the strategic and operational levels?
Effectiveness	• To what extent have the results of the SP been achieved so far? • What products have been delivered? Which ones have not been delivered? • What is the quality of the products obtained? How were they used to achieve the expected results? • What were the main reasons for achieving or not achieving SP outputs and outcomes? • To what extent has the COVID-19 pandemic influenced the outcomes and effectiveness of the SP, and how have interventions under the SP addressed this influence to adapt to the changes?
Efficiency	• Were the results achieved efficiently in relation to the cost of the activities undertaken? • Were the results achieved on schedule? • Has the SP been implemented in the best possible way considering the other existing possibilities? • To what extent have financial resources been mobilized to implement the SP?
Impact	• What concrete changes have the implementation of the SP brought, or is likely to, to the constituencies and final beneficiaries? • Has the SP strengthened the capacities of national constituents and institutions and strengthened an environment (policies, laws, skills and attitudes.) that promote the sustainability of results?

Sustainability	• How sustainable are, or are likely to be, the results of the SP? • What are the main factors that influence the viability or non-viability of SP? • What is the level of ownership of the products and results by partners and target groups? • Are strategies envisaged to ensure that constituencies at various levels (provincial & national) will take lasting ownership of the results?
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In the analysis, each of these questions has been unpacked in a set of sub-questions and assessment areas discussed further in the methodology section. In terms of scope, the evaluation looked at the period of (2015 – 2019). Geographically, the evaluation scope is national, covering key stakeholders, beneficiaries and the ETDP SETA constituency.

1.3 Structure of the report

The evaluation report is structured to support the reader's comprehension of the methodological process followed for the evaluation and how the results have been analysed. The conclusions are derived from the findings, and preliminary recommendations have been made based on the findings. A brief literature and document review is undertaken to help frame the findings and analysis. The findings are presented as informed organisational performance data from the ETDP SETA annual reports using a colour-coded dashboard system to record progress and the perceptions of participants who participated in the ETDP SETA various learning interventions. These findings are further complemented by the analysis of other statistical reports from STAT SA and DHET. After a synthesised analysis of each of the themes cited above, a conclusion is put forward, and preliminary recommendations have been made.

2. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was conceptualised as an implementation evaluation with a significant clarificatory design component intended to guide a theory-driven approach to the evaluation. Several research methodologies were employed to address the study objectives, including a literature review and reconstruction of Theory of Change (ToC) and Results Log-frames for each programme outlined in the ETDP SETA Five Year Strategic Plan (2015 – 2019). The units of analysis for the beneficiaries are the learnership programmes: bursary, learnerships, internships, WIL TVET and WIL UoT Learning Interventions.

The evaluation employed a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative surveys for the beneficiaries, qualitative interviews with some key informants (n=13) who were stakeholders, and a semi-structured questionnaire with stakeholders (n=31). Systematic random sampling was used to select beneficiary respondents from a pool of more than 7000 respondents. The inclusion criteria were those with email contacts and telephone, as the online surveys were emailed. The total realised population of learners with contact details was 1933, as extracted from the ETDP SETA Management Information System (MIS). For qualitative interviews, convenience sampling was done for the managers we sent a questions guide seeking in-depth expert explanations. Lastly, semi-structured interviews were sent to ETDP SETA 31 stakeholders for their insights on implementing the learnership programme. Quantitative

analysis was conducted in SPSS version 27, providing tables and graphs with frequencies and counts, while Atlas.ti software was used to analyse the qualitative data. Reconstruction of Theory of Change (ToC) and Results Log-frames was done through a workshop on outcome harvesting and document review. In line with the government's normative orientation towards partnership, ownership and utilisation of the evaluation results, the evaluation further adopted a participatory approach, including continuous in-process consultation with and inputs from the Project Steering Committee.

In the execution of the project thus far, the evaluation team has employed a project management framework which entailed several phases to the overall project. Each project phase focused on specific tasks/activities, deliverables, and timelines. A focus on the involvement of the ETDP SETA internal key stakeholders, rigorous project management, quality reviews and quality management and progress reporting underpinned each phase. Interaction with the ETDP SETA's internal stakeholders at all organisational levels remained central in our approach, thus ensuring buy-in at all levels. Although these phases are sequential, some activities and tasks have been executed parallel to achieve the best-desired outcomes. The assignment was thus divided into the following five phases, as depicted in the figure below:

Figure 1 below presents a visual model of the mixed methods explanatory sequential design, including a brief explanation of the process that was followed and used in this evaluation.

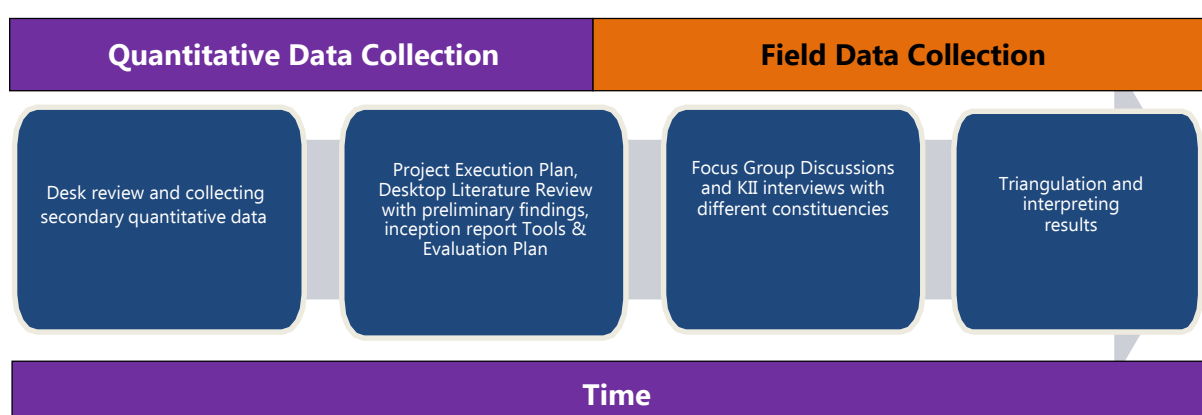


Figure 1: A visual model of the mixed methods explanatory sequential design

The following section describes our approach to constituency data collection at a national level to explore the extent to which programme stakeholders have actually used and dynamically adapted existing Sector Skills Plans to meet the evolving needs of their respective contexts. The evaluation approach also focused on the development of a theory of change, results chain (logical framework) and data collection instruments, and data collection case studies of employers in the skills sector who have successfully implemented their strategic plans and analysis phase.

2.1 Review phase

The review phase was primarily concerned with clarifying the nature of the intervention through an extensive document review, interviews with key stakeholders, and a literature

review. As part of this phase, interviews were conducted with stakeholders from the ETDP SETA through programme-scoping engagement meetings with members of the Project Steering Committee.

After a preliminary review of official organisational documents and policies related to the implementation of the ETDP SETA Strategic Plan, an analysis of planning systems in South Africa was undertaken. A literature review on planning, management mechanisms and arrangements was also undertaken to inform the analytical framework of the evaluation. All cited data sources were then analysed and integrated to produce findings on the evaluation questions and criteria.

A workshop was conducted with representatives from key programme implementing stakeholders to present an organisational-level draft theory of change and result chain framework to validate the ETDP SETA organisational programme intervention description. This clarificatory component could not be finalised following feedback and engagement with the Project Steering Committee. Subsequently, a position was taken that data collection would commence. At the same time, the process of finalising the organisational level Theory of Change is being completed together with the resulting results chain framework runs parallel. Data collection instruments were also developed and shared with the Project Steering Committee. For more detail on this phase, including an explanation of the evaluation criteria employed, please refer to the Evaluation Matrix appendix to the inception report submitted during this phase.

2.2 Data collection and analysis phase

In conducting this evaluation, we adopted a constructive approach to assess the extent of the progress and achievement in the implementation of the ETDP SETA Five Year Strategic Plan (2015 – 2019) with particular reference to the delivery of outcomes and impacts during the period under review.

Primary data collection occurred from the 07th of October 2022 to the 15th of December 2022. Collection can be distinguished between primary (qualitative and quantitative methods) and secondary (structured review and analysis of existing datasets). Basic ethical protocols were observed for all primary data collection, including informed consent; for all data presented in the report, anonymity has been introduced to limit the risk of attributing statements to specific individuals as per research procedure concerning ethical considerations; this included the Protection of Personal Information as espoused in the POPI Act.

2.2.1 Qualitative data sampling and methods

Key informants targeted through these participatory processes were identified. They included key stakeholders or informants such as the Department of Higher Education and Training officials, ETDP SETA programme managers, provincial managers, employers, and training providers. These were sampled for primary qualitative data collection. These key stakeholders were purposively selected based on being implementers of the ETDP SETA programmes and having a legislative interest in the ETDP SETA mandate. The evaluation

team also reached out to service utilisation by sampling programme beneficiaries to form part of the qualitative data collection exercise. The representatives and key stakeholders were consulted in the qualitative data collection process, including interviews and focus group sessions. The beneficiaries' data collection engagement was completed satisfactorily.

2.2.2 Electronic Survey

An electronic survey was administered via the online platform using Google forms aimed at a sample of key stakeholders within the ETDP SETA's establishment and constituency at national and provincial and was further extended to programme beneficiaries. The electronic survey was then piloted with a set of key stakeholders and beneficiaries prior to electronic distribution, and the pilot process resulted in minor changes to the electronic questionnaire. The evaluation employed a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative surveys for the beneficiaries, qualitative interviews with some key informants (n=13) who were stakeholders, and semi-structured questionnaires with stakeholders (n=31).

The relatively small and defined population size combined with guiding considerations of participation and buy-in resulted in all national and provincial ETDP SETA constituencies being included in the sample. Systematic random sampling was used to select beneficiary respondents from a pool of more than 7000 respondents. The inclusion criteria were those with email contacts and telephone, as the online surveys were sent through email. The total realised population of learners with contact details was 1933, as extracted from the ETDP SETA Management Information System (MIS).

2.2.3 Beneficiary Survey Sample

The beneficiaries were sampled from the database provided by the ETDP SETA. A total of 1933 respondents completed the Beneficiary Survey Questionnaire. Of these beneficiaries, 67% were female, 33% were male, and 5% preferred not to state their gender. The table below shows the distribution of beneficiaries according to their learning programmes. Ten (10) respondents did not indicate the programme they were enrolled in and completed.

Table 2: Distribution of Beneficiaries according to learning programme completed

	Frequency	Percent
Bursaries	634	33.0%
Skills Development	544	28.3%
Internships	338	17.6%
Learnerships	296	15.4%
WIL TVET	70	3.6%
WIL UoT	40	2.1%
Total	1922	100.0%

2.2.4 Employer Survey Sample

An online semi-structured survey was designed in google forms and distributed to the respondents via email. The advantage of google forms is that time for capturing data is saved, and data is synced onto a central server simultaneously; see link here.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdL0oa6Mr1yseM6VY-QhciyWmMG_r8sHQv0DkUnbkaPfWS6WQ/closedform

2.2.5 Key Stakeholder Survey Sample

For qualitative interviews, convenience sampling was done for the Managers whom we sent a guide of questions seeking an in-depth expert explanation.

Key informants targeted through these participatory processes were identified. They included key stakeholders or informants such as the Department of Higher Education and Training officials, ETDP SETA programme managers, provincial managers, employers in the sector, training providers and others. These were sampled for primary qualitative data collection. These key stakeholders were purposively selected based on having been implementers of the ETDP SETA programmes and having a legislative interest in the ETDP SETA mandate. The evaluation team also reached out to service providers by sampling programme beneficiaries to form part of the qualitative data collection exercise. As presented in the table below, the sample for key stakeholders included 13 managers from Gauteng, Limpopo, and Mpumalanga.

Table 3: Key Stakeholder Survey Sample

	State your province	Category of the ETDP SETA Constituency
1	Limpopo	Education and Training
2	Mpumalanga	Ntataise Lowveld
3	Limpopo	Limpopo Development Empowerment
4	Mpumalanga	ETDP SETA
5	Limpopo	Waterberg TVET College
6	Gauteng	University of Pretoria
7	Mpumalanga	ETDP-SETA
8	Gauteng	Western TVET College
9	Gauteng	Western TVET College
10	Gauteng	Western TVET College
11	Mpumalanga	ETDPSETA Operations
12	Gauteng	ETDP-SETA
13	Gauteng	ETDP-SETA

Lastly, semi-structured interviews were sent to ETDP SETA 31 other stakeholders for their insights on implementing the learnership programme. Quantitative analysis was conducted in SPSS version 27, providing tables and graphs with frequencies and counts, while Atlas.ti software was used to analyse the qualitative data. Reconstruction of Theory of Change (ToC) and Results Log-frames was done through a workshop on outcome harvesting and document review.

2.3 Data analysis and synthesis phase

All interview and focus group transcripts were subjected to thematic analysis using Atlas.ti software package. The evaluation team initially created codes corresponding with the evaluation questions and sub-questions and conducted an initial coding round using these codes. The first coding cycle was done based on these predetermined codes, with sub-codes added as necessary. Data coding commenced while data collection was still underway, allowing the team to identify areas for further exploration, clarification and triangulation through the remaining interviews and focus groups. The open-ended survey data and the additional documents shared by respondent key informants were also imported into NVivo and coded. Coding reliability was periodically checked by involving different team members in the coding process, strengthening inter-coder reliability. The steering committee's comments on the draft findings and the need for further triangulation and deeper analysis of the draft findings inform the second coding cycle. Overall, the qualitative analysis process enabled for systematically identifying key themes, weighing their relative strength/frequency, identifying nuances and differences between sources within themes, and easily pulling out illustrative quotes from the data. For quantitative results, the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 27 was used (IBM, 2020). This process produced frequency tables and graphs for each section on the results, evaluability, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, management mechanisms and arrangements, impact and sustainability. Disaggregated data was presented to clarify any differences between sexes and between different groups of poor people, including excluded groups, e.g. people with disabilities.

Overall, the mixed-methods approach deliberately attempted to triangulate qualitative and quantitative methods and drew from the primary and secondary data collected to enrich and illustrate the findings. The findings presented vary between complementing and competing findings based on the available data before being synthesised and critically analysed in line with a theory-driven approach after each findings section. In line with a theory-driven approach, the findings were synthesised in relation to each evaluation criterion, and then their implications for the validity of the intervention logic were discussed.

2.4 Limitations of the study

2.4.1 Limitations of the data

The results presented are limited to the extent to which the evaluation team has been able to access and collect data from inception to the end of the evaluation assignment. Thus, the primary qualitative data (interviews) was collected mainly from beneficiaries, with limited interviews conducted with key stakeholders nationwide. The study experienced significant difficulties in accessing qualitative data from key informants as these were hard to reach in most cases. However, these findings provide conclusive data that gives an accurate picture of issues that have emerged from the study, including gaps identified and successes recorded. At an aggregate level, the results presented adequately describe the evaluation's outcome.

2.4.2 Limitations of process

The evaluation experienced significant delays and non-responsiveness of key stakeholders in providing the required data, affecting the findings' currency. Several attempts were made to

reach these key stakeholders to solicit their valuable contributions to the study. However, no significant traction was realised in this area, although sufficient data was eventually collected to inform the study's outcome. This process was supplemented by the document analysis from the annual reports and other statistical reports from STATSSA and DHET. The key findings and recommendations are sufficiently current to serve as a basis for further action and improvement.

3. DEFINING THE WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

3.1 SETAs' role in advancing post-school education and training

The SETAs were established in 2000 through the Skills Development Act of 1998 (RSA, 1998, Chapter 3, Section 10) to facilitate the development of skills in relation to sector-identified skills needs. As the key institutions mediating between education and work, SETAs are responsible for developing a skills pipeline through promoting and supporting learnerships, apprenticeships or internships. Responding to skills challenges and attempting to smooth the transition from learning to work, the framework recognised the inadequate skills and poor readiness of new entrants into the labour market.

3.2 Work Integrated Learning

According to Valencia-Forrester (2020), the term Work Integrated Learning (WIL) refers to an educational approach that aligns academic and workplace practices for the mutual benefit of students and workplaces. It is a form of experiential learning where a student is placed in a working placement or work-based project.¹

This assertion is consistent with Mayombe (2021), who further describes WIL as an approach to career-focused education that includes classroom-based and workplace-based learning forms appropriate for professional qualifications. The three levels of WIL in South Africa, as defined by Bronkhorst (2013), are listed in section 3.3. below.

3.3 Three Levels of the WIL Programme

A. The knowledge WIL

At this level, the weighting of theoretical knowledge is significant, and the practical product, such as the concrete column, is only imagined. Hence, the curriculum integrates work knowledge and skills, including more knowledge at all levels.

B. The practice WIL

This is an extension of the knowledge leading to practice. In this case, the knowledge becomes progressively internalised and is used as the basis for practice, e.g. in the construction industry where the simulated practice and construction of small models outweigh the knowledge acquired in the knowledge phase.

¹ <https://www.sae.edu.za/why-us/work-integrated-learning-and-internships/>

C. The workplace WIL

In this WIL level, practice is done at an actual workplace. The workplace supervisor takes over the responsibility of the college lecturer. He or she ensures that the knowledge and practice that the college taught is embedded through the practical component. Although the focus is solely on the workplace, it is still educational.

Integrating the above three WIL models allows the students to experience an easier transition from college to the workplace. These two worlds, the college and the workplace, are linked by a relationship formed through interaction between the college lecturers, students, and workplace supervisors. If there is no integration, then there is a disjuncture, which is the current challenge with the WIL programmes in South Africa.

3.4 Description of the ETDP SETA Learning Interventions

3.4.1 Bursary Intervention

Objective of the learning Intervention

A bursary programme's core objective is to promote complete access for previously disadvantaged learners to higher education and address skills shortages within the sector and more widely across SA. By awarding bursaries, the ETDP SETA aims to ensure a continuous and increased supply of a skilled workforce in the sector of identified scarce occupations and skills and improve service delivery in the public sector. Awarding of bursaries seeks to provide unemployed youth with an opportunity to qualify (ETDP SETA, 2016, p. 50) and for employed beneficiaries to enhance their qualifications and skills. Awarding bursaries to employees in a firm in the ETDP sector is aimed at encouraging employers to contribute to skills development, particularly in the area of scarce skills required by that firm.

Description of the intervention

Bursaries are awarded to employed and unemployed learners to access higher education and technical vocational training. Learners awarded bursaries are assumed to be registered for further studies with a relevant higher education institution. The career prospects of bursary holders are expected to be enhanced at the termination of the programme. Likewise, the skills acquired are expected to promote mid and high-level skills for the sector. The focus on improving soft skills includes management, leadership and relationship-building skills (INSETA, 2020a).

Key stakeholders

Key stakeholders in respect of the bursary intervention include ETDP officials such as the Provincial Managers and Project coordinators. External stakeholders are university officials; and TVETs (ETDP SETA, not dated-a).

3.4.2 Learnership

Objective of the Learning Intervention

A learnership is a work-based experiential learning intervention which enables the learner to acquire an NQF-registered qualification associated with a specific qualification, trade or profession while gaining work experience. Its value lies in that learners who cannot engage in the full-time study can work and learn simultaneously. Learnerships aim to redress unequal access to education, training and employment opportunities and skills shortages in the labour market for a specific competency.

Description of the intervention

A learnership comprises structured and practical work-based learning and structured theoretical training. The way the programme is split involves 30% theoretical learning and 70% practical work experience with a mentor to guide the process.

The ETDP SETA manages learnerships and involves the commitment of three stakeholders: the learner, the employer and the training provider. The roles and functions of each of these stakeholders are outlined in a written agreement. Learners enter a contract with the employer for a fixed period whilst at the same time studying towards the qualification, the duration of which is pre-defined. An accredited skills development service provider delivers the formal learning component and includes an assessment component (ETDP SETA, n.d.-d). A learnership is designed to provide the learner with a variety of skills that include technical, work-specific and life skills such as communication and teamwork skills (SASSETA, 2019b).

Stakeholders who need to be engaged in this initiative include ETDP SETA officials, training providers, host employers, learners, ETQA officers and officials from the ETDQA unit (ETDP SETA, n.d.-d).

3.4.3 Internships

Objectives of learning intervention

An internship is a structured programme targeted at universities and universities of technology graduates. It aims to give graduates from universities and UoTs an opportunity to build on their qualifications through exposure to structured workplace experience. Exposure to workplace experience empowers unemployed graduates with practical knowledge commensurate with their qualifications (ETDP SETA, 2017c).

Description of the intervention

The ETDP SETA focuses on work experience in areas of scarce and critical skills in the sector. The internship allows graduates to apply their knowledge in real work situations. The internship is a full-time placement with an institution (government or private sector). As Ismail (2018) noted, the skills gained from internships are interpersonal, confidence, self-efficacy and professionalism. Key stakeholders involved here are the unemployed graduate (a potential employee), the host company (potential employer), and the ETDP SETA (ETDP SETA, 2017c).

3.4.4 Work integrated Learning (TVETs)

Objectives of the learning Intervention

The ETDP SETA WIL TVET intervention aims to provide TVET learners access to structured workplace experience in the relevant sectors. The intervention will then serve as a springboard for employment access or help learners become self-employed. Through WIL exposure, graduates are expected to acquire relevant attributes and work-related competencies. TVET's training duration is generally three years for a certificate focused on educating and training students to work in technical or vocational fields. In some instances, a graduate from a TVET may be able to continue further studies in a UoT.

Description of the learning intervention

Access to WIL enables TVET learners to meet curriculum requirements to complete their studies and achieve relevant qualifications. The maximum duration of a WIL placement is 18 months. The expectation is that once they have had such workplace exposure, the learner can complete a qualification to secure employment more easily or become self-employed (ETDP SETA, n.d.-c).

Key stakeholders include the ETDP SETA officials, the host employer and the mentor (if not the same person) and officials representing the higher education learning institution, TVET or UoT (ETDP SETA, n.d.-c).

3.4.5 Work Integrated Learning UoTs

The ETDP SETA WIL UoT intervention aims to provide UoT learners access to structured workplace experience in the relevant sectors (ETDP SETA, n.d.-c). Through WIL exposure, graduates are expected to acquire relevant attributes and work-related competencies. Importantly, access to such experience enables learners to meet curriculum requirements to complete their studies and achieve relevant qualifications. A UoT offers mainly diploma and certificate courses and some degree courses with a three-year duration. UOT focus on career-directed courses designed to be practical, with work-integrated learning being an essential aspect of the course.

Description of the WIL UoT Intervention

The maximum duration of a WIL placement is 18 months. The expectation is that once the learner has had workplace exposure, the learner will have completed a qualification and be able to secure employment more easily or become self-employed (ETDP SETA, 2017c).

Key stakeholders include the ETDP SETA officials, the host employer and the mentor (if not the same person) and officials representing the higher education learning institution, either TVET or UoT (ETDP SETA, n.d.-c). The skills developed through the WIL include technical, business and soft skills, which include a focus on motivational, interpersonal, maturity and confidence skills (DHET, 2013a).

4. CONTEXT AND DESIGN OF THE ETDP SETA STRATEGIC PLAN

4.1 Introduction to the policy and legislative context

The Education Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA) is a public entity established in terms of Section 9(1) of the Skills Development Act, no 97 of 1998, to advance skills levels in accordance with the National Skills Development Skills Plan (NDSP). The mandate of the ETDP SETA is to promote and facilitate the development and improvement of the skills profile of the sector's workforce in order to benefit employers, workers and employees in the ETD sector.

The ETDP SETA skills planning and implementation is guided by the following MTSF (2014-2019) outcomes: Outcome 6.1: Quality basic education and Outcome 6.5: Skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path. In responding to these outcomes, the ETDP SETA has set for itself the strategic goals cited in paragraph 1.1.

Nationally, The South African national planning framework has evolved considerably since its introduction in 2001 amidst a dynamic and complex policy and legislative context. It has its foundation in four early pieces of legislation. The first is the Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996). It sets out the distribution of powers and functions between the spheres of government (defined in the Public Service Act of 1994). It weaves intergovernmental interdependence and cooperation into the fabric of the State. This necessitates planning coordination vertically between spheres and horizontally between departments. The Constitution (section 216) further mandates National Treasury introduce and enforce compliance with uniform treasury norms and standards.

Secondly, the Public Finance Management Act of 1999 (PFMA) provided a legislative foundation in terms of the financial regulatory environment. Chapter 4 (Section 27) of the PFMA linked departmental budget and expenditure mandates with planning by requiring that when the accounting officer of each department submits the department's annual budget to Parliament or the provincial legislature, it must be accompanied by measurable objectives for each main division within the department's vote. Chapter 5 elaborates on the responsibilities of accounting officers regarding budgetary control and reporting. Section 52 also linked planning and budgeting functions for public entities and government business enterprises by requiring them to submit an annual budget and a corporate plan.

The PFMA has laid the basis for and subsequently revised the provisions for strategic and annual performance planning in terms of the Treasury Regulations Chapter 5 (2005, revised 2007). The PFMA and its associated regulations thereby set out the prescripts that the FSAPP has framed to guide planning and the allocation of funds over the medium term to ensure alignment and integration between planning and budgeting, along with annual performance planning, monitoring and reporting.

