



Implementation Evaluation of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training College Expansion and Capacity Development Programme

9 April 2018

National Evaluation Plan Report



planning, monitoring
and evaluation

Department:
Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



higher education
& training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

This report has been independently prepared by Southern Hemisphere. A steering committee oversaw the operation of the evaluation, commented on and approved the reports. The steering committee was chaired by Dr H. Narsee of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). The committee members were Ms R. Govender (DHET), Ms M. Swart (DHET), Ms P. Garza (DHET), Ms S. Nkwane (DHET), Mr S.B. Radebe (Ekurhuleni West TVET College), Mr Frans Strydom (National Skills Fund - NSF), Ms T. Moila (NSF), Ms L. Okuofu (NSF), Ms K. Hlongwane (NSF), Ms N. Makanya (National Treasury) and Ms N. Chitepo (Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation). The peer reviewers were Prof J. Papier (University of the Western Cape – UWC) and Adjunct Associate Prof S. Akoojee (University of Witwatersrand – Wits).

This is a mixed-method evaluation, combining a quantitative survey of colleges, semi-structured qualitative interviews and focus groups, and a document review. The evaluation took place between October 2016 and November 2017.

Submitted by:

Dr Mark Abrahams, Ms Dena Lomofsky, Ms Tracey Phillips, Prof. Justine Burns, Ms Wilma Wessels and Ms Mishkah Abrahams. Internal peer review was conducted by Dr Charles Sheppard and Dr Catherine Robertson.

Evaluators:
Southern Hemisphere

Tel: + 27 (0) 21 422 0205

Email: mark@southernhemisphere.co.za

Submitted to:

Ms. Noqobo Chitepo

Director: Evaluation

Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME)

The Presidency

Private Bag X944, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa

Tel: + 27 (0)12 312 0204

Fax: +27 86 686 4455

Email: nox@dpme.gov.za

Copyright

Copyright of this evaluation report as a whole is vested in the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation and the Department of Higher Education and Training of the Government of South Africa. No part may be reproduced in whole or in part without the express permission, in writing, of these departments.

In general, publication of the results in journals is to be welcomed, but only after the reports have been to Cabinet, and subject to the permission of the DPME custodial department to ensure that confidential information is not used.

Disclaimer

Any opinions expressed in this report are the responsibility of the service provider and not the Evaluation Steering Committee, the DPME or the DHET.

Acknowledgements

This evaluation was made possible by the participation of a number of stakeholders. We would like to thank all the respondents for their time and insights. The participants were from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), National Skills Fund (NSF), the 15 colleges that participated in the qualitative research and the 44 colleges and 60 respondents that completed the survey. Key people assisted us to set up the fieldwork at each college and their efforts are appreciated.

The Steering Committee and the peer reviewers provided valuable guidance and insight.

We also acknowledge the contributions of the Southern Hemisphere team: Ms Dena Lomofsky (team leader), Dr Mark Abrahams (project manager), Ms Tracey Phillips and Ms Wilma Wessels (senior evaluators), Mr Bongani Manzini, Ms Gethwana Mahlase and Ms Mervyan Konjore (fieldworkers), Ms Mishkah Abrahams (research assistant), and Ms Pippa Segal (project coordinator) all from Southern Hemisphere, and Prof. Justine Burns (expert – University of Cape Town), We particularly thank Dr Charles Sheppard (Nelson Mandela University) and Dr Catherine Robertson (Independent expert) who provided the internal peer review of the report. We would also like to thank ikapadata for conducting the quantitative electronic survey.

Contents

1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Background to the intervention.....	1
1.2. The TVET College Expansion and Capacity Development Programme (CECDP).....	5
1.3. Background to the evaluation.....	6
1.4. Evaluation Framework, including Evaluation Criteria, and how they were applied in the context of the evaluation.....	7
2 EVALUATION PROCESS, METHOD AND SAMPLE.....	9
2.1 Implementation process.....	9
2.2 Methodology.....	10
2.2.1 Qualitative method and sample.....	10
2.2.2 Quantitative methodology and sample.....	10
2.2.3 Limitations and mitigations.....	12
2.2.4 Ethics.....	12
2.3 Capacity Development element.....	12
3 THE THEORY OF CHANGE OF THE TVET COLLEGE EXPANSION AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (CECDP).....	13
4 DOCUMENT REVIEW AND ANALYSIS – TVET POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT.....	17
5 CASE STUDIES.....	28
5.1 West Coast TVET College.....	29
5.2 Gert Sibande TVET College.....	29
5.3 PE TVET College.....	30
6 KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS.....	30
6.1 TVET CECDP design process.....	30
6.1.1 Relevance of programme design to national priorities.....	31
6.1.2 Relevance of the TVET CECDP to TVET colleges.....	35
6.1.3 Appropriateness of programme design to TVET college institutional environment.....	37
6.1.4 Conceptual clarity and programme logic – strengths and challenges in programme design.....	38
6.1.5 Key point summary.....	40
6.2 Presentation of findings for effectiveness of programme implementation.....	41

6.2.1	Implementation at NSF level (programme and grant management)	41
6.2.2	Implementation at college level (project management)	47
6.2.3	Key Point Summary	56
6.3	Presentation of findings for efficiency of programme implementation	57
6.3.1	Allocative efficiency	57
6.3.2	Productive efficiency	60
6.3.3	Sufficiency of programme timeframes and funding	71
6.3.4	Key point summary	72
6.4	Results – the extent to which the TVET CECDP has been effective in achieving its objectives.....	72
6.4.1	Student access to TVET colleges is expanded	73
6.4.2	Key Point Summary	77
6.4.3	Expanded student access to WBL through apprenticeships, internships and learnerships. 78	
6.4.4	Key Point Summary	85
6.4.5	TVET colleges have sufficient and well-capacitated staff	85
6.4.6	Key Point Summary	96
6.4.7	TVET colleges provide a broad set of programmes through an expanded PQM.....	97
6.4.8	Key Point Summary	101
6.4.9	Overall goal: Graduates from TVET colleges have technical and other skills relevant to the needs of the South African economy.....	102
6.4.10	Enablers and barriers to the achievement of outcomes	103
6.4.11	Key point summary	109
6.5	Presentation of findings on sustainability.....	110
6.5.1	Expanded capacity to manage projects and the aspects of the programme	110
6.5.2	WBL	111
6.5.3	Expanded staff capacity.....	111
6.5.4	Expanded PQM	112
6.5.5	Financial sustainability.....	113
6.5.6	Enablers of programme sustainability	114
6.5.7	Barriers to programme sustainability	115
6.5.8	Key point summary	116
7	CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED	117
7.1	Design.....	117
7.2	Effectiveness of implementation.....	117

7.3	Implementation Efficiency	118
7.4	Achievement of outcomes	119
7.5	Achievement of results / outcomes.....	120
7.6	Sustainability	120
8	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	121
8.1	Design.....	121
8.2	Effectiveness of implementation.....	121
8.3	Outcomes.....	123
8.4	Sustainability	125
9	ANNEXURES	126
	Annexure 1: References	126
	Annexure 2: Methodology: Evaluation analytical framework.....	128
	Annexure 3: Proposed revised ToC and Logframe.....	128
	Annexure 4: Evaluation instruments.....	128
	Annexure 5: Case studies	128
	Annexure 6: Efficiency tables (Section 6.3)	128
	Annexure 7: Outcomes section tables (Section 6.4).....	128
	Annexure 8: Terms of reference for the evaluation.....	128
	Annexure 9: List of colleges in the sample	128
	Annexure 10: Some good practices identified and recorded.....	128
	Annexure 11: Input on funding model from Boland TVET College in response to the validation workshop:	129

List of Figures

Figure 1: National Qualifications Framework	3
Figure 2: Sample of respondents (all and primary).....	12
Figure 3: ToC diagram for the TVET CECDP.....	16
Figure 4: Major policy and legislative changes impacting on the NSF (source: DNA Economics, 2014)	19
Figure 5: Number of students enrolled in public TVET colleges, by qualifications category in 2010.....	20
Figure 6: College perceptions of agreement with the relevance of the programme objectives for their colleges	36
Figure 7: Perception of agreement with programme objectives for which colleges received funding	36
Figure 8: Respondents are largely positive about NSF financial management	44
Figure 9: 70% of colleges indicated that they reported to the NSF on time	45
Figure 10: M&E systems	47
Figure 11: Readiness to implement the programme	49
Figure 12: Additional staff appointed for the programme per college (mean)	50
Figure 13: Additional staff appointed for the programme (totals).....	50
Figure 14: Ratio of actual expenditure, to contracted budget amount for 2012-2016, by TVET college...	59
Figure 15: Correlation between contract budget and budget spending	60
Figure 16: Correlation between budget share spent and change in total staff, 2012-2015	61
Figure 17: Change (%) in staff by category, 2012-2015	62
Figure 18: Correlation between budget share spent and changes in support staff, 2012-2015.....	62
Figure 19: Correlation between budget share spent and changes in lecturing staff, 2012-2015	63
Figure 20: Correlation between budget share spent and changes in management staff, 2012-2015.....	63
Figure 21: TVET enrolments, 2012-2015.....	64
Figure 22: Change (%) in enrolments by race and gender, 2013-2015	65
Figure 23: Correlation between changes in learner enrolments and budget shares spent	66
Figure 24: Correlation between changes in FTE enrolments and budget shares spent	66
Figure 25: Changes (%) in enrolments by qualification, 2012-2015	67
Figure 26: Correlation between budget share spent and changes in NC(V) enrolments, 2012-2015.....	67
Figure 27: Correlation between budget share spent and changes in N1-N3 enrolments, 2012-2015.....	68

Figure 28: Correlation between budget share spent and changes in N4-N6 enrolments 2012-2015.....	68
Figure 29: Ratio changes (%) in student, staff and institutions by province, 2013-2015	69
Figure 30: Total number of beneficiaries.....	70
Figure 31: Correlation between budget share spent and total beneficiaries, 2012-2015	71
Figure 32: Expanded student access domain from ToC.....	73
Figure 33: Student enrolment at TVET colleges by qualification category (DHET, 2017).....	74
Figure 34: Expanded student access to WBL domain from the ToC.....	79
Figure 35: College establishment of a dedicated WBL function as a result of the TVET CECDP	80
Figure 36: Improvement in college WBL information systems as a result of the TVET CECDP	81
Figure 37: Partnerships established by colleges for WBL purposes as a result of the TVET CECDP	84
Figure 38: Staff capacity domain from the ToC	87
Figure 39: Tools used by colleges to assess staff development needs during programme implementation	88
Figure 40: Survey respondent perceptions of the quality of lecturers appointed through the TVET CECDP	89
Figure 41: Lecturing staff received the necessary training to upskill and top up existing capacity during programme implementation	91
Figure 42: Additional training received by lecturing staff as part of the TVET CECDP	92
Figure 43: Survey respondents' perceptions of the effectiveness of staff development programmes provided as a result of the TVET CECDP	94
Figure 44: Perceptions regarding improved WBL opportunities for lecturers as a result of the TVET CECDP.....	95
Figure 45: Expanded PQM domain from the ToC	97
Figure 46: Number of new courses introduced as a result of the TVET CECDP.....	100
Figure 47: Systems framework for analysis of enablers and barriers to achievement of outcomes	104
Figure 48: Partnerships established with industry associations as part of the programme	111
Figure 49: Is the college still offering the courses that were introduced as a result of the programme?.....	112
Figure 50: What were the main challenges of the programme for the college?.....	115

List of Tables

Table 1: Final sample of semi-structured interviews and focus groups conducted	10
Table 2: The number of Educators trained at TVET colleges, 2013-2016.....	23
Table 3: Public TVET college enrolments, 2010-2014.....	25
Table 4: Number of additional staff by college.....	51
Table 5: Number of NSF beneficiaries, 2013-2016	77
Table 6: Examples of support, development and training programmes rolled out to staff	93

Abbreviations

CECD	College Expansion and Capacity Development
CECDP	College Expansion and Capacity Development Programme
CIP	Colleges Improvement Programme
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
ECD	Early Childhood Development
FET	Further Education and Training
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
HoD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resources
HRDC	Human Resource Development Council of South Africa
HRDSA	Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa
IT	Information Technology
IPDP	Individual professional development plans
ITS	Information for Tertiary Education System
KII	Key Informant Interview
KPA	Key Performance Area
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LED	Local Economic Development
LOLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTSF	Medium-Term Strategic Framework
NATED	National Accredited Technical Diploma/ National Education Report 190/191 programmes
NCP	National Planning Commission
NDP	National Development Plan
NEET	Not in employment, education or training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
NSA	National Skills Authority
NSF	National Skills Fund
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NC(V)	National Certificate (Vocational)

NSC	National Senior Certificate
NVC	New Venture Creation
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
PE	Port Elizabeth
PoE	Portfolio of evidence
PM	Project Manager
PQM	Programme and Qualifications Mix
PSET	Post-School Education and Training
RFP	Request for Proposal
SAICA	South African Institute of Chartered Accountants
SANQF	South African National Qualifications Framework
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SDL	Skills Development Levy
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SMME	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
SSI	Semi-Structured Interviews
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TTT	Technical Task Team
TUP	Training of Unemployed Persons
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNISA	University of South Africa
WBL	Workplace-Based Learning
WIL	Work-Integrated Learning

Glossary

National Technical (NATED)	Accredited Diploma	<p>NATED programmes, also known as or N-Diplomas or Report 190/191 programmes, are delivered under the auspices of the Department of Higher Education and Training. NATED programmes are delivered by public and private TVET Institutions.</p> <p>(http://www.pecollege.edu.za/index.php/2013-03-01-07-32-34/report-191-nated)</p> <p>NATED technical programmes were historically the flagship programmes of the Further Education and Training (FET) sector, and acted as the theoretical component of the artisanal training system for apprentices employed by private sector firms. In recent times, students increasingly enrol in NATED without first being employed or obtaining employer sponsorships (DNA Economics, 2015, Performance and Expenditure Review: Technical and Vocational Education and Training. National Treasury).</p>
NC(V)		<p>The National Certificate (Vocational) is a three-year programme that integrates theory with simulated and/or workplace-based practical training and is an alternative to the National Certificate for school leavers.</p>
Learnerships		<p>Learnerships are structured programmes that combine theoretical knowledge with practical workplace experience. Learnerships lead to a qualification registered on the National Qualifications Framework.</p>
Apprenticeships		<p>Apprenticeships are workplace-based training programmes in the occupational trades, like artisanship.</p>
Internships		<p>Internships are periods of practical work experience aimed at increasing the employability of learners.</p>
Short skills programmes		<p>These are short training programmes made up of selected unit standards or chunks of learning across a wide range of disciplines, generally delivered over a one to six-month period.</p>

Source: DNA Economics. 2014. *Expenditure Review of TVET Colleges*.

Policy Summary

TVET College Expansion and Capacity Development Programme (CECDP) Evaluation

The College Expansion and Capacity Development Programme (CECDP) was implemented between 2012 and 2015 by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the National Skills Fund (NSF) to assist three million young people who were not in education, employment or training (the so-called NEETS). R2.5 billion in national skills funding was dedicated solely to the 50 former Further Education and Training (FET) colleges for their programme-related activities. The main aims of the CECDP were to increase student enrolment, expand workplace-based learning (WBL), enhance the capacity of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) staff and expand the programme qualifications mix (PQM) of colleges.

This implementation evaluation used a mixed-method approach to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the programme, and was conducted between August 2016 and November 2017. There are considerable differences between colleges and their ability to absorb this funding, but strong themes emerged which inform the recommendations.

The CECDP is highly relevant to the policy agenda and the needs of the public TVET colleges. There were significant capacity constraints in implementation, which the programme design failed to consider. There were also a number of systemic challenges that inhibited success and sustainability. The funding allowed many colleges to expand their WBL component and to start expanding their PQM. Increased student enrolment was modest, amounting to only 3% of the total TVET enrolment for the period. However, colleges have improved their recruitment and enrolment systems, and are enrolling marginalised students. The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) funding for scholarships was the biggest enabler of this increased enrolment. This brought its own challenges as colleges were not equipped to deal with underprepared students. The NSF performed its grant management function well, but more support was needed on the technical aspects of the programme.

The key constraints in the system are:

- **No policy framework governing WBL.** Conditions of employment-related responsibilities for the students are not clear when they are paid stipends via the colleges. Who is the employer?
- **The inefficient administration by Sector Education Training Authorities (SETA).** This affects availability of funding for stipends for WBL which is a critical incentive for both businesses and students. Accreditation and certification of programmes are also bottlenecks affecting expansion of the PQM and timely graduation. SETAs are critical to the success of TVET, but are currently a bottleneck.
- **The funding model for TVET colleges.** Colleges receive funding from four funding streams, causing delays, limited cash flow and frustration. This also results in multiple monitoring and reporting systems which are administratively challenging for colleges.
- **Fragmented PQM.** The DHET only approves the PQM that includes ministerial-approved programmes.

- **The Policy on Professional Qualifications for Lecturers in TVET has not been implemented.** This inhibits the colleges' ability to recruit and retain adequate and sufficient teaching staff, and there are no incentives to staff to build their capacity because of insufficient career paths.
- **No jobs.** Even if learners are skilled and have short-term jobs, there are many areas where there are no sustainable jobs. This inhibits the attainment of the long-term goal of aiding job creation.
- **Poor infrastructure.** Colleges cannot expand enrolment and the courses that they offer because of limited infrastructure. Funding upgrades/ renovations rather than new buildings exacerbates inequalities between colleges.
- **Under-prepared students.** Improved systems to support under-prepared and marginalised students are critical to improving student outcomes (e.g. throughput).

Key policy recommendations:

- R1. The NSF needs to use a systems approach when planning for programmes and make sure that all aspects are addressed for successful implementation: legal/policy framework; funding flows; human resources capacity; communications; programmes; planning, monitoring & evaluation; infrastructure and logistics (e.g. transport).
- R2. The NSF needs to improve its processes for application and assessment of proposals.
- R3. To strengthen implementation, the NSF (in cooperation with the DHET), should ensure more support for colleges to implement the non-financial aspects of the grant to help colleges meet the objectives.
- R4. There is a need to improve the administrative data monitoring systems at the TVET colleges to facilitate better planning and improved outcomes monitoring.
- R5. A higher level of emphasis needs be placed on the development of entrepreneurial skills to enable TVET graduates to become self-employed as opposed to job-seekers.
- R6. The DHET should address the issue of low student throughput. An in-depth study of this issue is recommended for evidence gathering that might inform solutions.
- R7. A clear policy framework for WBL is required that is aligned to labour legislation, and the incentives for employers to provide workplace opportunities need to be more efficient e.g. access to the Skills Development Levy (SDL) from SETAs.
- R8. The policy on professional qualifications for lecturers in technical and vocational education and training (Government Gazette No 36554, Notice 410, 11 June 2013) needs to be implemented urgently, yet in a considered and systematic way.
- R9. A concerted effort needs to be made at a sector level by the DHET and other post-school education and training (PSET) stakeholders, particularly SETAs, to ensure that the PQM is better structured and administered.
- R10. Review the funding model of TVET so that there is one stream of funding via the DHET that covers all programmes in the PQM.

Executive Summary

Evaluation of TVET College Expansion and Capacity Development Programme

1 INTRODUCTION

The implementation evaluation of the TVET CECDP was conducted by Southern Hemisphere between October 2016 and November 2017 as part of the National Evaluation Plan of 2016-2017 of the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in the Presidency.

The TVET CECDP was launched by the Minister of Higher Education and Training in August 2012. The Programme aimed to address the plight of the three million young people who were not in education, employment or training. R2.5 billion in national skills funding was dedicated to the 50 TVET colleges for their programme-related activities. Funding was extended to a number of colleges until the end of 2016.

The purpose of the implementation evaluation was to address key *evaluation questions* related to: relevance and appropriate design; effectiveness of achieving objectives; effectiveness of implementation; efficiency; sustainability and insights into lessons and recommendations to inform future programmes.

