



**ECD Labour Market  
Information & Implications  
for Skills Planning**



Education, Training and Development Practices  
Sector Education and Training Authority



**RESEARCH**  
**Report  
Summary**

AT THE CUTTING EDGE OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

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# INTRODUCTION



The ETDP SETA Research Chair in Early Childhood Development is tasked with researching the current labour market profile to determine demand for, and supply of specific skills training and to explore how the ETDP SETA could partner with relevant stakeholders to best support training to meet this need.

This report is shaped by two main questions:

1

What are the key questions surrounding the skills gap in the ECD workforce emerging from a review of current ECD services, policies and practices in South Africa?

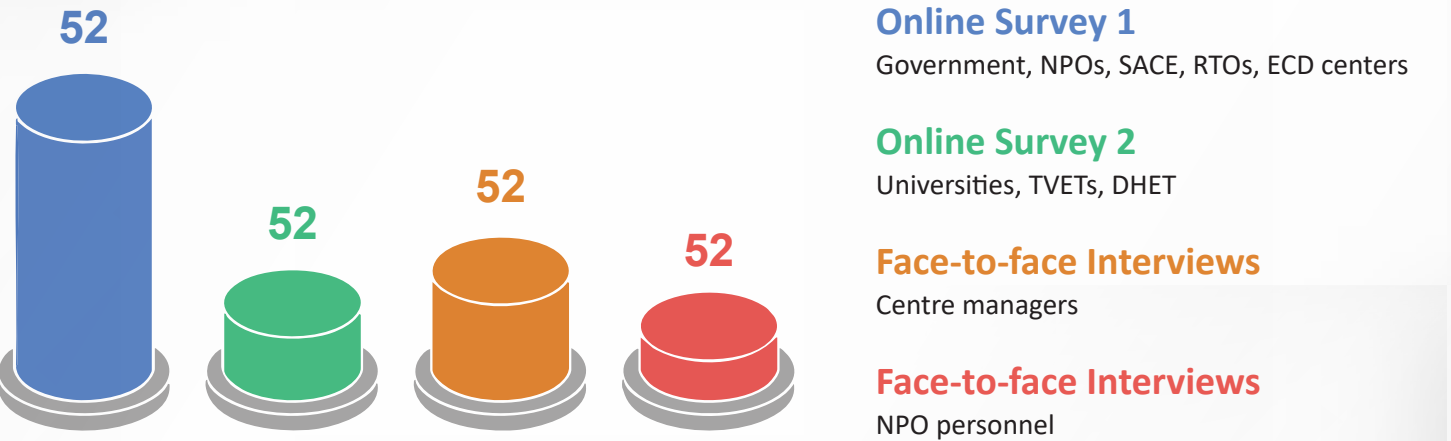
2

How can the skills gaps be closed by collaboration for learning and action among the various stakeholders responsible for workforce skills development?

# METHODOLOGY

The multi-method research design consisted of a desktop review, supplemented by open-ended questionnaires administered online to have a greater reach, and qualitative individual and focus group interviews, conducted both face-to-face and virtually, depending on the availability of the respondent.

Number of Respondents by Research Method:



The desktop review was conducted first to determine the labour market profile from the official documents available. In terms of the sources to consult/approach, the decision was guided by previous ETDP SETA skills sector plan reports. To supplement this data, primarily qualitative online surveys were conducted by means of open-ended questionnaires with the relevant role players as indicated in Table 1.

# FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS FOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

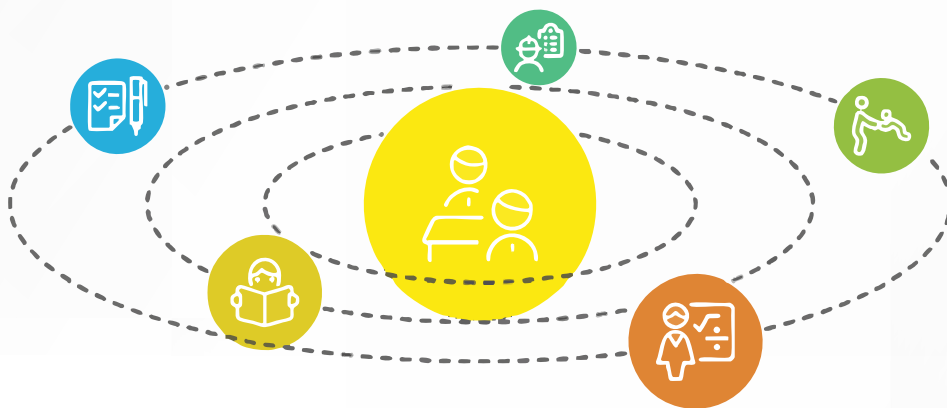
1

What are the key issues surrounding the skills gap in the ECD workforce emerging from a review of current ECD services, policies and practices in South Africa?

## Nature of sector

The sector is under-skilled, with nearly half of all practitioners/managers without a recognised qualification. The rural areas are the worst affected.

## Implications for Skills Training: Enhancing ECD Skills and Access



### Registration and Compliance

Increasing registration for effective planning

### ELP Management Support

Assisting managers in compliance and sustainability

### Home-Based Stimulation

Developing programs for home-based stimulation

### Parent Training

Training parents to provide stimulation

### Social Worker Training

Training social workers to train parents

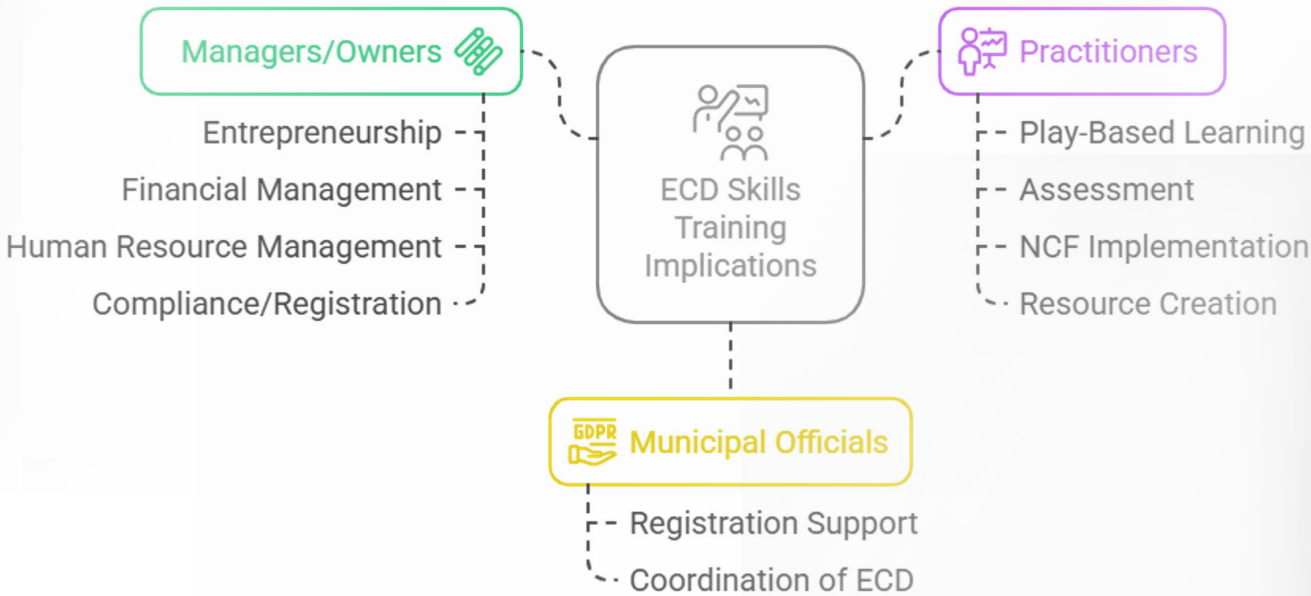
Most children under 5 do not attend an ECD centre, meaning that they may not receive adequate stimulation and care to prepare them for schooling.