4.2 Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans

Amidst a dynamic and complex policy and legislative context, the South African national planning framework has evolved considerably since its introduction in 2001. Government introduced the Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation System (GWMES) in 2007, with

a results-based approach confirmed in the National Outcomes Approach (2010) and the NDP. These policy changes reflected a systemic shift towards planning and managing government performance to achieve results.

With the introduction of these changes, new concepts and a guiding logic with implications for government planning were introduced. The Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans (2010) was part of this legislative and policy evolution to consolidate the various planning components into an overall planning, monitoring and evaluation system. The aim was to achieve improved results through better planning and performance. To obtain more reliable performance information and support learning and improvement in the public service; improve the quality of strategic and annual performance planning; and strengthen accountability in the public service, with better strategic planning and management arrangements leading to improved policy delivery.

The purpose of the Revised Framework is to build on the foundation of the 2010 Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans, reaffirm the planning logic and institutionalise planning to enable better service delivery. The planning principles to be implemented through the Revised Framework aim to focus the planning approach towards achieving results; standardise the concepts used in short and medium-term planning instruments; streamline the planning, monitoring and evaluation processes. Moreover, to increase learning and innovation through improved use of evidence and the findings from monitoring and evaluation.

The Revised Framework focuses on planning for women, youth and people with disabilities. It also gives the core principles for short and medium-term planning, the legislative and policy prescripts that must be adhered to and the rationale for the results-based approach to planning, monitoring and evaluation. The Revised Framework describes the processes for developing and approving plans and implementing effective oversight and feedback arrangements. In addition, it sets out the planning principles that inform the logic and content of SPs, APPs, AOPs and Implementation Programme Plans, and the linkages between other short- and medium-term plans in government. It also provides the logic for monitoring and evaluating plans and for using related reporting instruments and their results at the different stages of the planning cycle.

The Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans provides direction to national and provincial government institutions about short- and medium-term planning. This section describes the purpose of the Revised Framework and identifies the legislation, regulations and other prescripts that govern the development of short- and medium-term plans. It also describes the medium- and long-term government policy direction, which, together with an institution's mandate, determines how it carries out its planning. An important component of the section is the description of the Results-Based Approach, which provides the planning logic to be institutionalised through the implementation of the Revised Framework.

4.2.1 Purpose of the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and APP

The purpose of the Revised Framework is to provide the principles for short and medium-term planning for government institutions and to describe how institutional plans align with high-level government medium and long-term plans and the institutional processes for the different types of plans. The Revised Framework also aims to:

- Institutionalise government's national development planning agenda through institutional plans.
- Institutionalise planning for women, youth and people with disabilities in line with the relevant frameworks.
- Provide information about the legislation which informs government planning.
- Institutionalise the Results-Based Approach.
- Provide planning tools which can be used for the different types of plans.
- Describe the alignment between the planning, budgeting, reporting, monitoring and evaluation processes.
- Give the definitions of the various planning, reporting, monitoring and evaluation concepts.
- Outline the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders and institutions that participate in the planning processes.

The revised framework intended to align strategic and annual performance planning practices with government's results-based approach. It is intended to provide a broad guide for institutions when developing Strategic and Annual Performance Plans while acknowledging that government institutions vary significantly in roles and responsibilities. The framework applies to national departments, provincial departments and public entities (including constitutional institutions) (National Treasury, 2010). The framework is to be read in conjunction with the Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information (FMPPI) (National Treasury, 2007) and supports the operationalisation of the revised Treasury Regulations, issued in terms of Chapters 5 and 30 of the PFMA. The FSAPP expects departments to:

- Produce and table a 5-year Strategic Plan (SP), including sequencing of projects and programme implementation and resource implications.
- Produce and table an Annual Performance Plan (APP), including forward projections for a further two years, in line with the MTEF period, including annual and quarterly performance targets.
- Identify core indicators to monitor institutional performance;
- Adopt a quarterly reporting system including submission of agreed information to the Presidency, Premier's Offices, the relevant treasury and the Parliamentary portfolio committees; and
- Ensure alignment between Strategic Plans, APPs, budget documents, and annual and quarterly reports (National Treasury, 2010).

The framework outlines that each department's activities must be founded in its legislative mandate, which it must implement, manage or oversee (National Treasury, 2010). Thus, the Strategic Plans and APPs are intended to give effect to departments' and agencies' statutory

responsibilities while also reflecting the intended outcomes of government. The FSAPP also outlines the intended link between plans and departmental budgets. Strategic Plans should take a medium-term view of five years, but annual budgets are produced as part of the MTEF three-year horizon linked to a budget programme structure. This structure is intended to create a stable framework that links “successive plans and strategic priorities to budget allocations and performance indicators that track key delivery over the medium to long term” (National Treasury, 2010). This means that sudden changes and shifts to budget programmes are meant to be limited and managed to avoid the frivolous moving of funding between programmes. Implicit in this is that institutions should not change their budget structures to reflect goals that are only a high priority in a particular year or for a short-term period. Instead, they maintain a medium to long-term outlook in the interest of structural stability and reliability delivery.

The Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans concisely explains the relationship between the SP, APP and other government planning, which displays the top-down and bottom-up linkages in the government planning system. The framework also explains where planning sits in relation to the electoral, budgeting and reporting cycles of government. It creates direct reporting expectations for APPs in the Quarterly Performance Reports (QPRs) and Annual Reports (ARs) (National Treasury, 2010).

4.3 Theory of Change for the ETDP SETA

4.3.1 Policy purpose and key results

The Theory of Change and logic model were developed in consultation with the Project Steering Committee for this evaluation. Table 1 shows an extract from the logic model as applied for this evaluation.

As the Theory of Change used for this evaluation states, the aim of ETDP SETA is to assess the extent of the progress and achievement in the implementation of the ETDP SETA Five-Year Strategic Plan, with particular reference to the delivery of outcomes and impacts during the period under review. The results would then assist the SETA to improve the quality of strategic and annual performance planning and strengthen accountability for future performance results. The quality of strategic and annual performance planning is understood to be a function of the integration, alignment and consistency with related policy (e.g. the MTSF, Outcomes approach, the NDP (since 2011)), strategies (e.g. sectoral and provincial), budgets, programmes and plans. Strengthened accountability is achieved when Strategic Plans and APPs are subsequently reported against, and those reports are then utilised by different role-players, both within the State and outside of it, to hold public institutions to account in terms of their resource utilisation and performance. This is the purpose of the ETDP SETA Strategic Plan expressed in the Theory of Change and the summary intervention logic below, which works backwards from the intended impact down to the policy purpose.

Based on the desktop literature review, the evaluation team establishes that the ETDP SETA SP for the period under review is anchored on four pathways as its domains of change. The foundation of all four pathways foregrounds a legitimate pathway to actualising priorities related to the ETD sector, including under 6.1: Quality Basic Education and 6.5: a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path based on the MTSF (2014-2019). The

MTSF (2014-2019) focuses on deepening transformation and is the first MTSF which addresses the implementation of the National Development Plan out of the 14 key priority areas identified. The MTSF emphasizes that skills development should form the bedrock of the Government's approach by ensuring that the post-school system has a skilled and capable workforce to meet the current and future needs of the economy and society.

In order to promote and facilitate the development and improvement of the skills profile of the sector's workforce for the benefit of employers, workers and employees in the sector, the ETDP SETA achieves its vision along four pathways. They represent the SETA's journey to the ultimate impact it envisioned in its Strategic Plan for the period under review of 2015 - 2019. The ETDP SETA's Theory of Change is predicated on four pathways to change: **Administration, Research and Skills Planning, Learning programmes and Projects, and Quality Assurance**. They believe that all these domains of change (Programmes) are necessary to propel its institutional performance, resulting in a developed and improved skills profile of the sector's workforce for the benefit of employers, workers and employees.

In its Theory of Change, the ETDP SETA envisions a sector in which:

- the skills levels of employees and workers are raised;
- there is a healthy balance between supply and demand in the labour market;
- there are diverse, flexible routes for initial and in-service education and training;
- a variety of career paths is available;
- the quality of education and training provided is improved;
- the levy grant scheme is efficiently administered;
- there is regular liaison with providers, other SETAs, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the National Skills Authority (NSA), the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), the Quality Councils, the Professional Bodies and others;
- internal and external communication is effective in order to advance national human resource and skills development;
- dialogue and interaction are encouraged between public and private entities in the sector with regard to skills transfer and training;
- good service delivery is encouraged; and
- employers, workers and employees benefit from quality training, higher productivity and harmonious mutual dependence.

The foundation of all four pathways foregrounds a legitimate pathway to actualising priorities related to the ETD sector included under 6.1: Quality Basic Education and 6.5. These relate to a skilled and capable workforce supporting an inclusive growth path based on the MTSF (2014-2019), which focuses on deepening transformation and is the first MTSF which addresses the implementation of the National Development Plan out of the 14 key priority areas identified. The MTSF emphasizes that skills development should form the bedrock of the Government's approach by ensuring that the post-school system has a skilled and capable workforce to meet the current and future needs of the economy and society.

All four pathways are more fully described in a schematic diagram below:

ETDP SETA - THEORY OF CHANGE

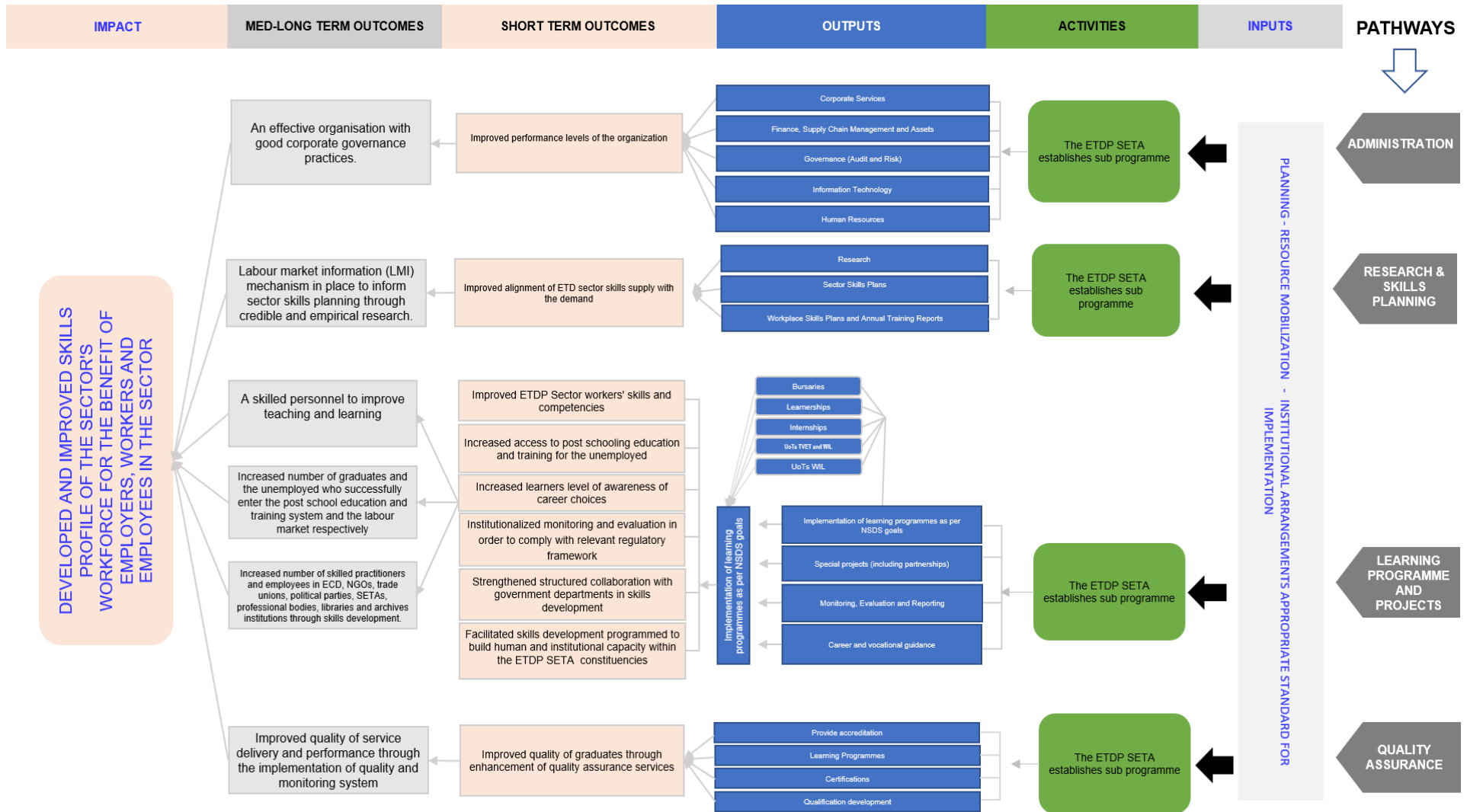


Figure 2: ETDP SETA Organisational level - Theory of Change Schematic representation

Table 4: The four pathways of the ETDP Theory of change

Long-Term Outcomes: The pathways culminate in six long-term outcomes:

Outcome 1: An effective organization with good corporate governance practices,

Outcome 2: Labour Market Information (LMI) mechanism in place to inform sector skills planning through credible and empirical research,

Outcome 3: A skilled personnel to improve teaching and learning,

Outcome 4: Increased number of graduates and the unemployed who successfully enter the post-school education and training system and the labour market, respectively,

Outcome 5: Increased number of skilled practitioners and employees in ECD, NGOs, trade unions, political parties, SETAs, professional bodies, libraries and archives institutions through skills development and

Outcome 6: Improved quality of service delivery and performance through the implementation of quality and monitoring systems.

If these long-term outcomes are achieved, the ETDP SETA will have made an important contribution to achieving its ultimate vision as it relates to a developed and improved skills profile of the sector's workforce for the benefit of employers, workers and employees in the sector. The ETDP SETA's 5-year commitment and holistic approach outlined in its Strategic Plan 2015 – 2019 was designed to provide Quality Basic Education and a skilled and capable

Administration	Research and Skills Planning	Learning programs and Projects	Quality Assurance
This pathway helps the ETDP SETA to ensure effective organisational management and administration. It rhymes well with chapter Five of the ETDP SETA Sector Skills Plan as it relates to skills priority action to ensure effective and efficient service delivery in public institutions.	This programme helps the ETDP SETA to gather accurate information on the supply of and demand for skills in order to address the skills gaps in the ETD sector. This programme lays a strong foundation to achieve strategic outcome number two as it relates to Labour market information (LMI) mechanism in place to inform sector skills planning through credible and empirical research.	The purpose of the programme is to provide services for the implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of learning programmes. The foundational building block of this pathway involves understanding the importance of priority skills action proposed in chapter 5 of the ETDP SETA Sector Skills Plan of ensuring quality teaching and learning in schools and PSET institutions.	Purpose of the programme is to ensure quality provisioning of accreditation, monitoring and quality assurance of learner achievement. It lays the foundation for achieving strategic priority number six as it relates to Improved quality of service delivery and performance through the implementation of quality and monitoring systems. It has links to chapter 2 of the ETDP SETA sector skills plan in respect of change drivers.

workforce to support an inclusive growth path as a response to the MTSF (2014-2019), which focuses on deepening the transformation agenda which addresses the implementation of the National Development Plan.

5. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This section of the report outlines the key evaluation findings based on a triangulated analysis of the literature, documents, and primary and secondary data collected. The findings are presented in order of the overarching questions and the sub-assessment areas, which serve as an assessment framework for analysis derived from the ToR. The key primary results as per the Theory of Change are therefore acknowledged within the existing structure but dealt with in the synthesis sub-sections of the report.

5.1 Review of Strategic Goals

Several programmes were implemented during the review period 2015/16 to 2019/20 to ensure the ETDP SETA achieves the key strategic outcome-oriented goals. The ETDP SETA skills planning and implementation is guided by the following MTSF (2014-2019).

- Outcomes: Outcome 6.1: Quality basic education and
- Outcome 6.5: Skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path.

The review established that six programmes were initially implemented until 2016 when the Department of Higher Education and Training issued circular No. 1 of 2016 informing SETAs of changes in programme structure that resulted in the reduction of programmes from six to four, effective from the 2018/19 financial year. In the review, six programmes will be reflected for 2015/16 to 2017/18; after that, 2018/19- 2019/20 will have four programmes¹ as is more fully described hereunder.

Following our analysis, this report establishes preliminary findings in this regard that depict the progress and results achieved using a colour-coded dashboard system to describe the level of achievement for each programme as follows:

6. PERFORMANCE TARGET REVIEW

The following section provides the achievements of the six programmes between 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18, and four programmes in 2018/19 and 2019/20. The data was compiled from various performance indicators presented in the Annual Performance Plans and other programme documents for the duration of the strategic plan. The data was coded 1=achieved and 0=not achieved. The overall per cent of the programme is calculated as follows:

Performance achieved=Total # of achieved indicators/Sum x 100

6.1 Measuring Programme Relevance

This section presents the level of achievement of specific indicators in the period 2015/16 to 2017/18.

Table 5: Measure of Relevance of Programme 1 for the period 2015/16

Programme 1: Development of a credible ETD Sector Skills Plan	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2015/16
An approved five-year SSP	●
Submission of WSPRs	●
Scarce and Critical Skills Guide developed	●
Annual Stakeholder Survey conducted	●
Research Chair reports informing the SSP	●
Evaluation of workplaces (public HEIs) to ensure compliance with WSPRs	●
Performance = 7/7	100%

● Good performance

● Poor performance

2015/16: Several projects contributed to the finalization of the SSP that was completed successfully, e.g., collection and analysis of the WSPRs; findings and recommendations of the research conducted by the Research Specialists and Research Chairs; Stakeholder Satisfaction survey and Impact Study findings and recommendations. Areas of underperformance include capacity building for SDFs on the Scarce and Critical Skills Guide and conducting a research survey for the impact study. It is proposed that these challenges will be overcome by the SETAs initiative of entering strategic partnerships with public HEIs to conduct required research; and partnering with reputable private organizations to capacitate and disseminate SDFs, Scarce and Critical Skills Guide. The budget allocated to this is, on average under, expended by 65%. The research establishes that this under-expenditure may be due to underperformance.

The results show that the SP was consistent with the national development strategy/plan and the sector priorities and 100% met the needs of the target population. In addition, the coherence at the strategic and operational level as the 7 activities in this programme was fulfilled.

Table 6: Measure of Relevance of Programme 1 for the period 2016/17

Programme 1: Development of a credible ETD Sector Skills Plan	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2016/17
SSP update submitted to DHET for approval on prescribed dates	●
Performance = 1/1	100%

● Good performance/target

● Poor performance/target not achieved.

The Five-Year Sector Strategic Skills Plan update was approved by DHET; the activity was 4% over the allocated budget. The return on investments was positive, and the value for money resulted in the planned activity being done with 100% performance (efficiency).

Table 7: Measure of Relevance of Programme 1 for the period 2017/18

Programme 1: Administration	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2017/18
Clean audit outcome achieved	●
Number of governance structure members trained	●
Percentage of risks within approved tolerance and appetite levels	●
Percentage of litigation managed procedurally	●
Level of ICT governance compliance	●
Level of awareness and profiling of the organisation	●
Level of compliance with SCM- related legislative provisions	●
Number of employees trained on full and short courses	●
Number of APP programmes evaluated	●
Performance monitoring of APP programmes conducted and reported	●
Performance = 8/10	80%

● Good performance/target ● Poor performance/target not achieved

The programme activities were relevant to the achievement of programme outcomes. Their overall performance in 2018/19 was positive, with eight out of ten activities scoring (80%), except for governance structure members trained and compliance with SCM- related legislative provisions, which scored negatively. There was a 39% average under expenditure, which could be the reason for the two negatively performing indicators in this programme.

6.2 Measuring Programme Effectiveness

The section focuses on the effectiveness of the programmes and answers the following questions:

- To what extent have the results of the SP been achieved so far?
- What products have been delivered? Which ones have not been delivered?

Table 8: Measure of Effectiveness of Programme 2 in the period 2015/16

Programme 2: Quality teaching and learning in schools, TVET Colleges and HEIs	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2015/16
Number of Grade R/ Foundation Phase teachers enrolled on the Grade R Diploma or B.Ed. Foundation Phase degree	●
Number of Grade R/ Foundation Phase teachers enrolled for 2nd or later years	●
Number of primary and secondary school teachers enrolled in subject content and ICT programmes	●
Number of teachers in full service and LSEN schools enrolled for braille and sign language facilitation	●

Number of primary and secondary school teachers enrolled in End User Computing Learnership	●
Number of TVET lecturers and management enrolled in relevant programmes	●
Number of academics in research or HEIs enrolled at master's or PhD levels	●
Number of HEIs receiving financial support for staff development	●
Performance = 5/8	63%

● Good performance/target achieved ● Poor performance/target not achieved

There was overall 63% good performance in this programme in the period 2015/16. The performance within this programme is driven by external factors such as students enrolling and training centres administrating processes timeously. The research establishes that there is misalignment of timings with training providers and ETDP SETA which may have contributed to the underperformance of this programme. The budget performance indicates 95% under-expenditure of claims not being paid out to training providers.

Weak areas that need improvement were Grade R/ Foundation Phase teachers enrolled for 2nd or later years, Number of TVET lecturers and management enrolled in relevant programmes, and HEIs receiving financial support for staff development.

Table 9: Measure of Effectiveness for Programme 2 for the period 2016/2017

Programme 2: Quality teaching and learning in schools, TVET Colleges and HEIs	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2016/17
Number of public-school teachers enrolled in ICT skills development programmes	●
Financial support to DBE on establishment of broadcast and digital platforms for teacher development	●
Financial support for the development of self-diagnostic assessment for teachers	●
Training of GET teachers on Home Language and English First Additional Language	●
Number of independent schools associations supported in skills development programmes (NAISA)	●
Number of TVET colleges supported	●
Number of TVET college governors' councils supported through skills development	●
Number of public HEIs supported	●
Number of academics in research or HEIs enrolled at Master's and PhD levels (NGAP)	●
Number of levy paying private HEIs, NGOs and TVET colleges supported	●
Number of teacher trade unions supported through skills development	●
Performance = 6/11	54%

● Good performance/target ● Poor performance/target not achieved

This programme did not perform well in 2016/17 (54%). 5 out of six activities did not do well. The average under-expenditure of this programme was 84%, indicating that the low

disbursement of funds is negatively impacting the programme's implementation. The SETA needs to improve its operational effectiveness to meet demands.

Table 10: Measure of Effectiveness for Programme 2 for the period 2017/18

Programme 2: Research and Skills Planning	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2017/18
An updated approved annual SSP to inform organisational planning	
Number of research organisations supported through skills development	
Performance = 1/2	50%

This programme moderately performed in the 2017/18 period. Research organisations were not adequately supported through skills development, most likely due to the 41% average under-expenditure.

Table 11: Measure of Effectiveness for Programme 2 for the period 2018/19

Programme 2: Quality teaching and learning in schools, TVET Colleges and HEIs	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2018/19
2.1 An updated approved annual SSP to inform organisational planning	
2.2 Number of research reports produced	
2.3 Number of approved WSPs and ATRs	
Performance = 2/3	66%

 Good performance/target  Poor performance/target not achieved

The programme performed better in 2018/19 than the previous year, although units of measurement were different. Levy-paying organizations submitted a low number of WSPs and ATRs. A potential strategy to overcome under-performance is to give feedback on all WSPs and ATRs submitted within three months of submission.

The Research project was 100% under budget. Funds were budgeted for the renewal of the Research Chairs, which was not achieved this year. There was a 60% average under expenditure.

Table 12: Measure of Effectiveness for Programme 2 for the period 2019/20

Programme 2: Research and Skills Planning	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2019/20
2.1 An updated approved annual Sector Skills Plan by DHET	
2.2 Number of research reports produced	
2.3 Percentage of WSPs and ATRs assessed, and feedback provided within 3 months after the closing date	
Performance = 3/3	100%

 Good performance/target  Poor performance/target not achieved

Compared to the previous period, the targets were all achieved; thus, no areas of underperformance have been identified. The budget is, on average, 54 % under-expensed. Enough researchers to output the required number of reports in 2018/19 and 2019/20 years were appointed in 2018/19.

6.3 Measuring Programme Impact

This section provides findings on the extent to which the programmes contributed to expected outcomes based on the level of achievement of the specific indicators presented in the tables below

Table 13: Measure of Impact for Programme 3 for the period 2015/16

Programme 3: Improving public service delivery in the ETD sector	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2015/16
Number of school administrators placed in schools for the 2nd or later years	●
Number of unemployed youths trained as administrators	●
Number of national, provincial and district officials enrolled in relevant learning programmes	●
Performance	66%

● Good performance/target ● Poor performance/target not achieved

This programme performed well in 2015/16; two activities were satisfactory. The number of school administrators placed in schools for the 2nd or later years increased, reflecting the ETDP SETA programme's impact. The partnership with DBE has been favourable in the delivery of training programmes and the reduction of the costs of training. Underperformance is driven by unemployed youth being unable to attend classes. The average budget under expenditure for this programme is 71%.