A mixed-method approach was used which included: participatory workshops, qualitative semi-structured interviews and focus groups drawn from a sample of 15 colleges spread across urban, peri-urban and rural areas in all provinces; key informant interviews, a document review and a structured online survey in which all 50 public colleges were invited to participate. Responses were received from 44 of the colleges (88%). Purposive sampling was used to select 15 colleges for the qualitative sample. Three colleges in rural, urban and peri-urban areas were chosen as case studies. The case studies are discussed in Annexure 5 to the main report.

2 THEORY OF CHANGE OF THE PROGRAMME

This Programme's four main objectives are to support public TVET colleges to:

1. **Enrol a larger number of students**, particularly in artisanal-related programmes and the National Accredited Technical Diploma (NATED) programmes, as well as programmes linked to occupational qualifications and skills programmes that are based on part-qualifications, to support the needs of the South African economy;
2. **Expand student access to WBL** through learnerships (including artisanship) and internships, particularly for occupations where a high demand exists;
3. **Build the capacity of their staff** relevant to the occupational-related training programmes, to improve the quality of teaching and learning;
4. **Offer a broader set of programmes through an expanded PQM** so that students may be provided with a wider range of programme choices.

At a workshop a retrospective Theory of Change (ToC) and logical framework (logframe) were developed with representatives from the DHET, NSF and DPME (see Annexure 3 for

the revised logframe).

3 KEY FINDINGS FROM THE DOCUMENT REVIEW

The document review highlights the policy environment around 2010 that informed the decision to embark on the Programme. At that time, emphasis was placed on TVET colleges to promote growth and to address national skills shortages, which meant that challenges faced by the 50 merged public TVET colleges had to be systematically addressed. Policies, strategies and frameworks were designed to directly and indirectly deal with the systemic, structural and institutional challenges. Overarching policies were promulgated, such as the Green (2012) and White Papers (2013), informed by directives provided in the National Development Plan (NDP). A turnaround strategy was formulated, external expertise was utilised to target the public TVET college management difficulties, and paths for the professional development of TVET staff were identified, with several universities brought in to facilitate the curriculum. Funding was made available through the National Skills Authority (NSA) and was managed by the NSF. Additional funding was made available for infrastructural development. Partnerships between public colleges, universities, SETAs and employers were encouraged and promoted as good practice.

4 CASE STUDIES

Three case studies were conducted to get a full picture of how the project was implemented in a single college.

The **West Coast TVET College** has a peri-urban and rural service area in the Western Cape. The college focused on all four objective areas of the CECDP. The college had to revise its proposal six times, reflecting different interpretations of the parameters of the funding. This delayed start to the programme disrupted their desire to offer certain courses that would meet local requirements. This college has a history of engaging with industry as all its campuses are located in close proximity to small, medium and large businesses. The TVET programme has positively transformed the occupational department of the West Coast TVET College from a small department to a noteworthy division.

The college received R68,444,779.00 from the NSF for this programme. It spent R54,050,890.93 (79% of budget), and the project is being implemented over five and not three years as it received no cost extensions. The project merged with new projects (roll-out) in January 2017.

The **Gert Sibande TVET College** also has a predominantly rural and peri-urban service area. The campuses are surrounded by mining interests as well as agriculture. The college focused on all four objective areas of the CECDP. This college provides good practice examples of encouraging the enrolment of learners, particularly through its enrolment process which includes conducting interviews and providing career counselling. The case study shows that buy-in and support from college management are better when there is good alignment between the college strategy and the TVET CECDP objectives. The college received R48,015,538 from the NSF and spent 92% of the budget in a three-year period.

The **Port Elizabeth (PE) TVET College** serves urban and peri-urban communities. It is located in the Eastern Cape. The PETVET College focused mostly on offering a broader set of programmes through an expanded PQM. It provides a good practice example of expanding the PQM based on a consultative process and thorough needs assessment. The challenges experienced with WBL in this college also highlight the importance of setting up a

placement unit to facilitate placements as this cannot be the responsibility of lecturers/facilitators/project manager. The college received R24,953,812.00 from the NSF and spend 90% of its allocated funding. It was implemented over four years and has received further funding for Phase 2.

5 KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

5.1 What have we learned about programme design for the TVET College sector?

The CECDP was viewed more as an opportunity to release funds into the TVET sector as opposed to having a coherent programme strategy. The design did not take a systemic view of the TVET colleges, e.g. their regional and local contexts, the human resource capacity of colleges and the infrastructural requirements for the expansion programme. This limited the effectiveness of implementation. While the programme design included strong grant management elements, this did not extend to technical support to the colleges. Monitoring systems were established to track inputs, not quality or throughput, and there was duplication of reporting on data that the DHET may already have had in their extensive data systems. The lack of programme documentation at the start resulted in limited shared understanding of the overall objectives and scope of the programme, leading to a lengthy start-up phase for many colleges, and lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities for various partners.

5.2 What have we learned about the effectiveness of implementation?

Many colleges had limited capacity to apply for and implement this grant. Only 30% of colleges submitted proposals on time and some colleges took up to 1.5 years for their start-up phase with a lot of support from the NSF. The NSF had good project (grant) managers to guide colleges through the management and reporting of financial and non-financial data. The importance also emerges of funding a strong project management function at college level, including financial management/audit, (four additional management staff were appointed per college as part of this project).

It is clear that work placement requires dedicated human resources and systems for monitoring and management of placements, strong administrative support, as well as the ability to follow up with students and employers on the quality of the placement. Information Technology (IT) systems can be used to facilitate the tracking of students, but direct contact is also necessary. This is time intensive.

5.3 What can we learn about programme efficiency?

Over the period of the CECDP, enrolments increased by 12%, yet beneficiary numbers comprised only 3% of total student enrolments at TVET colleges for 2013-2015, suggesting that the programme had a modest impact on overall student enrolment. The results regarding staff capacity enhancement are also limited. While most institutions showed an increase in the staff:student ratio, the increase was not matched by an increase in teaching staff to carry the load, with the 8% expansion mostly in management and support staff. This must affect the quality of learning. Where budgets were more fully spent, there were slightly larger increases in lecturing/support staff.

There is also considerable variation in the programme cost per beneficiary by college, with cost per beneficiary ranging from a low of R12,537 to R360,507 per beneficiary, depending

on what the colleges were implementing (facility upgrades are more expensive than designing new curriculum). The average contract cost per beneficiary across all colleges is R64,607, although the actual cost per beneficiary spent to date is slightly lower at R53,058.

The analysis indicates that funding is not the key constraint on programme success, since on average 80% of budgets had been spent by 2016. It appears more likely that insufficient time has elapsed to properly assess programme impact. The analysis also suggests that better targeting of resources and more joint planning is required at both PSET and college level so that, for example, an increase in student enrolment is matched with higher staff complements.

5.4 What lessons have been learned about the achievement of outcomes?

In terms of *increased student access*, colleges had to cope with larger influxes of students, and many expressed challenges with staff capacity, underprepared students, accommodation, transport and limited institutional resources. Student access cannot be expanded without consideration of TVET college capacity in terms of infrastructure, human resources and student accommodation. These were identified as the top challenges for colleges in the survey.

A primary success of this intervention was the impetus it gave to colleges to expand their WBL capacity, both internal systems and relationships with SETAs and industry partners. All 44 colleges that responded to the survey (100%) had WBL capacity, and 92% colleges had partnerships with SETAs by the end of 2017 (DHET 2017-2018 partnership report).

The provision of a stipend for students for their work placements was a critical success factor, providing an incentive for employers to take learners. Employers need this additional incentive as many do not claim their SDL because of the administrative burden this places on their companies, and prefer to see it as a tax.

In terms of *expanded staff capacity*, TVET colleges struggle to find staff who are both good at teaching and have the necessary industry experience. The staff capacity development was not undertaken in line with PQM expansion. While WBL for lecturers was found to be very beneficial, TVET lecturers are reluctant to participate in WBL. This was ascribed to lecturer workloads, administrative duties, and a lack of adequate support structures and incentives.

Most appointments of new staff were either in management or support positions, and the lecturer:student ratio increased on average during the programme period.

Part of the rationale for the Programme was the complex and confusing nature of the TVET PQM. However this cannot be addressed at college level. Curricula reviews and changes are required to ensure that TVET colleges can provide a broad set of programmes relevant to skills development needs. This requires the cooperation of all key stakeholders in the TVET sector. Further, accreditation of courses remains a big challenge, despite the relationships with SETAs.

5.5 What have we learned about the sustainability of the CECDP objectives for the TVET College sector?

The investment in the colleges has limited sustainability. Investments in facility upgrades are sustainable if they are adequately maintained. Some colleges have improved their project management capacity which enables them to manage other projects like this in the future.

However, many colleges outsourced their training because they were not ready to implement a new PQM, hence the courses offered may not be sustainable if there is no future funding for outsourcing. Continuity of funding is important for college planning purposes and for reducing student drop-out rates. Hence time lapses should not occur between funding cycles.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The overall aim of the programme was to enhance and expand public TVET colleges' ability to produce sufficiently skilled graduates to meet the South African economy's needs. There is considerable heterogeneity of experience by public TVET colleges in every dimension considered. The results achieved by the TVET CECDP are mixed. The primary achievement in the first three years was to re-orientate the colleges in the direction of greater work integration, and to create stronger relationships in the post-school sector between the public TVET colleges and the SETAs, and more partnerships with industry. Overall, the project was somewhat catalytic for the TVET sector to expand its capacity to deliver WBL and expand its course offerings.

The biggest gaps were firstly, that there was no plan to support the colleges through implementation of the non-financial aspects of the programme, and there was insufficient cooperation between the DHET and the NSF in this regard. Secondly, the narrow parameters of the funding affected the ability of the colleges to expand sufficiently. Quality suffered as a result. It is positive that the NSF and the DHET are continuing to support the public TVET colleges through another round of funding. However a review of the funding model of colleges is necessary to support the expansion and sustainability of the TVET college system.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on an observation of the findings emanating from this study, the following recommendations are advised:

- R1. A programme of this magnitude and complexity requires careful consideration of design and planning that should include addressing all the inter-connected challenges in the system.
- R2. The NSF should improve its processes for application and assessment of proposals
- R3. To strengthen implementation, the NSF (in cooperation with the DHET), should ensure more support for colleges to implement the non-financial aspects of the grant to help colleges meet the objectives. This should include supporting communities of practice.
- R4. The administrative data monitoring systems at TVET colleges need to improve to facilitate better planning and improved outcomes monitoring. The NSF can make better use of existing DHET information and monitoring systems, including to monitor throughput rates.
- R5. A higher level of emphasis should be placed on the development of entrepreneurship to enable TVET graduates to become self-employed as opposed to job-seekers.
- R6. The DHET needs to address low student throughput. A more in-depth study of this issue is recommended to inform solutions, covering student support services, career

- guidance and perceptions of the TVET college sector as an education provider of choice.
- R7. A clear policy framework for WBL is required which is aligned with labour legislation to clarify the legal responsibilities of those providing placements and avoid future disputes regarding learner employment status and compensation. Engagement with unions regarding WBL must also be considered. Staff at colleges must be able to communicate the potential industry incentives to employers and help them navigate the system.
- R8. The Policy on Professional Qualifications for Lecturers in TVET (Government Gazette No 36554, Notice 410, 11 June 2013) needs to be implemented urgently, yet in a considered and systematic way. It must occur in a systematic process of engagement with post-school sector stakeholders; must encourage ongoing staff development; and must encourage communities of practice. The role of the current funding model for TVET colleges in dis-incentivising staff development must be fully understood and addressed, and incentives for staff capacity building explored.
- R9. A concerted effort needs to be made at a sector level by the DHET and other PSET stakeholders, particularly SETAs, to ensure that the PQM is better structured and administered. A situation analysis should be conducted in this regard, and college staff need to improve their ability to design and administer course material and accreditation processes.
- R10. Since the findings show that there is great heterogeneity among colleges, the DHET and the NSF can consider implementing more focused, targeted interventions at colleges where there is a match between the policy intentions of government and the strengths and capabilities of the colleges. Individual expansion and capacity development plans need to be developed with each college.
- R11. The funding model needs to be reviewed to provide certainty of funding and enable colleges to plan properly and hire appropriate staff.

A more detailed description of the above summary of recommendations can be found at the end of the report.

1 INTRODUCTION

This report will present the findings of the evaluation study on the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College Expansion and Capacity Development Programme (CECDP); a programme introduced by the Government of South Africa to encourage increased enrolment at TVET colleges. This evaluation assesses the implementation effectiveness of this programme in order to inform future programme design.

Before outlining the findings of this evaluation, it is necessary to firstly understand why this intervention was deemed necessary and the context in which it was undertaken. This is detailed in the background presented below.

1.1. Background to the intervention

TVET: an overview

The entire post-school sector in South Africa changed significantly since 1994. This was as a response to the fragmented and racialised system during apartheid as well as the challenges facing the country, such as skills shortages and unemployment. The changes include the merge of 36 higher education institutions (21 universities and 15 technikons) into 23 institutions: 11 traditional universities, 6 universities of technology, and six comprehensive universities. Since the merger of the universities in 2005, two new universities have also been established and one has demerged bringing the total number of universities to 26. Colleges of education and nursing colleges were also closed and these functions were incorporated into the universities' (Higher Education and Training) functions.

The introduction of the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF) in 1998 saw technical colleges earmarked to produce the next generation of skilled workers and great effort was put into reforming the system. Indeed, the transformation programme, established by the Further Education and Training (FET) White Paper of 1998 and enacted by the FET Colleges Act, Act 16 of 1998, was based on the need for a more coordinated technical and vocational system, including senior secondary schools, colleges, and other forms of workplace training. Furthermore, the creation of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in 2009 provided the basis for greater coherence in the post-school education environment, and potentially a clearer institutional home for FET colleges. The legislative transformation of the technical and vocational sector began in 2000 with the establishment of a task team to review institutional restructuring. This process, which was completed in 2003, resulted in the development of nine provincial plans outlining the configuration of merged colleges, and the transformation of 152 technical colleges into 50 multi-site public FET colleges (Kraak, Paterson & Boka, 2016).

Traditionally, FET/ TVET¹ colleges provided National Accredited Technical Diploma (NATED) and National Certificate (Vocational) or NC(V) qualifications. NC(V), which was introduced in 2007, included a wide variety of three-year qualifications in 14 subfields, directly responding to South Africa's economic needs (Gewe, 2010). It included both a practical and theoretical component. The N1 to N3 Engineering NATED programmes lead to a qualification as an

¹ The 50 public FET colleges were designated 'TVET colleges from 2015 while private colleges continued to be described as FET colleges. However as TVET is an internationally accepted generic description, it is used as such in this report and therefore on occasion can include private FET colleges.

artisan when combined with practical work and a trade test (Branson, Hofmeyr, Papier & Needham, 2015). The N4 to N6 NATED certificate programmes lead to a vocational qualification which could be converted into a NATED N6 diploma qualification if 18 months or 2 000 hours of relevant workplace experience were acquired after the 18-month-long N4 to N6 certificates had been obtained.

Within the National Qualifications Framework (see Figure 1 below), the TVET colleges are deemed to be more accessible than other higher education institutions. Learners can access the college after completing Grade 9 as well as after Grade 12. The entry requirements are less stringent and the multi-campus composition of most colleges allows them to have a larger physical presence across South Africa than universities or universities of technology. Despite the steady growth in enrolment and their higher accessibility, TVET colleges continue to face a number of challenges, many of these emerging since the sector's reconfiguration.

Figure 1: National Qualifications Framework

Levels	Band	Qualification type	School	ABET	NCV	NATED	OC	Providers			Q-type		
10	HET	Doctoral degree (professional)						ABET centres	TVET	University	Certificates	Diplomas	Degrees
9		Master's degree (professional)											
8		Bachelor honours degree					O C 8						
		Postgraduate diploma											
7		Bachelor's degree					O C 7						
		Advanced diploma											
6		Diploma advanced certificate					O C 6						
5		Higher certificate				N4-N6	O C 5						
4	FET	National certificate	Grade 12/ NSC		NC V 4	N3	O C 4						
3			Grade 11		NC V 3	N2	O C 3						
2			Grade 10		NC V 2	N1	O C 2						
1	GET	General certificate	Grade 9	Level 4									
			Grade 7	Level 3									
			Grade 5	Level 2									
			Grade 3	Level 1									

Source: Branson, N., Hofmeyr, C., Papier, J. and Needham, S. 2015. South African Child Gauge 2015.²

Although enrolments in colleges have increased in recent years, colleges still enrol fewer students than universities. Public colleges were expected to respond to the national agenda for skills development within a context of equity, and to engage with human resource supply issues, while private providers concentrate on 'demand-side' imperatives (Akoojee, 2005). The Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) Task Team report (HRDC, 2014)

² Apprenticeships also fall under Level 4.

indicates that the combined enrolments in TVET colleges and technical high schools constitute only 20% of total enrolments at upper secondary level. This is well below those in East Asia (35%) and Europe (48%) but comparable to Africa (20%) and Latin America (18%). The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (PSET) (DHET, 2013) as well as the National Development Plan (NDP) envisage a TVET college segment of 60% of the PSET sector by 2030.

TVET colleges provide both vocational and occupational training. The NC(V) programme was advertised as the flagship offering of public TVET colleges. However, in 2012, the majority of students were enrolled for NATED programmes, while a quarter of the public TVET college students enrolled for the NC(V). With the NC(V) enrolments, TVET colleges are struggling to provide the appropriate mix and balance of practical and academic experiences and students are struggling with the academic demands of the programme, resulting in huge drop-out rates. The pass rate decreased significantly in 2012 compared to that of 2011. In 2012, the highest pass rate (39%) was for students enrolled for the NC(V) Level 4 qualification. In 2011, the NATED qualification reported the highest pass rate at 61% (HRDC, 2014).

Other general challenges across colleges and programmes as identified in the Terms of Reference (ToR) for this evaluation, include low student enrolment rates (in comparison to universities); limited capacity for teaching and curriculum and training material development; and a Programme and Qualifications Mix (PQM) that is complex to administer, poorly quality-assured and difficult for potential learners to understand (Lolwana, P., Ngcwangu, S., Jacinto, C., Millenaar, V. & Martin, M.E., 2015). Low throughput and certification rates severely hamper the potential impact of TVET colleges (DNA Economics, 2015: i).

TVET Funding

The PSET system is managed by the DHET. The programmes are offered by universities, TVET colleges and community colleges. Workplace-Based Learning (WBL) is facilitated by the National Skills Fund (NSF) and the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), which also provided funding for the sector. The role of the NSF and the SETAs are explained in more detail in section 4.

The TVET sector has received specific funding injections in order to facilitate the intended growth of the sector. In 2005, National Treasury allocated a R1.9 billion recapitalisation conditional grant, aimed primarily at infrastructural development, to assist with modernised programme delivery. These funds were allocated to support the delivery of programmes in priority skills areas from 2007. A TVET college bursary scheme was launched in 2007, with an initial three-year allocation of R600 million to support enrolments in NC(V) (Gewe, 2010). The NDP envisages 25% of young people enrolled in the post-school system by 2030 and 2.5 million in TVET colleges (DHET, 2013). This has led to a significant increase in enrolments, especially in TVET colleges. Between 2010 and 2014, the number of enrolments increased by 9.4% per year. However, public funding only increased by 5.5% per year in real terms³. This equates to a real decrease in real spending per enrollee. To put this further into perspective, during this period, universities saw a slight increase in spending (DHET, 2013).

Funding in the PSET system include both direct and indirect allocations with the following five main channels of funding being:

³ Adjusted to take inflation into account

1. Block grants to TVET colleges and universities, which they have autonomy over;
2. Earmarked grants to TVET colleges and universities, over which they have limited autonomy;
3. National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) funding, based on the enrolment of qualifying students;
4. SETA funding to TVET colleges and universities for student support;
5. NSF funding for infrastructural development, training programmes or allocations to the NSFAS.

In 2014-2015, 60% of TVET colleges' funding was from the DHET, compared with universities that received 40% of their funding from DHET subsidies. The second-highest proportion was NSFAS transfers at 20%. SETA allocations, NSF allocations, fees, and third stream funding each provided 5% of TVET college funding in the period. The bulk of TVET college funding (80%) in 2014/2015 were thus from appropriations.