Implications for skills training: There is a need to support/develop home-based/non-centre-based stimulation programmes, which will require training parents or training social workers/CHWs to train parents.

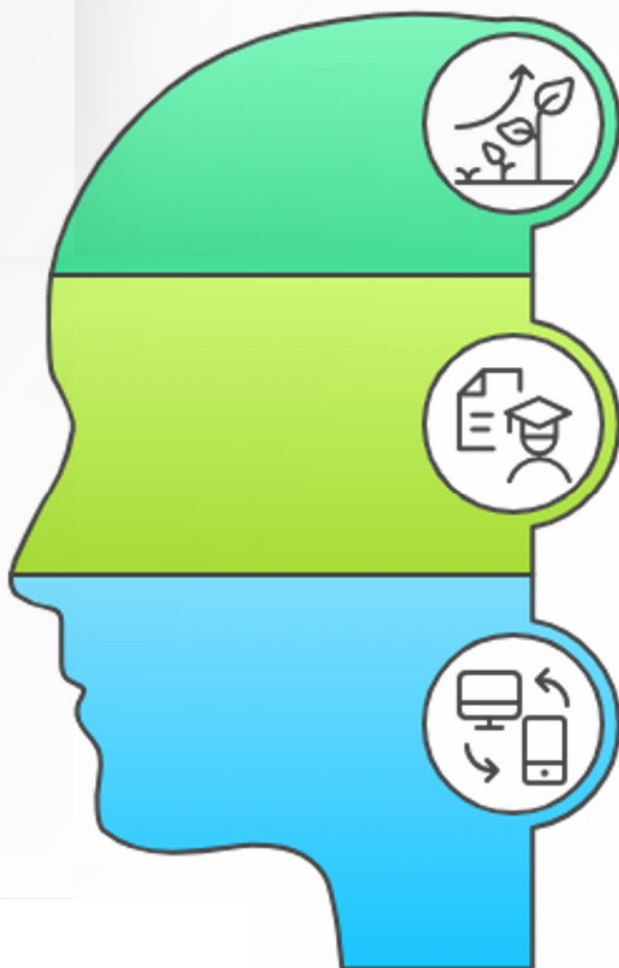
**Occupational and skills gaps:**

Managers/owners of ELPs do not have the required skills to enable them to effectively operate a business or comply with Government requirements.

**ECD Skills Training Implications**



Sector trends and innovations:



## Sector Trends

Mobilizing through forums and partnerships

## Professionalization

New programs at higher education

## Technology Integration

Digital skills and applications



The sector is mobilising itself through ECD forums, partnerships and social enterprise models, and the DBE is recognising and tapping into this.

Implications for skills training: Partnerships and collaboration with well-established, well-run and sustainable NPO, ECD forums and the DBE are required to identify training needs and available resources to enhance skills training to reach those most in need.