Table 14: Measure of Impact for Programme 3 for the period 2016/17

Programme 3: Improving public service delivery in the ETD sector	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2016/17
Number of interns placed as school administrators in schools for the third-year management development programmes.	●
Number of key and strategic government officials in education enrolled in public administration and management development programmes.	●
Advanced Diploma in Leadership and Management Diploma (DBE Special Project)	●

● Good performance/target ● Poor performance/target not achieved

The high achievement of this programme is due to the high number of enrolments with payments settled within the budgeted amount. This programme is, on average, 72% under the expected expenditure. The addition of the Advanced Diploma in Leadership and

Management Diploma (DBE Special Project) impacted the overall performance, which exceeded the previous years 'performance.

Table 15: Measure of Impact for Programme 3 for the period 2017/18

Programme 3: Improved quality teaching and learning in institutions	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2017/18
Number of public TVET college lecturers and managers supported through skills development	
Number of Community Education and Training Colleges practitioners supported through skills development	
Universities South Africa (USAf) supported through skills development	
Number of public HEIs supported through skills development	
Number of private HEIs supported through skills development	
Number of private FET colleges supported through skills development	
Number of public school teachers enrolled in full qualifications	
Number of public school teachers enrolled in part qualifications/skills programmes	
Number of public school teachers awarded bursaries	
Number of government officials in the education sector enrolled in public administration and management development programmes	
Number of Teacher Union Institutes supported through skills development	
Performance 3/11	27%

 Good performance/target  Poor performance/target not achieved

The programme was worded differently in 2017/18 and constituted 11 activities, of which only three were done with a positive impact (27%). The programme generally did not achieve its targets. Delays in procurement and under-recruitment are the main drivers of under-achievement. Public school teachers' advancement was poor, while there was a lack of support for private FETs and HEIs.

Table 16: Measure of Impact for Programme 3 for the period 2018/19

Programme 3: Improving public service delivery in the ETD sector	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2018/19
3.1 Number of teachers, school managers and government officials enrolled in full qualifications	
3.2 Number of teachers enrolled in part-qualifications/skills programmes	
3.3 Number of TVET and community college lecturers enrolled in skills programmes	
3.4 Number of public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) funded for skills development	
3.5 Number of private HEIs and Further Education & Training (FET) colleges funded for skills development	
3.6 Number of workers who completed skills programmes	
3.7 Number of unemployed enrolled in skills development programmes	

3.8 Number of unemployed people that completed skills programmes	●
3.9 Number of successful active partnerships with ETD constituencies	●
3.10 Number of education departments' special projects funded	●
3.11 Number of impact studies conducted on previous projects	●
3.12 Number of training sites monitored	●
3.13 Number of ETD-related career guidance events conducted	●
Performance= 10/13	77%

● Good performance/target ● Poor performance/target not achieved

There were two additional activities added to the programme in 2018/19. The programme improved drastically from 27% in 2017/18 to 77% in 2018/19. Overall, the programme made a 77% impact on the ETDP programme in 2018/19. Notably, the number of unemployed people who completed skills programmes and the number of teachers enrolled was low (target not achieved). Late start of programmes is responsible for driving under-achievement as they are in progress on 31 March when ETDP SETA financial year ends. To overcome this challenge, a coordination strategy was implemented for these programmes. The funds were adequately utilised, 27% average under expenditure, showing the value for money was worthwhile (efficiency).

Table 17: Measure of Impact for Programme 3 for the period 2019/20

Programme 3: Improving public service delivery in the ETD sector	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2019/20
3.1.1 Number of government officials enrolled in skills development	●
3.1.2 Number of teachers enrolled in teacher development programmes	●
3.1.3 Number of TVET Colleges funded for skills development	●
3.1.4 Number of community college practitioners enrolled in skills development	●
3.1.5 Number of universities funded through skills development	●
3.1.6 Number of private HEIs and FET Colleges funded for skills development	●
3.1.7 Number of NGOs/ CBOs/NPOs funded for skills development	●
3.1.8 Number of trade unions funded for skills development	●
3.1.9 Number of political parties funded for skills development	●
3.1.10 Number of SETAs, associations and statutory bodies funded for skills development	●
3.1.11 Number of workers who completed full qualifications	●
3.1.12 Number of workers funded through SETA bursaries who completed full qualifications	●
3.1.13 Number of workers who completed skills programmes	●
3.1.14 Number of Unemployed enrolled in occupational programmes, including learnerships mainly through TVET Colleges	●
3.1.15 Number of Unemployed enrolled in skills programmes	●
3.1.16 Number of Unemployed awarded bursaries	●
3.1.17 Number of students placed for the work experience (TVET College Students)	●

3.1.18 Number of students placed for the work experience (University Students)	●
3.1.19 Number of interns placed for workplace experience	●
3.1.20 Number of Unemployed completed learnerships	●
3.1.21 Number of Unemployed completed skills programmes	●
3.1.22 Number of Unemployed completed full qualifications through bursaries	●
3.1.23 Number of students who completed workplace experience	●
3.1.24 Number of Unemployed completed internships	●
3.1.25 Number of candidates enrolled in recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) programme	●
3.1.26 Number of Candidates who complete qualifications through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) programmes	●
3.1.27 Number of people with disabilities enrolled in skills programmes	●
3.1.28 Number of cooperatives funded	●
3.2.1 Number of government partnerships established with the Department of Basic Education	●
3.2.2 Number of government partnerships established with the Department of Higher Education and Training	●
3.3.1 Number of tracer studies conducted to assess the impact of projects implemented	●
3.3.2 Percentage of projects monitored for implementation within set time frames	●
3.4.1 Number of career guidance awareness events implemented	●
Performance 23/27	85%

● Good performance/target ● Poor performance/target not achieved

The programme further improved in 2019/2020, with 14 additional activities; it contributed to an 85% impact on the ETDP SETA programme. Fewer workers and unemployed youths who completed training are regarded as non-completions at the time of reporting because there is a lag between the completion of the training programme and the final release of results. The budget for Employed Learning and Unemployed Learning programmes is 20% and 8% over expenditure. To overcome under-performance, a strategy for improved monitoring, collection and reconciliation of learners' results will be implemented. There was a 22% average over expenditure, showing that the budget did not tally the activities.

6.4 Measuring Programme Sustainability

This section presents findings on the extent to which programme activities contributed towards the sustainability of the programmes.

Table 18: Measure of Sustainability for Programme 4 for the period 2015/16

Programme 4: Access and progression into high-level skills and support for work experiential learning	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2015/16
Number of renewed bursaries for students	●
Number of students awarded bursaries for full qualifications	●
Number of youths provided with a second chance to improve their matric results	●
Number of unemployed candidates receive qualifications through RPL	●
Number of youths placed in workplace experience programmes (graduates and undergraduates)	●
Number of career guidance booklets printed and distributed to learners	●
Number of CDOs placed at institutions of learning or workplaces	●
Number of youths enrolled in learnership programmes	●
Number of people with disabilities enrolled in skills programmes	●
Performance 6/9	66%

● Good performance/target ● Poor performance/target not achieved

The programme achieved a 66% success rate, including training people with disabilities activity satisfactorily done. The achievement noted above indicates a high demand for the training programme, with many students enrolling and over subscribing. This indicates that the programme is generally sustainable in the long term as there will always be demand from youths needing skills development to enhance their chances of employability. However, the findings also show that underachievement in some areas is attributed to the lack of enrolments or (attrition) students leaving the programme as they are absorbed into other opportunities, including job opportunities. Nonetheless, the programme remains a gateway to employment opportunities, especially for the youth. The average budget under expenditure for this programme is 64%.

Table 19: Measure of Sustainability for Programme 4 for the period 2016/17

Programme 4: Access and progression into high-level skills and support for work experiential learning	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2016/17
Number of unemployed youths awarded new bursaries	●
Number of unemployed youths awarded bursaries (renewals)	●
Number of CDOs placed at TVET colleges (continuation)	●
Number of career guides distributed	●
Number of career guidance events organised for the distribution of career guides	●
Number of unemployed youths provided with workplace experience (internships and WPEs)	●
Number of learners enrolled for RPL (including RPL centres)	●
Number of unemployed youth enrolled in skills programmes, including	●

metric re-write/second chance project	
Number of unemployed youths enrolled in learnership programmes	●
Training of people with disabilities	●
Performance =6/10	60%

● Good performance/target ● Poor performance/target not achieved

The programme sustained a 60% success rate. There is a low enrolment rate of unemployed youth in skills programmes, including matric re-write/second chance projects. Fewer bursaries were awarded to the unemployed youth as these funds were allocated to NSFAS. Also, learners presented with employment opportunities dropout and left the programme. Where there is over achievement is where there are funds available in the budget to accommodate more interventions. The average budget allocated to this programme is 82% under expenditure. Therefore, the programme's sustainability is closely tied to the resource allocation and incentives to ensure that more young people are enrolled and retained in the various programmes.

Table 20: Measure of Sustainability for Programme for the period 2017/18

Programme 4: Youth Development and Student Support	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2017/18
Number of students awarded new bursaries	●
Number of students awarded bursaries (renewals)	●
Number of graduates and undergraduates provided with workplace experience (CDOs, internships, TVET college and UoT graduate placements)	●
Number of candidates receiving qualifications through Recognition of Prior learning (RPL)	●
Number of unemployed youth enrolled in skills programmes	●
Number of unemployed youth enrolled in learnership programmes	●
Number of unemployed people with disabilities enrolled in skills programmes	●
Number of co-operatives supported through skills development (continuation)	●
Performance =6/8	75%

● Good performance/target ● Poor performance/target not achieved

In 2017/18, the programme was worded differently, with different activities to implement. Enrolling people with disabilities and youths in skills programmes was underachieved in this period, compared to the previous two periods, which should be an area of concern. Despite that, the programme sustained a 75% success rate. Under-achievement was primarily due to stipends being unavailable at student recruitment. There was an 11% average under expenditure, showing the value for money was worthwhile as most of the funds were utilised to realise the positive results.

Table 21: Measure of Sustainability for Programme 4 for the period 2018/19

Programme 4: Quality Assurance	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2018/19
4.1 Number of learning programmes approved	●
4.2 Number of certificates issued	●
4.3 Number of learning materials developed	●
Performance=3/3	100%

Targets this year were achieved and surpassed. The programme was 59% under-expensed because internal staff members procured certificate templates from Government Printers instead of private and more costly companies. The target of people with disabilities and youths was not included in this programme in this period, which we find is a shortfall. The good news is that the target of certificates was achieved, although quantitative results show that it was just above half of the beneficiaries got certificates in this period.

Table 22: Measure of Sustainability for Programme 4 for the period 2019/20

Programme 4: Quality Assurance	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2019/20
4.1. Percent of learning programmes received for quality assurance evaluation is evaluated, and feedback is provided within 120 days	●
4.2. The number of certificates printed and issued	●
4.3. The number of occupational qualifications developed	●
Performance =2/3	66%



Good performance/target



Poor performance/target not achieved

The target to develop 3 occupational qualifications has been missed. Developing a qualification takes longer than a year and will be aligned to SAQA and QCTO processes. An 84% average under-expenditure could have contributed to the occupational qualifications' development target underachievement. However, once these outstanding activities are completed, it is evident from previous years that the programmes are sustainable and will remain in high demand, especially among the youth seeking to develop their skills or those seeking employment through placements with employers.

6.5 Programme Impact and Effectiveness

Programme 5 was discontinued in 2018/19 and 2019/20 as the programmes were consolidated and reduced to four main programmes. Nonetheless, the findings presented here for 2015/16 and 2016/17 lay a foundation and contributed to successive programmes' performance.

Table 23: Measure of Impact and Effectiveness for Programme 5 for the period 2015/16

Programme 5: Supporting ETD constituencies for skills development	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2015/16
Number of Trade Union Federations supported	●
Number of Political Parties supported	●
Number of NLPEs supported	●
Number of Youth Cooperatives supported	●
Number of Private Training Providers supported (APPETD and non-APPETD)	●
Number of Independent School Associations supported	●
Support provided to HEIs through a partnership with HESA	●
Number of Research Organisations supported	●
Number of Teacher Union Institutes supported	●
Number of SETAs, Quality Assurance and Professional Bodies supported	●
Performance = 3/10	30%

● Good performance/target ● Poor performance/target not achieved

The evaluation establishes that this is one of the most underperforming programmes (30%) of the ETDP SETA. This underachievement is driven by constituents not being able to meet the criteria or not accepting offers from the SETA. This programme has an average of 81% under spending on interventions. The programme was not effective in supporting ETD's strategic plan activities. The programme experienced teething problems from which some lessons were learnt and carried to the next financial year.

Table 24: Measure of Impact and Effectiveness for Programme 5 for the period 2016/17

Programme 5: Supporting ETD constituencies for skills development	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2016/17
Number of trade union federations supported in skills development	●
Number of political parties supported in skills development	●
Skills development Support for Universities South Africa	●
Number of Private Training providers (APPETD and non-APPETD Affiliates)	●
Number of SGBs as employers and associations supported	●
Number of semi-registered ECD centres supported and fully registered	●
Number of cooperatives supported (continuation)	●
Number of SETAs and councils paying levies to the ETDP SETA supported	●
Performance = 7/8	86%

● Good performance/target ● Poor performance/target not achieved

The programme improved drastically in 2016/17, with only one underachieved activity. Underachievement is due to late enrolment dates at the ECD institution. Skills development

support activities have been achieved at 82% under budget. The programme made an 86% impact on the beneficiaries as their numbers increased-ETDP SETA coverage.

Table 25: Measure of Impact and Effectiveness for Programme 5 for the period 2017/18

Programme 5: Skills Development for ETD Constituencies	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2017/18
Number of trade union organisations, including trade union federations supported through skills development	
Number of political parties supported through skills development	
Number of NLPEs, NGOs and Worker Education Organisations supported through skills development	
Number of school governing bodies supported through skills development	
Number of SETAs and professional bodies paying levies to the ETDP SETA supported through skills development	
Number of independent schools' associations supported through skills development	
Number of private training providers supported through skills development	
Performance = 7/8	86%

 **Good performance/target**  **Poor performance/target not achieved**

The programme sustained an 86% success rate, just like the previous period. Several trade union organisations, including trade union federations supported through skills development, were the underperforming indicators.

6.6 Measuring Effectiveness and Efficiency

Similarly, Programme 6 was discontinued in 2018/19 and 2019/20. Some of the activities in this programme were incorporated into the consolidated programmes. Therefore, these findings have a bearing on the on-going performance of the four main programmes.

Table 26: Measure of Effectiveness and Efficiency for Programme 6 for the period 2015/16

Programme 6: Enhancing organisational management and administration for quality service delivery	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2015/16
Labour peace promoted and maintained	
Human Resources organisation-wide business management processes developed and implemented	
Integrated employee wellness initiatives (including disability management) implemented	
A SETA-wide performance monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework and plan are in place	
Increase number of accredited providers in rural areas	
Applications for accreditation and extension of scope for new/emerging providers are assessed	
Assessment results verified/externally moderated	

Learners for full qualifications certificated	●
Increase the number of occupational qualifications developed	●
Qualification Assessment Specifications and External Integrated Summative Assessment tools and instruments are developed	●
Bank of assessment tools and instruments for 2 sets of occupational qualifications are developed	●
Learning materials for occupational qualifications are developed	●
Number of identified business processes that are ICT enabled	●
Business units able to utilise digitisation capabilities and report online	●
Contract management process workflow enabled	●
All internally managed discretionary projects reported online (excluding those managed by partners)	●
Performance = 7/16	44%

● Good performance/target

● Poor performance/target not achieved

The programme's success is dependent on the successful performance of the organisation. Areas of weakness include incomplete contracts and a lack of up-to-date ICT resources. Overcoming challenges include capital investment into ICT resources, staff training, and performance management. The programme was inefficient as the financial resources used did not reflect the value for money, seven out of 16 indicators performed well, while more-8 did not.

Table 27: Measure of Effectiveness and Efficiency for Programme 6 for the period 2016/17

Programme 6: Enhancing organisational management and administration for quality service delivery	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2016/17
Occupational qualifications developed.	●
Occupational qualifications learning materials are developed	●
Number of accredited providers in rural areas	●
Number of Learning Programmes are evaluated	●
Assessment results verified/externally moderated.	●
Number of Learners certificated against qualifications	●
Staff developed through skills programmes	●
The extent to which sound legal support and advisory services to the organisation are provided	●
The extent to which Good Corporate governance practices are promoted	●
ICT Systems upgraded	●
The extent to which the organisation's products and services are profiled and marketed	●
Performance Monitoring and Support conducted and reported on	●
Four quarterly evaluation progress reports were submitted to management structures.	●
100% compliance with Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), 1999; Treasury Regulations and relevant legislative prescripts.	●
Performance=3/14	79%

● Good performance/target ● Poor performance/target not achieved

Most projects within programme six were achieved, except for three, because they commenced late due to unresponsive bids. The programme made a 79% contribution to the ETDP SETA strategic plan, and the value for money was worthwhile (efficiency).

Table 28: Measure of Effectiveness and Efficiency for Programme 6 for the period 2017/18

Programme 6: Improved Quality Assurance	
Performance Indicator	Achievement 2017/18
Number of learning programmes evaluated	●
Number of external moderations conducted	●
Number of Assessment Centres established	●
	100%

● Good performance/target ● Poor performance/target not achieved

Programme 6 completely changed its activities in 2017/18 before it was reworted in 2018/19 and 2019/20. The quality-of-service delivery and performance was achieved this year at 75% under expenditure. The programme contributed 100% to the 2015/16 -2019/20 Strategic Plan; hence the value of money and social returns on the beneficiaries was worthwhile (efficiency).

6.7 Measuring Programme Evaluability

Notably, the wording of the activities in most indicators and across the years is inconsistent, which could affect the definition of achievement (subjective) and, ultimately, the alignment of these to the "SMART" model of indicator design. The indicators must be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART) across time (2015/16 -2019/20). The evaluation found that the ETDP SETA organisational level programmes were not grounded in an explicit Theory of Change; as a result, the entire Strategic Plan for the period under review at an institutional level was not evaluable, and neither was the SP developed with a results-based approach. To remedy this challenge, the Theory of Change was developed in retrospect with the participation of the key stakeholders in the four key programmes through which the strategic plan was implemented.

The table below depicts the summary of Programmes showing efficiency in the use of financial resources:

Table 29: Summary of Programmes showing efficiency in use of financial resources

	2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19		2019/20	
Programme after 2017/18	Perf	Under exp	Perf	Under exp	Perf	Under exp	Perf	Under exp	Perf	Under exp
Programme 1: Administration	This was worded differently before 2018						57%	14%	75%	29%
Programme 2: Quality teaching and learning in schools, TVET Colleges and HEIs	63%	95%	80%	84%	50%	41%	66%	60%	100%	54%
Programme 3: Improving public service delivery in the ETD sector	80%	71%	100%	72%	27%	22%	77%	27%	88%	22%
Programme 4: Quality Assurance	This was worded differently before 2018						100%	59%	66%	85%
Before 2018/19										
Programme 1: Development of a credible ETD Sector Skills Plan***	100%	65%	100%	48%	80%	39%				
Programme 2: Quality teaching and learning in schools, TVET Colleges and HEIs	63%	95%	80%	84%	50%	41%				
Programme 3: Improving public service delivery in the ETD sector	80%	71%	100%	72%	27%	22%				
Programme 4: Access and progression into high-level skills and support for work experiential learning***	67%	23%	60%	82%	75%	11%				
Programme 5: Supporting ETD constituencies for skills development	30%	81%	83%	82%	86%	39%				
Programme 6: Enhancing organisational management and administration for quality service delivery	50%	50%	79%	31%	100%	75%				

**Indicator definition and items in the scale were not the same as from 2018*

The study noted that Programmes 1 and 4 were worded differently and consisted of different items in the measurement scale, while Programmes 2 and 3 were consistent throughout the study period 2015/16 to 2019/2020.

Table 31 above provides the overall performance of the indicators. Each composite indicator consists of scores 1=achieved and 0 =not achieved. The number of achieved performance indicators was divided by the total number of items in the indicators and multiplied by 100 to obtain the percent achieved. The indicators may not be comparable for programme 1 and programme 4 in the financial periods 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19. 2019/20. We note that the definitions of the programmes are different; hence we conclude that the indicators and targets, although sufficiently defined, may not be measurable across the 5 years. To mitigate this inconsistency, we narrate the two periods as mutually exclusive. The conversion of financial inputs into activities support seems low, as there was under-expenditure throughout the three years (2015/16-2011/18). However, this has been improving since 2018/19 and is most efficient in the 2019/2020 period.

Figure 3: Trends analysis over the years

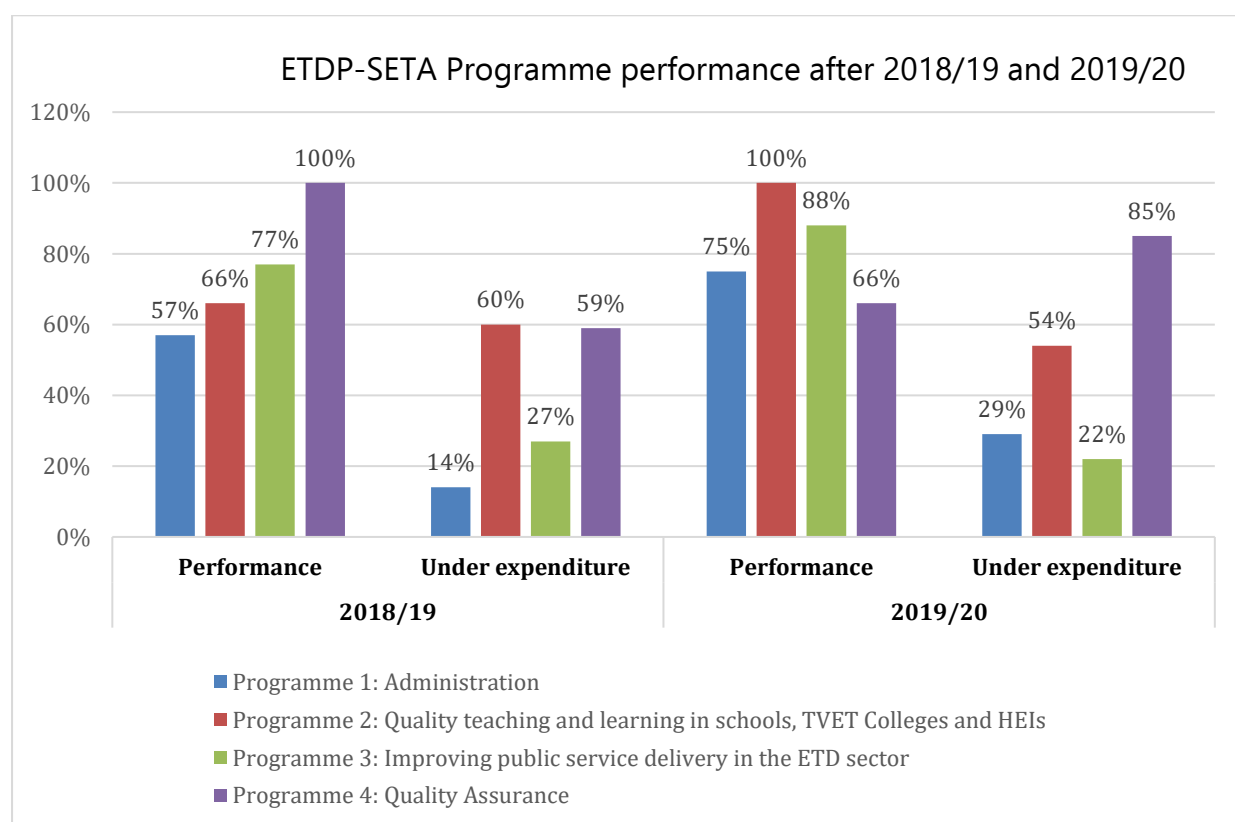


Figure 2 indicates that programme 4 performed well (100%) in 2018/19 and achieved its targets compared to 2019/20 (66%). Programme 2 achieved all its targets (100%) in 2019/20 compared to the previous period -2018/19 (66%). Programme 1 and 2 improved significantly between 2018/19 and 2019/20, where P2 achieved all its targets, while programme 4 dropped in performance from 100% to 66%.