Each of these funding streams has its own complex systems of control which is time-consuming and costly for college processes, and that might include duplication. This often causes time delays, limited cash flow and frustration at the college level.

1.2. The TVET College Expansion and Capacity Development Programme (CECDP)

The Minister of Higher Education and Training requested funds from the NSF in 2011 to expand student enrolment in public TVET colleges. A budget of R2.5 billion was allocated, enabling the roll-out of the TVET CECDP.

The overall goal for the TVET CECDP was to contribute towards 'a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path' (Outcome 5 of the Medium-Term Strategic Framework: 2014-2019). It aimed to achieve this contribution by equipping TVET learners with skills relevant to the needs of the South African economy.

The following overall aims were stated as follows at the launch of the programme:

- To progressively realise the goals of making TVET colleges central to skills delivery;
- To bring better leverage in the use of resources and skills levies;
- To link TVET college programmes to major policy initiatives such as the Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa (HRDSA), National Skills Development Strategy III (NSDS III), Skills Accord, Green Paper, NDP and Plan of Action;
- To build the capacity of the TVET college system to drive the development imperatives of government and the country as a whole (DHET, 2012c).

This programme had four main objectives, namely:

- To support TVET colleges to **enrol a larger number of students**, particularly in artisanal-related programmes and the NATED programmes, as well as programmes linked to occupational qualifications and skills programmes that are based on part-qualifications, to support the needs of the South African economy;

- To support TVET colleges to offer a broader set of programmes through an **expanded PQM** so that students might be provided with a wider range of programme choices;
- To support TVET colleges to **expand student access to WBL** through learnerships (including artisanships) and internships, particularly for occupations where a high demand exists; and
- To support TVET colleges to **build the capacity of their staff** relevant to the occupational-related training programmes, to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

This programme was implemented by the NSF from 2012-2015, and is the subject of this evaluation.

The framework for delivery was explained as follows (NSF, National Launch PowerPoint, 2011):

- Each college to finalise the contract and return copy to the NSF without delay;
- The DHET to conduct a due diligence on colleges to determine college readiness;
- Each TVET college to open a separate bank account in the name of the college within two weeks;
- The NSF commits to paying first tranches within two weeks after receiving receipt of banking details;
- Colleges, with NSF assistance, will rework projects according to approved amounts.

1.3. Background to the evaluation

This evaluation was part of the National Evaluation Plan, 2015. The overall purpose of this evaluation was to assess whether the TVET CECDP had been effective in achieving the above-mentioned objectives, as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme's implementation.

The evaluation assessed the programme against the following intended outcomes:

- Improved student access to TVET colleges, particularly in artisanal-related and skills development programmes;
- Improved student opportunities for WBL, particularly through learnerships and internships;
- Improved lecturer capacity to deliver programmes and improved administrative capacity in TVET colleges to support college operations, and more specifically, the NSF-funded programme ('project management, administration and reporting'); and
- A broader and more relevant PQM offered by TVET colleges.

Key evaluation questions

An evaluation framework was designed and informed by a document review and the Theory of Change (ToC) that was developed at a ToC workshop with key programme stakeholders. The key questions addressed in this evaluation were:

1. To what extent was the programme design relevant, appropriate and technically sound?
2. To what extent was the programme effective in achieving its objectives?
3. To what extent was the programme effectively implemented?
4. To what extent was the programme efficiently implemented?
5. How was the programme integrated with existing programmes at TVET colleges, and what implications did this have for programme sustainability?
6. What key insights, lessons and recommendations were offered for possible continuation of the elements of the programme in selected TVET colleges?

The evaluation covered the time period of 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2015 and covered all South African provinces⁴. However, some colleges received their final payment in December 2016 as seen in Table 1 in Annexure 6. In each case, a programme extension was negotiated.

1.4. Evaluation Framework, including Evaluation Criteria, and how they were applied in the context of the evaluation

The key questions framed the focus for the evaluation on the design of the programme, on its implementation and the results (outcomes) of the programme. The key questions also provided the assessment criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability to be used in the evaluation.

The analytical framework for the evaluation can be found in Annexure 2.

The main questions for the evaluation as applied to the evaluation criteria were:

- The appropriateness and relevance of the programme's design:
 - Is the programme design relevant to national priorities?
 - Is the programme design appropriate to the TVET college institutional environment?
 - Is the design of the programme conceptually clear and coherent?
 - Is the ToC valid and is the logic of the programme appropriate and plausible?
 - What indicators (qualitative and quantitative) should be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme?
- The programme's level of effectiveness in achieving its four main objectives, as noted in Section 1.2 above:
 - What are the measurable results (outcome indicators) of the programme?
 - How has the programme performed in terms of its outcome indicators?
 - To what extent did this programme contribute towards the bigger pool of people with intermediate skills?
 - What have been the unintended consequences of this programme, if any?

⁴ TVET TOR, page 7.

- The extent to which the programme had been effectively implemented:
 - How was the programme implemented at TVET college level? What approaches, strategies and plans did the different TVET colleges adopt to implement the programme?
 - What was the capacity of TVET colleges to manage the programme? For example, did TVET colleges employ dedicated project managers to facilitate programme implementation?
 - To what extent were the approaches, strategies, mechanisms, processes and procedures adopted by TVET colleges and the NSF to implement the programme, appropriate and effective?
 - What have been the successes (outputs) and challenges of the programme and what are the reasons for these?
 - How effectively was programme implementation monitored at both NSF and college level?
- The extent to which the programme has been efficiently implemented:
 - Allocative efficiency - whether available resources have been allocated to their best possible use within a programme as opposed to some alternative allocation. This would include measures of financial efficiency, which usually measure how well the money invested in a programme or intervention produces the desired output or revenues for the agency or institution making the investment.
 - Productive efficiency - how well the money invested in a programme or intervention produces benefits to society. Key questions here would be to assess the number of beneficiaries trained over the programme period, the cost per beneficiary trained, and whether there were any significant variations across TVET colleges in this regard.
- The extent to which the programme was integrated into existing TVET college programmes – and the implications of this for programme sustainability:
 - How did this programme relate to existing programmes in the TVET college sector? To what extent was there alignment? How effectively has the programme been integrated into the day-to-day business of the college? What was the specific value-add of the programme, to the day-to-day work of the college?
 - How did TVET colleges differentiate between the NSF and fiscal funding revenues in their monitoring and reporting?
 - Did TVET colleges establish partnerships that have long-term implications for the work of the programme? Will these partnerships continue to be sustained after this programme ends?
 - Did TVET colleges employ staff (with the exception of the project manager) from the funds of the programme? If so, what are the implications for the sustainability of the objectives of the programme?
 - To what extent are the projects introduced at TVET colleges sustainable, both in terms of programme sustainability and financial sustainability?
 - Will the programme results continue once the additional NSF funding has ended?
- In addition to the above, the evaluation explored the key insights, lessons learned and recommendations for possible continuation of the programme that had emerged in the course of programme implementation. Here, the following questions were

asked:

- What examples of good practice are emerging from the programme?
- What lessons can be learned for similar programmes that may be considered in the future?

2 EVALUATION PROCESS, METHOD AND SAMPLE

2.1 Implementation process

A participatory process was followed in line with the National Evaluation Framework. The primary vehicles for participation were the Evaluation Steering Committee and the various workshops that were held, including the ToC workshop held at the start of the evaluation, and the validation workshop where the draft report was presented and discussed. A broader set of stakeholders attended these workshops.

Role of the Steering Committee

The Evaluation Steering Committee, chaired by the DHET, included representatives from the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) and National Treasury (NT) and played an integral role in the different stages of the evaluation process. The committee approved all deliverables including the ToC, instruments, evaluation framework, coding report, report framework and draft report. The committee had the support of two peer reviewers who also provided comments on the deliverables.

Planning and Inception workshop

The planning meeting with the steering committee took place on 19 October 2016, and the final evaluation methods, sample, evaluation questions and timeframes were agreed. It was decided to add 16 work placement officers to the sample. An inception report was produced thereafter to capture these changes to the original proposal.

Document review

A document review was conducted of the history and policy context of TVET in South Africa, programme documentation, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) records. Close-out reports of 44 of the 50 TVET colleges were analysed as part of the document review. Electronic copies were provided by the colleges, although not all colleges had electronic copies of their close-out reports. The hard copies of the close-out reports were sourced directly from the NSF.

Theory of Change (ToC) workshop

The ToC workshop with key stakeholders identified by the steering committee was held on 7 November 2016 at the DPME offices in Hatfield, Pretoria. This participatory process was designed to retrospectively establish a ToC for the programme as there was no final ToC. The result is the ToC and Logical Framework (logframe) captured in Annexure 3.

Instrument design

The instruments were informed by the document review, inception workshop, ToC workshop and the logical framework. All instruments (quantitative and qualitative) were approved by the steering committee prior to fieldwork. The evaluation instruments are described in Annexure 4.

2.2 Methodology

A mixed-method evaluation was conducted. This included qualitative semi-structured interviews and focus groups at a sample of 16 colleges, key informant interviews, a document review and a structured online survey in which all the colleges were invited to participate.

2.2.1 Qualitative method and sample

Semi-structured interview schedules and focus group discussion guides were designed in line with the evaluation framework. These were all approved by the steering committee before fieldwork began.

Most of the interviews and focus groups were conducted between 28 November 2016 and 17 February 2017. In total, 71 semi-structured interviews and 17 focus groups were conducted. Three colleges were chosen as case studies: West Coast TVET College, Gert Sibande TVET College and Port Elizabeth (PE) TVET College. Students were only included in the case study colleges.

Purposive sampling was used to select the 16 colleges for the qualitative sample. The DHET assisted with the identification of the specific colleges using this sampling frame. The key consideration was to ensure a spread across rural, peri-urban and urban-based colleges in all the provinces. In the end two colleges were included from each province, except for the North West and the Northern Cape where one college for each province was included. Fieldwork was conducted in 15 out of the 16 colleges that were identified for inclusion in the evaluation. The list of colleges and the interviews conducted at each college are included in the final sample provided in Annexure 9.

Table 1: Final sample of semi-structured interviews and focus groups conducted

Designation for semi-structured interviews	Actual no. of interviews
Principals/Vice principal	16
Sector experts	2
SSI with lecturers	2
Project managers/Project officers	17
Work placement officers/ Student support managers	13
Learning facilitators	7
Employers	4
NSF and DHET	10
TOTAL	71
Designation for Focus Groups	Actual no. of focus groups
Lecturers (f/g)	14
Students/learners (f/g)	3
TOTAL	17

2.2.2 Quantitative methodology and sample

An electronic online survey was conducted to include all 50 Colleges in the evaluation. The survey targeted principals and project managers who had worked at TVET colleges between 2012 and 2015 when the TVET programme was implemented. The survey was implemented

by iKapadata.

A total of 168 email addresses were used to distribute the survey. The invitation to participate in the survey was sent to principals (using an address list provided by the DHET), as well as their administrative assistants, and previous and current project managers (whose contact details were supplied by the NSF). Respondents were given three weeks to complete the questionnaire online. Additionally, 211 phone calls were made, reminding individuals to participate, and 20 interviews were conducted by telephone.

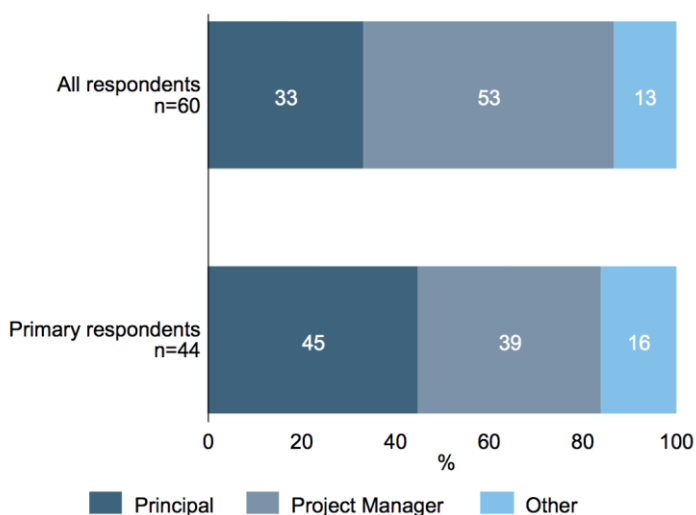
In total, 60 representatives from 44 colleges participated in the survey as depicted in Figure 2 below⁵. The data was analysed according to two respondent groups, all respondents, and a primary respondent.

For responses where every answer was necessary, we analysed all the responses, hence n=60 (for example, challenges faced by colleges). The sample comprised 45% principals, 38% project managers and 16% other.

The primary respondent for the college was the person who indicated the larger number of programme objectives for which the college received funding. Where two respondents from the same college indicated the same number of programme objectives, the principal of that college was designated as the primary respondent. We used the responses from the primary respondent for questions where we only wanted one answer per college (for example, number of staff employed by the college). There were 44 respondents in this group (n=44). The sample comprised 53% project managers, 33% principals and 13% other.

⁵ The colleges that were not represented in the survey at all were Goldfields TVET College, Ingwe TVET College, Nkangala TVET College, PE TVET College, South West Gauteng TVET College, Tshwane North TVET College.

Figure 2: Sample of respondents (all and primary)



2.2.3 Limitations and mitigations

The evaluation was conducted one year after the project had ended, and five years after it had been initiated. It was inevitable that some staff members might have moved to other colleges or left the system. It is important to acknowledge this point to understand that the evaluation had to ask respondents to reflect on their feelings in hindsight, and to rely on their memories of events. Further, not all interviewees possessed detailed knowledge of the TVET CECDP and thus were only able to speak about the component in which they were involved. For example, lecturers could talk about the expanded PQM but not about the programme design and management. This made it difficult at times to state with confidence that certain outcomes shared by respondents could be attributed to the programme. However, this aspect did not impact negatively on the data as a wide range of stakeholders were included in the evaluation, and data was also triangulated with the various reports and documents. The analysis of all the available close-out reports was a good mitigation factor.

2.2.4 Ethics

Consent was obtained from all participants in the study. Participants were made aware of the voluntary nature of the questions as well as their right to withdraw consent. They were also made aware that their confidentiality would be protected.

2.3 Capacity Development element

The ToC workshop was attended by a broad group of stakeholders and was the main vehicle for capacity development in this evaluation as it included both inputs (pedagogic) and workshop elements.

3 THE THEORY OF CHANGE OF THE TVET COLLEGE EXPANSION AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (CECDP)

The ToC was developed with representatives from the DHET, NSF and DPME at a workshop as part of this evaluation, and built on the draft ToC that had been drawn up previously by the DHET/NSF but never finalised. This section provides an overview of the existing ToC and Logical Framework (logframe). The full version is found in Annexure 3. The ToC and logframe have been updated based on the findings of the evaluation.

The ToC works from the perspective that the NSF is the implementing agent, and any changes that occurred at the TVET colleges would be considered outcomes. As shown in Figure 3, the ToC has four pathways of change, each relating to the four outcomes areas of the programme; namely, expanded student access, expanded WBL, expanded staff capacity and expanded PQM.

As the programme was implemented by the NSF, the outputs relate to the three main management functions of the NSF, namely:

1. Timely and sufficient disbursement of funding by the NSF.
2. Effective management structures set in place by the NSF.
3. Well-structured and coordinated monitoring systems established.

The ToC postulates that if these outputs are well achieved, and the colleges do what they proposed as the basis of their agreement with the NSF (immediate outcomes), then the intended intermediate and longer term outcomes will be achieved. The overall goal for the TVET programme is to contribute towards a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path (Outcome 5 of the Medium-Term Strategic Framework, 2014-2019). The TVET CECDP aims to contribute to this outcome by equipping TVET learners with skills relevant to the needs of the South African economy.

In short, these outcomes would be achieved through the following pathways of change:

- Pathway 1: the colleges put adequate systems in place for managing expansion (particularly for increasing student enrolment, provision of funding for students and having appropriate infrastructure and project management capacity); and
- Pathway 2: TVET colleges establish effective mechanisms for WBL that are relevant to the needs of industry; and
- Pathway 3: college lecturers are sufficiently capacitated to deliver on the mandate of the TVET colleges in terms of relevant content knowledge, technical knowledge and pedagogical skills; and
- Pathway 4: the colleges have a broad set of programmes that are relevant to the needs of the economy, society and the learners; and
- Intermediate outcomes: the graduates from the TVET colleges have technical and other skills relevant to the needs of the South African economy.

The key assumptions underpinning this are:

From activities to outputs

- That the systems set in place are able to function effectively (to enable timely and sufficient funding disbursements), irrespective of capacity levels at TVET colleges;

- There is a synergy between the intention of the TVET CECDP and the aspirations of the TVET colleges;
- That sound management structures are in place to utilise additional resources in line with the proposed plans of action; and
- Monitoring tasks would be performed effectively and timeously at college level to allow for sound M&E of TVET programme implementation.

From outputs to outcomes

The key assumptions underpinning the achievement of all outcomes are:

- TVET colleges have the necessary policies, structures and protocols in place to enable achievement of outcomes;
- TVET colleges have the necessary skills and resources to enable the achievement of immediate and intermediate outcomes; for example, to conduct a skills audit or a needs analysis of the current PQM and local economy; or to align strategic planning to programme objectives and national plans.

Assumptions relevant to Outcome 1 (improved student access to TVET colleges) are that:

- student demand for TVET programmes exists;
- additional resources are available from the fiscus to accommodate student number increases.

Assumptions relevant to Outcome 2 (improved student opportunities for WBL) are that:

- TVET colleges have partnerships in place or, if not, that colleges will be able to establish agreements that will lead to more WBL opportunities – and that these will be sustainable;
- there are sufficient industry partners in close proximity to TVET colleges - particularly those located in rural areas - to provide the necessary opportunities for WBL;
- identified industry partners are willing to provide WBL opportunities;
- identified industry partners have the necessary skills to mentor and guide learners during their placements.

Assumptions relevant to Outcome 3 (improved lecturer capacity to deliver programmes, and improved administrative capacity) are that:

- the required capacity-building courses for college staff exist;
- lecturing staff are available and willing to participate in developmental programmes;
- staff development programmes will yield the desired effect, namely, well-capacitated lecturers delivering quality teaching and learning;
- staff who have undergone professional development will remain in the TVET college system.

Assumptions relevant to Outcome 4 (broader and more relevant PQM offered) are that:

- TVET colleges have the necessary capacity and skills to develop additional PQM courses;

- TVET colleges receive accreditation to offer full and part-time occupational qualifications;
- by broadening the PQM, TVET colleges will be able to address local skills needs as well as provincial and national skills shortages.