### Professionalisation of the sector through new programmes at HE.

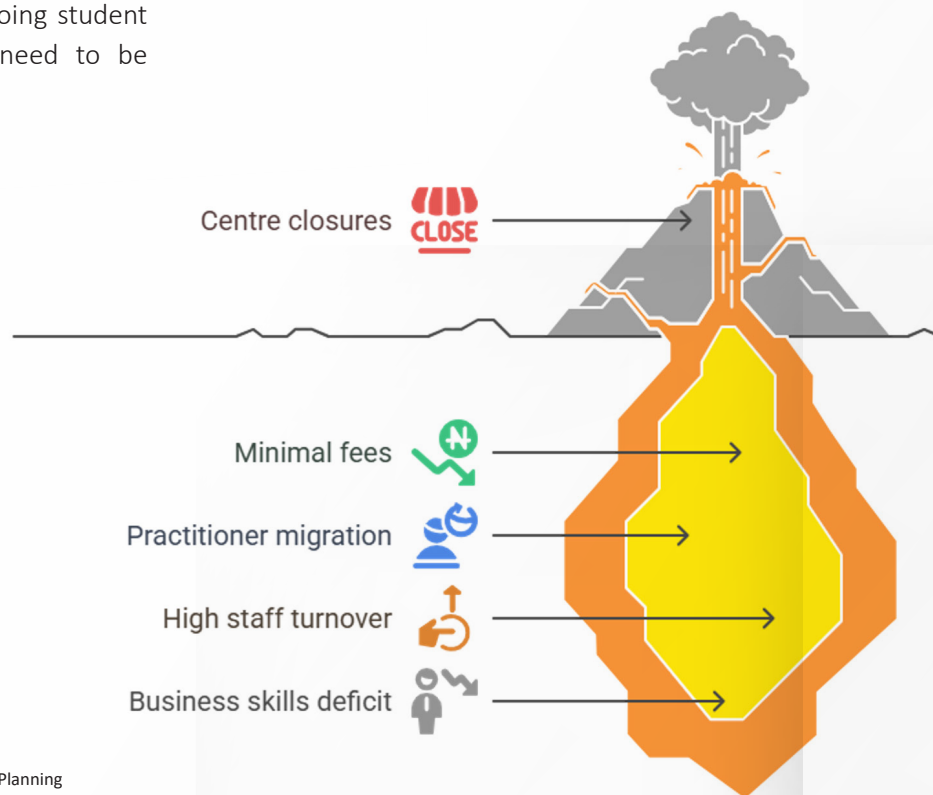
Implications for skills training: Bursaries need to be targeted to support students but should be accompanied by ongoing student support systems and tracking of outcomes. Staff need to be developed to present these programmes.

### Technology is changing how skills development is delivered.

Implications for skills training: Digital skills must be developed for all occupations in the sector; call centres and training/support applications should be developed and made accessible especially in rural areas.

#### NEGATIVE TRENDS

## Early Learning Programme Challenges: Unveiling the Underlying Issues





## 2

## How can the skills gaps be closed by collaboration for learning and action among the various stakeholders responsible for workforce skills development?

Table 2 summarises the skills development needs indicated by this research, the section of the report on which the findings are reported, and possible actions and partnerships to address the need. All these suggestions are in alignment with the aims of the NIECPD, DBE Policy and NDP, as well as the ETPD SETA SSP.

**Table 2 Skills gaps and possible interventions to address them**

Skills gap/needs	Section of report	Possible interventions to address gap
Critical skills training <NQF Level 4 and upskilling of all practitioners in play-based learning/digital skills etc.	3.1; 3.2; 4;5	Partner with NPOs/RTOs/TVETs to offer short training interventions, that include virtual or face- to-face follow-up
Professional qualifications for practitioners	3.1; 3.4; 4;5	Bursaries for new ECCE programmes at HE with ongoing support for students and tracking of throughput rate
Academic skills training	3.2;4.3;5	Support bridging programmes to develop academic literacy
Non-centre-based and home-based care and stimulation	3.2;3.5;5	Partner with NPOs offering parental training/ toy libraries; with DSD for training of social workers; DOH for training of CHWs to train parents
Management of ECD centres	4.2;5	Partner with NPOs already offering social enter prise models and training
Registration compliance	4.2;5	Partner with DBE Vangasali registration drive and link to WSPR submission
Municipal support of ECD	3.4;5	Partner with NPOs/DBE already training municipal officers
National association for skills development in ECD	3.3;5	Engage with existing ECD forums to develop national skills association
Digital skills	3.4;4.5	Support existing digital applications/call centres/ online course development; short training courses for digital skills

There is an acute shortage of qualified ECCE practitioners to meet the goal of universal access in the poorer areas. Almost 200 000 more practitioners will be needed for the 0-5 age group and around 65 000 Grade R practitioners. Emerging occupations are quality assurance officers, mentors for practitioners and managers, and trainers of government officials to support the sector in their various roles.

# ECD Labour Market Information & Implications for Skills Planning

## RESEARCH SUMMARY REPORT



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