Figure 4: Overall Performance of overall Programme Performance

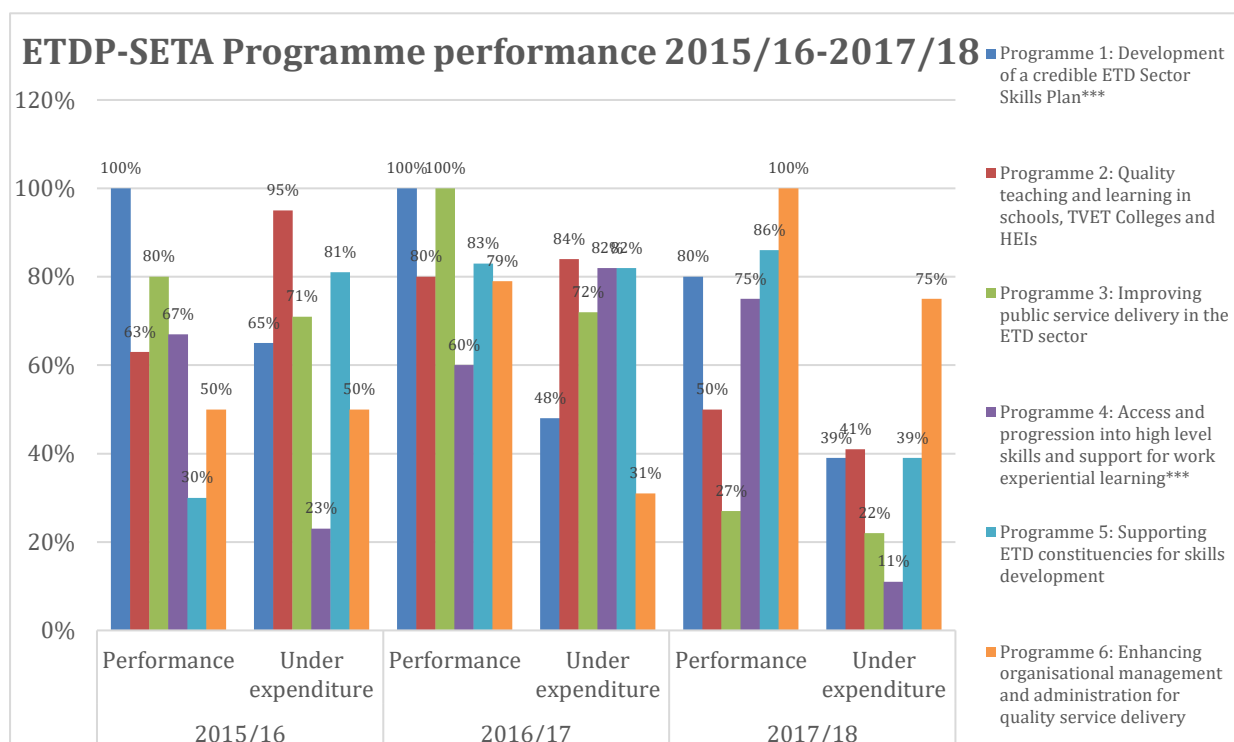


Figure 3 above indicates that overall trends analysis of the performance of programmes was positive, with outliers in programme 3 in 2015/16 (27%) and in programme 5 in 2015/16.

Programme 1: Development of a credible ETD Sector Skills Plan: Figure 2 indicates that overall, the performance of indicators was positive, achieving 100% between 2015/16 and 2016/17. The performance decreased to 80% in 2017 and 2018 and dropped to 57% in 2018/19 before picking up in 2019/20 (75%) (see Figure 2).

Programme 1: Administration. This programme was introduced in 2019/2020. It performed moderately well in 2018/19 and improved to 75% in 2019/2020 (Fig 2).

Programme 2: Quality teaching and learning in schools, TVET Colleges and HEIs. Generally, this programme's performance has improved since the 2015/16 financial period. The overall performance of the indicators in the financial period 2015/16 period was 63%, improved to 80% in 2016/17, and dropped drastically to 50% in 2017/18. There was an improvement in overall performance indicators since 2018, with 100% overall programme performance in the 2019/2020 pre-Covid-19 period.

Programme 3: Improving public service delivery in the ETD sector. This programme performed well between the 2015/16 and 2019/2020 periods, with over 75% performance in all periods except in 2017/2018, where the programme was underperforming.

Programme 4: Access and progression into high-level skills and support for work experiential learning. This programme performed well, improving from 66% in the financial year 2015/16 to 100% in 2018/19. There was a decline in performance in 2019/2020.

Programme 5: Supporting ETD constituencies for skills development. This programme was dropped in the 2018/19 and 2019/2020 periods. The programme performance was poor in 2015/16 but improved drastically to over 80% in 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Programme 6: Enhancing organisational management and administration for quality service delivery. This programme was also dropped in the 2018/19 and 2019/2020 periods. The programme performed moderately in the 2015/16 period. It improved to 79% in 2016/17 and 100% in 2017/18. The programme dropped in performance in the period 2019/2020 period when it was renamed Programme 4: "Quality Assurance".

7. QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS: BENEFICIARIES' SURVEY

This section of the report provides the detailed evaluation findings of related to beneficiaries' perceptions. This programme also represents the main programme of the ETDP SETA's mission-critical functions. The findings presented here also contribute towards addressing the ETDP SETA's strategic outcome-oriented goal focused on increasing the number of students who successfully enter the post-school education and training system to create multiple pathways for young people to navigate the school and post-school system; and to transition seamlessly into the workplace and follow rewarding careers. The findings are based on a sample of 1933 beneficiaries who participated in the survey. Therefore, this report supersedes an earlier report presented to the ETDP SETA based on a sample of 354 beneficiaries. The survey was conducted through a self-completion questionnaire that was emailed to beneficiaries sampled from the database provided by the ETDP SETA. Therefore, the findings presented are descriptive and provide a basis for conclusions and insights to be drawn regarding assessing, in part, the extent to which the implementation of the SP was successful. It is important to state that these findings are focused on the beneficiaries who participated in the ETDP SETA's learning programmes during the implementation of their SP from 2015 to 2019. Although these findings are of primary relevance to the ETDP SETA, they are equally relevant to its ecosystem of stakeholders, including the DHET, training institutions and employers.

7.1.1 ETDP SETA learning intervention participation

7.1.1.1 Participation in the ETDP SETA Learning Interventions

One of the key focus areas of this evaluation was to gather data from beneficiaries who had participated in a specific learning intervention under the auspices of the ETDP SETA. As part of the study, we sought to confirm if participants had been involved in any ETDP SETA interventions over the period under evaluation. The majority of the participants (86.4%) confirmed that they had participated in ETDP SETA learning interventions. A small proportion of the participants (12.7%) indicated that they had not participated in any learning intervention, while about 0.8% did not respond to the question. The results are presented in the table below.

Table 30: Can you please confirm that you completed the ETDP SETA learning intervention?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	No	246	12.7	12.7
	No response	166	0.8	0.8
	Yes	1671	86.4	86.4
	Total	1933	100.0	100.0

The study also confirmed the nature of the learning intervention that the participants participated in during the evaluation period. The sample distribution below shows that most beneficiaries participated in the ETDP SETA's learning intervention by being awarded a bursary or participating in a skills development programme or internship. The least number of beneficiaries participated in the learning intervention through Work Integrated Learning at Universities of Technology, as shown in the figure below.

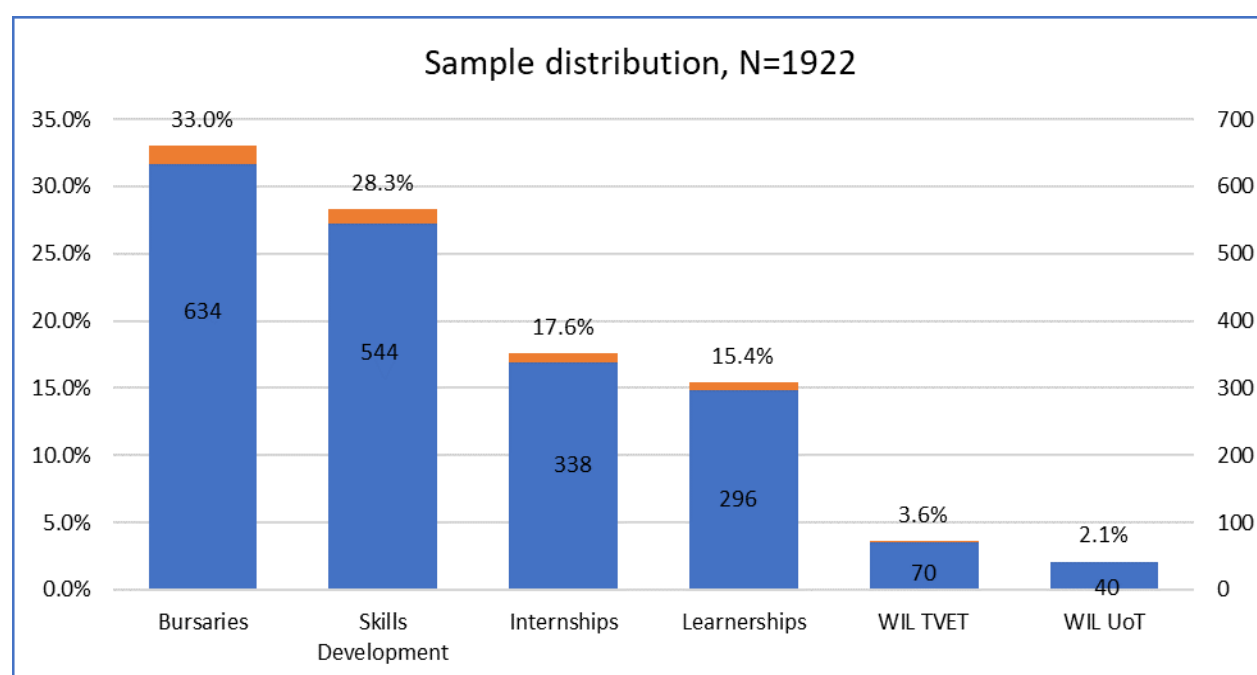


Figure 5: Sample distribution by nature of learning intervention

In terms of proportion the results indicate that 32.8% of the participants were awarded bursaries, 17.5% were in internships and 15.3% were in learnerships. Furthermore, 28.1% were involved in a skills development programme. A small proportion of 3.6% and 2.1% were involved in WIL TVET and WIL UoT, respectively.

7.1.1.2 Prior access to a SETA-funded learning intervention

The participants were asked if they had previously participated in any other SETA learning intervention before the ETDP SETA intervention. The overwhelming majority (85.4%) indicated that they had not been part of any other SETA learning intervention before enrolling in the ETDP SETA learning programme. However, 13.9% stated that they had previously been involved in learning interventions under other SETAs.

Table 31: Did you previously access any OTHER SETA learning intervention/s BEFORE doing the ETDP SETA learning intervention we are interviewing you for?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	No	1651	85.4	85.4
	No response	14	0.7	0.7
	Yes	268	13.9	13.9
	Total	1933	100.0	100.0

The study further sought to confirm if participants had completed their learning intervention under the ETDP SETA and had received certificates. The results indicate that most participants completed their learning interventions across all the categories. The lowest completion rate of 81.6% was recorded under the bursaries programme. Although still significantly high, the 18.4% who did not complete their programme represent a loss to both the SETA and the participant in terms of resources, time spent and unfulfilled targets.

7.1.1.3 Completion of the SETA learning intervention

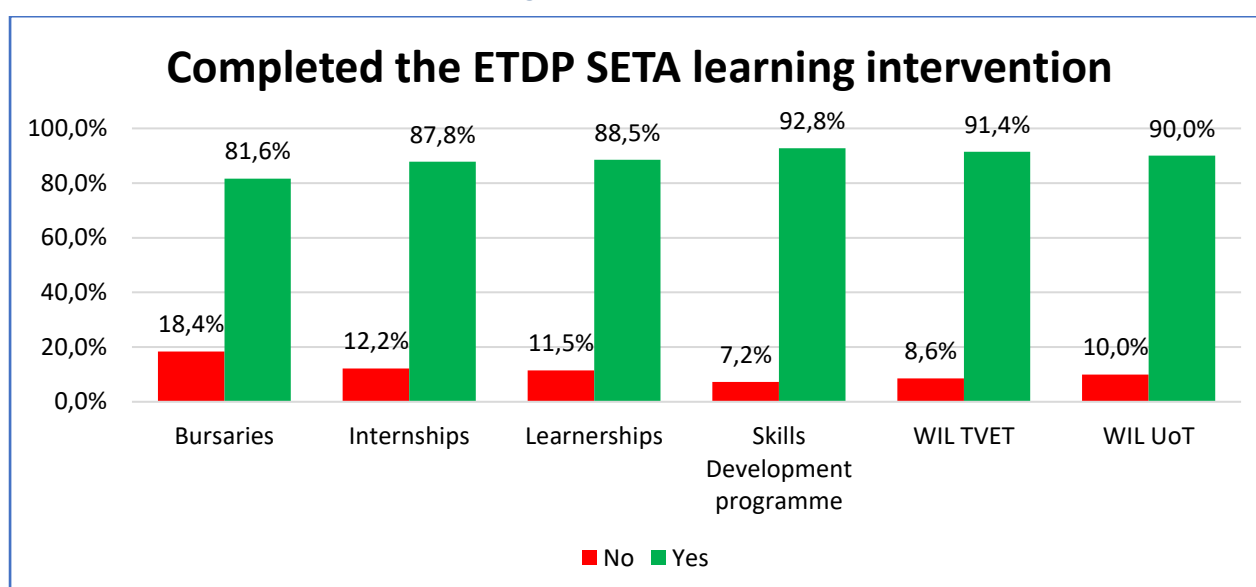


Figure 6: Completed SETA Learning Intervention

Of all the participants that completed a learning intervention, 56.2% received a certificate, and 42.4% did not receive certificates. A small proportion of participants (1.4%) did not respond to this question. These results are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 32: Did you receive a certificate after completion of the learning intervention?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	No	819	42.4	42.4
	No response	28	1.4	1.4
	Yes	1086	56.2	56.2
	Total	1933	100.0	100.0

Further analysis shows that the highest proportion of beneficiaries who received certificates was in the skills development programme (69%), followed by 66.9% of beneficiaries in bursaries programmes and 63.3% in the learnership programmes. The majority of

participants in internships (78.9%) did not receive certificates after completion of their programmes, followed by those in WIL TVET (65.7%) and WIL UoT (53.8%).

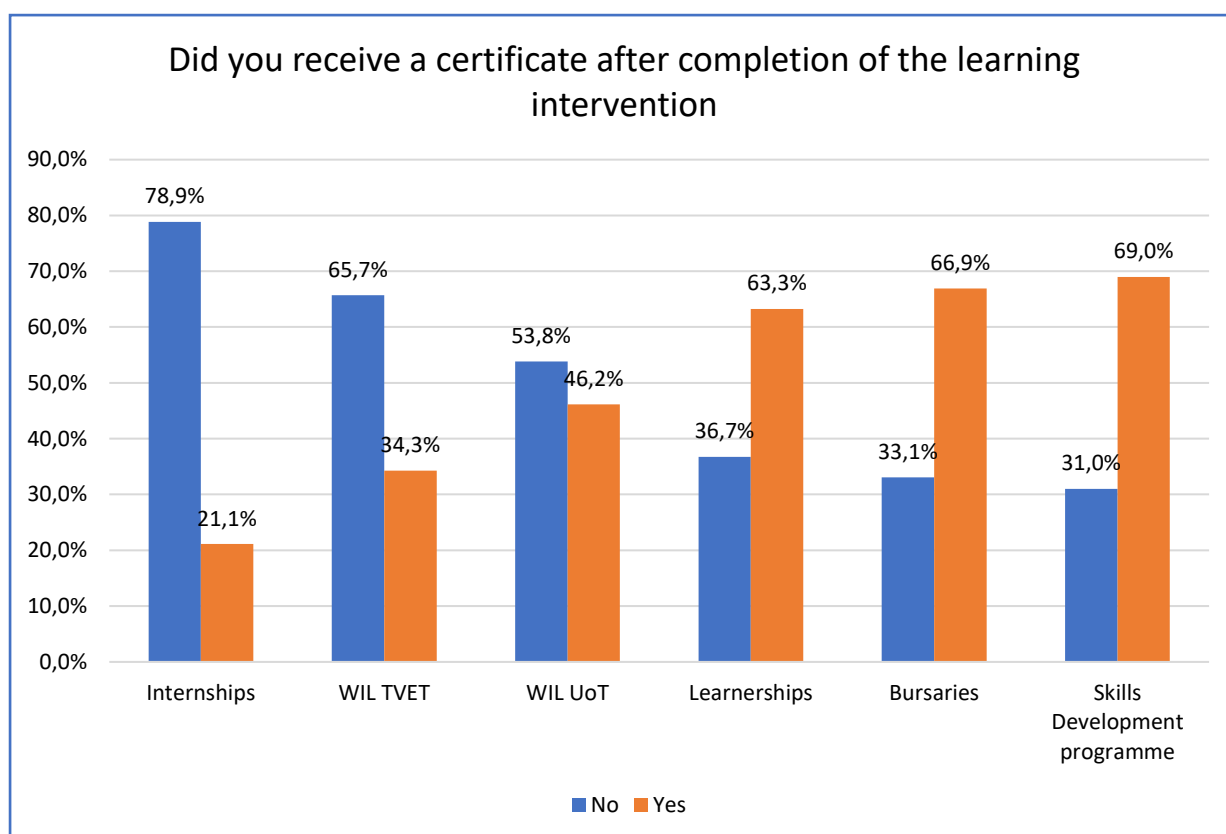


Figure 7: Received certificate after completion

This finding suggests that without a certificate of completion or competence after going through any of the programmes mentioned above, beneficiaries would have no proof to present to prospective employers. Although not explicitly stated by the participants in the survey, this could add to the challenges young people face in securing employment even after they have completed some programme to enhance their potential to become employable.

7.1.1.4 Spatial Demographics of sampled Beneficiaries

The spatial demographics are an essential part of the study since it demonstrates the extent to which learning interventions are accessible to beneficiaries across the country.

7.1.1.5 Distribution of respondents by province

Most participants (25.3%) indicated they were residents in Gauteng, 14.3% from Western Cape and 13.6% from the Free State Provinces. Furthermore, 12.6% and 9.6% of the participants were from KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, and Provinces, respectively. The full results are presented in Table 9 below.

Table 33: Distribution of beneficiaries by province

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	EC	181	9.4	9.4
	FS	263	13.6	13.6
	GP	489	25.3	25.3
	KZN	244	12.6	12.6
	LP	121	6.3	6.3
	MP	186	9.6	9.6
	NC	118	6.1	6.1
	NW	54	2.8	2.8
	WC	277	14.3	14.3
	Total	1933	100.0	100.0

7.1.1.6 Migration of Beneficiaries across Provinces

After completing their learning programme, the participants were asked if they had moved from their province. Only 8.1% stated they had moved provinces, while 91.3% stayed in the same.

Table 34: Did you change your province of residence after you had completed your learning intervention?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Missing	12	0.6	0.6
	No, still in the same province	1765	91.3	91.3
	Yes	156	8.1	8.1
	Total	1933	100.0	100.0

7.1.2 Demographic Profile of Beneficiaries

This section presents findings with regard to demographic characteristics, particularly race, gender, and age, as well as the inclusion of people living with disabilities. This is critical for ETDP SETA to be able to determine if they are reaching their target groups.

7.1.2.1 Representation by Race

The racial profile of the participants shows that the majority (81.1%) is Black, 11% are Coloured and 4.5% are White. A small proportion of 1.7% is Indian and the remainder chose not to state their race.

Table 35: Distribution of participants by racial group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Missing	13	0.7	0.7
	Black	1568	81.1	81.1
	Coloured	225	11.6	11.6
	Indian	33	1.7	1.7
	Other	7	0.4	0.4
	White	87	4.5	4.5
	Total	1933	100.0	100.0

7.1.2.1 Representation by people living with a disability

The ETDP SETA acknowledges that including people with disabilities is an important priority for skills development and employment initiatives in the country. The study participants were asked if they had any disabilities and the majority (95.0%) stated that they did not have any known disability while only 4.0% confirmed that they had a known disability.

Table 36: Do you have a known disability?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	No	1836	95.0	95.0
	No response	19	1.0	1.0
	Yes	78	4.0	4.0
	Total	1933	100.0	100.0

Further analysis shows that 6.1% of the beneficiaries in the skills development programmes had some known disability, followed by 5.4% in the Learnership programmes. There were also 2.5% and 2.4%, of participants with known disabilities in the WIL UoT and Internship programmes, respectively.

7.1.2.1 Distribution by age and gender

The gender distribution of beneficiaries shows that the majority (66.6%) is female and 32.3% are male.

Table 37: Gender distribution of participants in ETDP SETA learning interventions

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Female	1288	66.6	66.6
	Male	625	32.3	32.3
	Prefer not to say	5	0.3	0.3
	No response	15	0.8	0.8
	Total	1933	100.0	100.0

The ages of the participants ranged from a minimum of 18 years to a maximum of over 65 years. However, a larger portion (41.9%) of the participants was between the ages of 25 and 34 years and 35.5% were between the ages of 39 and 49 years.

Table 38: Age distribution of participants in ETDP SETA learning interventions

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	18-24 years	111	5.7	5.7
	25-34 years	809	41.9	41.9
	35-49 years	687	35.5	35.5
	50-64 years	310	16.0	16.0
	65+ years	8	0.4	0.4
	No response	8	0.4	0.4
	Total	1933	100.0	100.0

When analysed according to the learning programmes, the findings show that there were more female participants in the WIL TVET programmes at 81.4%, closely followed by learnerships at 75.9%. The results further show that when it comes to WIL UoT the gender distribution is almost proportional.

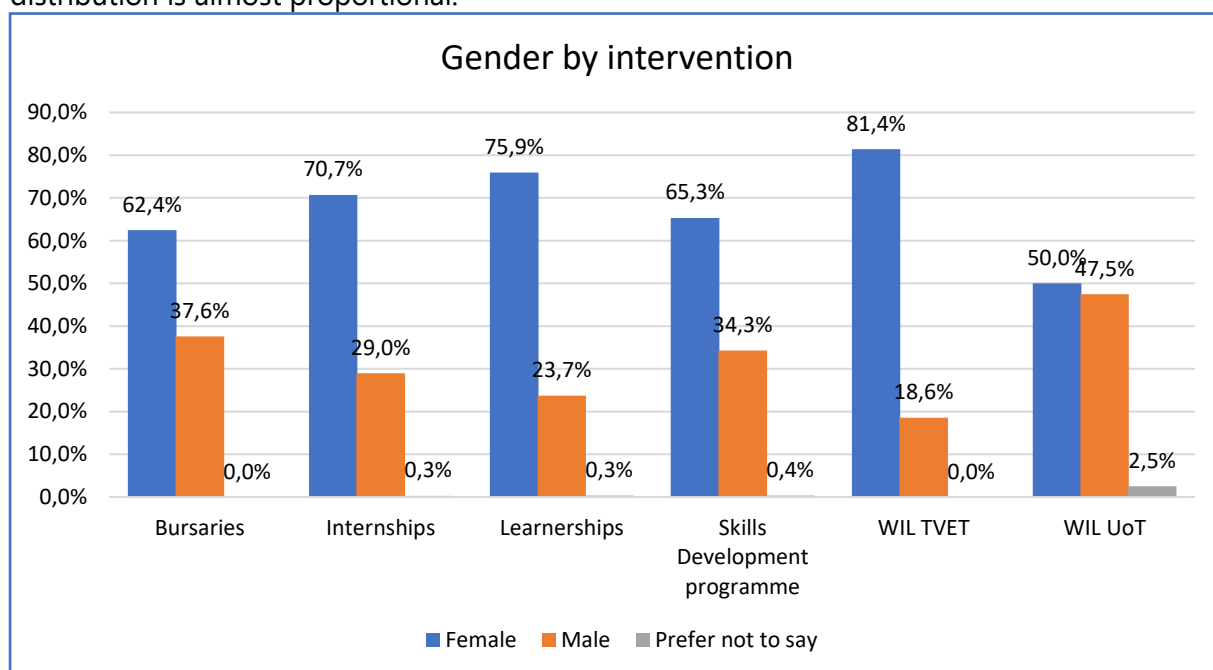


Figure 8: Gender distribution of participants

These findings indicate that more females are enrolled in the learning programmes. This result resonates with the national goal of ensuring that women are included in all critical spheres of the economy. Therefore, the enrolment of more women will ultimately contribute towards ameliorating the gender disparities in society, especially in the workplace.

7.1.2.2 Realisation of demographic targets

The demographic statistics presented above align with the national expectations regarding race, gender and age. Most black people in South Africa live in poverty, a legacy of the inequality created by the loss of economic assets and stifled productivity capacity under the apartheid system. Therefore, the result showing that 81% of the beneficiaries are black demonstrates both the demographic reality and provides an opportunity for young black people to break the cycle of poverty and inequality in the country. The gender composition of the beneficiaries also shows that more females than males were enrolled in the various learning programme. This dynamic is critical for closing the gender gap where women are more likely to live in single-headed and poor households. Therefore, increasing the number of women in these programmes positively responds to national issues. Lastly, most of the beneficiaries in the programme are between the 25 – 34 age group. This resonates well with the national statistics that show that youth unemployment is a significant issue in the country. Therefore, targeting this age group for such programmes is likely to positively impact addressing unemployment within provinces and at the national level.