Outcomes to goal/impact

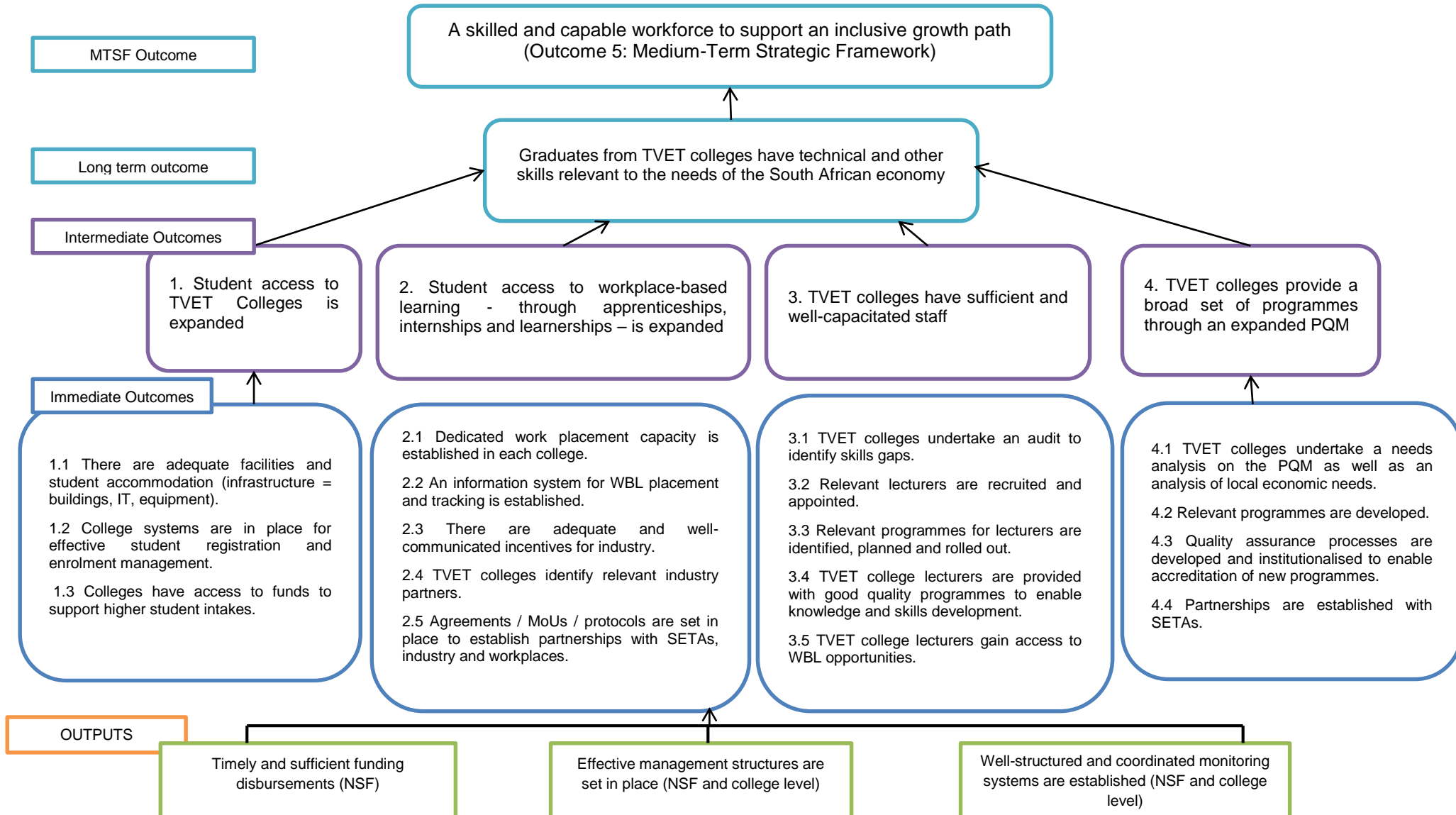
Finally, if the programme achieves the outcomes, the following assumptions will come into play:

- expanded access, opportunities for WBL, well-capacitated staff and an expanded PQM are sufficient to bring about improved skills development and learning outcomes;
- current legislative frameworks and policies will enable the achievement of the anticipated long-term outcome and goal (Outcome 5 of the MTSF);
- the South African economy is growing sufficiently to facilitate a skills demand and uptake of TVET college graduates.

The full ToC and Logical Framework (logframe) are provided in Annexure 3.

The logframe was derived from the ToC. As this is a theory-based evaluation, the findings are structured according to the main evaluation questions and the indicators. The lessons learned and recommendations respond to the assumptions in the ToC.

Figure 3: ToC diagram for the TVET CECDP



4 DOCUMENT REVIEW AND ANALYSIS – TVET POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

The ToR for this evaluation excluded a literature review. However, a list of documents that needed to be considered for this assessment was provided. The purpose of the document review was to familiarise the evaluation team with the project and its context, to inform the ToC, and to help develop appropriate evaluation questions to inform the programme review and analysis of findings. The full list of documents reviewed can be found in Annexure 1, the References.

This section reviews these documents, starting with the NDP, in order to locate the programme in its policy context and institutional setting.

The National Planning Commission, located in the Presidency, produced the NDP – 2030 (the Plan) in 2012. The Plan considered the TVET (former FET college) sector as generally dysfunctional, too small and with poor quality output. Many colleges, according to the Plan, lacked adequate capacity, were under-resourced and inefficient. While some colleges performed better and had the necessary expertise, it stated that up to 65% of college students were unable to gain work experience, which is a requirement for completing the NATED diplomas.

The colleges developed a poor reputation due to the low rate of employment of college graduates. This contributed to the skewed post-school enrolment where in 2010, universities enrolled around 950 000 students while colleges enrolled about 300 000. Approximately three times as many students thus entered universities compared to those entering colleges (National Planning Commission, 2012: 316). TVET colleges also attracted a diverse range of students. A pattern had emerged where students who were not fortunate enough to be granted access to a university would subsequently enrol at TVET colleges. The enrolment would include students rejected by universities, others who were not able to obtain their National Senior Certificate (NSC), and/or were not able to find employment (DHET, 2013).

South Africa's 50 public TVET colleges, created out of the merging of 152 technical colleges, have been undergoing reforms and restructuring programmes for years. Some of the reforms were mentioned earlier. The latest policy reformulation was in the form of the White Paper for PSET (DHET, 2013). Subsequent changes involved rationalisation of college numbers and size, the introduction of new programmes and plans to phase out others, recapitalisation of infrastructure, new forms of college governance, shifts in line-function accountability of colleges, and shifts in staff employment regimes, interspersed with sporadic lecturer and governance training (Kraak et al., 2016). Colleges have been required to establish functioning relationships with SETAs, to pursue collaboration with higher education institutions, and to initiate workable relationships with employers in order to generate opportunities for students to benefit from experience in workplaces while studying and for graduates to benefit from work placements upon graduation (Kraak et al., 2016).

An envisaged change was for the old NATED courses (N1 to N6) to be phased out and to be

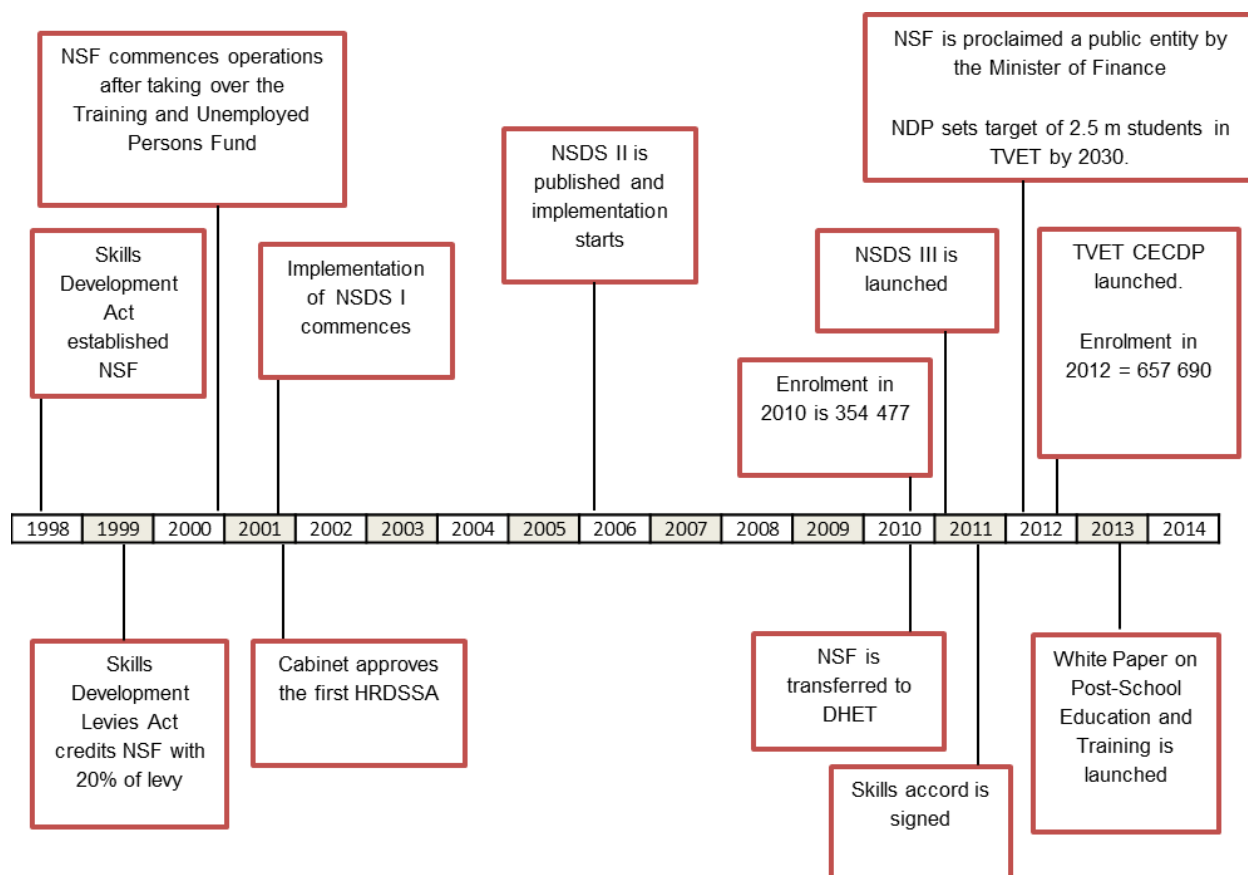
replaced by programmes that had the support of industry. Emphasis was placed on Mathematics, Languages and IT. Challenges within the TVET system were identified such as the low enrolment of learners, staffing vacancies and the provision of lifelong learning. In 2010, however, the DHET was persuaded by industry demands for the NATED courses to be retained, and the colleges' preferences for the familiar NATED programmes, to allow NATED programmes to continue indefinitely. (Papier, 2011: 103).

The Green Paper (2012) that preceded the White Paper for PSET (2013), argued that South Africa carried a history of apartheid and colonialism that continued to foster inequalities and multiple forms of discrimination against black, poor, female and disabled students and that quality education provision needed to be strengthened alongside the expansion project of TVET colleges in South Africa (DHET, 2012a).

There was a need to substantially expand access to education and training, not only to take into account the needs of youth who had completed school, but also for those who happened not to have completed schooling. Better quality would build confidence in the college sector and attract more learners. The NDP recommended a participation rate of 25% that would accommodate about 1.25 million enrolments compared to 300 000 (NDP, 2012). According to the Green Paper (DHET, 2012a), TVET colleges were to contribute to overcoming the structural challenges facing the South African society by expanding access to education and training opportunities and increasing equity, as well as achieving high levels of excellence and innovation (HRDC, 2014).

The policies and frameworks that influenced decisions about the NSF and the TVET sector are outlined in the timeline below.

Figure 4: Major policy and legislative changes impacting on the NSF



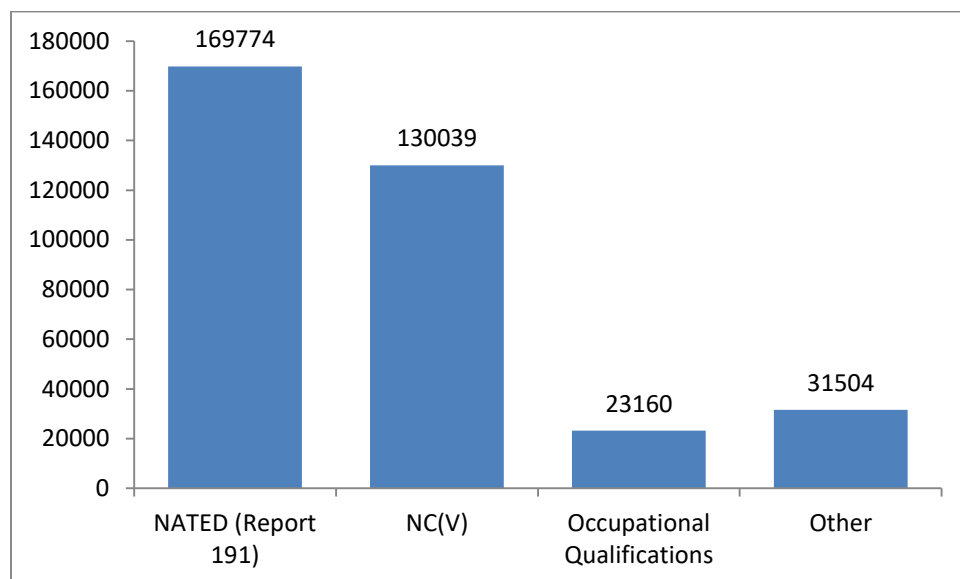
Source: DNA Economics, 2014

Funding for expansion

The Skills Development Act, Act 97 of 1998 established the NSF, along with the SETAs to finance PSET. The NSF receives a statutory allocation in the form of the Skills Development Levy (SDL). This tax requires all employers to contribute 1% of their wage bill to fund learning and development. The expenditure focus of the NSF has shifted from funding mostly social development initiatives under the NSDS I to expanding access to vocational and technical training in line with the NSDS III. The fund was moved from the Department of Labour to the DHET in 2010. This change was motivated by the need to create a closer link between the NSF and reforms in the post-school education system (DNA Economics, 2014: 23).

The public TVET college enrolment figures for 2010 in the different programmes are provided below (i.e. excluding private colleges).

Figure 5: Number of students enrolled in public TVET colleges, by qualifications category in 2010



Source: DHET. 2016. *Statistics on Post-School Education*.

Figure 5 indicates that Report 191 (NATED) had the largest number of enrolled students in public TVET colleges from 2010 (DHET, 2016a).

It was in this context that the Minister of Higher Education and Training launched the TVET CECDP in August 2012. The Minister directed the attention of heads of colleges to the plight of the three million young people, not in employment, education or training (the so-called NEETs) and warned that this group would be joined by the majority of approximately 1.1 million young people turning 18 each year. R2.5 billion in the NSF was dedicated solely to the 50 TVET colleges for their programme-related activities. A further R1.5 billion from the fund was added for infrastructural improvement, a total of R4 billion in NSF funding over three years. The objective was to reach 1 million enrolments at colleges by 2014 (DHET, 2012b).

This initiative was also intended to be a driver and catalyst for community development, to tackle unemployment and poverty by inviting unemployed youth to make use of capacity development opportunities through skills programmes, learnerships and internships. Colleges had to reach out to communities, especially young people, in the process of rolling out skills development on a massive scale (DHET, 2012b).

NSDS III

This CECDP was supported in the NDP where the strengthening of the institutional capacity of vocational education and training institutions was recommended. The NDP stated that increasing access and improving success in programmes leading to intermediate and high learning, and ensuring a dynamic interface between workplaces and learning institutions would be essential (NPC, 2012). The programme was also in concert with the NSDS III (DHET, 2012c). The NSDS III is the overarching strategic guide for skills development and provides direction to sector skills planning and implementation for the SETAs. It provides a framework for

the SDL resource utilisation of these institutions as well the NSF, and sets out the linkages with, and responsibilities of, other education and training stakeholders (DHET, 2012c). A central skills development strategy, promoted by the NSDS III, is the establishment of closer links between employers and training institutions and between both of these and the SETAs as a way of effectively responding to the needs of the labour market and social equity (DHET, 2012c). With employment as the final objective, the NSDS III supports the integration of workplace training with theoretical learning, to facilitate students' journeys to sustained employment and in-work progression.

White Paper

In November 2013, the government released the White Paper for PSET. While the Green Paper (2012) dealt with the challenges that the post-schooling system had been facing, the White Paper (2013) set out the vision for the post-schooling system and the principles governing that vision, as well as the policies and strategies which would be developed and implemented over the coming years from 2013 to 2030 to build an expanded, effective and integrated post-school system and improve the capacity of the PSET system to meet South Africa's needs (DHET, 2013: xi).

The core aim of the White Paper are to increase the student enrolment numbers of TVET colleges from one million to 2.5 million by 2030, to improve the management and governance, develop the quality of teaching and learning, increase student responsiveness to local labour markets, improve student support services, and develop infrastructure. One of the key strategies envisaged by this policy is the partnership with employers. These partnerships would assist the colleges to provide job opportunities for students and for work-based integrated learning (DHET, 2013).

As a policy directive, the White Paper emphasises the crucial role of technical and vocational education and sets out strategies for transforming the sector further, defining its place in the post-school system and ensuring that it becomes a path to a brighter future for its students and for the country. The strengthening and expansion of the public TVET colleges would enable them to attract a large proportion of school leavers and become institutions of choice, hence disposing of the notion that these colleges were of little value, a legacy of the days when TVET colleges did not enjoy the attention given to other sectors within post-school education. The policy states that part of the process of ensuring that TVET colleges become quality educational institutions will involve the setting of benchmarks for optimal functionality to determine the interventions needed in each institution.

The NSF and the SETAs – key sector stakeholders

The NSF was established in 2000 to support priority skills and innovative research in high-level occupationally-directed programmes from universities to the workplace. This fund was known as a 'catalytic' fund because it promoted strategic partnerships and innovation in project delivery. The Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning (PIVOTAL) grant functions similarly, but with a focus on providing access to professional placements, work-integrated learning, apprenticeships, learnerships, internships, skills programmes and work experience placements.

The SETAs distributed discretionary funds for the purpose of upgrading skills in the workforce. Alongside the SETAs, large corporate employers and state-owned enterprises cooperated with the relevant education and training institutions to provide training and staff to address educational needs. SETAs continue to act as the bridge between students and workplaces by creating interventions and shaping solutions on skill demands within a given sector.

DHET's Turnaround Strategy

In support of the objectives set out in the Green and White Papers, the DHET established a Turnaround Strategy for FET Colleges (DHET, 2012d) to address key challenges associated with dysfunction in colleges and to ensure a marked and sustainable improvement in the quality of teaching and learning delivery. The turnaround strategy was developed for the period 2012-2015. By 2030 the goal is to have head-count enrolments of 1.6 million in public universities, 2.5 million in TVET colleges, and 1 million in the [proposed] community colleges which were introduced in the White Paper and which were launched in 2015-2016.

The turnaround strategy was guided by the following priorities: managing change in turbulent times; leadership for transformation; institutional differentiation; movement from current to desired status; student performance and success at the centre; strategy; and accountability for performance.

According to the DHET (2012d), the turnaround strategy was aimed at implementing short-term interventions that could offer immediate gains. The implementation was to be done using a phased approach, with some of the activities running concurrently, which include:

- a strategy for managing the migration to the DHET;
- immediate interventions to stabilise the institutions in light of the function shift;
- detailed diagnosis of the intervention requirements of the 50 colleges in each of the seven areas of functionality;
- institutional development which is geared to short-term gains but focuses on discernible and sustained impact; and
- differentiated support to colleges for medium-term outcomes based on identified needs, ranging from intensive hands-on and generalised interventions in all seven areas, to specific interventions in particular areas (DHET, 2012d).

The DHET website reports the training of about 1 768 educators at TVET colleges over a three-year period from 2013 to 2016. The table below provides the number of educators trained in the different programmes on offer. The website provides a more detailed analysis of the number of educators per college and per programme (DHET, 2016b).

Table 2: The number of Educators trained at TVET colleges, 2013-2016

Civil Engineering	Electrical Engineering	Engineering design & Related Design	English	Finance, Economics & Accounting	Hospitality	IT & Computer Science	Life Orientation	Management	Marketing	Mathematics	Mathematics Literacy	Office Administration	Tourism
119	119	115	155	150	77	123	164	123	104	144	132	171	72

Source: DHET. 2016b. website (referenced).

The Turnaround Strategy for FET colleges was poised to build the capacity of TVET colleges with a focus on management and human resources. In addition, the government established the National Artisan Development Support Centre (NADSC), a three-year project funded by the NSF, to provide students with specialised skills for the artisan sector of the economy (DHET, 2013). Other initiatives include the development of professional qualifications for lecturers in Technical and Vocational Education and Training to better prepare TVET teachers and trainers. Clear objectives for this were articulated in the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (2014-2019).

Medium-Term Strategic Framework 2014-2019

The Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) is government’s strategic plan for the 2014-2019 electoral term. ‘There are problems with the quality and reputation of many post-school institutions. If these problems are not addressed, options for improving human capital will remain limited and this will adversely affect the competitiveness of the county’s economy, while increasing the premium for skilled labour. One of the goals is therefore to improve the quality of TVET colleges by ensuring that the number of qualified lecturers is increased and administration is improved. To support the quality of lecturing, ten universities will offer TVET lecturing qualifications by 2019 (currently only one offers such qualifications), and 30% of TVET college lecturers should have workplace exposure every year by 2019 (Republic of South Africa, 2014: 23).

The MTSF articulates government’s commitment to implementing the NDP and delivering on its electoral mandate as well as its constitutional and statutory obligations. The priorities identified in the MTSF are incorporated into the plans and programmes of national and provincial departments, municipalities and public entities. It recommends the building of a strong relationship between the college sector and industry. This will improve the quality of training in colleges and ensure quick absorption of college graduates into jobs. The MTSF promotes a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path. It encourages the expansion of TVET college campuses and student accommodation. It envisages the number enrolled at TVET colleges to increase from 670 455 in 2013 to 1.238 million students in 2019. It wants the number of artisans produced every year to increase from 18 110 in 2013 to 24 000 per annum by 2019, to meet the needs of a growing economy. The MTSF also includes actions to increase the number of students enrolled in foundation programmes which provide enrichment for students who are not adequately prepared for post-school training (Republic of South Africa, 2014).

Parallel strategies included the commissioning of JET Education Services (JET) to conduct the Colleges Improvement Programme (CIP) between 2011 and 2014, aimed at improving the capacity, functionality and performance of 15 selected colleges in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo. 'The ultimate aim of the CIP was to bring about a turnaround in the performance of the 15 participating colleges (Kraak et al., 2016: xii). Colleges struggled with implementing appropriate financial controls and accountability. In 2013, nine colleges were under administration. The DHET subsequently engaged the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) to provide assistance relating to financial management and administration (Kraak et al., 2016).

The HRDC of South Africa established a TVET Technical Task Team (TVET-TTT) on TVET colleges through its Technical Working Group (TWG) in May 2011, to conduct a study aimed at strengthening and supporting TVET colleges to enable the colleges to expand access and enable quality programme provision. The study resulted in five main research papers on: (i) the purpose of the TVET colleges in South Africa, (ii) profile of the TVET colleges sector, (iii) partnerships, (iv) pathways, and (v) positive learning experience (HRDC, 2014).

The study found that although the government has consistently urged the forging of partnerships and closer linkages between TVET colleges and employers, the overriding focus has tended to be on the breadth or number of partnerships from a statistical perspective, rather than the qualitative dimensions, modalities and outcomes of partnerships. This has meant that the intended outcomes, such as the creation of work-integrated learning placements, employment, and curriculum and infrastructural development, could not be achieved. Furthermore, the increase in student enrolment without a corresponding increase in lecturer recruitment led to deterioration in the lecturer:student ratio from 1:20 in 2002 to a national average ratio of 1:55 in 2012. The challenges at colleges were compounded by the low skills level of lecturers, with the majority not having current industry knowledge.

The report provided overall recommendations. Given the triple challenges of unemployment, inequality and poverty on the one hand and, on the other, the need for TVET colleges to play a significant role in a broader developmental agenda beyond a rigidly narrow economic development approach, the purpose of the TVET colleges sector could be progressively broadened in line with the development trajectory of the country. It was proposed that:

- The overall long-term focus for the sector should be modelled around the creation of opportunities for youth and adults to acquire skills, knowledge and values for lifelong learning.
- The purpose should reflect TVET for economic and broader societal and developmental objectives (with the involvement of the Department of Trade and Industry, the Department of Economic Development, the National Planning Commission, national business formations and national labour formations).
- The programme offering should be differentiated, taking into consideration TVET for the local economy (local businesses, provincial and local government and the informal sector).

- In the short to medium term, the main focus should be linking TVET to occupations and the acquisition of mid-level skills required by the South African economy.
- There is a need for policy clarity from the DHET in particular and the government in general with specific reference to the government's stance on the TVET college purpose and partnerships with public and private sector organisations (HRDC, 2014: 23).

The growth and expansion of TVET colleges

The DHET reported that the growth, expansion and performance of institutions within the TVET sub-sector were strategic priorities for the department. Their review indicated that the NDP and the White Paper for PSET (2013) mandated the department to expand the provision of education and training within the college sector by finding multiple funding streams for the college sector, dealing with the efficiency and effectiveness of institutions, putting in place functioning governance and management structures and providing appropriate support for learning and teaching. To this end, the DHET reported that:

- TVET college enrolment had increased by 67%, from 420 475 in 2009 to 709 535 in 2014;
- Registrations in learnerships had increased by 58%, from 49 309 in 2009 to 77 931 in 2014;
- Registrations in internships had increased by 299,5%, from 3 005 in 2009 to 12 006 in 2014;
- Registrations in skills development programmes increased by 116,5%, from 63 659 in 2009 to 137 880 in 2014 (DHET, 2016c).

The DHET's (2016a) post-school statistics for 2014 revealed there had been a steady increase in enrolment at TVET colleges since 2010. Total enrolments in public TVET colleges were as follows.

Table 3: Public TVET college enrolments, 2010-2014

Year	Enrolments
2010	354 477
2011	400 272
2012	657 690
2013	639 618
2014	702 383

Source: DHET. 2016. *Post-School Statistics, 2014*.

Report 191 (NATED) had the largest number of enrolled students in the public TVET sector from 2010 to 2014. The enrolment for NC(V) also increased slightly from 130 039 in 2010 to 166 433 in 2014. The DHET 2016 Report also provides statistics on staff employment and indicates that in 2014, public TVET colleges employed 18 396 persons, of whom 10 842 (59%)

were employed as lecturing staff, 7 131 (39%) as support staff and 423 (2%) as management staff.

The total number of female staff (9 544) was higher than male staff (8 852). Northlink TVET College contributed the highest number of both female (496) and male (426) members of the total staff. Very detailed information about student enrolment by course or programme per college is provided in this 2016 report. It is clear that the rate of expansion as envisioned in the White Paper and other documents had not been attained. It is, however, in the detailed analysis of the programme outcomes – the success rates or throughput rates of the different programmes and levels – that there is cause for concern.

A significantly large number of students who, irrespective of qualification types and gender, wrote and were eligible to complete a qualification during the 2014 academic year did not successfully complete the relevant qualification (DHET, 2016). The latter statement was a refrain that followed reports on examination results in all types of qualifications and levels. This indicated the issue of high drop-out rates and low retention rates of most TVET programmes.

Low throughput and certification rates are severely hampering the potential impact of TVET colleges. In 2013, for NC(V) Level 2, only 33% of students who enrolled in all the required subjects to complete their current level, progressed to the next year of study, while a further 28% of eligible students did not write the exams at all, implying a throughput rate of under 24% (National Treasury, 2014).

A tracer study was conducted to track the transition to the labour market of NC(V) students who enrolled in 2010. The study was funded by the NSA in 2016. A significant number of students (8 387) represented the sample selected for this study and 2 898, representing all the nine provinces, responded. More than half of the respondents had not completed NC(V) Level 4 when interviewed – five years later. Most of them indicated that they did not have the funds to continue their studies. Students on bursaries were required to complete their studies in the time stipulated, otherwise they had to fund their own studies.

A large number indicated 'other' as the reason for not completing their studies. The researcher reported that one major reason was that students were still waiting to receive their results and certificates from the DHET for prior courses completed. 'A backlog in NC(V) certification has been a problem since 2007 and as at August 2015, 129 932 candidates were affected across all exam cycles' (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2015 in JET, 2016: 12).

In August 2015, a plan was presented to the Parliamentary Committee on Higher Education and Training for removing this backlog within six months (NSA. 2016: 12). The tracer study also found that unemployment was high among respondents who did NC(V) at the TVET colleges. The proportion employed increased from 11.0% in 2011 to 48.3% in 2015 but both those students who had completed and those who had dropped out had difficulty finding employment.

Ongoing challenges

The Auditor-General of South Africa (A-G), in his education sector report, found that the skills development sector did not have a coherent and uniform M&E framework to assess achievement of outcomes and the impact of skills development or an integrated mechanism

whereby SETAs and other skills development role-players could share their M&E findings (RSA, 2016, Education Sector Report 2015-2016. Towards and Education and Training System that is driven by Quality, Accountability and Impact: 49).

The A-G recommended that the DHET formalise the mechanism(s) for collective leadership and accountability by skills development oversight structures and senior management to ensure that the skills development initiatives yielded the desired outcomes and impact. Another recommendation was the development of a coordinated sector-wide skills development M&E framework and to ensure that SETAs share data from research, monitoring and evaluation findings. The latter was deemed necessary because the impact of skills development interventions was not adequately assessed through tracking whether these interventions contributed to the beneficiaries of these programmes obtaining employment. The key challenges facing the TVET sector can be summed up as follows.

The TVET system has to grow substantially to be responsive to the changing labour market and individual needs, yet be flexible enough to address skills imbalances and shortages. This requires a responsive, properly planned and effective TVET system.

The ambition to expand numbers and the responsibilities of the TVET colleges must consider the limited resources available in this sub-sector of the higher education system. The priority should first be to stabilise the system, while providing clarity about its vision and role in the PSET system. This should be supported by the availability of qualified lecturers, a suitable legal framework and strong partnerships with industry and social partners. Therefore, a realistic approach is to sequence the necessary reforms and set out reasonable timelines, while improving the quality of the product (DHET, 2016d: 17).

Summary of review

This document review highlights the policy environment around 2010 that informed the decision to embark on the expansion of TVET college programme. Several proposed documents could not be easily accessed, such as the NSF monitoring reports and annual reports of colleges. The former were all in hard copy and pertained almost exclusively to financial monitoring. Annual reports were collected from the colleges that were visited but some had difficulty providing copies over the period required. The college close-out reports are reported on in more detail within the broader evaluation report. Additional documents that spoke directly or indirectly to this programme were used.

Emphasis was placed on TVET colleges to promote growth and to address the skills shortages that the country was experiencing, which meant that all related challenges faced by the 50 merged TVET colleges had to be systematically addressed. Some of the challenges included the high rate of unemployment among the youth, the close to three million young people who were not in education, employment or training, the financial challenges faced by this NEET group, the dysfunctional management and administrative structures prevailing at most of the TVET colleges that created high levels of instability, the lack of resources at TVET colleges due to under-funding, the negative reputation associated with TVET colleges that resulted in skewed enrolment in post-school institutions with a preference for universities, and the pervasive inability of college graduates to find employment.

All these challenges were duly considered and policies, strategies and frameworks were designed to directly and indirectly deal with the systemic, structural and institutional dynamics that hindered the success of the TVET sector. Overarching policies, such as the Green and White Papers, informed by directives provided in the NDP, were promulgated. A turnaround strategy was formulated, external expertise was utilised to target the TVET college management difficulties, and the paths for the professional development of TVET staff, were set in motion with several universities brought in to facilitate this curriculum. Funding was made available through the NSA and managed by the NSF. Additional funding was made available for infrastructural development. Partnerships among public colleges, universities, SETAs and employers were encouraged and promoted as good practice.

Some of these initiatives resulted in success. Student enrolment increased from 354 477 in 2010 to 702 383 in 2014. The biggest increase in enrolment was in 2012 when the TVET College Expansion Programme was launched. The DHET also reported increases in the number of learnerships, internships and students registered for skills development programmes up to 2016. The TVET College Expansion Programme was deemed essential to provide young and older unemployed people with skills to access the economy or job market.

The overall uptake of skills development opportunities across all TVET colleges has been less than that envisaged in the policy and framework documents and falls far short of projections for 2030. Student throughput rates remain a serious concern, the partnerships between industry, SETAs and TVET colleges are not as yet ideal, and infrastructural challenges, such as accommodation facilities and transport, continue to hamper progress. The findings of the implementation evaluation of the expansion and capacity development programme should be interpreted in this context.

5 CASE STUDIES

Case studies have been conducted to get a full picture of implementation in the colleges. Three different sites were selected from three provinces, representing different geographic and economic service areas, such as urban, peri-urban and rural. For the case studies, all the targeted respondents (principals, lecturers) were interviewed as well as additional staff, students and employers offering workplace skills opportunities. The selected colleges were: West Coast TVET College (Western Cape), Gert Sibande TVET College (Mpumalanga) and PE TVET College (Eastern Cape).

The close-out reports, annual reports and NSF monitoring/progress reports for these colleges provided additional data for the case study reports. This evaluation study started at the end of 2016, and the TVET CECD Programme officially ended in 2015, but both West Coast TVET College and PE College had extensions approved and were still in touch with students and could set up the requested interviews. The students at Gert Sibande TVET College did not arrive for the scheduled interviews. Two sets of employers were made available at West Coast TVET College and one each at PE TVET College and Gert Sibande TVET College.

The individual case studies provide information gleaned about the design, implementation, results and sustainability of the TVET programme, in relation to the overall objectives. The case

studies also sought to extract good practices and lessons learnt in implementing the TVET CECD Programme. These are summarised at the end of the attached full individual reports. The full case study report is presented in Annexure 5.

5.1 West Coast TVET College

The West Coast TVET College was selected as a case study because of its peri-urban and rural service area. It is located in the Western Cape while the other two case studies were chosen from the Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga.

The college focused on all four objective areas of the TVET CECDP, and so provided a good overview of how the programme had been implemented holistically.

This college has a history of engaging with industry as all its campuses are located in close proximity to small, medium and large businesses. The TVET CECDP programme has positively transformed the occupational department of the West Coast TVET College from a small department to a noteworthy division.

Project summary data

Sub-component	Details
1. Project value (received)	R68,444,779
2. Total funds spent	R54,050,890.93 (79% of budget)
3. Total NSF balance	R3,112,379.58 (as at 31/12/2016)
4. Project duration	Three years and an additional two years (to allow for extension period). Extension project will merge with new project (roll-out) in January 2017

5.2 Gert Sibande TVET College

The Gert Sibande TVET College was chosen as a case study because of its predominantly rural and peri-urban service areas. The campuses are surrounded by mining interests as well as agricultural operations.

The college focused on all four objective areas of the TVET CECDP, and so provided a good overview of how the programme had been implemented holistically.

This college provides good practice examples of encouraging the enrolment of learners, particularly through its enrolment process. Conducting interviews and providing career counselling support as part of the application process helped to ensure that students were enrolled into appropriate programmes. The case study also showed that where there is good alignment between the college strategy and the TVET CECDP objectives, there is good buy-in and support from college management.

Project summary data

Sub-component	Details
1. Project value (received)	R48,015,538
2. Total funds spent	R44,390,242.58 (92% of budget)
3. Total NSF balance	R3,591,404.21
4. Project duration	Three years

5.3 PE TVET College

The PE TVET College was chosen because it serves urban and peri-urban communities.

Of the four objectives, the college focused mostly on offering a broader set of programmes through an expanded PQM. It provides a good practice example of expanding the PQM based on a consultative process and thorough needs assessment. The key lessons learnt are that good project management, stakeholder consultation and a strong lecturing/facilitation team enable implementation.

The challenges experienced with WBL at this college also highlight the importance of setting up a placement unit to facilitate placements as this cannot be the responsibility of lecturers/facilitators/project manager.

Project summary data

Sub-component	Details
1. Project value (received)	R24,953,812
2. Total funds spent	R22,576,330 (90% of allocated funding)
3. Total NSF balance	R2,377,482
4. Project duration	Four years and an additional two years (for phase 2)

6 KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

6.1 TVET CECDP design process

Key evaluation question: To what extent is the programme design relevant, appropriate and technically sound?

The overall framework and plans for the TVET CECDP emanated from an analysis of the acute skills shortages in the country, the growing number of young people who are not in education or employment or training, and the potential role that the TVET sector could play in addressing these challenges. The programme design and objectives are described in the background section and in the section on the ToC. The design of the programme has been evaluated

against these objectives and the ToC.

6.1.1 Relevance of programme design to national priorities

National priorities for this programme were provided in the NDP (NPC, 2012), the Green Paper for PSET (2012), NSDS III (2012), the MTSF 2014-2019 and in the White Paper for PSET (2013). The shift towards a more inter-connected post-school system suggested that the different needs of post-school youth would be addressed with a clearer pathway to occupational qualifications and the workplace, and articulation with higher education.

Increased enrolment

In relation to the relevance of the four strategic objectives, the policy-related documents above all raise the potential benefits of increased enrolments at the colleges. Possible targets of more than one million enrolments were set for 2014. These targets were set in response to the need to develop skills to grow the economy and also as a response to the challenge of dealing with approximately three million NEETs. This group grows by a large proportion of the one million school leavers added each year. The increase in access was viewed as a priority for the NSF, as the following quote attests:

Mainly to increase access, to increase student numbers at colleges. That is why NC(V) and NATED courses were funded as colleges could increase their intake. Also occupational courses were funded – depending on the project manager, the college and their capacity. (NSF)

Respondents interviewed at the colleges also agreed that the objective of increased access for students was indeed relevant to the national priorities, as illustrated in the following quotes:

Anything that assists with unemployment should be relevant. (work placement officer)

It responds and is relevant to address issues of poverty, unemployment, low levels of education, gender imbalances at work and the needs for the people with disabilities. All these groups are catered for in this programme. (project manager)

WBL

The second objective promoted linking with industry and providing lecturers and students with WBL experiences. Industry linkages and access to work exposure are important, not only for enhancing teaching and learning, but also for enhancing access to meaningful employment. While there has been pressure on colleges to create more effective linkages with industry over the last decade, there has been limited success (DBSA, 2010). The following statements support the relevance of this objective in the design of the programme:

It was relevant because it was important to establish the occupational programme which was to take students to another level. Coming to the college was meant to help them with practicals aligned to what they had done at college. The actualisation of this insight was to clear the bad name of TVET that they are useless and produce workpower of low quality. (project leader)

Most definitely. The TVET colleges are well placed to engage with skills development that is, making sure that learners have skills that will help them get employed or they can use the skills to create their own employment. (work placement officer)

The first quotation above supports the relevance of this objective as a strategic challenge, particularly where colleges are not being proactive in creating links with industry for the purpose of facilitating access to the workplace for students in order to enhance their learning in the college. The second quotation indicates the importance of colleges having the necessary linkages and support of industry and being capable of providing the range of skills needed for employment. The following assumptions, generated during the ToC workshop, needed to be assessed prior to and during the programme implementation:

- TVET colleges have partnerships in place or, if not, colleges will be able to establish agreements that will lead to more WBL opportunities – and these will be sustainable;
- there are sufficient industry partners in proximity to TVET colleges, particularly those located in rural areas, to provide the necessary opportunities for WBL;
- identified industry partners are willing to provide WBL opportunities;
- identified industry partners have the necessary skills to mentor and guide learners during their placements.

Engagement with industry is a strategic and highly relevant priority, particularly in rural areas, and it remains a challenge.

Capacity building

Recent poor throughput rates at TVET colleges, high drop-out rates and poor quality of TVET students seeking employment suggest, among other things, some inefficiencies and poor quality of delivery in the TVET college sector. The capacity development of college staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning was targeted as a key lever to improve the overall quality of the TVET sector. The lack of capacity at college level resulted in much of the initial delivery of the TVET programme being offered by external providers and this was allowed as long as these providers were accredited or the college could accredit the courses. Colleges also used the programme funding to buy in capacity through short-term contracts where they lacked capacity. Colleges could not 'appoint' permanent staff with the NSF funding and the short-term nature of the contracts meant that the capacity was short-term as well. This is expressed in the quotations below:

A project manager was appointed, courses were identified and, through advertising, external providers were identified and contracted to deliver the courses. (college principal)

The college followed its own path by employing external providers because it lacked capacity. (project manager)

The following key assumptions were generated for the staff capacity development objective or outcome:

- the required capacity-building courses for college staff exist;
- lecturing staff are available and willing to participate in developmental programmes;
- staff development programmes will yield the desired effect, namely, well-capacitated lecturers delivering quality teaching and learning;
- staff who have undergone professional development will remain in the TVET college system.

The relevance of this objective is further amplified below:

Project management capacity of institutions needs to be looked at since the colleges have varying capacity. The smaller TVET colleges have little capacity because there are not enough human resources to manage and they become overloaded. (college principal)

PQM

Finally, the TVET programme was also designed to assist colleges to expand their PQM. One principal commented as follows when asked about the relevance of the programme:

I think the programme is relevant. A good development through DHET and for the TVET programme in particular has opened doors for colleges to come up with innovative programmes that are relevant, based on fundable proposals. (college principal)

The intention of the programme expansion was signalled in the Minister's speech at the launch of the TVET programme:

That the NSF funding extends beyond the traditional NC(V) and Report 191 programmes to include skills programmes, learnerships and internships is no accident. We expect that FET colleges will reach out to communities, especially young people, and offer them these opportunities. Over the long-term we would like to see FET colleges as a partner of choice (for SETA and NSF) to roll out skills development on a massive scale. (DHET, 2012b).