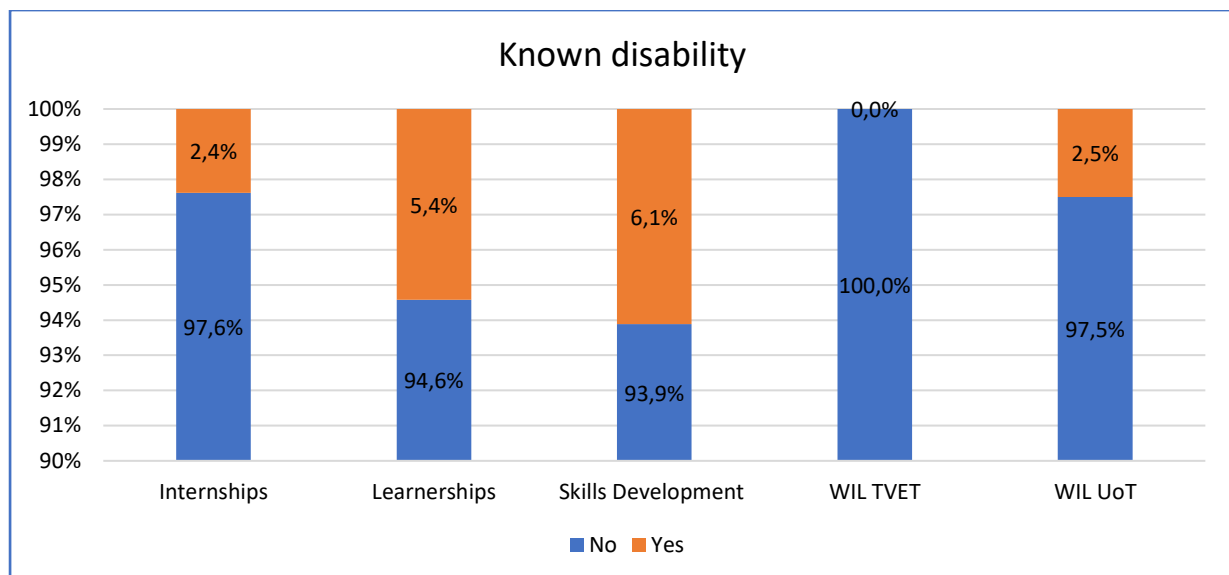


Figure 9: Inclusion of participants with known disability

These findings suggest that there is effort being made to include people with disabilities in the ETDP SETA learning programmes in line with national expectations that gender mainstreaming should be considered in spheres of society.

7.1.3 Social Economic Profile of Beneficiaries

The socio-economic profile of the participants in the study helps to reveal the impact of the learning interventions on their families' economic welfare. Therefore, this section will present results on the household composition, employment status of beneficiaries before and after participating in the learning and skills intervention and level of income level.

7.1.3.1 Household composition

Generally, the results show that most of the beneficiaries come from relatively large families. As much as 87.9% of the beneficiaries come from households composed of between 3 and 4 people while 12.1% are from households of up to 2 people. The size of the households puts pressure on available resources for the upkeep of the family.

Table 39: How many people live in your household?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1-2 members	216	11.2	12.1
	3-4 members	1568	81.1	87.9
	Total	1784	92.3	100.0
Missing	System	149	7.7	
Total		1933	100	

7.1.4 Socioeconomic status of beneficiaries

7.1.4.1 Employment status of Beneficiaries before the ETDP SETA Learning Intervention

The study results further show that prior to attending the learning and skills intervention 49.7% of the beneficiaries were in full time employed while 30.8% of the beneficiaries were unemployment. About 10.5% of the beneficiaries were studying and not in employment of any kind while 7.8% were in part-time employment.

Table 40: Employment status of beneficiaries BEFORE the learning and skills programme

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Missing	12	0.6	0.6
	Business (self-employed)	13	0.7	0.7
	Employed, full time	960	49.7	49.7
	Employed, part time	150	7.8	7.8
	Studying and not working (Full time or Part time)	203	10.5	10.5
	Unemployed	595	30.8	30.8
	Total	1933	100.0	100.0

Analysis of the data according to the learning programmes indicate that beneficiaries of skills development programme (83.8%) and recipients of bursaries (62.3%) were already employed full time. However, most of the beneficiaries who enrolled for internships (72.2%), WIL TVET (65.7%) and learnerships (53.4%) were unemployed. Therefore, enrolment in these programmes might have been viewed as an opportunity to acquire skills to gain employment.

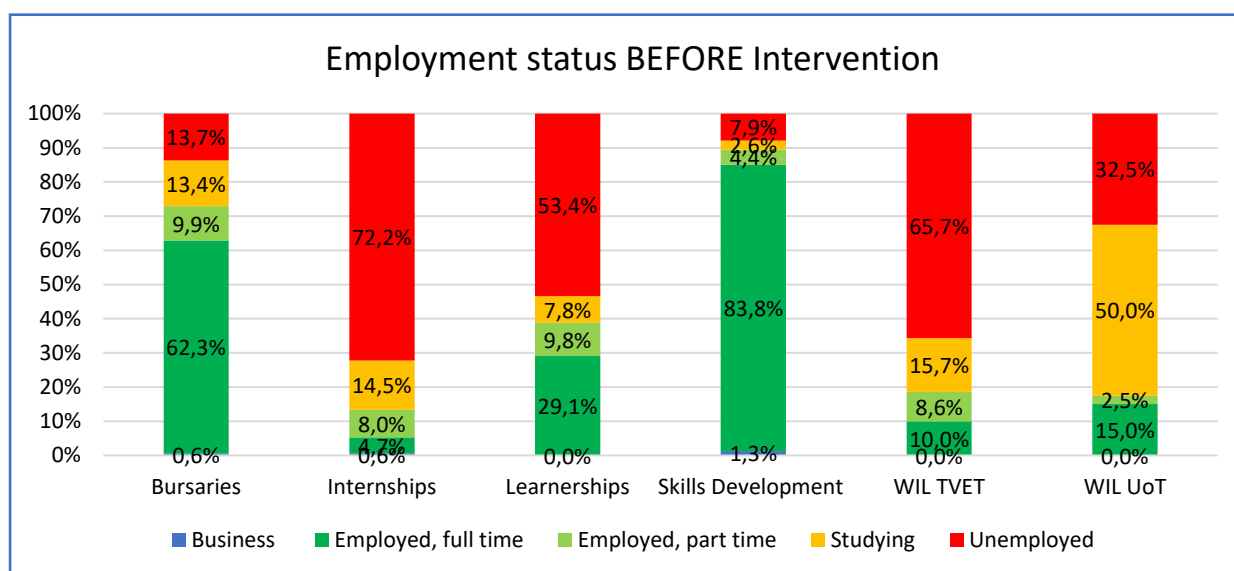


Figure 10: Employment status BEFORE intervention

Overall, after the learning interventions, the proportion of beneficiaries in full-time employed increased to 59.1% while those unemployed reduced to 22.8%. This result demonstrates the benefits that accrue to beneficiaries as a result of having acquired additional skills that prepare them for the workplace or to move up the career ladder.

Table 41: Employment status of beneficiaries AFTER the learning and skills programme

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Missing	34	1.8	1.8
	Business (self-employed)	24	1.2	1.2
	Employed, full time	1142	59.1	59.1
	Employed, part time	203	10.5	10.5
	Studying and not working (Full time or Part time)	90	4.7	4.7
	Unemployed	440	22.8	22.8
	Total	1933	100.0	100.0

When analysed according to the learning programmes, the findings reveal the following:

- **Bursaries:** The employment rate increased after intervention as intended, and unemployment decreased
- **Internships:** Employment increased drastically while unemployment decreased
- **Learnerships:** Employment slightly increased, and unemployment decreased
- **Skills development:** This programme is intended to have the greatest effect on employment, yet employment and unemployment statistics remain the same. It is unclear why this turned out this way, but it requires further analysis and scrutiny to understand and contextualise this result.
- **WIL TVET:** Unemployment slightly decreased, and employment improved
- **WIL UoT:** Unemployment increased after the intervention, thus presenting this as an unintended consequence of the learning intervention.

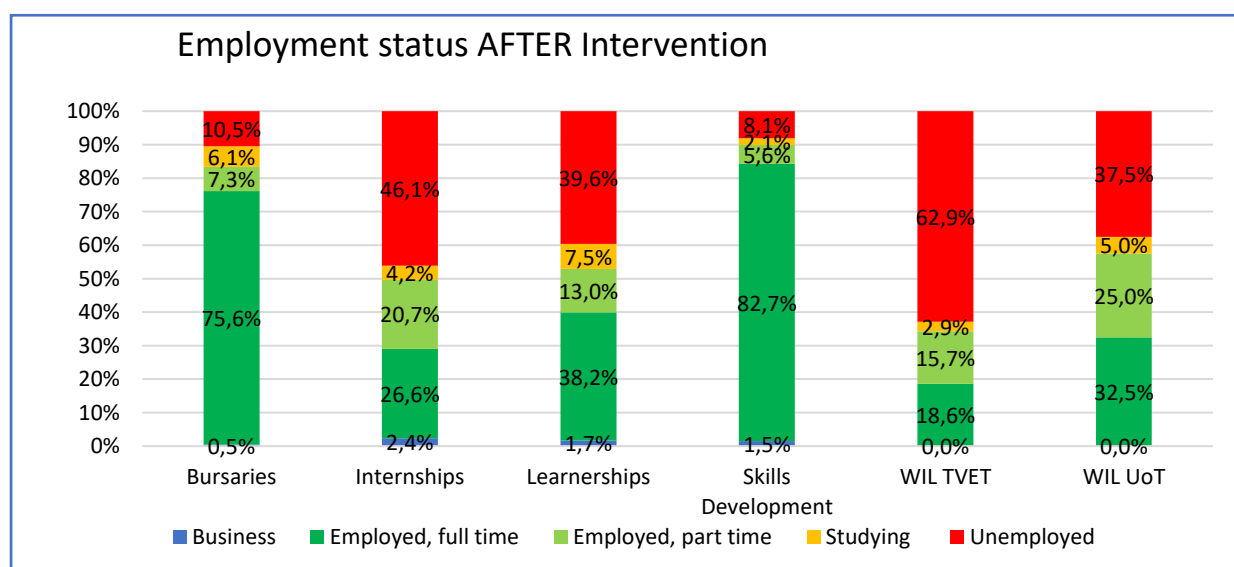


Figure 11: Employment status AFTER intervention

Most beneficiaries who enrolled for the skills development programme (75.7%) and bursaries (66.7%) confirmed that they were employed at the same company where they completed the learning intervention. As expected, most of the beneficiaries enrolled in the internships (67.9%) were not employed at the companies where they completed their learning programmes.

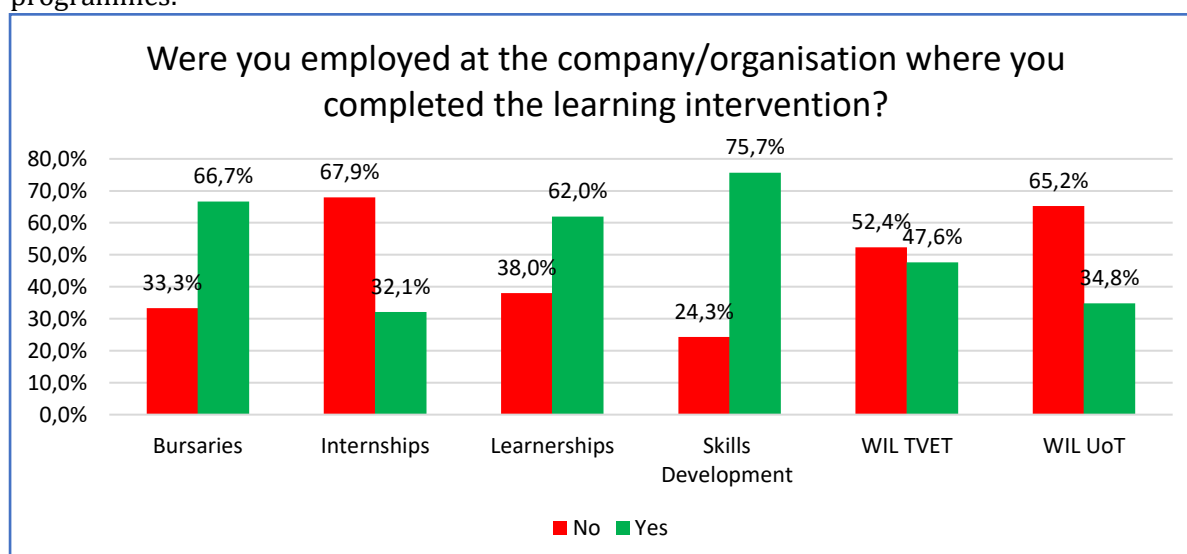


Figure 12: Were you employed at the company where you completed the learning intervention

After completion of the learning interventions most of the beneficiaries indicated that they were still working in the same industry in which their learning intervention took place. A significant result in this instance is around internship beneficiaries 50% of which indicated that they were now working in a different industry than the one in which their learning intervention took place. However, overall, the findings indicate that the beneficiaries continued working in the same industries which is positive when viewed from a career progression point of view.

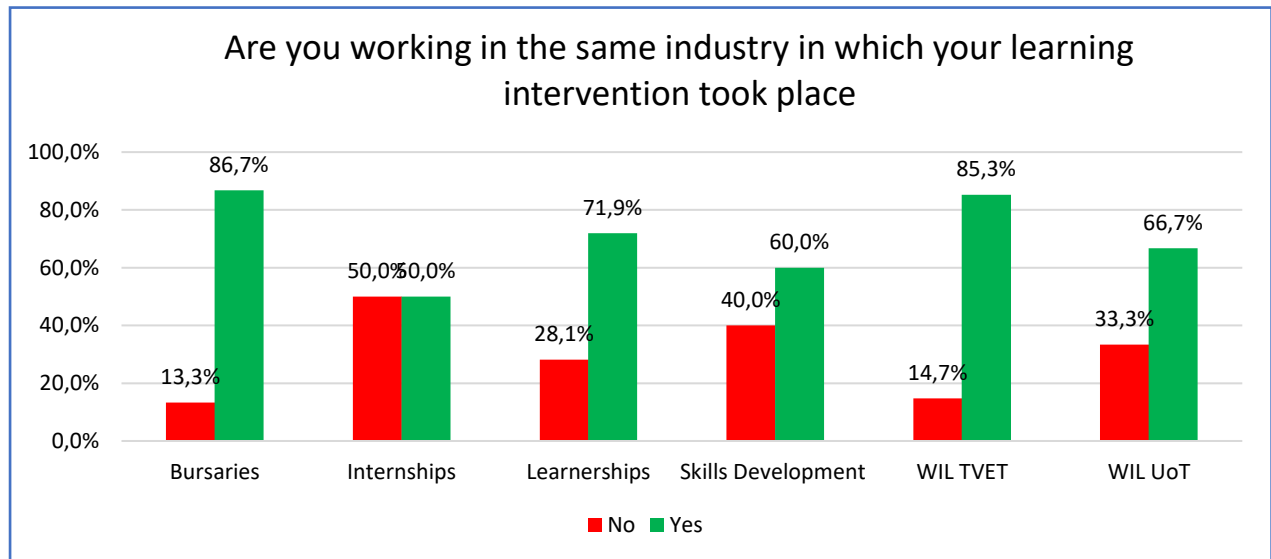


Figure 13: Are you working in the same industry in which your learning intervention took place

7.1.4.2 Household Income

Household income is a critical indicator of the economic welfare of the family. This study assumes that beneficiaries can contribute significantly to the increase in household income by participating in the learning and skills programme. The study results show that 32.8% of beneficiaries are in households with a gross household income of over R20 000, 14.4% earn gross income between R15 000 and R20 000, and 11.4% live in households with gross incomes of between R10 000 and R15 000.

Table 42: Current gross household income

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	No response	48	2.5	2.5
	R1-R500	104	5.4	5.4
	R10,001-R15,000	221	11.4	11.4
	R1001-R2000	139	7.2	7.2
	R15,001-20,000	279	14.4	14.4
	R20,001 and above	634	32.8	32.8
	R2001-R3500	147	7.6	7.6
	R3600-5000	134	6.9	6.9
	R501-R1,000	82	4.2	4.2
	5001-10000	145	7.5	7.5
	Total	1933	100.0	100.0

The analysis of the findings further indicates that participants who benefitted from bursaries and Skills development were likelier to have the highest gross household income. As presented in the figure below, internships and Learnership programmes beneficiaries were more likely to have lower incomes.

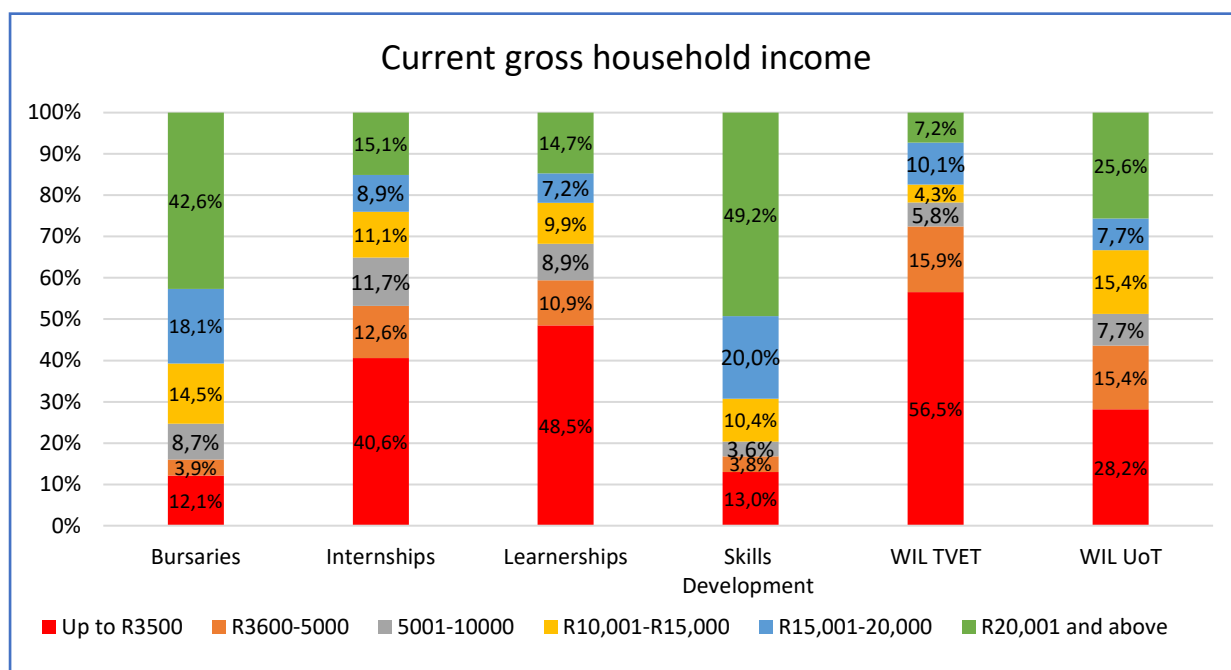


Figure 14: Current Household Gross Income

However, these findings should be interpreted cautiously as it is expected that all the learning interventions are designed to improve participants' well-being. In this case, income is being used as a proxy for the level of well-being as more income is likely to result in a household being able to afford necessities, maintain livelihoods or even access more and better social services such as health and education.

7.1.5 Beneficiary perspective on learning intervention

This section presents findings with regard to beneficiaries' perceptions of the impact learning interventions had on their career development and progression. This is important for ETDP SETA to be able to determine whether the programmes developed with training providers are meeting targets as intended.

7.1.5.1 NQF Level of Beneficiary arising from participation in ETDP SETA-funded learning intervention

A significant proportion of the beneficiaries were unaware of the NQF level of the programme they were funded. However, 13.9% were NQF 7; 12.5% were NQF 6; 11.3% were NQF 5; 11% were NQF level 4.

Table 43: What was the NQF level of the learning intervention you completed?

		Frequency	Frequency	Valid frequency
Valid	Missing	96	5,0%	5,0%
	As a postgraduate no	1	0,1%	0,1%
	Certificate	2	0,1%	0,1%
	Degree	7	0,4%	0,4%
	Diploma	6	0,3%	0,3%
	Don't know	453	23,4%	23,4%
	Honours Degree	3	0,2%	0,2%
	Internship	5	0,3%	0,3%
	Matric	3	0,2%	0,2%
	National Diploma	4	0,2%	0,2%
	Not completed	30	1,6%	1,6%
	NQF 1-4	317	16,4%	16,4%
	NQF 5-9	959	49,6%	49,6%
	NQF10-NQF15	47	2,4%	2,4%
	Total	1933	100,0%	100,0%

7.1.5.2 Quality and relevance of training/mentorship received

The majority (92.7%) of the participants indicated that the quality of the training and mentorship received was of acceptable and good quality, with 42.9% stating that it was excellent. Only a small and negligible proportion of 2.6% indicated that the quality of the training and mentorship was poor.

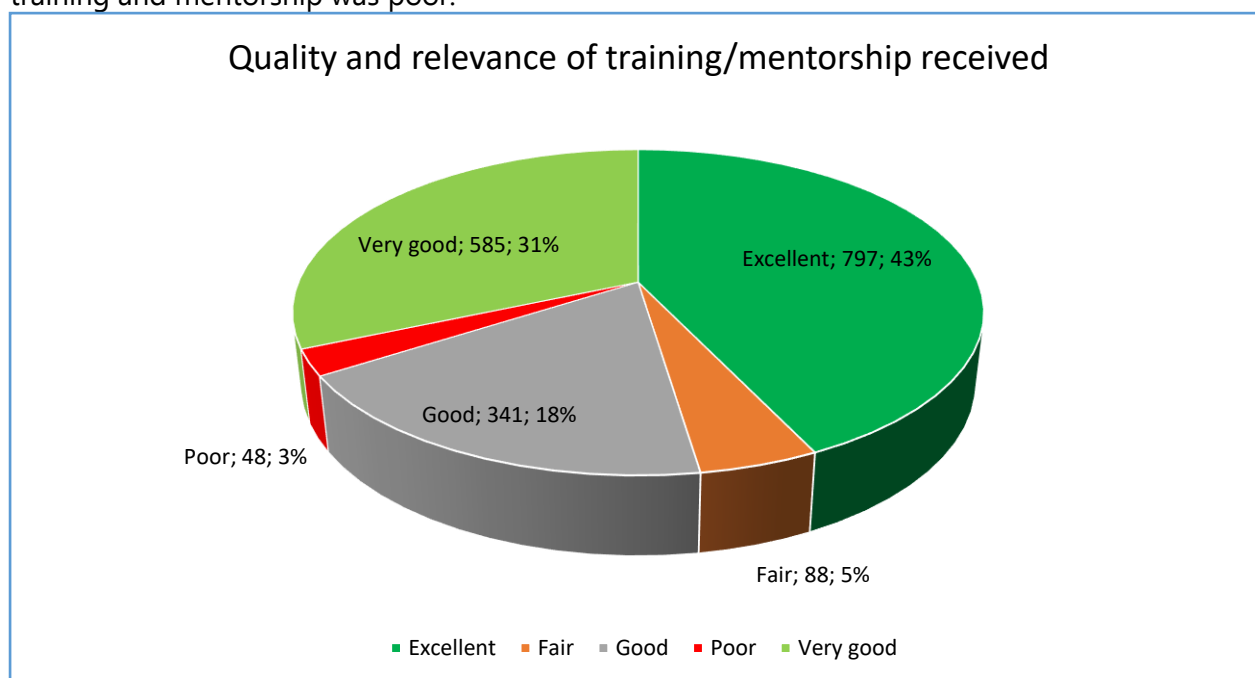


Figure 15: Quality of training/mentorship received

Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the quality of the ETDP SETA programmes is generally good and meets the standards and expectations of the majority of the beneficiaries. With respect to the relevance of the training and mentorship received,

approximately 79% of the beneficiaries indicated that it was relevant, as presented in the figure below.

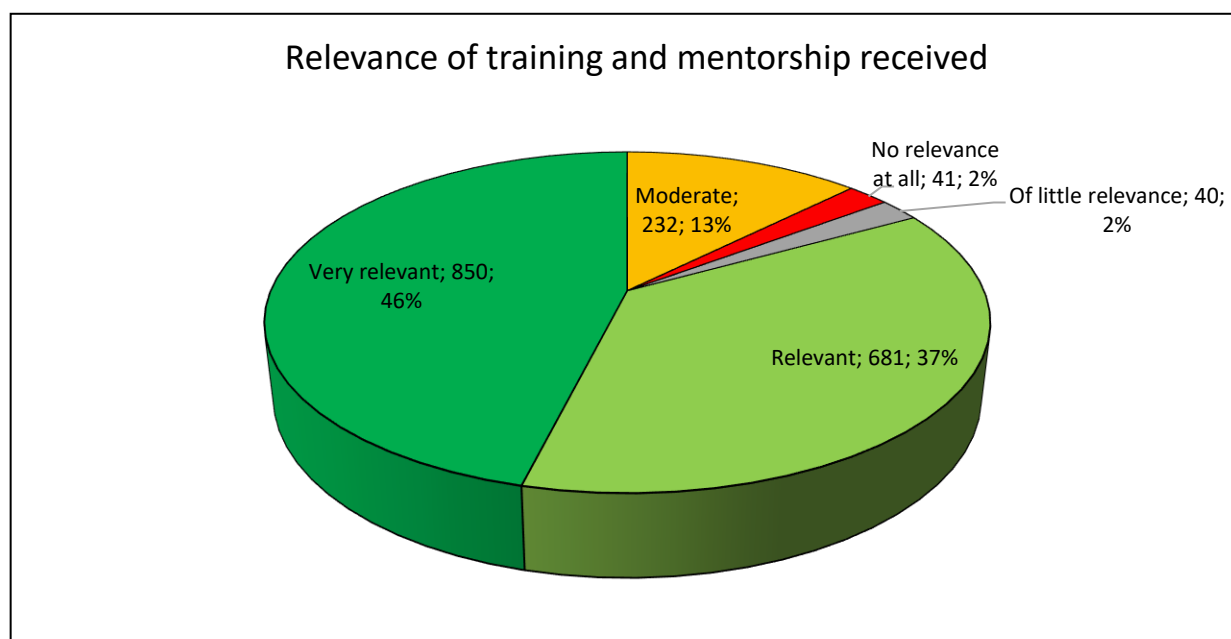


Figure 16: Relevance of training and mentorship received

In addition to the training's quality and relevance, the evaluation also sought to determine the effectiveness of the learning interventions. Overall the learning interventions were noted to have been effective to a great extent by the majority of the beneficiaries. For instance, 85.4% of the beneficiaries stated that the learning intervention contributed to their development and acquisition of skills while 82.3% indicated that their participation in the programme intervention elevated productivity in the organisation.

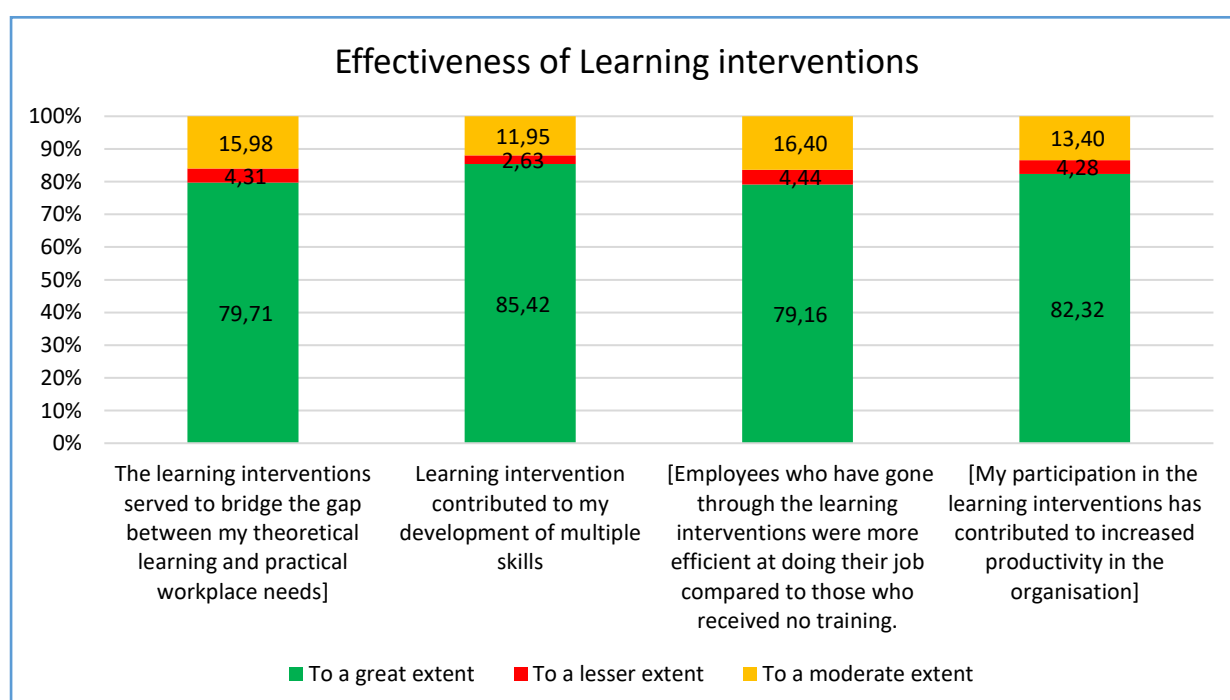


Figure 17: Effectiveness of learning intervention

Employment benefits such as medical aid contributions, paid annual leave, maternity/paternity leave are indicators of the quality of employment. Table 15 shows that more learners have received paid sick leave, 64% and maternity/paternity leave, 63%. The least received benefits are employers paying UIF contribution, 49%, and paid vacation leave, 35%. Learners from Skills Development and Bursary programmes report receiving benefits more often whereas WIL TVET learners report not receiving benefits often.

Table 44: Quality of employment

Quality of employment							
	Bursaries	Internships	Learnerships	Skills Development	WIL TVET	WIL UoT	Total
Are you entitled to paid sick leave?	77%	41%	44%	81%	23%	53%	64%
Are you entitled maternity/paternity leave?	75%	38%	41%	82%	27%	47%	63%
Does your employer deduct PAYE from your salary?	71%	34%	34%	75%	20%	39%	57%
Does your employer contribute to any pension/retirement fund for you?	71%	26%	31%	80%	13%	29%	56%
Are you entitled to medical aid benefits?	65%	20%	25%	75%	11%	29%	51%
Does your employer pay UIF contributions for you?	57%	39%	38%	56%	20%	42%	49%
Are you entitled to any paid vacation leave?	41%	25%	21%	45%	16%	26%	35%

7.1.5.3 Beneficiary programme expectations

Most learners, 80%, agree that the learning intervention met their expectations. 8% disagree, 9% are unsure whether their expectations were met or not.

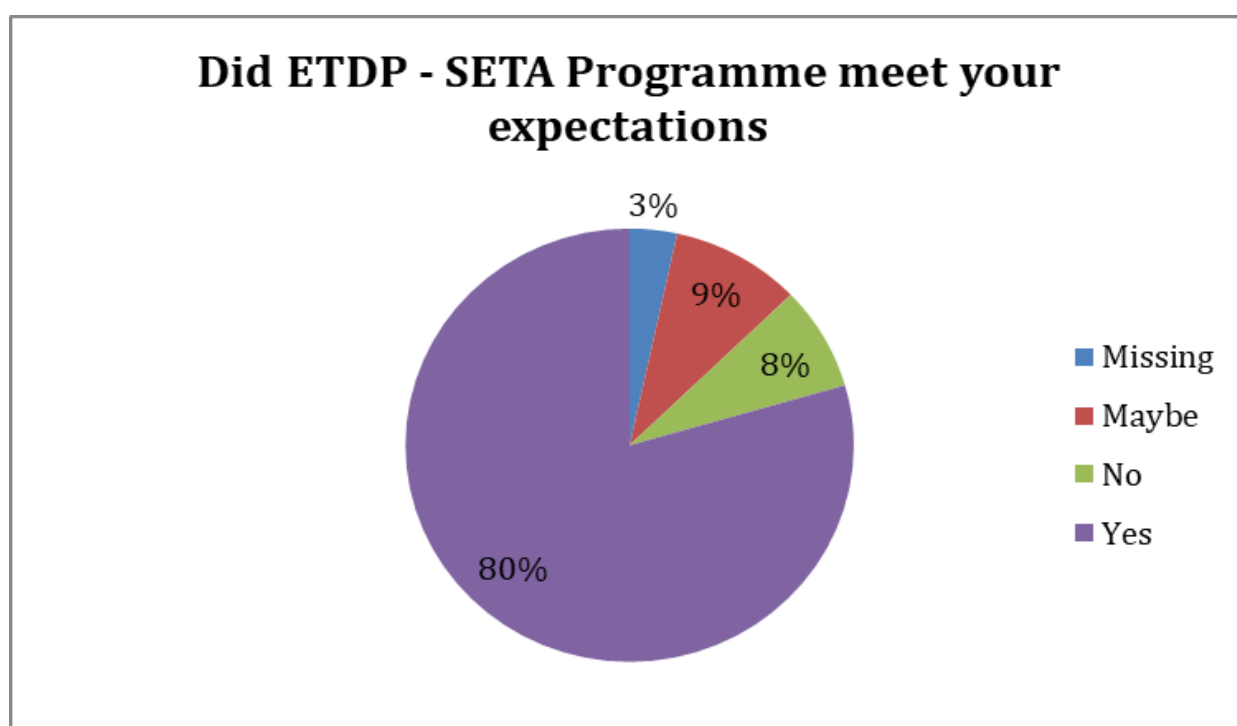


Figure 18: Expectations of ETDP_SETA learning interventions

Learners were allowed to express what they expected would happen after the completion of the learning intervention. Overall, gaining knowledge and skills was a major expectation for 97.4% of the beneficiaries. The next major expectation was gaining computer literacy skills (78%), followed by graduating and receiving certification for the completed programme (76.4%). Another significant expectation among beneficiaries was gaining the opportunity for further studies (73.8%). These results indicate that the beneficiaries were forward-looking and viewed these learning programmes as an opportunity to equip them with the necessary skills to leapfrog them to higher and better livelihoods. Therefore, the ETDP SETA should ensure that this perception is made tangible through their campaign strategies as well as through the implementation of the programmes.

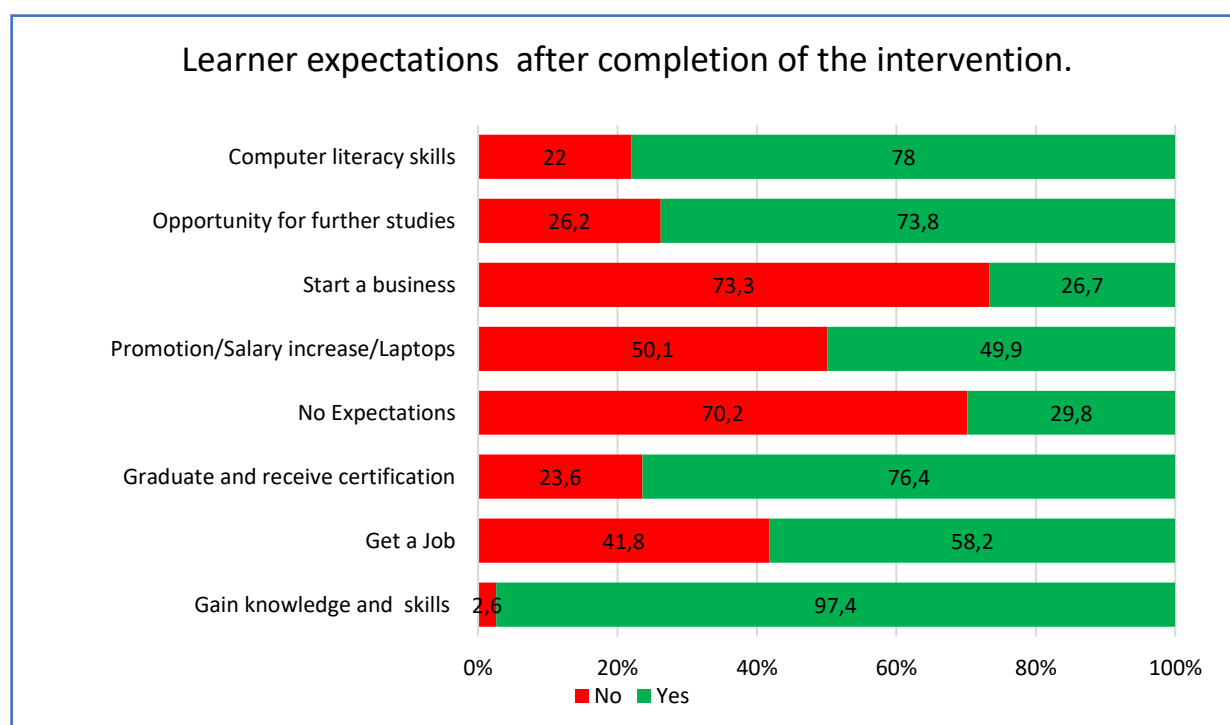


Figure 19: Learner expectations after completion of the learning intervention

When the analysis was conducted according to the learning interventions gaining knowledge, skills and experience remained the most favoured outcome scoring 95% from beneficiaries in skills development and WIL UoT programmes and 94% from beneficiaries in internships and WIL TVET. The next most popular expectations were to graduate and receive certification with an average of 66% across all learning programmes and increase computer literacy skills at 62%. Few beneficiaries (19%) expected to start a business after the learning intervention. This could either mean they were already employed or had no desire to start a business. Further reflection suggests that even though an important aspect that needs to be considered to address unemployment is entrepreneurship, perhaps the components of learning business and entrepreneurial skills are missing from the curriculum.

Table 45: Learner expectations after completion of the intervention

Learner expectations after completion of the intervention							
	Bursaries	Internships	Learnerships	Skills Development	WIL TVET	WIL UoT	Total
Gain knowledge, skills & experience	87%	94%	92%	95%	94%	95%	92%

Graduate & receive certification	75%	55%	67%	59%	72%	79%	66%
Computer literacy skills	59%	71%	71%	51%	80%	82%	62%
Opportunity for further studies	69%	55%	59%	51%	50%	66%	59%
Get a Job	51%	68%	47%	29%	45%	50%	47%
Promotion/Salary increase/Laptops	48%	40%	38%	32%	31%	39%	40%
Start a business	17%	24%	25%	15%	19%	21%	19%
No Expectations	15%	17%	21%	17%	31%	13%	18%
Other	8%	7%	7%	6%	6%	0%	7%

The findings reveal that most beneficiaries received a promotion upon programme completion accompanied by a pay rise across all the learning programmes. Those beneficiaries in the WIL UoT, learnerships and skill development programmes were more likely to receive a promotion. These findings are significant in that career progression is closely linked with improvements in the well-being of households and thus make a huge contribution towards reducing poverty and inequality.

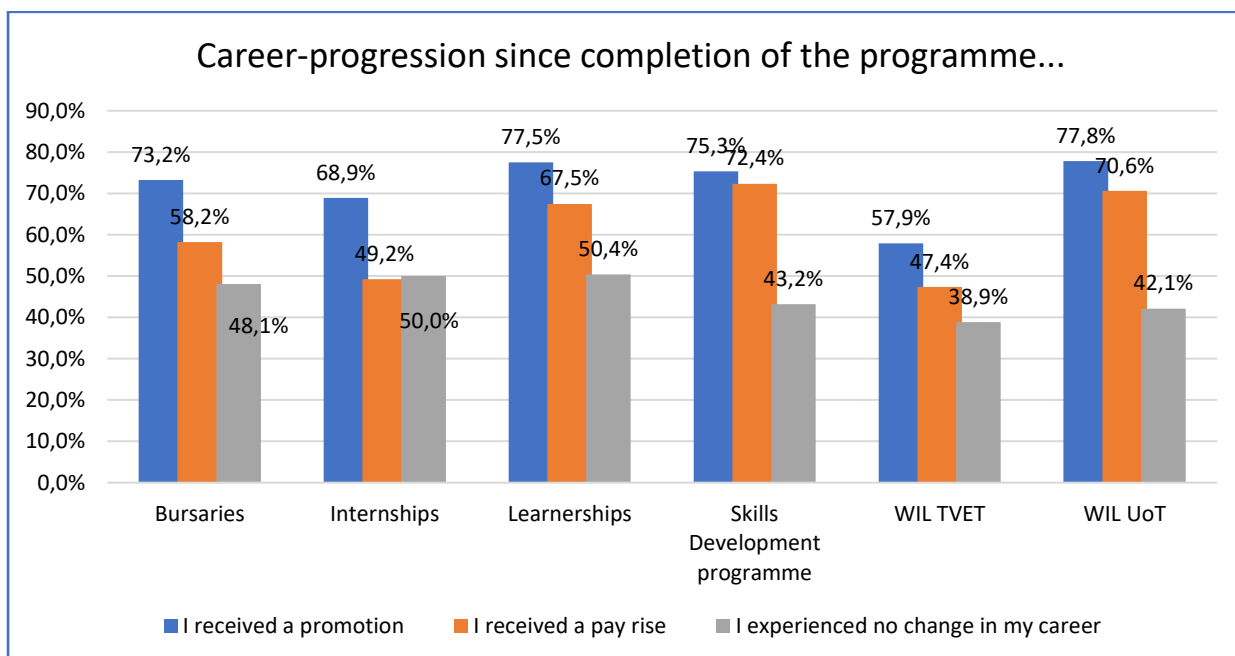


Figure 20: Career progression since completion of the programme

7.1.5.4 Relevance of learning/training intervention to their work

Learners reported that the training and mentorship they received on the learning intervention was relevant to a great extent (61%) and 27% indicated that it was relevant to a moderate extent. Those that reported that the training was of little or no relevance are the least at 6%.

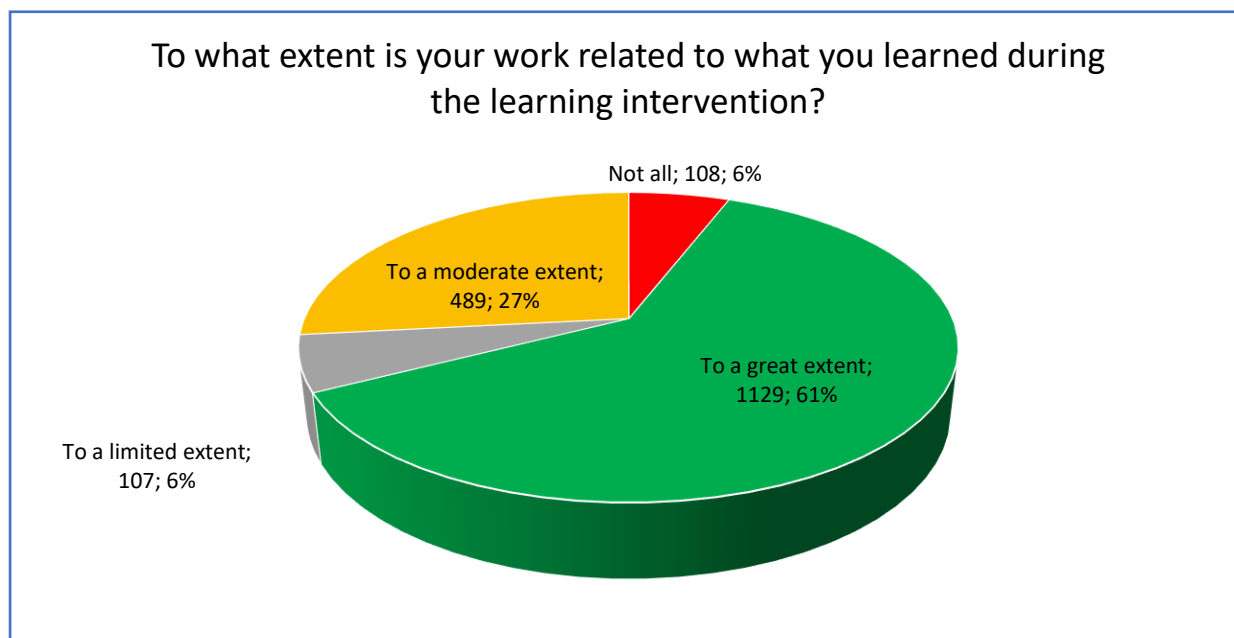


Figure 21: Relevance of learning intervention to their work

Therefore, the above results indicate that the learning programmes' quality, relevance and effectiveness met the standards expected by the beneficiaries.

7.1.5.5 Satisfaction with the ETDP SETA Learning Intervention

Based on the evaluation results, 66.9% of the beneficiaries were satisfied with the way the programmes were handled and how they interacted with the SETA. Only a small proportion of 8.1% indicated that they were not satisfied.

Table 46: Satisfaction with the ETDP SETA Learning Intervention

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Missing	322	16.7	16.7
	No	157	8.1	8.1
	Not sure	156	8.1	8.0
	Yes	1295	671	66.9
	Total	1933	100.0	100.0

7.1.5.6 Views on improving the ETDP SETA Programme intervention

The evaluation sought to solicit the views of respondents on specific areas where they felt improvement was required and necessary. The following key areas were identified and are presented below:

- a) **Longer training period and employment:** Providing permanent employment after completion of the programme should be a priority focus of the learning programmes. According to 55.6% of the beneficiaries the duration of the internships should also be increased. Other key stakeholders indicated that instead of 12 months internships make it 3 years so that graduates can successfully transition into the labour market. Graduates need more than 12 months of experience to land a proper job. Internships are not a panacea for unemployment because if you are not lucky enough, you are still unemployed after the internship. Graduates need long-term exposure in the work environment.
- b) **Improve the administration and quality of programmes:** Approximately 52% of the beneficiaries felt that ETDP SETA should improve the administration of its programmes. In comparison, 48.3% stated that the quality of the programmes could be improved. Closely related to these issues, 66.3% indicated that more funding should be allocated to these programmes to enhance their effectiveness. In addition, additional funding would also result in the programme being scaled up according to 57.6% of the beneficiaries.
- c) **Partnership:** It would be advisable to partner with ETDP SETA nationally instead of just one province to facilitate scalability and long-term sustainability. Since the SETA cannot be approached to consider programmes, all 'provincial DOE"s should be informed of the impact that the TTP programme has made in the Limpopo province so that they can consider implementing provincially to enhance and fortify the National Development Plan objectives.
- d) **Programmes** offered are of high value leading to employment, but some seem not to be attached to a qualification. Therefore, the number of TVET College students' placements should be increased to enable beneficiaries to gain experience through internship programmes. The issue of placement by the SETA was raised by 50% of the beneficiaries. However, beyond placement, 58.9% of the beneficiaries suggested that the SETA should provide post-intervention support.

7.1.5.7 Beneficiary recommendations to ETDP SETA on improving the learning interventions

Most beneficiaries recommended that the SETA expedite the certification process to ensure that all those who complete their learning programmes are awarded appropriate certificates. Other recommendations include allocating additional resources to the learning programmes, increasing funding/stipends, providing post-intervention support and increasing the scale of the programme.

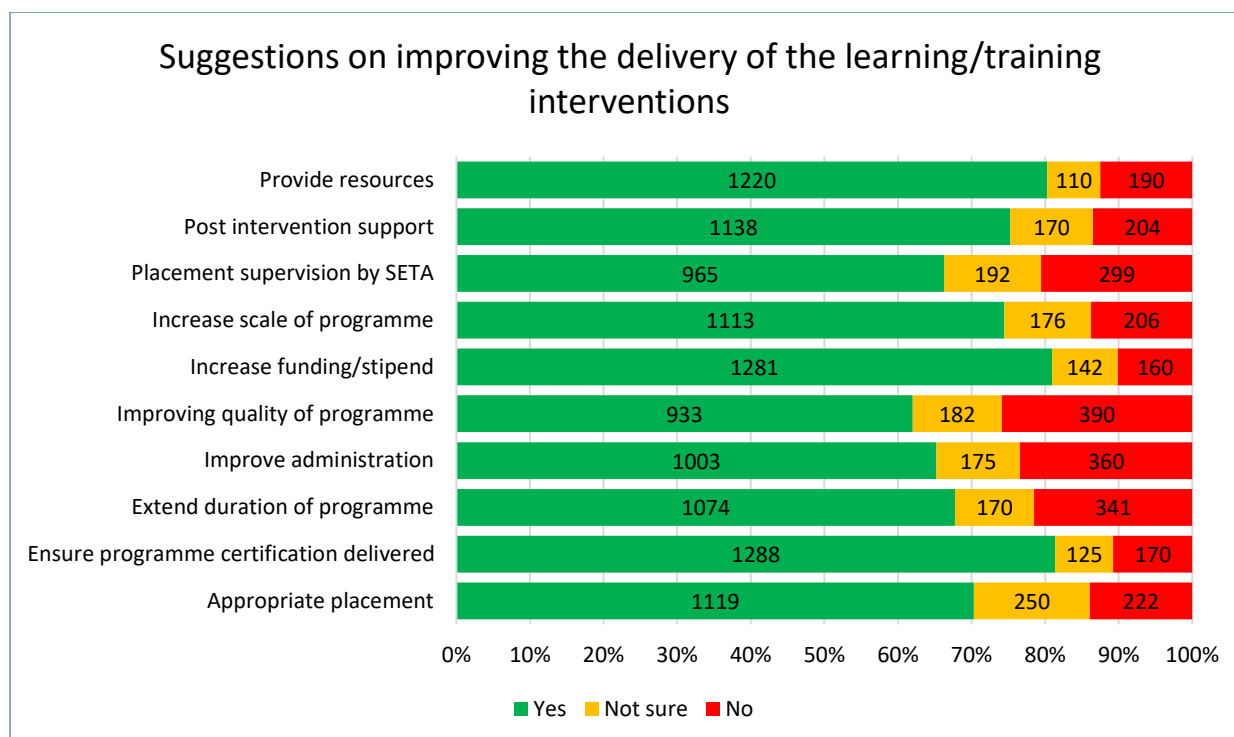


Figure 22: Recommendations to improve delivery of learning/training interventions

7.2 Outcomes of the ETDP SETA Programs

This section provides further results of the outcomes of the ETDP SETA learning programme. The data was recoded into relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact by summing the Likert scale questions and dividing by the number of response items or by obtaining the average mean score for the yes(=1) and no (=0) responses. The reliability of the scales was calculated, and all scales had Cronbach's alpha coefficient of greater than 0.7 (reliable). These descriptive results complement the frequency and percentages reflected in the results tables. The research findings are then presented in relation to the broad objectives of the study. Presenting the findings in this manner addresses the key research questions articulated in the section. The key findings report evidence in respect of the following indicators: employment status of the beneficiaries (employed, self-employed and unemployed); employment rates; nature of employment (access to benefits); career progression for beneficiaries; and employer perceptions of the value of learning interventions (employable people; increased productivity of the company) and key achievements and challenges. These are measured in line with the evaluation matrix components of programme evaluability, relevance, efficiency, Management mechanisms and arrangements, effectiveness, sustainability and impact. The following section of the report provides a summary of the assessment along the lines of the key questions of the evaluation.