In order to ensure that this can happen, the following assumptions needed to be addressed prior and during the implementation of the programme:

- That TVET colleges have the necessary capacity and skills to develop additional PQM courses;
- That TVET colleges receive accreditation to offer full and part-time occupational qualifications;

- That by broadening the PQM, TVET colleges will be able to address local skills needs as well as provincial and national skills shortages.

Design process

It cannot be said that there was a considered design process for the CECDP. The programme was launched as a grant funding opportunity, the colleges prepared proposals and the NSF adjudicated these and assisted the colleges to obtain funding. The process is described below.

The national launch on 1 August 2012 was attended mainly by principals/CEOs of TVET colleges and officials from the DHET and the NSF. A draft ToC was developed by officials of the NSF but this was not operationalised because of the challenges associated with the quality of the proposals received and the support needed by colleges to attend to the reworking of proposals. The due diligence exercise was also not implemented sufficiently.

The NSF managed the process of engaging with the funding proposals submitted. Some proposals were accepted and others required revision. The NSF also provided support to colleges that were not able to produce timely proposals. For this evaluation the senior management staff (principals and deputy principals) at colleges were asked about their involvement in the overall design of the programme. Of the 14 senior managers interviewed, four indicated that they were newly appointed and had not known about the programme before they arrived at the college. Six of the managers referenced the national launch meeting as their only involvement and the others stated that they had had meetings with external colleagues to discuss the design of the intervention.

Fifteen project managers were also asked about their knowledge of the overall design of the programme. Ten indicated that they were newly appointed and did not have any knowledge about the design of the programme. The rest indicated that they were not involved at all and that they had been provided with targets to meet.

I can only speak to phase 2 – no college input on the design of the programme. We were told by the NSF that these are the focus areas and this is the allocated budget for each. No discussion of programme areas with the college as far as I know ... but then, I came in once the proposal had been written and submitted. (project manager)

When asked, 'what informed the programme design', the NSF respondent replied:

It was mainly a political decision. There was an indication that the TVET colleges would become more prominent. The minister discussed with college principals – how many additional students they could absorb, based on capacity. They quoted figures and he said he would find the money. It was more a political driver to address unemployment and underemployment. (Key informant interview (KII))

The following assumptions were generated during this evaluation for the ideal design of a programme of this nature. NSF and DHET staff members generated these during a workshop to revisit and re-draft the ToC for the programme.

- That the systems set in place would be able to function effectively (to enable timely and sufficient funding disbursements), irrespective of capacity levels at TVET colleges;

- That there is synergy between the intention of the TVET CECDP and the aspirations of the TVET colleges;
- That sound management structures are in place to utilise additional resources in line with the proposed plans of action;
- That monitoring tasks would be performed effectively and timeously at college level to allow for sound M&E of TVET programme implementation (ToC – assumptions).

However, these assumptions were not attended to through the due diligence processes and the design phase was hurried along after the launch and the focus shifted to implementation. This is evident via the following response from a principal:

The ToC was started but it was not done properly. NSF had to jump. The beginning was difficult. At the launch the Minister and Director-General had discussions with the college principals. At the meeting the Memoranda of Understanding were signed and they could get the money. Lower structures did not have a clue what was going on – to get people to do the work, it took about a year. (KII)

The overall design that informed the stated objectives and set the targets for the programme remained at the national level with the NSF and the DHET. There is no indication, except through the launch event, that the programme intent was systematically shared with the colleges. All respondents at the level of the college were unaware of any research that had been undertaken to inform the programme design. A project manager said he would not call it a programme – it was a call for funding proposals, an opportunity to access funds.

6.1.2 Relevance of the TVET CECDP to TVET colleges

Some of the findings indicate that the core components of the project were relevant to the needs of the colleges. Senior managers interviewed at the colleges indicated that they referred mainly to their own strategic plans when considering the courses selected as part of the TVET CECDP. These managers had been in place when the programme started, as highlighted in the quotes below:

From our strategic plan, we looked at what we had to offer and considered the scarce skills within our rural community and the mining industry context and we introduced new courses – using mainly contract staff to teach the new courses. (college principal)

We did not do anything very different. We just did a lot more because we had resources to market the courses and we had to ensure that we delivered on our promises. We managed to enhance our partnership with local government significantly. (college principal)

We used the college's strategic plan to identify the priorities we had set for the college and we could upscale our initial projections. Management provided a lot of input for this. (project manager)

In the quantitative survey, the respondents indicated the relevance of each of the programme components for their colleges and for what they had received funding.

Figure 6: College perceptions of agreement with the relevance of the programme objectives for their colleges

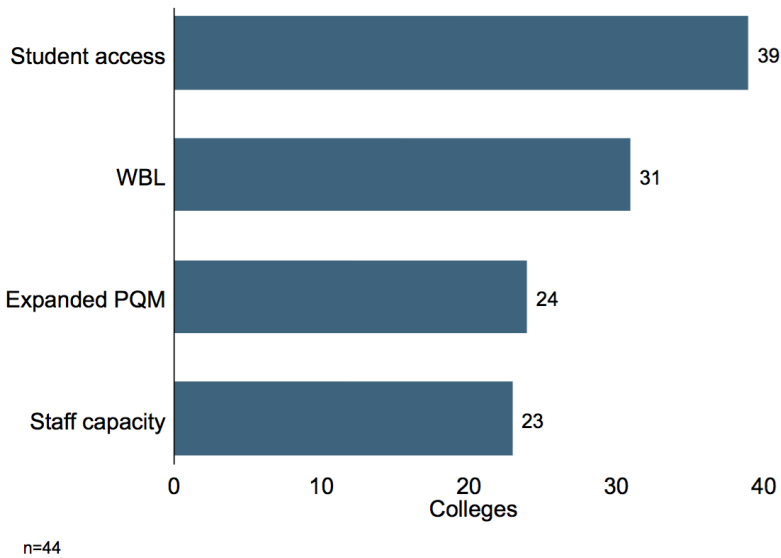
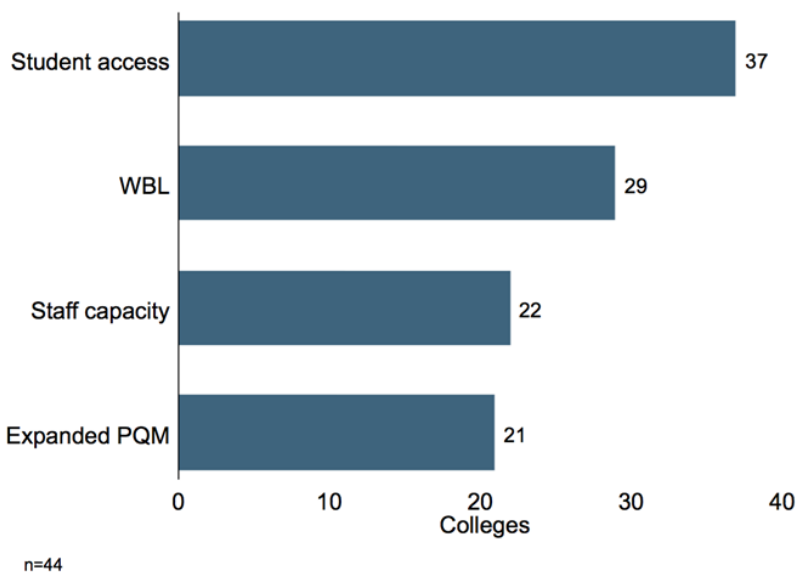


Figure 7: Perception of agreement with programme objectives for which colleges received funding



The figures above present a synergy between the perceived relevance of the programme objectives for the colleges and the funding they had received. This could be as a result of the content of their proposals, and the parameters that had been set by the NSF, or a combination of the two.

Whether the colleges were administratively and structurally prepared for this investment and the expansion, and whether the project was designed appropriately to support them in this endeavour, are explored below.

6.1.3 Appropriateness of programme design to TVET college institutional environment

This section assessed how well the design was able to capture and accommodate the material conditions of the TVET colleges. In terms of institutional capacity, it was assumed that TVET colleges had (A) the project management capacity to plan, execute and manage the expansion programme; (B) the HR capacity and systems to manage enrolment, WBL and financial matters; (C) adequate facilities to accommodate the increased numbers of students; and, (D) institutional capacity to expand their PQM, including accreditation.

In general, it was assumed that the colleges could deliver, but as one respondent commented:

There was the political expectation that colleges could deliver but they were going through too many changes at the time. (KII)

The various aspects of the relevance to institutional design are discussed below:

Project management capacity

An important component of the design of the project was the provision of funding for the colleges to invest in project management capacity and the provision of a project administration budget. This was a good design feature, which most colleges made use of, sooner or later.

Another aspect of project management was the ability of colleges to gather and report on financial and non-financial data. The design did allow for colleges to appoint staff to manage the financial reporting of the project. Furthermore, the NSF had project managers that were able to guide the colleges through this process. The successes and challenges with this are discussed in the section on effectiveness of programme implementation (6.2 below). But this was about the only aspect for which the NSF provided technical assistance, as illustrated by the following quote:

There was an assumption that colleges were able to manage money efficiently, and that they wouldn't struggle to plan for the utilisation of funding but this was not the case for most of the colleges. (KII)

HR capacity

The expansion of the colleges' ability to enrol students, and to develop appropriate systems and technologies for this, was an intended outcome of the programme. However, the design did not consider sufficiently how colleges would manage the first expanded intake, since these systems had not yet been developed. Further, the NSF was not yet clear on what it required in terms of monitoring data from students, so this data may not have been captured at first, causing delays in reporting. The rush to enrol more students meant that systems were developed retrospectively.

Further, according to some respondents, the ability of colleges to make HR appointments to

meet their needs is constrained by the outdated funding model based on enrolments for Ministerial programmes and centralised HR systems. Managing WBL is a labour-intensive task and requires personnel, and colleges had to put these systems in place. The funding did make provision for the hiring of management and support staff to implement the project, but not necessarily for WBL.

There was funding to hire lecturing staff but only in relation to the project, and hence these positions were not necessarily permanent, or colleges outsourced this function.

Adequate facilities to meet expanded student numbers

Other challenges such as infrastructure and the provision of transport and accommodation for students were deemed out of the scope of the funding.

By only addressing four aspects of college expansion, the project did not view the college as a whole system and consider that expansion in one area would have ramifications in others. For example, expanding student enrolment or expanding the PQM puts greater demand on facilities. So, this was a design flaw. There was no technical assistance for this aspect of the project in the design of the programme.

Institutional capacity to expand PQM

It was an appropriate expectation for the colleges to be able to expand their PQM, but their ability to respond to the required skills in their communities was limited. Many colleges responded by outsourcing this capacity, as they did not have sufficient internal capacity. The systems were not in place for this expansion. For example, some of the qualifications were not registered and so courses had to be terminated or where they had been completed, students did not receive certification. There was no technical assistance in the design of the programme to support the colleges in expanding their PQM.

The TVET CECDP was designed without taking into account the constraints of the current funding model. The funding of TVET colleges is based on the number of enrolments. These have to be students who have enrolled for the 'Ministerial' or traditional or core programmes, NATED and NC(V). The funding model enables the colleges to recruit staff. The colleges embarked on a juggling act to fund occupational posts. They kept open a few of the staff establishment posts (based on the enrolments of the 'traditional' programmes) so that they could fund occupational programmes. The 'traditional' staff offer the core programmes (Ministerial programmes), and are not available to get involved in skills development. Hence, contract staff are brought in. According to a key informant:

The staff will never be developed if DHET does not amend its funding model! (KII)

6.1.4 Conceptual clarity and programme logic – strengths and challenges in programme design

The Minister announced the TVET programme that was to involve the NSF, the DHET and the TVET colleges in partnership to build the TVET system. The main underlying assumption was

that if students were skilled, they would get jobs. A key strategy and the strength of the design were the stipends made available for WBL. These were a critical incentive for industry to participate and provide jobs.

Many more challenges regarding the design of the programme were shared compared to the strengths respondents could identify.

One college reported that its relationship with the NSF had improved over time and there was now a clearer understanding of expectations on both sides. Another reported that it had developed better relationships with SETAs and industry as this was a key requirement for the success of the TVET programme. While most respondents, particularly senior management, expressed gratitude for the funding opportunity, many challenges were raised by key informants, some of which are shared below. They attest to the fact that the programme design focused on supply and demand, but not quality.

One key challenge raised by the NSF was that the programme was not sufficiently informed about the capacity, material conditions and historical developments of colleges, as indicated by the quote below:

If we had proper research and proper reports about the colleges, things may have turned out better. There were problems with throughput rates, financial barriers of learners, poor record keeping etc. When we arrived it was difficult to get proper proposals. They had to submit a proposal – over-enrolment was high on the agenda. We received poor proposals. (KII)

Another key challenge with the programme design was that insufficient thought had been given to the ramifications of expansion for colleges, and the kinds of support that colleges would need to implement systems for expansion.

The three key roles of the NSF as reflected in the ToC were: (1) timely and sufficient disbursement of funding by the NSF; (2) effective management structures set in place by the NSF; and (3) well-structured and coordinated monitoring systems established. No consideration was given to the other types of more technical support that colleges would need to successfully implement the expansion mandate.

The technical support from the NSF predominantly focused on financial management reporting. This is in line with the skill set of the NSF. Colleges needed support with implementing WBL, staff training and curriculum development, but there were no systems for this. The DHET did not provide any support, which would have been more in line with their mandate. It is important to note that there are only three people responsible for the whole of TVET at the DHET, even though it has now become a national competence. The following comment reflects this narrow programme design in terms of technical assistance:

In reality, only funding was made available. There was some support in financial project management. It was not a well thought-out design. The expanded numbers had repercussions for colleges. No real staff development took place. There are no reports about development of staff as a result of this programme. When NSF funding was given, they gave it to colleges that didn't have the capacity to do skills analysis, M&E so they took what was available. (KII)

Another critical challenge that was not considered was how to support students who were poorly prepared, especially the Grade 9s who were coming into the NC(V) stream. While there was funding for WBL, there was no funding for student support which is critical for throughput. A 2016 tracer study conducted by JET Education Services for the DHET (2016) found that more than half of the NC(V) students who had been surveyed in the baseline study, had not completed NC(V) Level 4, mainly because they could not get further funding because they had not completed in the stipulated time. So the lack of funding for student support was a key gap in the objectives of the programme.

As for the missing elements, not much thought was given to the fact that students needed to be supported. NC(V)s were extremely young students, mostly Grade 9s, and the social aspect had to be considered. Student support was vital in the process, but not part of the funding model. Rural students needed more support as there was not enough industry in rural areas and rural students needed to travel further for practicals. This should be considered given the distance and location from their areas. (college principal)

Most of the challenges about the programme design raised at the colleges relate to 'out-of-scope' matters such as infrastructure, staff appointments other than project managers, student accommodation, and transport costs related to course delivery. The provision of funding of stipends for WBL was a critical design component, without which the programme would probably not have been implemented. However, excluding transportation costs and accommodation leaves a shortfall in student funding. Since these factors affected throughput rates and quality, it begs the question whether they should have been excluded, or whether they could have been considered for funding if they were part of a clear strategy at college level.

The exclusion of infrastructural investment is also not clear to all colleges. Some colleges managed to do infrastructural upgrades to facilities such as Boland TVET College, which upgraded its kitchens and computer facilities, as they could clearly motivate how these were linked to the expansion of the PQM. It had not been clear to all the colleges that this was possible.

6.1.5 Key point summary

- The design of the programme had been informed by policy imperatives that identified skills needs in the country and ways to accommodate young people who required skills.
- The overall design that had informed the stated objectives and set the targets for the programme, had remained at the national level with the NSF and the DHET.
- The objectives outlined in the programme design were relevant to the policy needs and were in line with TVET college objectives.
- There were several assumptions made about the ability of TVET colleges to manage, administer and implement the TVET programme. These assumptions had not been tested or checked, resulting in support not being provided where needed.

- More research and information were needed about the actual capacity of colleges before the implementation and colleges needed information and time to prepare for implementation.
- A key conceptual gap was the insufficient attention to how to ensure throughput – quality of programmes and sufficient student support (including financing of transport).

6.2 Presentation of findings for effectiveness of programme implementation

Key evaluation question: to what extent were the approaches, strategies, mechanisms, processes and procedures adopted by the NSF and the TVET colleges to implement the programme appropriate and effective?

6.2.1 Implementation at NSF level (programme and grant management)

6.2.1.1 Effectiveness and appropriateness of management strategies used by the NSF

Since the NSF was the implementing agency for this programme, the outputs relate to what the NSF did to manage the programme effectively. The three main outputs identified in the logframe are: (1). timely and sufficient funding of disbursements; (2). effective management structures are set in place; and (3). well-structured and coordinated monitoring systems are established. This section provides some context for the NSF itself before examining each of these outputs.

History and mandate of the NSF

The NSF was established in 1998, through the Skills Development Act, Act 97 of 1998. It took over operations of the Training of Unemployed Persons (TUP Fund) in 1999. The first levy was received in 2000, and it derives its mandate from the various iterations of the National Skills Development Strategy: NSDS 1 ((2001-2005), NSDS II (2005-2010, extended to 2011) and NSDS III (2011-2016). The primary mandate of the NSF is to fund projects identified in the NSDS as National Priorities effectively and efficiently; to effectively and efficiently fund projects related to the achievement of the purpose of the Act as the Director-General determines and to administer the fund within the prescribed limit, as regulated from time to time.

The NSDS III views the NSF as:

... a catalytic fund enabling the state to drive key strategies and assist non-levy-paying cooperatives, non-governmental organisations and community structures to meet the training needs of the unemployed and vulnerable groups. NSDS III envisaged that the NSF should operate at the highest standards of efficiency and effectiveness, making use of its resources to have a major impact on skills development in the country. (RSA, 2016: 18).

A strategic framework for the allocation of funding from the NSF for 2011-2016 was approved by the Minister of Higher Education and Training. The DHET was established in 2009 and the NSF was transferred from the Department of Labour to the DHET in 2011. This resulted in

challenges with the NSF financial administration and grant-making systems at the same time as the TVET CECDP was being planned and launched.

It was decided that the NSF was best placed to implement the project since the DHET was still setting up their systems for TVET and had limited staff capacity to implement a project of this nature. The NSF was launching the CECDP while it was still working on improving its own internal systems. At the same time, the administrative data management systems from the TVET colleges were insufficient, and colleges were only able to report accurately on enrolments. They could not report on throughput or other non-financial data such as staff training. This made planning for the project a challenge, and also created shortfalls in funding for the colleges due to funding shortfalls, which colleges refer to as 'over-enrolment'

The focus of this section is on the effectiveness of the management of the CECDP by the NSF.

6.2.1.2 Timely and sufficient disbursement of funding

Application process

All 50 TVET colleges were invited by the NSF to submit proposals for grants for the TVET CECDP. They were provided with a guideline document and a template to complete. The template was thorough, and was mostly in line with Guideline 2.2.3 for the planning of new implementation programmes produced by the DPME. It required colleges to provide a problem analysis, a results hierarchy, implementation plan, risks and constraints, sustainability, project governance and administration, and M&E. It also required a detailed activity-based budget. Applications were invited on 9 December 2011, and the intention was to confirm the grants by April 2012.

Only 30% of the colleges responded with proposals within this timeframe. The NSF provided hands-on support to colleges to ensure that their projects were in line with the eligibility criteria, and this often entailed multiple submissions by colleges.