7.2.1 Evaluability

Is the strategic plan (SP) evaluable?

In relation to the question, "Is the strategic plan evaluable" and the line of inquiries for the sub-questions therein, the evaluation found that the ETDP SETA organisational level programmes were not grounded in a Theory of Change. As a result, the entire Strategic Plan

for the period under review at an institutional level was not evaluable neither was the SP developed with a results-based approach. The absence of the organisational-level Theory of Change has resulted in bottlenecks and impediments to the general understanding of progress. However, it is important to note that there was sufficient information to establish a line of sight and to assist with the reconstruction of the ToC in retrospect, which would guide the evaluation based on clear performance indicators elicited from the annual performance plans implicit in nature. Furthermore, the study revealed that the SP did not have an effective monitoring and evaluation strategy and the research agenda. However, there were monitoring and evaluation reports that the SETA was conducting at periodical intervals.

Furthermore, the APPs are clear about planning, targets, outcomes and budget programmes but do not give rationales to programme design which serve as outcome-drivers, such as those referenced in the DORA (see DPME, 2013), which then gives limited clarity of how the SP is designed to work in order to produce measurable results. However, to proceed with the evaluation exercise, the team elicited data from the SETA's APPs to re-construct the organisational level Theory of Change retrospectively. This was then subjected to the evaluation committee for validation.

Regarding planning with gender-disaggregated data collection, the study revealed that the SETA was compliant in this area, as this was well documented in the datasets provided by the SETA. However, there is a greater need to ramp up the numbers on gender disaggregation in beneficiary recruitment to support marginalized and vulnerable groups. To this effect in reviewing the ETDP SETA's constituency profile, the evaluation established that the labour market in South Africa remains characterised by a shortage of job opportunities due to slow economic growth. At the same time, racial and gender disparities also remain predominant. The racial profile of the participants shows that the majority (81.1%) were Black, with fewer than 11% Coloureds (11%) and 4.5% White (4.5%), and the least were Indian (1.7%). The gender distribution shows the inclusion of more female beneficiaries (66%) in this programme, results that resonate with the overall national goal of ensuring that women are included in all critical spheres of the economy. Most of the beneficiaries in this representative sample were from relatively large households composed of between 3 and 4 people. A fifth (20%) of these households had a monthly gross income of R3500 and below, almost just the minimum wage. The distribution of learnership respondents in the drawn sample was as follows: relatively more support is targeted to bursaries (33%) and skills development (28%); followed by internship (18%), learnership (15%), with less than 5% of support targeted on the WIL TVET and WIL University of Technologies (WIL UoT). Very few (4%) had some form of disability, and low inclusion rates among people with disabilities. The composition of youths in this evaluation sample was 47.6%-less than half, against the high employment rate among youths in South Africa. Youth aged 15-24 and 25-34 years recorded the highest unemployment rates of 63,3% and 41,3%, respectively (StatsSA, Q2:2021).

7.2.2 Relevance

To what extent is the SP consistent with the national development strategy/plan and the sector priorities?

The second key evaluation question addressed under this heading is: “To what extent is the SP consistent with the national development strategy/plan and the sector priorities? In response to this question and its associated sub-questions, the evaluation found that the ETDP SETA SP was primarily relevant and appropriate as a mechanism of policy reform to the South African PSET system designed to provide the beneficiaries with relevant skills in order to achieve competence in occupationally directed programmes from intermediate and high-level skills in order enhance employability and sectors’ performance and productivity as guided by the following MTSF (2014-2019) outcomes: Outcome 6.1: Quality basic education and Outcome 6.5: Skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path.

The results show that the 2015-2019 Five-Year Strategic Plan was consistent with the national development strategy/plan and the sector priorities. By inference, the objectives and design of the Programmes respond to beneficiaries' needs, and the programme will continue to do so even if circumstances change. The quantitative results reflect overall programme relevance, the programme was perceived as relevant to the needs of the target population, and there is coherence at the strategic and operational levels; 80% of our surveyed respondents agreed that the learning intervention met their expectations. They reported that the training and mentorship they received on the learning intervention was relevant to a great extent, while interviews with the Managers confirmed these results. These results imply that the ETDP SETA strategic plan meets the needs of the target population, and there is coherence at the strategic and operational levels. Furthermore, the policy implication of the results is that the objectives and design of the ETDP-learning interventions are sensitive to the economic, environmental, equity, social, political economy, and capacity conditions in which it takes place (OECD, 2022).

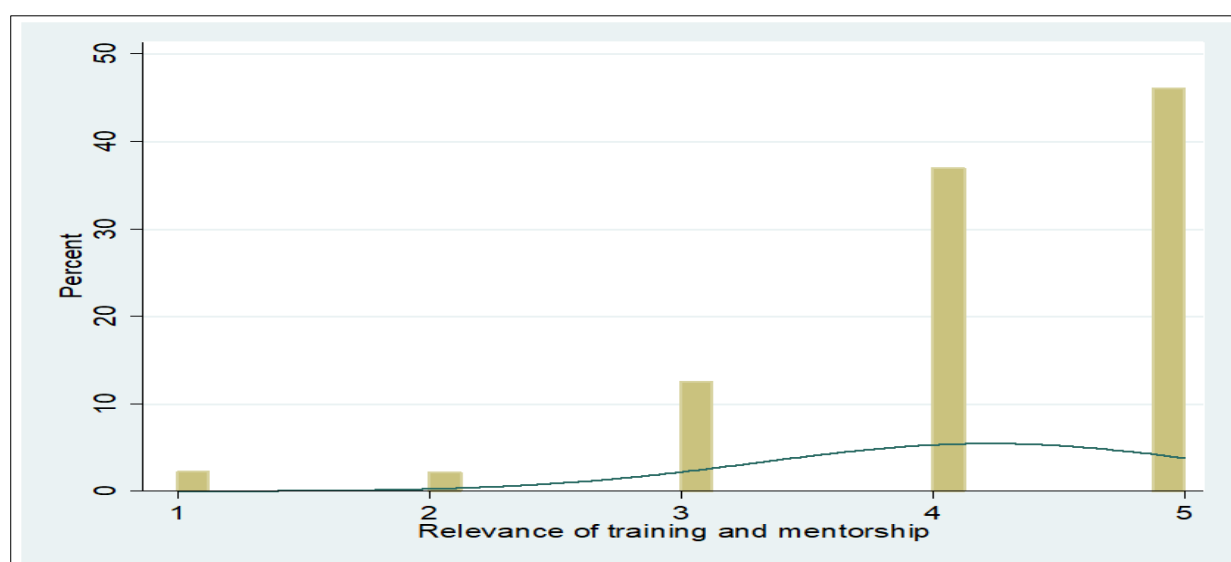


Figure 23: Relevance of training and mentorship

7.2.3 Effectiveness

To what extent have the results of the SP been achieved so far?

Effectiveness helps in understanding the extent to which an intervention achieves or has achieved its objectives. It can provide insight into whether an intervention has attained its

planned results, the process by which this was done, which factors were decisive in this process and whether there were any unintended effects (OECD, 2022). The evaluation sought to establish to what extent the results of the SP have been achieved so far as a key evaluation question for this criterion. In this key question, the study sought to establish further to what extent SP results have been achieved by reviewing data regarding levels of achievement and none achievement thereof.

The study revealed that in the majority of instances the Strategic Plan is reported to have been a success wherein the SETA over-achieved many planned targets with superior quality of services rendered and products delivered to the target group, despite minor challenges observed from the study. Triangulated results of both quantitative and qualitative findings are further conclusive that the ETDP SETA learning interventions were effective. This also relates to the management of the SETA's disbursement and allocation of grants to stakeholders for skills development within the different sectors. ETDP SETA Managers and stakeholders interviewed were positive that ETDP SETA was on the right trajectory in prioritizing critical skill shortages and dealing with people with disabilities.

On the other hand, to measure programme effectiveness based on the beneficiary perspective, the study assessed the learners' expectations from the interventions residing in programme three by examining baseline data against results post-intervention.

The results show positive perspectives on the value of the learning interventions, as the results were skewed towards a mean score value of 4 (efficient) and 5 (very efficient). The programme was perceived to bridge the gap between beneficiaries' theoretical learning and practical workplace, contributed to the development of multiple skills, made them more efficient at doing their job, increased productivity in the organisation, and increased their earnings.

Table 47: Career-progression since completion of the programme

Career-progression since completion of the programme...	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Received promotion	1,156	0.26	0.439504	0	1
Received pay rise	1,114	0.37	0.48249	0	1
Not experienced any change	1,167	0.53	0.499288	0	1
Has your salary changed as a result of the learning intervention?	1,333	0.26	0.439788	0	1

0=No 1=yes

Table 74 indicates that few of them received a promotion ($M=0.26$, $SD=0.43$), or a pay rise ($M=0.37$, $SD=0.48$), while half of them ($M=0.53$, $SD=0.50$) indicated that they had not experienced any positive carrier progression. Further results show that up to a quarter of them ($M=0.26$, $SD=0.43$) had a salary change due to the learning intervention.

2 Mean score between 1=yes and 0=no

The table below shows that the majority of beneficiaries expected to gain the knowledge necessary for their job (97%), gain computer knowledge (78%), graduate and receive certification (76%) and attend as an opportunity for further studies (74%). Half of them attended the Learning programme to get a job (58%) and have a salary increase (50%). Very few had no expectations or intended to start a business upon completing the learning programme.

Table 48: Learner expectations after completion of learning intervention

Learner expectations after completion of the intervention. <i>1=Yes 0=No</i>	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
To gain knowledge	1,819	0.97	0.161946	0	1
Get a job	1,533	0.58	0.493734	0	1
Graduate & receive certification	1,669	0.76	0.427372	0	1
No expectations	1,173	0.29	0.456224	0	1
Promotion/Salary increase	1,533	0.50	0.500158	0	1
Start a business	1,368	0.27	0.442456	0	1
Opportunity for further studies	1,549	0.74	0.440618	0	1
Computer literacy skills	1,524	0.78	0.414701	0	1
Other expectations	425	0.32	0.465181	0	1

The respondents were asked how satisfied they were with their current job after the intervention. Overall, they were satisfied as the mean values are skewed towards 4(satisfied) and 5 (very satisfied). (96%), maternity/paternity leave (90%), PAYE deducted from their salary (83%), pension contribution (81%), UIF contributions (71%), and medical aid benefits (75%).

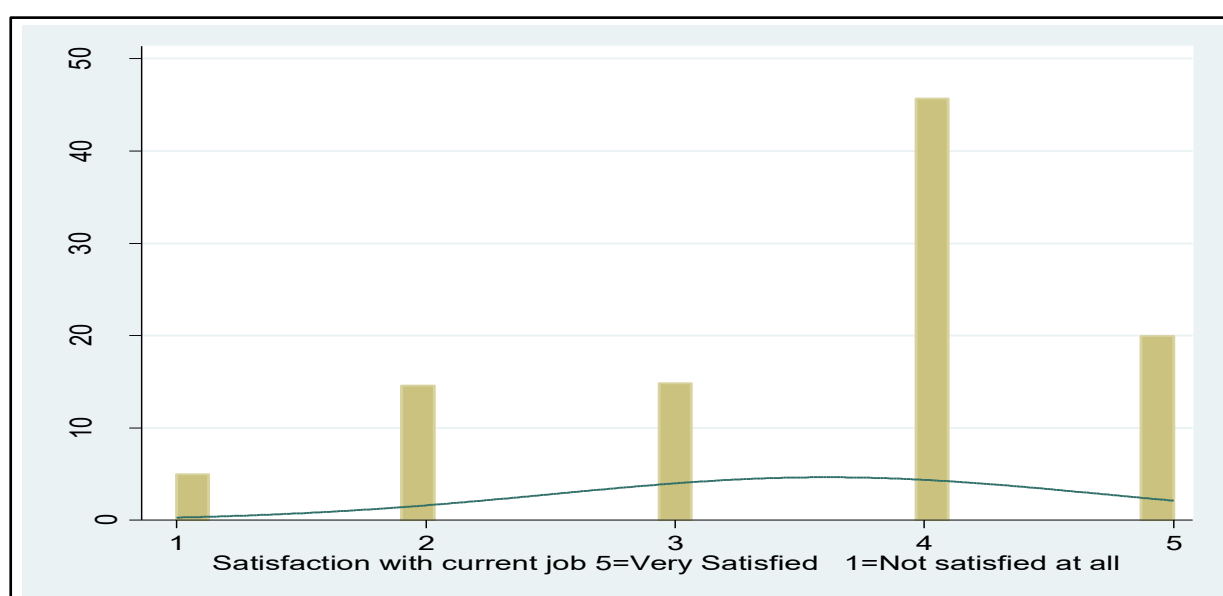


Figure 24: Satisfaction with current job

The findings are conclusive in that ETDP SETA learning interventions were effective as the mean score values were skewed towards 4 (practical) and 5 (very effective).

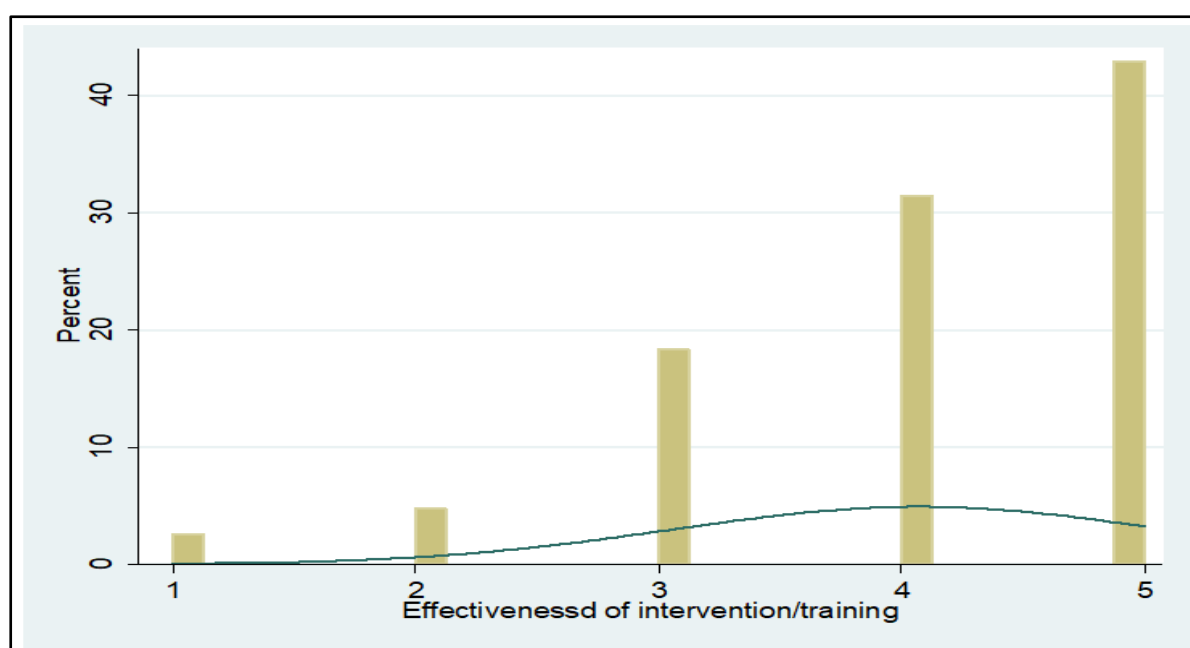


Figure 25: Effectiveness of learning intervention

It is universally recognised that higher levels of educational attainment are associated with better health and well-being, higher employment rates, better labour market opportunities, and higher earnings (Reddy et al., 2016). Further findings in this evaluation study reveal that the learning programmes positively affected promotion upon completion of their programme accompanied by a pay rise. However, those who received certificates were just above half. 47.8% did not receive certificates, yet accredited certification is needed for young people seeking work to be shortlisted for interviews.

This could be viewed as a negative outcome if we consider the DHET (2021) report that some young work-seekers are not well educated and do not possess sufficient skills and previous work experience demanded by employers in the labour market. The economy demands skilled and experienced work-seekers. We argue that not obtaining a certificate makes it difficult and lessens the chances for young people to find employment, ultimately resulting in some losing hope of ever finding a job (thereby becoming discouraged work-seekers). Policy should respond to diverse levels of skills development and occupational pathways shortfalls (such as certification). It should effectively allocate resources in a manner that targets inclusive development (Bhorat et al., 2020). In other words, ETDP SETA should allocate adequate funds for learnership that will be attended for a period commensurate with a certificate.

StatsSA data between 2016-2020 indicates that there has been some significant year-on-year increase in the proportions of young people who have disengaged with the labour market and are also not building on their skills base through education and training – they are not in employment, education or training (NEET). While there are many notable results, the study further revealed that budgetary constraints remain a challenge in financing

various programmes undertaken by the organisation resulting in the underachievement of certain targets in certain instances.

In terms of drivers of success and results achieved, the study establishes that there has been a huge effort and significant improvements in applying "SMART" principles to strategic planning and indicator protocolling thereby resulting into achievement of the SP outputs and outcomes year on year.

7.2.4 Efficiency

Were the results achieved efficiently in relation to the cost of the activities undertaken?

In this area the evaluation considered the key evaluation question: "Where the results achieved efficiently in relation to the cost of the activities undertaken?" In addressing this question, the study established that although Results-based management principles were not fully exploited by the SETA in terms of programme design, the SP overall provided good value for money wherein the SP was implemented in the best possible way in view of the other existing possibilities. In terms of programme outcomes realized from the effects of interventions under programme three, the results indicate that most of the participants completed their learning interventions across all the categories, value for financial resources spent. Although still significantly high, the 18.4% who did not complete their programme represent a loss to both the SETA and the participant in terms of resources, time spent and unfulfilled targets. These results imply that in implementing the ETDP SETA 2015-2019 SP, the conversion of inputs (funds, expertise, natural resources, time, etc.) into outputs, outcomes, and impacts, was done in the most cost-effective way possible. This may include operational efficiency which refers to how well the intervention was managed.

In terms of beneficiary perception of programme efficiency, the results show positive perspectives on the value of the learning interventions, as the results were skewed towards a mean score value of 4 (efficient) and 5 (very efficient). The programme was perceived to bridge the gap between beneficiaries' theoretical learning and practical workplace, contributed to development of multiple skills, made them more efficient at doing their job, contributed to increased productivity in the organisation and that the programme made their earnings increase. The implications of the results are that the financial resources mobilized for the implementation of the strategic plan were used efficiently to the benefits of the beneficiaries. However, carrier progression since the completion of the programme was viewed unsatisfactory.

Table 49: Career-progression since completion of the programme

Career-progression since completion of the programme...	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Received promotion	1,156	0.26	0.439504	0	1
Received pay rise	1,114	0.37	0.48249	0	1
Not experienced any change	1,167	0.53	0.499288	0	1
Has your salary changed as a result of the learning intervention?	1,333	0.26	0.439788	0	1

0=No 1=yes

Table 74 indicates that few of them received a promotion ($M=0.26$, $SD=0.43$), pay rise ($M=0.37$, $SD=0.48$), while half of them ($M=0.53$, $SD=0.50$) indicated that they had not experienced any positive career progression. Further results show that up to a quarter of them ($M=0.26$, $SD=0.43$) had a salary change as a result of the learning intervention.

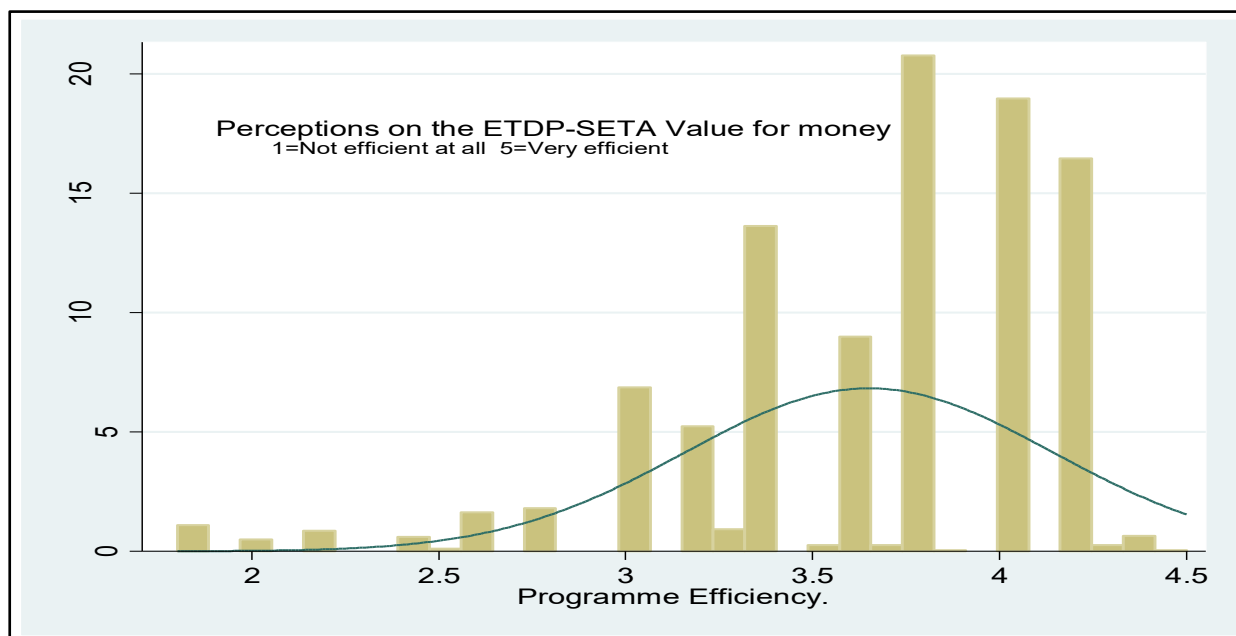


Figure 26: Programme Efficiency

The implications of the results are that the financial resources mobilized for the implementation of the strategic plan were used efficiently to the benefits of the beneficiaries. However, career progression since the completion of the programme was viewed unsatisfactory.

In terms of key stakeholder survey results, most ETDP SETA Managers were confident that the administration and disbursement of the funds to beneficiaries were done timely, while in isolated cases one Stakeholder from a training institution cited challenges related to untimely disbursement of the funds as well as low coverage (too few loans disbursed, against the high demand) which affected performance.

From a gender lens, it is reported that males are likely to study for the so-called masculine science, technology, and engineering-based subjects, whereas females are focused on so-called feminine subjects, such as Health, Education, and Social Sciences (Reddy et al., 2016). The value for money would also be realised if ETDP SETA ensured more female beneficiaries are enrolled and graduated on STEM subjects from both Universities of Technologies and TVET colleges, which seem not to benefit much from the ETDP SETA WIL programme.

In terms of results delivery timing, the study established that while in most cases results were achieved on schedule there were notable cases where delays were generally experienced due to procurement processes that were misaligned with divisional plans and coordination with key suppliers to the SETA. The financial analysis also further revealed

³ Mean score between 1=yes and 0=no

significant challenges in the financial resource mobilization strategy failing to meet certain targets in the implementation of the SP.

7.2.5 Management mechanisms and arrangements

Are the management modalities and governance arrangements of the SP adequate? Are the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved clearly understood?

In relation to the question, “Are the management modalities and governance arrangements of the SP adequate?

In programming, part of program design requires the development of an Evaluation Plan from the onset. The Evaluation Plan helps measure the success of programmes, the constituency you have targeted, and other beneficiaries you may have acknowledged. It draws directly on the specific outcomes your Theory of Change has already identified. While your Theory of Change has encouraged you to be ambitious about what outcomes you want your targeted constituency to achieve, your Evaluation Plan will focus on what is practical and realistic to measure. An Evaluation Plan is most often produced in the form of a table. For each outcome that you intend to measure, the table sets out how you will measure it. Setting it out clearly in this way will not only help you measure the success of your programme but also help you see that success when it happens and understand what this means for your participants and your programme.

The review of data established that the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans (RFSPAPPs) (2019) guides government planning and reporting processes for institutional Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans. Chapter 8 of the RFSPAPPs (2019), provides for Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation of the plans and programmes of government. The RFSPAPPs (2019) provide mid-term and end-term progress reports on Strategic Plans for a five-year planning cycle. The mid-term progress report must reflect performance during the first two and a half years of the planning cycles and the first half of the financial year. This will be in addition to the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) Mid-Term Review of Government Performance for the relevant period. Implementing Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans must be monitored to measure progress towards achieving planned targets. The monitoring findings can be used to improve performance and future planning and budgeting decisions. Monitoring of plans must be conducted continuously by collecting data on specified indicators, verifying, storing the data, analysing and reporting on progress against the achievement of targets. These findings must be used to provide management, oversight institutions and the public with information about the extent to which implementation of the plans has progressed and the extent to which government priorities and development results are being achieved. Reporting is a vital component of the monitoring process and is used to inform management and oversight decision-making. Reporting tracks progress against a plan, improves accountability for the delivery of government priorities and provides information about the use of allocated budgets. It also allows institutions to describe measures that will be taken to ensure that the implementation of plans remains on track. The review has revealed considerable data indicating that the SETA has employed various mechanisms to support management structures to effectively monitor the performance and results of the

SP as prescribed by the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans.

In response to the key evaluation question above, the study in part established that the SETA has put in place adequate and meaningful management modalities and governance processes and arrangements that are aligned to guidelines in the King II report and guidelines of the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans (RFSPAPPs) (2019) which adequately addresses its governance needs.

Evidence from the study further shows that the SP receive significant administrative, technical and even responsive political support from relevant constituent structures and oversight bodies (DPME, provincial treasuries, policy departments, and the AG) for improvements in applying the framework. Still, the implication is that the SETA receives technical and adequate financial resources to fund priority areas to accomplish the SP outcomes.

However, in view of the above, it is clear that the ETDP SETA SP for the period under review does not have an Evaluation Plan as per the requirement by the National Evaluation Policy Framework. The framework guides that to ensure proper planning for evaluations by Government, all state institutions must develop evaluation plans which outline the evaluations to be conducted during a specific period.

7.2.6 Impact

What concrete changes has the implementation of the SP brought, or is likely to, to the constituencies and final beneficiaries?

Impact is the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects (OECD, 2022). It addresses the intervention's ultimate significance and potentially transformative effects, and the results show a net positive effect of the programme on employment and employability, but not entrepreneurship. ETDP SETA is one of the role players supporting the NSDS III policy by prioritizing the skills development programmes in the education sector as an Education training authority.

In relation to the key question, "What concrete changes has the implementation of the SP brought, or is likely to, to the constituencies and final beneficiaries?"

The study reveals that, although we may not attribute the programme's impact on the beneficiaries as it would be premature to assess, at this moment, the programme's impact in terms of concrete changes to the constituencies and final beneficiaries, including its potency to strengthen the capacities of national constituents and institutions and the environment (policies, laws, skills and attitudes) that promote the sustainability of results, the ETDP SETA has contributed significantly to the realisation of some of these indicators including the employability outcome, when we consider the net transitions into employment and out of unemployment.

We can also measure the programme's contribution by running inferential statistics as a paired t-test of the learners' employment status before and after the intervention. The

paired t-test analysis tests the hypothesis that the ETDP SETA intervention improved the beneficiaries' employment status, as seen in the table below.

Table 50: Employment status BEFORE and AFTER the intervention

Paired t test					
Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Employment status BEFORE Intervention	1,896	0,58	0,49331	0,560059	0,604498
Employment status AFTER Intervention	1,896	0,72	0,44889	0,70024	0,74068
Diff	1,896	0,14	0,41463	-0,15686	-0,11951

Mean (diff) = mean (EmploymentBefore - EmploymentAfter) t = 14.5116

Ho: mean (diff) = 0 degrees of freedom = 1895

Ha: mean (diff) < 0 Ha: mean(diff) != 0 Ha: mean(diff) > 0

Pr(T < t) = 0.0000 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0000 Pr(T > t) = 1.0000

58% of the beneficiaries were employed before and 72% after the intervention. The mean scores (0.58) and (0.72) correspond to the percentage employed. There was a difference (diff=-0.14) between employment status before and after the intervention. The t-value is large, and the p-value ($\Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0000$) is statistically significant; hence the null hypothesis that the programme had no effect is rejected. We thus conclude that the ETDP SETA intervention effectively implemented the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan.

The study reveals a positive net transition, as more targeted beneficiaries of the SP moved into employment than unemployment. Overall full-time employment rates increased from 49.7% before participating in the learning programme to 59.1% post-intervention. Unemployment reduced from 30.8% to 22.8% before and after participation in the learning and skills programme, an 8-percentage point decrease in the unemployment rate in this cohort.

Based on the baseline data, employment rates were more likely to significantly increase among bursary recipients (62.3% vs 75.6%-after) before and after the learning intervention, compared to other forms of support. Although skills development had the most significant positive effect on employment, there was no improvement before (83.8%) and after (82.8%) the learning intervention. Unemployment was more likely to decrease significantly among learnership (53.4% vs 46.1%-after) and internship (72.2% vs 38.2%-after) modes of learning beneficiaries in the two periods. Notably, the WIL TVET programme had high unemployment rates before (65.7%) and after (62.9%), without any significant improvement between the periods, while unemployment slightly increased among the few in the WIL UoT. Inferential analysis can conclude with 95% certainty (95% CI, $p < 0.05$) that there was a significant improvement in employment status before and after the intervention. This is a substantial change the implementation of the SP has brought.

7.2.7 Sustainability

How sustainable are, or are likely to be, the results of the SP?

Sustainability in this sense shall refer to the extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue. This includes an examination of the financial, economic, social, environmental, and institutional capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time (OECD, 2022)⁴

The findings in this criterion address the key question related to the likelihood of the SP results being sustainable beyond the funding of the SP for the period under review. This section also includes broader considerations around the main factors that influence SP's viability or non-viability, including the level of ownership of the products and results by partners and target groups. The section further probes whether the strategies envisaged ensuring that constituencies at various levels (provincial & national) will take lasting ownership of the results. Like many other countries globally, cognisance is taken of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to the disruptive nature of the pandemic that could have affected the sustainability of results thereof in the context of national responses and how stakeholders may have responded to advance ownership of the results of the project. Given the above context, qualitative results show that the ETDP SETA learning programme is sustainable. The Managers and Stakeholders interviewed felt that sustainability is guaranteed as the programme is well thought out and in alignment with activities already on the ground. They, however, felt that planning in advance involving all stakeholders and constituencies is crucial as the SETA implements multiple programmes simultaneously for its future programming of the SP. Further assessment revealed that the ETDP SETA's mission-critical functions were largely affected by the pandemic in terms of service delivery for hard-to-reach constituency areas resulting in compromised organisational resilience to deal with the effects of the pandemic. The practical implication of these results is that although ETDP SETA is adequately resourced, a robust business continuity plan must be established and built institutional capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time.

7.2.8 Coherence

How well does the ETDP SETA SP programme intervention fit?

As part of value addition from the evaluation team, we added a criterion of Coherence to the key evaluation questions probing the intervention fit to enrich the evaluation as these collectively address a critical part of the review.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), which is a model upon which the National Evaluation Policy Framework is predicated, as an authoritative guide for programme evaluation within the South African context, was recently established (2019) updated benchmark evaluation criteria which speak to Coherence as suggested in the evaluation questions above. The five original DAC criteria have been expanded to six, and the definitions of the six criteria have been refined to provide greater evaluation precision. In reference to the provisions of the

⁴ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

National Evaluation Policy Framework as guided, the compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution is critical. In this regard, Coherence speaks to how other interventions (particularly policies) support or undermine the intervention and vice versa. Coherence further speaks to the extent to which the ETDP SETA Strategic plan and APPs for the period under review are logical, easily understandable and unified documents internally and respectively. How they structure and present their content is central to users' ability to understand and apply them. In terms of the organizational planning process, alignment to national, provincial and local government planning, the National Development Plan and the Medium Term Strategic Framework, Implementation Delivery Mode, Spatial Development Framework, Budget Prioritisation Framework, Provincial priorities, policy, planning, budgeting and reporting processes set out the structure of the respective documents as a basis for framing this appraisal of coherence. When considering the coherence of the ETDP SETA SP, the document follows a clear logic in providing a rationale for its existence before highlighting key legislation and policy imperatives of public sector management reform as part of the planning process. The document concisely dives into planning, budgeting and reporting to provide a context for the planning cycle and the supporting accountability instruments.

The situating of the SP in this context then provides the space for introducing key concepts, most notably that of the results chain and performance indicators. The SP then provides concise practical guidance on developing performance indicators, setting targets, reporting and facilitating corrective action. This then informs a description of the institutional arrangements, publishing protocols and roles and responsibilities before concluding with a glossary of key concepts. The document is coherent and strikes a balance between the conceptual overview and preliminary guidance on how to apply the concepts in practice. It follows a clear logic in its structure, and therefore we conclude that the SP has held up well as a document coherently with the processes of national planning in its own right.

7.2.9 Narrative explanation on the ETDP SETA achievement of five-year targets

7.2.9.1 Contributions made towards vulnerable groups

The SP's implementation has significantly contributed to the female beneficiaries. The gender dimension is one of the major focus areas in most developmental programmes nationally and globally. Therefore, in this case, the results indicate that more females participated in the programme and were able to secure employment after completing their programmes. Empowering women is also considered to have a greater positive impact on families. In addition to attracting female candidates to its programmes, the ETDP SETA also focuses on including people with disabilities. Similarly, the programme has successfully enrolled people with disabilities.

7.2.9.2 Contribution to spatial transformation

Most ETDP SETA learning programme beneficiaries (25.3%) remain in Gauteng. Other provinces with significant distribution of beneficiaries are Western Cape (14.3%), Free State (13.6%) and KwaZulu-Natal (12.6%). These results suggest that the ETDP SETA still has a major task to accomplish to increase the accessibility of their programmes to a broader proportion of beneficiaries across all the provinces.

7.2.9.3 Contributions towards the triple challenges: Unemployment, Inequality & poverty

The results presented and discussed above have demonstrated that employment levels have increased among the beneficiaries from 2015 to 2019. Given that unemployment is a national scourge, this outcome is encouraging as the employment of at least one household member invariably leads to improved livelihoods. The income associated with the nature of employment attained directly and positively impacts the socio-economic status of many households. Therefore, implementing the Strategic plan has created opportunities for securing or maintaining livelihoods for many beneficiaries.

8. LESSONS LEARNED

Impact assessment is about the causal effect. In assessing the impact of the ETDP SETA programmes as part of the key questions asked in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the ETDP SETA five-year Strategic Plan 2015-2019, the assessment also looked at the following:

- What concrete changes has the implementation of the SP brought, or is likely to, to the constituencies and final beneficiaries?
- Has the SP strengthened the capacities of national constituents and institutions and strengthened an environment (policies, laws, skills, attitudes, etc.) that promote the sustainability of results?

Often interventions may have positive and negative changes produced, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended, therefore to assess the ETDP SETA programmes' impact, we conducted Case studies of employers in the skills sector who have successfully implemented their strategic plans in order to attribute the SP's effects to these.

8.1 The Attribution Gap

A common refrain in the literature argues that an excellent societal effect or outcome, especially outcomes on the higher levels, may have several contributing factors. This is not to say that a specific government programme caused that effect all on its own (Walker et al. 2007). For instance, job creation may be attained despite projects to promote training. In other words, even if specific beneficiaries may have benefited from a financed programme, it does not necessarily follow that the project led to significant job creation in the broader economy; or that if such job creation did occur, it is attributable to the specific programme and not to some other more significant factor. Further, several projects may contribute to the same outcome. The difficulty of attributing outcomes to specific projects is what we have referred to as the "attribution gap" which means that no direct relationship between the direct benefits to targeted beneficiaries of the projects and indirect benefits to broader society can be proven easily as too many factors are involved in isolating the effect of a single intervention.

For instance, while unemployed beneficiaries might have benefited from the ETDP SETA strategic plan programmes and funding, the project may have no effect in reducing unemployment in the broader economy. Caution should therefore be exercised when an outcome is attributed to the efforts of a specific project/programme

It is on the backdrop of this understanding that the impact of ETDP SETA's funded projects was measured from a contributory perspective in this study. This was because ETDP SETA's beneficiaries also receive similar or augmented support from various sources such as donors and other government agencies; hence ETDP SETA cannot claim success or failure alone. Therefore, consistent with outcome evaluation principles, it is only reasonable to assess ETDP SETA's funding support from a contributory perspective. The evaluation acknowledges the significance of the milestone achieved in terms of the numbers, for example, unemployed beneficiaries who entered labour markets successfully during the period under review. While changes in the lifestyles or employment status of beneficiaries cannot be entirely attributed to the support received from the ETDP SETA, it is important to acknowledge that a significant number of the beneficiaries who have gone through the ETDP SETA programme interventions have gained skills and even employment. The positive linkages in the programme story from the vantage point of the beneficiaries themselves are illustrated by the feedback in the following success story.

Case Study: Success Story 1:

Profile	Hygro Training College Hygro Training College offers a wide range of accredited Agricultural Training Programs. All their programs are developed to transfer theoretical and practical knowledge to students. As part of its strategic approach and implementation model, the college has built a wide network comprising a wide variety of commercial farm operators, including citrus and sub-tropical fruit producers, as well as renowned Beef Masters and Poultry Producers. Hygro Training College thus has the comparative advantage of exposing students to practical demonstrations and experiences that enhance their understanding and application of the relevant subject they wish to study. These experiences enable students to have real-life principles and procedures that the agricultural industry has to offer. With specific reference to skills development, Hygro offers its clients and students a wide variety of occupationally aligned skills programs that range across all farming aspects, including Occupational Health and Safety. The training programs target a range of farm employees, from general farm workers to assistant farm managers. The most popular skills in demand include the following: • Hydroponic Production • Poultry Production • Occupational Health and Safety • Agricultural Management for Supervisors • Food Safety and Quality control in a pack house • Tractor Driving Hygro offers training programs through the learnership model, which focuses on vocational education and training that combines theory and practice, culminating in a qualification registered with SAQA. Hygro is accredited to offer the following Learnerships: • Plant production NQF Level 1-4 • Animal production NQF Level 1-4 • Mixed Farming NQF Level 1-2 • Poultry Production NQF Level 2 • Horticulture NQF Level 1
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	• Fruit Packing and Grading Processes NQF Level 3 • Grain handling processes NQF Level 2 & 3
The problem and its significance	Hygro Training College prides itself on keeping abreast with developments in the agricultural industry and focuses on the necessary and critical skills. Furthermore, Hygro also focuses on ensuring that it offers its training programs effectively and efficiently. It is against this backdrop that as a training institution, Hygro requested funding from the ETDP SETA to train 8 of its staff to upgrade their skills and provide opportunities for leadership development. Therefore, although there were no problems per se within Hygro, there was a need for staff to acquire advanced skills to propel them in their career progression but also to position the training institution as a preferred provider of agricultural training services. Problem identification In line with good practice in organizational development, Hygro does its strategic planning every five years and develops annual implementation plans. The strategic and annual plans are based on issues identified from SWOT analysis and environmental scanning exercises. Through these processes, Hygro identified further skills training as essential to supporting and promoting staff in their careers while giving shared value to the organization. The staff also expressed a keen interest in the training as it provided opportunities for professional growth and effectiveness in the workplace. The Training Phase Hygro requested funding from ETDP SETA to provide training for its staff in the following areas: • First Aid • Fire Fighting • Moderator and Assessor Training • Essential Leadership Skills The training sessions were thus focused on occupational safety and providing staff with the skills to be moderators and assessors in the agricultural sector. <i>The training was meant to strengthen Hygro as an employer and training provider.</i> The ETDP SETA appointed training service providers through a tender system. Siyabuswa was appointed to conduct First Aid and Fire Fighting training; Sikulisana was appointed to provide moderator and assessor training; and Eland Consulting was appointed to provide leadership training.
Outcome/Results	The feedback from the training sessions was positive across all training areas. The training materials used and presented to the students were relevant and of high quality, according to feedback from the staff members who participated in the training. Furthermore, the training approaches and processes effectively transferred the requisite skills to staff members. Even though some of the training sessions were conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, the trainers were experienced and created a conducive environment for the staff members to learn and upgrade their skills and knowledge. As a result of the training, there was a significant improvement in staff performance in their various roles. Their approach to their work became more positive. The leadership training was influential in shifting their mindset towards a more accommodative perspective and enabling the team to create a positive working environment. Furthermore, 3 members were promoted to moderator

	positions after the training had passed the training verification exercise. Therefore, the trainings were considered to have been very successful.
The challenges encountered	The major challenges reported by Hygro pertain to the process that the organization went through with the ETDP SETA to request training and, eventually, the appointment of the training providers. The Training Manager indicated that the process was frustrating as the SETA did not seem to have a well-structured sequence of activities to approve the funding request. Each time Hygro inquired about the funding, they were asked to provide additional documents and information, making the process unnecessarily long and cumbersome. Concerning the training providers, the only challenge was the delay in providing certificates by Eland Consulting for the leadership skills training. The certificates were eventually received a year after the training.
Outcomes Beyond the results	Hygro Training College continues to offer excellent training for learnerships and facilitates the placement of training graduates. The notion of continuous learning and development remains a guiding principle embraced by all staff in the organization. Therefore, the role played by the ETDP SETA in strengthening training providers and employers are critical in ensuring that students in learnership programs benefit and graduates find suitable placements to gain experience in their chosen field. Below are comments from students who attested to this perspective quoted verbatim: <i>"I started at Hygro Training College in 2017 as a graduate student, and during that year of placement, I could also work and attend my classes. When I finished my studies, I was given the opportunity and got hired permanently."</i> <i>"Hygro is a good placement agency. It helps students who have problems with experiential farm training, and they pay you while you're in the field. Hygro makes follow-ups to acknowledge whether the student attends daily through clock sheets and progress reports."</i>

Note that more case studies will be included in the final report as the assignment concludes. Interviews in this regard for three more case studies are still in progress.

9. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation assessed subjective assessments of the SETA's beneficiaries and key informants of the role of the ETDP's interventions in assisting students in securing employment. Based on the concrete triangulated results, we conclude that, among other factors (both external and internal), ETDP SETA's learning interventions appear to be making a positive contribution in facilitating the postulated transitions as per the 2015-2019 Strategic plan. The body of evidence assembled in this report is compatible with a hypothesis of programme impact, relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. Given the above, the evaluation concludes by pointing out a summary of key achievements while highlighting key shortfalls respectively as follows:

9.1 Key achievements

Increased employment rates and retention in the same company

Overall, the findings indicate that the programme had positive effects on the employment rate. In addition, the beneficiaries continued working in the same companies or organisations where they completed their programme. This is a positive outcome when viewed from a career progression point of view.

Quality and relevance of training/mentorship received.

The majority (92.7%) of the participants indicated that the quality of the training and mentorship received was of an acceptable standard and good quality, with 42.9% stating that the service received was excellent. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the quality of all ETDP SETA programmes being, Administration, Research and Skills Planning, Learning programmes and Projects, and Quality Assurance are necessary and generally good and meet the standards and expectations of most of the beneficiaries as they advance the agenda for a developed and improved skills profile of the sector's workforce for the benefit of employers, workers and employees in the sector.

9.2 Key Shortfalls

Low entrepreneurship intentions

In South Africa, some imbalances occur between the types of skills developed and those needed in the world of work. This is against the backdrop of a high unemployment rate. Few beneficiaries (19%) in our study sample showed the intention to start a business after the learning intervention.

Low certification rate

When learners attend any programme, they are supposed to be retained, complete and employable. In this study, the survey results that show that at least four out of every ten learners in the programme did not receive certificates should be of concern to ETDP-SETA. The target for the number of certificates printed and issued in 2019/2020 was not achieved due to expenditure.

Low Inclusion of special groups (disabled)

The learning intervention is gender-responsive but not disability responsive. In 2017/18 and 2018/2019, the target for unemployed people with disabilities enrolled in skills programmes was not achieved. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) to enhance opportunities for employment for people with disabilities through ETD learnership programmes is therefore urgent.

Inadequate funding for the Colleges

Qualitative results indicate that there seems to be inadequate funding for the various programmes. Therefore, increased funding and more effort is needed to offer more skill-based programmes by continuously offering bursaries and graduate internship opportunities. In most instances, the sampled respondents in the study felt that closing all the gaps in education is always a challenge when implementing programmes due to budget constraints.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Improve and expedite the certification process.

Most beneficiaries recommended that the SETA expedite the certification process to ensure that all those who complete their learning programmes are awarded appropriate certificates. There is a need for the ETD to fast-track the process to develop a qualification, as this takes longer than a year as will have to be assigned and be aligned to SAQA and QCTO processes.

Recommendation 2: Additional resources

Other recommendations include allocating additional resources to the learning programmes, increasing funding/stipends, providing post-intervention support and increasing the scale of the programme. Managers suggest long-term learnership for 12 months for both theory and practice so they can get higher certificates. To improve public sector ETD workers' skills and competencies, the ETDP SETA should increase the budget allocation to programmes and utilize it in increasing the number of TVET Colleges and universities funded for skills development and career and vocational guidance. This is evidenced in many of the targets underachievements in the 2019/2020 financial year.

Recommendation 3: Development of Organisational Resilience Strategies in the context of COVID-19 related COVID-19 Pandemic

Managers indicated that the organisational unpreparedness for the Covid-19 pandemic affected the desired outcomes. There was no immediate intervention for organisational resilience for mission critical functions supporting business continuity, especially during 2019/20. Most people were infected or affected by Covid-19, and the morale too. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic will remain a threat to the South African economic and education sectors in short to medium term. Rasool (2020b:1) contends that its impact on students, employers, employees, and the unemployed should be continuously researched to avoid the risk of sending misleading signals for public investments in skills development. In this regard, it is recommended that the SETA develop Organisational Resilience Strategies to support business continuity and protect itself from all threats against mission-critical functions.

Recommendation 4: Longer training period and employment

Graduates need more than 12 months of experience to land a higher-paying job. Internships are not a panacea for unemployment because if you are not lucky enough, you are still unemployed after the internship. Graduates need long-term exposure to the work environment. The programme's success is dependent on the successful performance of the organisation. Areas of weakness in the 2019/20 financial year included incomplete contracts and a lack of up-to-date ICT resources. Overcoming challenges include capital investment into ICT resources, staff training, and performance management.

Recommendation 5: Improving the administration and quality of programmes

Approximately 52% of the beneficiaries felt that ETDP SETA should improve the administration of its programmes, while 48.3% stated that the quality of the programmes could be improved. Quantity (number of students funded) may not be the ideal outcome under programme 1, as the quality of the certificate and degree is important, as this weakly links or strongly link the graduates to high-earning jobs. However, the 2019/2020 financial year report shows a 29% average under-expenditure. A low percentage of audit findings were resolved on time in the same period, reflecting efficiency issues.

Recommendation 6: Increase TVET College students' placement.

It is recommended that the SETA invests in strategies for increased student placements. Programmes offered are of high value leading to employment but are not attached to a qualification. Therefore, the number of TVET College student placements should be increased to enable beneficiaries to gain experience through internship programmes. Beneficiaries suggested that the SETA should provide post-intervention support. We further recommend that a strategy for improved monitoring, collection and reconciliation of learners' results timeously be put in place to overcome underperformance.

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Chapter 6C of the amended act also establishes the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO), which regulates the ETDP SETA's education and training quality assurance functions.

<https://www.gov.za/documents/skills-development-levies-act> - Skills Development Levies Act No.9 of 1990 (SDLA)

Schedule 3A of the Public Finance Management Act No. 1 of 1999 (as amended)

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The New Growth Path (NGP): Framework, with its multi-faceted Accord, namely:

- National Skills Accord – to strengthen partnerships relating to training of teachers and lecturers as well as the placement of students and the unemployed in the workplaces for experiential learning
- Basic Education and partnership with schools – to focus on quality education delivery for teachers
- Green Economy – to develop green economy occupations, implementation of the environmental education by the SETA
- Employment Accord – to place unemployed learners on occupationally directed programmes

Human Resource Development Strategy 2010 2030 – to equip ETD Sector employers, employees and unemployed youth with skills

Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (2011 – 2025) – to address the training needs of educators and managers

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