The proposal had to be adapted according to the requirements and stipulations of the NSF. Infrastructure and staffing requests were removed and the college had to set targets for the various programmes. (college manager)

The college had to change the proposal six times before it was finally accepted. (college principal)

Despite these challenges with proposals, the NSF released interim funds to all 50 colleges and allowed them to account for this funding retrospectively. They also had to retrofit their plans. The initial release of funds was thus haphazard and without a clear plan by the NSF. Colleges interpreted the call differently, based on their particular needs, as the guidelines were fairly broad. This was not always disadvantageous. Firstly, many colleges used the initial funding to

cover shortfalls in expenditure due to over-enrolment⁶. Secondly, the process gave the stronger colleges a sense of ownership and a chance to get on with what they really wanted to do. However, the weaker colleges struggled with this loose arrangement. As identified above, the NSF had to provide a lot of hands-on support to ensure that these colleges were spending in line with the grant requirements. As discussed in the design section, there was insufficient time for preparation, and this meant that the NSF started off on the back foot.

The majority of survey respondents (77% of 26 colleges who responded to the question⁷) found the application process easy to follow, and 93% (of 44 colleges) found the proposals useful as a guideline for implementation (30% very useful, and 63% useful).

The most cited challenge for those who did not submit proposals immediately was insufficient time allowed. However, time was not a barrier for those colleges with strong strategic plans, as the following comment illustrates:

The senior management team, in consultation with staff in all the areas, developed the proposal, and a staff member was appointed as project manager. The college used its strategic plan to inform the areas of focus and to assess the human resource requirements for the projects. (college principal)

Disbursement

The survey results show that on the whole, the colleges were satisfied with the financial management and support received from the NSF in terms of grant management and disbursements.

There were some concerns with the disbursement process at the NSF. While 62% of survey participants agreed that the disbursements were paid timeously, 18% of colleges strongly disagreed with this statement. The reworking of the proposal caused delays in disbursements and those colleges had to support the NSF projects in the meantime with their own funds.

The delays seem to have been caused by poor reporting from colleges to the NSF, but once reports were submitted and approved, disbursements were released timeously to the colleges. In total, 27% of colleges indicated in the survey that they had not reported on time (see Figure 9).

One college mentioned that delays in disbursements affected students because they had to wait for their stipends. From the close-out reports, four colleges mentioned complicated financial templates and the claims process as challenges.

Sufficient funds

Of the 44 colleges that had responded to the survey question, 79% said that the finances

⁶ In anticipation of this funding from the NSF, based on political commitments, colleges had begun enrolling additional students in 2012. However, this enrolment was unfunded, and this is why colleges looked to the NSF to fund the over-enrolment from this project.

⁷ This question was only asked of the principals as we assumed that the project managers would not have been involved in the proposal writing.

received were sufficient for project implementation (54% agreed and 25% strongly agreed – see below). Insufficient funding and delays in transfers were the most common challenges mentioned by colleges in the close-out reports (22% – eight colleges – mentioned these). The examples provided by colleges where funds were not sufficient, were mainly for things that were outside the scope of the grant, such as student accommodation or transport. The scope of the funding was not clear to all colleges. One college reported in the close-out report that the administrator had been unaware of potential and available funding, and had not known that if enrolments were different from those in the budget, the college could not claim back the difference.

Other aspects could have been included in the project funding had colleges motivated sufficiently for them as part of the expansion of skills programmes, but they may not have known this. These included fees for project management, the funding of hairdressing kits, kitchen sets, and Early Childhood Development (ECD) kits, or workshop equipment and demonstration rooms.

Figure 8: Respondents are largely positive about NSF financial management

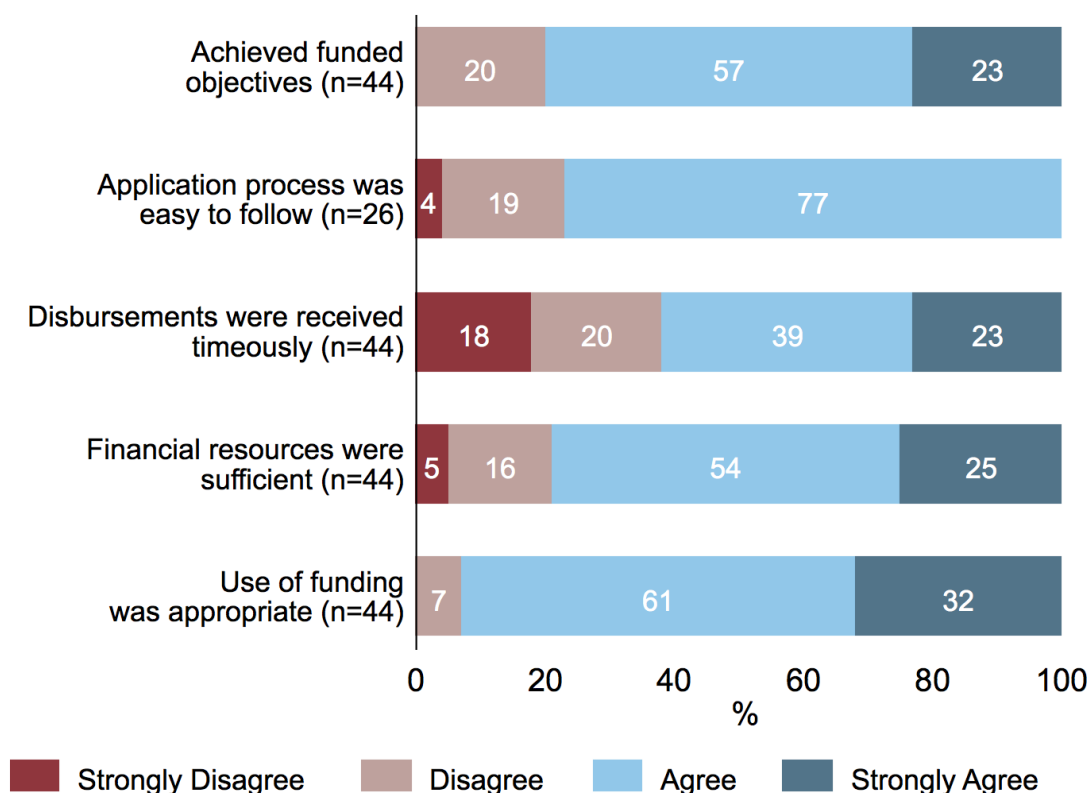
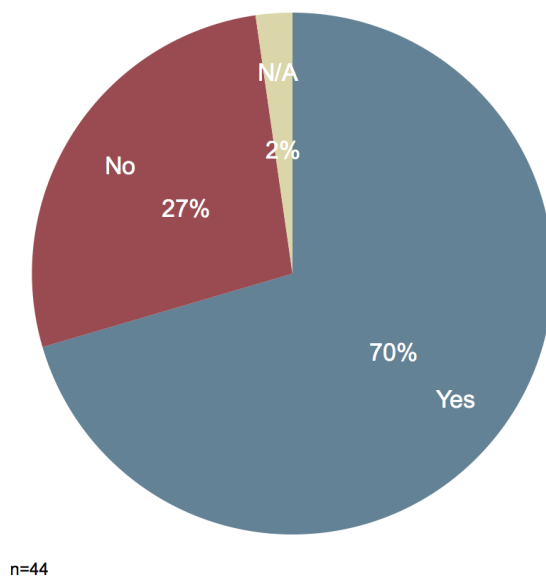


Figure 9: 70% of colleges indicated that they reported to the NSF on time



6.2.1.3 Establishment of effective management structures and monitoring systems

In this section the effectiveness of the NSF's grant management is assessed in relation to the CECDP, including monitoring and reporting systems.

Grant management

The management structures that needed to be established for the implementation by the NSF, were mainly for grant management purposes, including reporting on financial and non-financial data. The financial system had worked well.

Colleges were required to have a separate bank account for the project, and to provide all evidence of expenditure. Colleges had to provide financial statements/balance sheet, daily bank reconciliations, payroll administration, financial ledgers, income and expenditure statements. A budget for programme audits was included in the funding package from the NSF.

The NSF had project managers to work with the colleges in each province, and 79% of colleges agreed that they had received adequate support from the NSF (36% strongly agree, and 43% agreed).

Reporting was all in Excel and it was completed in Excel – we used the templates developed by the NSF and we got them in the beginning. Our grant manager helped us and then we got used to it quickly. We had a great relationship with our grant manager from the NSF. He was there with recommendations at reporting times. (college principal)

Monitoring and reporting systems

The NSF established a monitoring system for the project that focused on budgets, enrolment and delivery only, and not on quality or throughput rates. The NSF did not monitor quality of teaching, and training outcomes such as drop-out and pass rates. According to the Expenditure Performance Review of the NSF (DNA Economics, 2014), the NSF did not evaluate the overall effectiveness of its investment in training and capacity building. Similarly, throughput was specifically excluded as evaluation criteria for this evaluation (see ToR, Annexure 8, and Section 3.3 Components of the evaluation). This is a gap in the M&E systems of the TVET colleges and needs to be addressed.

The NSF provided reporting templates to the colleges and they were required to report quarterly, annually, and to provide a close-out report at the end of the project. The close-out reports were received from 44 of the 50 colleges. It took a while for the NSF to establish standardised reporting templates, but once they did, the colleges found them very useful. The NSF grant managers visited the colleges monthly, and assisted with reporting.

While the NSF provided a template for the close-out reports, it was still too open-ended, making analysis across all the reports difficult.

An analysis of all the quarterly reports from Boland TVET College from January 2013 to September 2015 showed consistent data requirements throughout the project. The reports included the following:

Financial: Drawdown request (claim form), cash flow analysis, project budget vs actuals, invoices received but not yet paid.

Non-financial: Beneficiaries and equity (full name and surname, ID number, race, gender, name of course, time period, days absent and stipend received; and training progress (summary of training completed during the reporting period in total and for gender and race. This data was not reported per beneficiary. It includes a list of the students who had dropped out in that period).

The NSF collated the beneficiary information annually, but no annual or final overall programme report was ever produced. The beneficiary reports include only the number of learners trained and aggregated per sector (based on enrolment data).

Most respondents in the survey indicated that they had had a positive experience of the NSF M&E system, 86% of respondents found the M&E systems helpful for reporting to the NSF, and 88% said that they had used the financial reporting systems regularly (see Figure 10).

The NSF leadership and reporting is good. It reinforces some types of disciplines such as reporting using their templates and regularity of reporting. (college principal)

A few negative comments about the M&E system were also received. Firstly, there were complaints about the amount of paperwork needed for supporting evidence, which had increased printing costs for colleges already on tight budgets. Secondly, changes in NSF evidence requirements, such as asking for attendance registers three years into the project, caused problems for project managers. Managing administrative data and reporting to the NSF on this project was a full-time job, and colleges that had hired dedicated people in this position

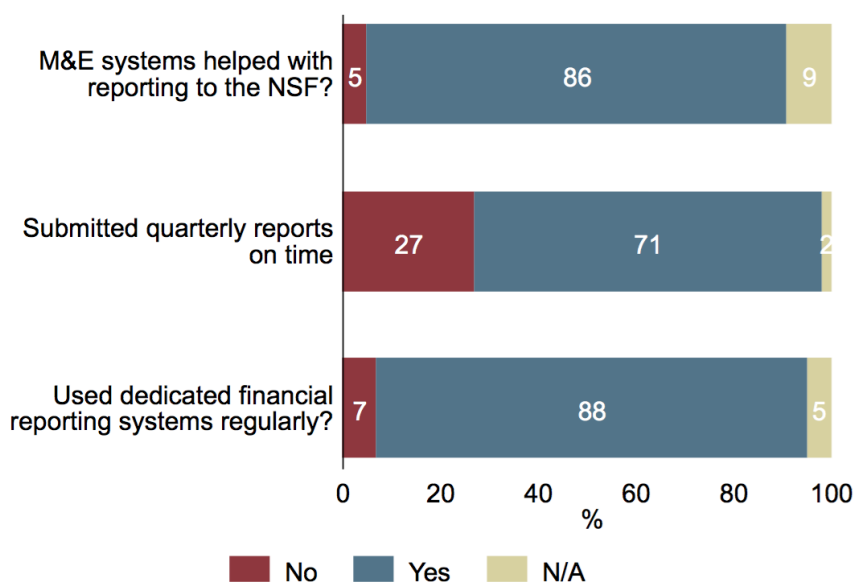
were glad to have done so.

One project coordinator commented that the NSF could have provided better guidance upfront on how to keep records of students and expenditure:

We did a lot of trial and error – it is a lot of information to get together, to track each student’s attendance, marks and work placement, etc. (project coordinator)

The NSF also provided R150,000 to each college for audit fees. One college mentioned that as they were audited anyway they used this money for other parts of the project.

Figure 10: M&E systems



n=44

6.2.2 Implementation at college level (project management)

The focus in this section is on how the projects were managed at each college. The section covers project management strategies, capacity at the college to manage and monitor the programme.

Project management strategies adopted to implement the programme at college level

Colleges also had to provide narrative reports annually and, in the close-out report, reported on governance, project management, project administration, M&E and risk management. Colleges did not consistently report under each heading, and reported on different issues under each heading, making a summary analysis quite difficult. Fewer than half the close-out reports received reported on project organisation and management (16), but 33 reported on project administration. What were most commonly reported on were the project management team,

their duties and involvement.

There were many different arrangements for project management, but centralised and dedicated project management worked best, according to the close-out reports and interviews. Even where campuses are geographically far apart, as far as 400 km apart in the case of the Northern Cape Rural TVET college, centralised project management was possible, with devolved responsibility for implementation to the campus level, with good monitoring systems in place. As one college principal commented:

Initially we devolved responsibility to campus managers to set up the project on different campuses. This became impossible to manage and we had to centralise the coordination function into a project management office. Delivery was still at the campuses but they had to report to the central office and were regularly monitored.

The size and make-up of the project teams differed across colleges, which is to be expected. Colleges made different arrangements for project management by either hiring new project managers or appointing existing staff as project managers. Project managers reported to the principals and management teams. Others commonly included in the project management teams were the principal, chief financial officer and deputy principal. Also mentioned are administrators, administrative interns and academic staff. A small number of colleges mentioned that staff turnover and internal transfer with no hand-over led to a number of management challenges. The importance of the project manager, regular internal meetings and visits by the NSF was highlighted.

Supply chain management procurement procedures were provided by the NSF and were used as a guide by the colleges. Comments were made about these being too restrictive, but, on the whole, they helped colleges put better procurement systems in place.

Levels of capacity of the TVET colleges to manage the programme

The majority of colleges who responded to the survey question on management capacity (n=37), indicated that they had sufficient project management capacity (67%). The project included a budget for project management. However, there was room for improvement⁸. The survey data indicates that 65 management staff were appointed among the sample of 14 colleges; on average 3.8 per college (from the 14 colleges that provided this information). The efficiency analysis confirms that while there were increases in lecturing and support staff at TVET colleges, by far the largest increase in the staff cohort was at the management level (see Figures A1 to A4 in Annexure 6).

Of the 44 colleges that responded to the survey, 22% said that they had insufficient administrative capacity to implement the project. Very few colleges made use of additional support staff (such as administrative interns or laboratory assistants), and only 0.7 additional staff were appointed on average (see Figure 12). There is evidence that colleges were unaware of the types of requirements that the NSF had of them, such as keeping records of students and

⁸ Only five colleges reported appointing new staff in the close-out reports, and only 14 colleges responded to the question of hiring additional staff in the survey.

having courses accredited, and that they were unprepared for this. The following quotation illustrates this point:

The college was not prepared for the ultimate outcome, like keeping records of students and ensuring that all programmes are accredited so that learners can receive certificates or credits for whatever courses they do, which we didn't know at the beginning, but we have prepared for it for the next cycle of funding by NSF. (college deputy principal)

In the close-out reports, two colleges reported losing necessary staff, which included the project manager, chief financial officer and administrator during the implementation period. This left project management in disarray. In one case a project manager could not be appointed due to insufficient funding being granted.

Figure 11: Readiness to implement the programme

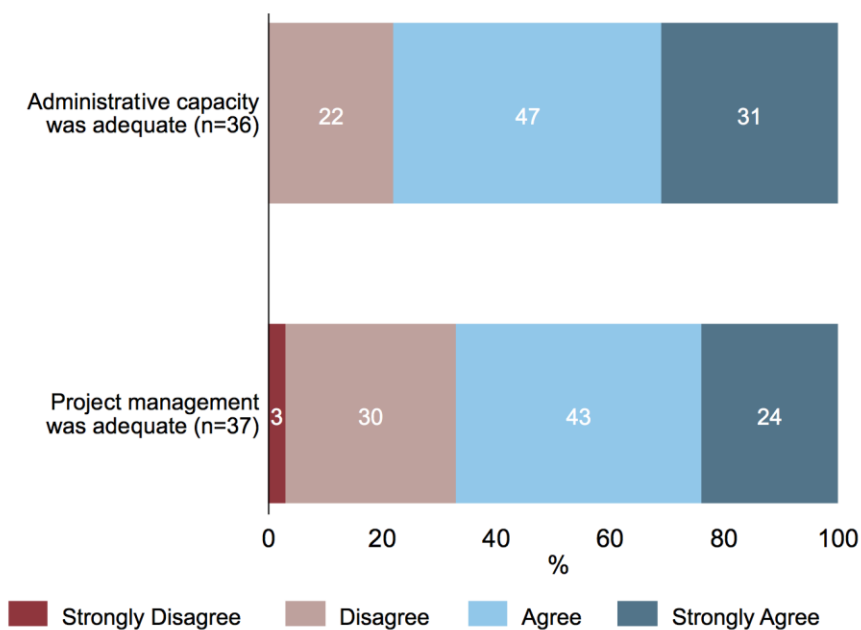
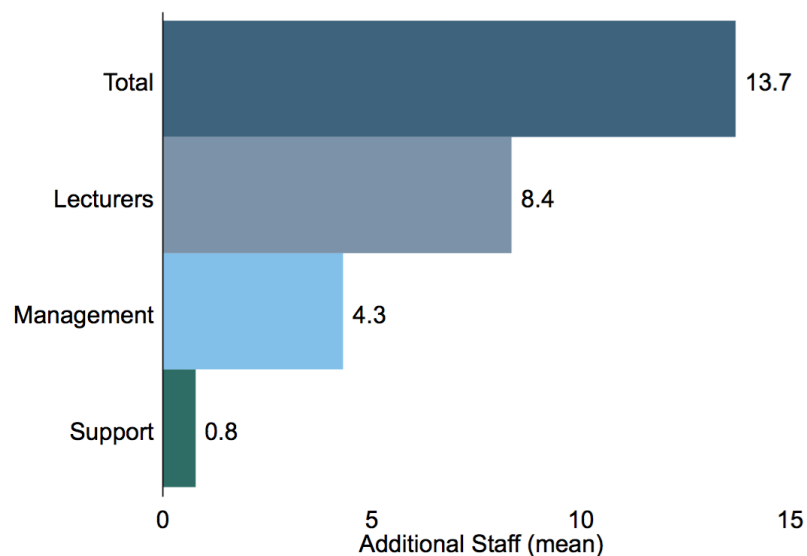
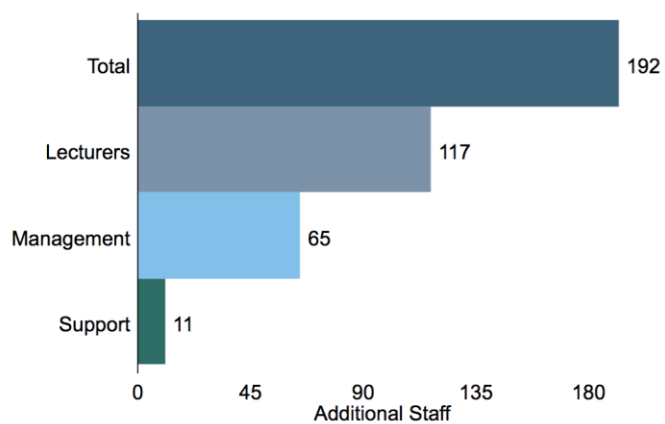


Figure 12: Additional staff appointed for the programme per college (mean)



n=14

Figure 13: Additional staff appointed for the programme (totals)⁹



n=14

⁹ Note: There is a discrepancy between the sum of the individual figures (117+65+11=193) and the total figure (192) due to the 'Don't know' responses (for example, in Table 4, Northlink knew one manager had been hired but did not know how many other staff had been hired).

Table 4: Number of additional staff by college

College	Total	Managers	Lecturers	Support
Boland	15	15	0	0
Cape Town	1	1	0	0
Eastcape Midlands	unsure	unsure	unsure	unsure
Ehlanzeni	11	1	10	0
Ekurhuleni East	unsure	unsure	unsure	unsure
Ekurhuleni West	unsure	unsure	unsure	unsure
Elangeni	unsure	unsure	unsure	unsure
False Bay	19	7	12	0
Gert Sibande	10	0	10	0
Ikhala	17	2	15	0
Letaba	40	15	15	10
Majuba	unsure	unsure	unsure	unsure
Northern Cape Rural	1	1	0	0
Northern Cape Urban	5	2	2	1
Northlink	unsure	1	unsure	unsure
Sekhukhune	5	3	2	0
South Cape	23	9	14	0
Taletso	5	0	5	0
Umfolozi	unsure	unsure	unsure	unsure
Waterberg	2	2	0	0
West Coast	38	6	32	0
Western Gauteng	unsure	unsure	unsure	unsure
TOTAL	192	65	117	11

Having dedicated staff to manage the project was critical for successful implementation:

Having one dedicated person to do the job was a major help. A lot of colleges may have made that error of not including a dedicated person to manage the finances. It was necessary for the scope of this project. It had a broad scope and there were a lot of people to coordinate. We looked at the project and realised that we needed to build additional management staff into the budget. (college principal)

Administrative challenges raised in the close-out reports related to data management such as information system integration, the MERCATA SMS system and poor record keeping. This had an impact on M&E requirements as discussed below.

While a number of colleges struggled with administration in the beginning, with the support of the NSF and by hiring additional staff at a management level, they were able to get up to speed by the end of the project. In total six colleges never submitted close-out reports to the NSF,

suggesting that these colleges struggled more with administration and reporting than others.

In terms of financial management, all the colleges complied with the NSF requirement to open separate bank accounts.

Monitoring of programme implementation at college level

Most of the close-out reports reviewed reported on M&E (36 out of 40 reports). However, it is clear that most colleges viewed it as a compliance function and that M&E capacity varied widely among colleges and, in one case, between programmes¹⁰. Only six of the colleges reported planning the evaluation at the start of the project or using either a project plan or a detailed M&E plan. Furthermore, only two reported that M&E contributed to identifying shortcomings and future initiatives. In addition, one college reported not implementing the required monitoring due to the project's limited size.

There were also other M&E challenges reported by colleges. They include a lack of M&E tools, lack of follow-up on risks identified, not enough people to conduct monitoring, and key project staff leaving. One college also mentioned challenges in obtaining accurate learner information. There were also challenges with consolidating all reports and the resultant delays in the second payment to the college NSF account.

The NSF had very prescriptive guidelines and it took some time to get the administrative support needed in place and to streamline monitoring and reporting systems. (project manager)

The M&E system of the colleges was unable to measure throughput, and hence the return on investment. Although this was only raised as a concern by one respondent, it is worth highlighting.

I would like to know that if the NSF gives us R5 or R10 million, we should know about the return on investment – where did our staff improve and where can we best use those people. (college deputy principal)

Another general challenge with M&E is the requirement that colleges track existing and new beneficiaries separately. Hence, each student who is on the programme becomes a new beneficiary each year of the project, even though the student remains as one beneficiary on the system. Tracking attendance was a manual process as attendance is not yet captured in the IT system. Additionally, tracking attendance required the support and buy-in of lecturers and heads of department (HoDs), which were not always forthcoming. One project coordinator described how she had to source attendance and marks for each subject in the engineering learnership and captured these herself because she did not have the cooperation from the lecturing staff.

Close-out reports reveal a variety of tools used for monitoring, but unfortunately these do not provide standardised information to draw conclusions from across colleges.

Aspects of the project that were monitored included monitoring students in classrooms and

¹⁰ The college found some programmes well managed but others not due to differing levels of funding for different academic programmes.

workplaces, including attendance, absenteeism, retention and subject pass rate, which were mentioned 13 times, as well as financial expenditure, including a separate bank account (three). Internal and external monitoring strategies were reported by colleges.

Internal monitoring strategies mentioned in the close-out reports included:

- Use of information management systems such as COLTECH TVET MIS system or SMS MERCATA system (five). The IT systems did not come without challenges. One respondent indicated that they had problems with the COLTECH system, but they cannot get NSFAS funding if they do not use it. The SETA IT system for tracking student success was also mentioned in the qualitative interviews. The SETA and SAQA monitoring systems are also used for tracking learners:
- Meetings with the steering committee (five);
- Regular weekly/monthly meetings of staff (12);
- Reports to the NSF (12);
- Internal audits (seven).

External monitoring strategies included:

- Financial reports or audits by the Auditor-General, NSF, KPMG (seven);
- Site visits from the project manager and the NSF (five).

Few colleges highlighted the tools used for monitoring which included: project readiness monitoring checklists, classroom observation, project delivery monitoring checklist, class registers, public TVET colleges M&E instruments, evaluation forms for learners and facilitators, training evaluation tool, satisfaction survey and workplace logbooks. According to reports, monitoring was done by staff, the college or specific departments (two), the NSF or the DHET (two), the college chairperson (one), City and Guilds (one), the project manager (one) and facilitators (one).

6.2.2.1 Successes and challenges of the programme implementation

The NSF

The **process of getting proposals** from colleges was challenging for the NSF. Although the NSF provided a guideline for grant applications (November 2011), it was still quite broad and was interpreted differently by the colleges. The NSF released funding to colleges with haste due to political imperatives, but this meant that the first year of the project was quite haphazard. This was compounded by the fact that both the DHET and the NSF were still setting up their respective systems – the DHET for TVET colleges and the NSF for grant making. Even though mention was made of due diligence being part of the process, there is no evidence that the NSF carried out any due diligence to assess the colleges' capacity to implement the programme, relative to the amount of funding they would receive. This could have helped the NSF with budget allocations and reduce underspending.

The primary function of the NSF was **grant management**, and the NSF managed to effectively implement detailed financial management and reporting systems for colleges. The NSF also

provided support in terms of grant managers to assist with the financial reporting using standardised templates, and guidelines for procurement. The NSF verification systems were good but manual and frequently changed, making the processes inefficient and tedious for colleges.

On the whole, the colleges agreed that the **funding was sufficient** to implement what they had proposed to deliver, but challenges remained with aspects that were not funded, such as accommodation and infrastructure.

The NSF allowed for colleges to establish **strong project management** systems by providing budget for project management and administration. However, not all the colleges made effective use of this budget and appointed existing staff as project managers (in addition to their main jobs) which challenged them in terms of time, skill and getting cooperation from the other role-players.

There was no overarching M&E framework, guideline or plan that governed the project. The NSF systems were not finalised at the start of the project, and reporting templates changed during implementation, causing additional work for the colleges. Colleges were not used to collecting that level of student data and it took a considerable amount of time and effort for them to set up these data management systems. The NSF supported them in this.

Delays from colleges in reporting to the NSF resulted in delays in funding to the colleges, which caused problems for the colleges and the students, especially regarding funding for stipends. This had knock-on effects on student placements and students dropping out (which are discussed in section 6.4 below).

There was no attempt by the NSF to create linkages between colleges which could encourage communication, learning and sharing. However, one college did mention a provincial college forum in the Western Cape where this took place informally.

College level

The programme has enabled the colleges to expand their project management and M&E capabilities. This will assist them to attract further funding in the future. Colleges also expanded their capacity to manage WBL and an expanded PQM (these aspects are discussed in section 6.4).

The programme worked well where there were strong project management systems, and it took some colleges up to 18 months to get these in place. This lengthened the start-up phase and limited what these colleges could achieve in the given timeframe. College project management capacity improved over time through trial and error and, supported by the NSF, through the hiring of specialist project managers, clerks and administrators.

Management of the programme was enhanced by its integration into the colleges' strategic planning processes including review and planning meetings. Nine of the colleges mentioned that they had used their strategic plans as the basis for proposal development and monitoring.

The areas of focus shared by the DHET and NSF were in line with the objectives of the college's strategic plan and very little support was needed. (college principal)

When developing the strategic plan, we consult the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy and the NDP and align to these. So our submission to NSF was based on analysis of provincial need. (college principal)

The main implementation challenges experienced by colleges included:

- The NSF financial system was different to the one that the colleges use, and required detailed verification of all expenses. A challenge mentioned by one college was that the financial years of the DHET and the TVET college did not align. This was raised as a concern by the Auditor-General.
- Colleges raised a number of challenges regarding appointing staff, either on contract or permanently. Firstly, it is a challenge to retain project management staff who were hired on contract due to the short-term nature of the funding. Secondly, there are systemic constraints in that their organograms determined by the DHET – did not change in line with their changing mandate, to accommodate skills programmes.
- Coordinating the gathering of data from multiple sources was an ongoing challenge – sources included different campuses, different academic departments and external training providers. Problems included verifying information from external providers on academic progress; getting commitment from TVET College staff to take on the additional monitoring duties required by this funding and the distances between campuses which made it difficult to monitor implementation.
- Although a few colleges mentioned that the use of the information management systems was problematic, Boland TVET College felt that all the colleges should be using the Information for Tertiary Education System (ITS) or the COLTECH system. One respondent indicated that the COLTECH system was a challenge for them.
- Administrative capacity to manage new aspects such as WBL needed to be established and this was difficult as this was new terrain for colleges. Administration was also labour intensive. The administration of stipends – keeping track of employee records such as leave days and sick leave – was a particular challenge for colleges. Technically, the students were new ‘employees’ of the college as colleges were paying the stipends. This presented new challenges for the colleges. ITS has a module called ‘coop’ to track student placements, which a respondent from the NSF indicated was difficult for many of the colleges to use. However, even if there was an IT system for this, there was not always staff to do the follow-up with students in the workplace:

Tracking is a challenge. Students disappear off the radar – This is a problem. There are no systems. We need a person responsible for this who will be calling them, finding out things like do they still have a job and how many were promoted. But even today we are short of lecturers, so how do we employ a tracking person? (college principal)

- Only one college mentioned that relationships with the community could become complex if community members question the college’s role in the selection of beneficiaries of bursaries and jobs.

- The short-term nature of the funding also presented a challenge to colleges because it inhibited their ability to plan. One college mentioned specifically the challenge of timeframes of courses that did not coincide with the funding period, meaning that students did not know if they would have funding to continue their studies, and colleges did not know whether they would be able to continue to offer certain courses. Attracting good people to short-term contract positions was also a challenge. The gap in funding between NSF I and NSF II caused continuity problems for colleges and interrupted courses.

6.2.3 Key Point Summary

- The TVET CECDP assisted some colleges to expand their proposal writing and project management capacity, which will enable them to implement more special projects in the future, and to attract funding from other sources. Most colleges needed a lot of support and more time to put strong, realistic proposals together, but learned through the process.
- In terms of implementing the grant, the NSF can improve its processes for calls for and assessment of proposals and improve college capacity to implement intended objectives (due diligence).
- There was sufficient funding for the colleges to achieve their intended objectives. The NSF disburses funds on time but delays are caused by inaccurate or late reporting.
- The NSF rightly only releases funds when reports provided by colleges are adequate. Poor reporting causes delays in funding which disrupt programme planning at the colleges. Improving college-level M&E is critical in this regard. The stringent monitoring and reporting requirements of the NSF have helped colleges to improve their M&E capacity. The one-on-one grant management support provided by the NSF, which was also linked to monitoring visits, is critical for the successful monitoring of the grant.
- Technical support from the NSF was limited to the management of financial and basic administrative data. Colleges needed more M&E support to track outcomes, and to implement the more technical aspects of the programme such as WBL, PQM and lecturer capacity development.
- The feedback on project management indicates that a dedicated project manager is essential for the smooth implementation of a project of this size, and colleges need sufficient support from all key stakeholders at the college including administration, finance, student support/WBL and academic staff. The project needs to be integrated into the daily management and operations of the college, aligned to its strategic plan and included in its regular reporting.
- Breaks in funding between project cycles should be avoided and the NSF should start planning in good time for the next phase.

6.3 Presentation of findings for efficiency of programme implementation

Key evaluation question: How efficiently was the programme managed and administered by the TVET colleges?

In assessing the efficiency of the programme, it is important to consider both allocative and productive efficiency. Allocative efficiency concerns whether available resources have been allocated to their best possible use within a programme as opposed to some alternative allocation. This would include measures of financial efficiency, which usually measure how well the money invested in a programme or intervention produces the desired output or revenues for the agency or institution making the investment. Productive efficiency typically measures how well the money invested in a programme or intervention produces benefits to society. Key questions here would be to assess the number of beneficiaries trained over the programme period, the cost per beneficiary trained, and whether there were any significant variations across TVET colleges in this regard.

6.3.1 Allocative efficiency

Is the allocated budget being fully spent?

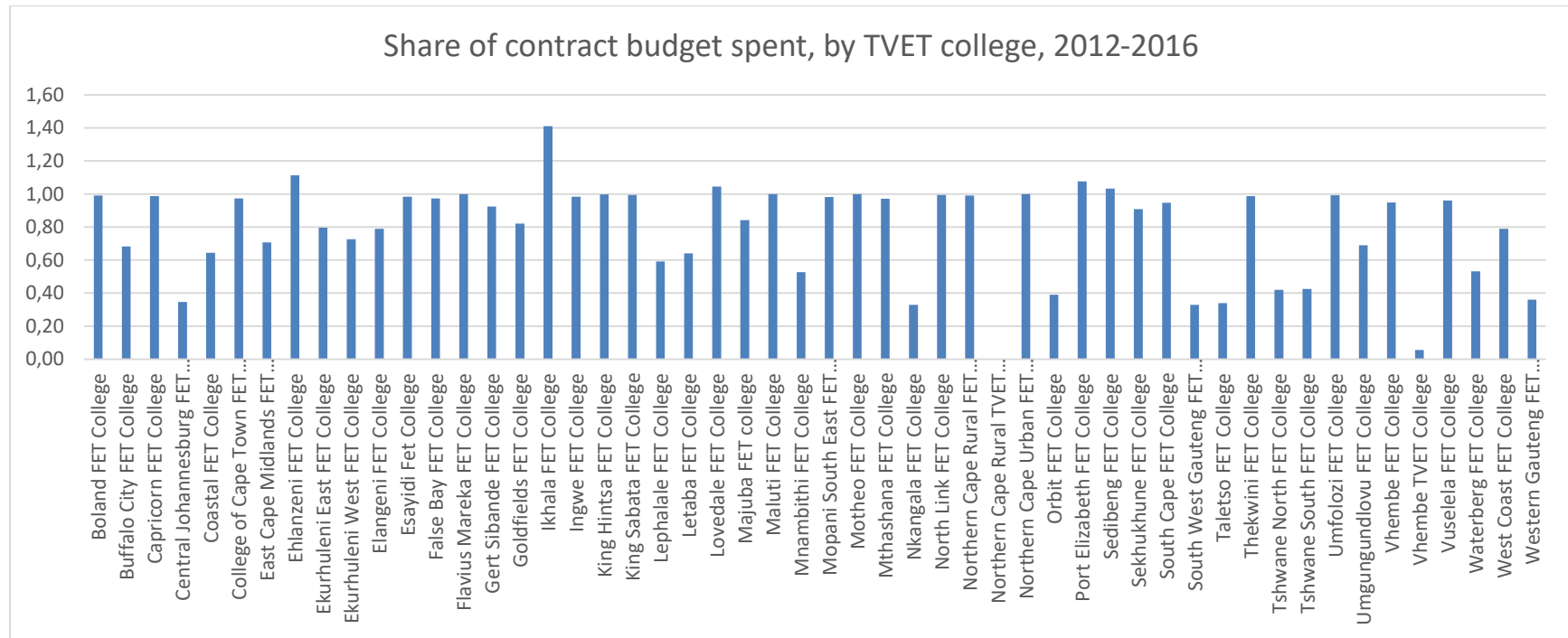
An important first indicator of financial efficiency is to consider the extent to which allocated budgets have been spent. Table 1 in Annexure 6 provides the detailed budget expenditure information provided by the TVET college. There are two measures used in the analysis: the first is the contracted amount, and the second is the total payments made. Where these two numbers match, it means that the allocated (contracted) budget has been fully spent. If the contracted budget amount exceeds that of the total payments, it means there has been underspending of the budget and there is money remaining. Conversely, if the contracted amount is lower than the total payments, this means that the allocated budget has been over-spent and the TVET college has had to make up the shortfall in some way.

This information is summarised in Figure 14 using the ratio: $\frac{\text{Total Payments}}{\text{Contracted Budget}}$. A ratio of one means the budget has been fully spent; a ratio of less than one implies underspending, and a ratio of greater than one suggests overspending. Across all TVET colleges¹¹, the ratio is 0.79, indicating that, on average, just under 80% of the colleges spent their contracted budget amounts. However, there is considerable variation among TVET colleges as Figure 14 makes clear. Boland, Eastern Cape Midlands and Tshwane North TVET Colleges all over-spent on their budgets. This is particularly important in the case of Tshwane North whose contract

¹¹ It is important to note that the following TVET colleges had contracts that did not fit into the 2012-2015 period: Sedibeng TVET College, Eastern Cape Midlands TVET College, False Bay TVET College, West Coast TVET College, Vhembe TVET College, Northern Cape Rural TVET College, Buffalo City TVET College, Lephalale TVET College, Tshwane North TVET College and Tshwane South TVET College. Details of the contracting period can be found in Table 1 in the Annexure 6.

extends until the end of 2017, yet the budget has already been exceeded. In contrast, a large number of colleges spent less than 40% of their budget. These include College of Cape Town, Ekurhuleni West, Elangeni, Esayidi, False Bay, Northern Cape Urban, Orbit and PE TVET Colleges. The Ekurhuleni West case of underspending is particularly interesting since Ekurhuleni East, in contrast, spent its full budget.

Figure 14: Ratio of actual expenditure, to contracted budget amount for 2012-2016, by TVET college¹²

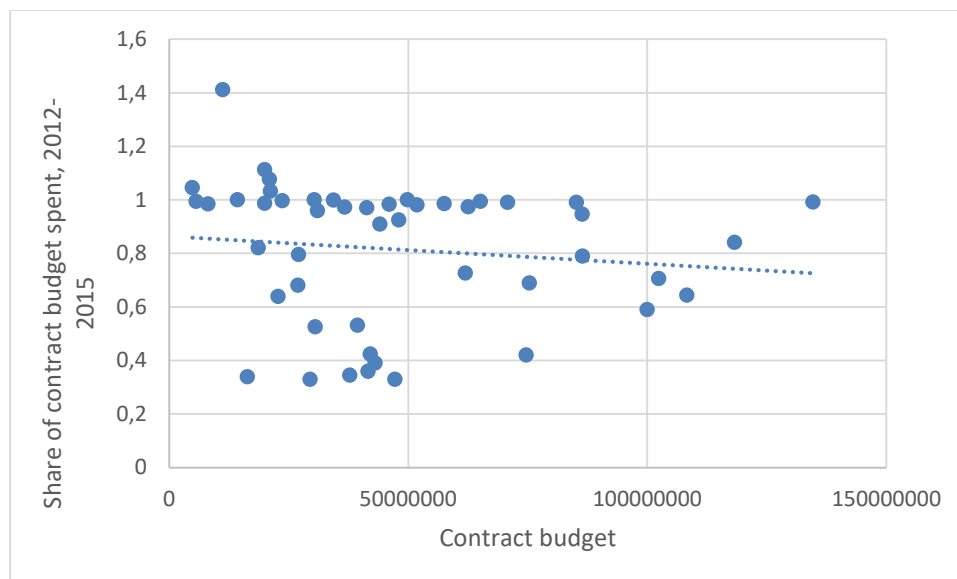


Source: DHET. Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2013, 2014 and 2015.

¹² We recognise that the use of FET in this diagram is inconsistent with our use of TVET in other parts of the report, but it is taken directly out of a Government publication.

Moreover, if one considers the relationship between the size of the contract budget and the extent to which the budgets were spent, there is a weakly negative relationship, which suggests that underspending is higher among those colleges awarded larger budgets. However, it must be emphasised that this is a very weak negative relationship as is clear in Figure 15 below.

Figure 15: Correlation between contract budget and budget spending



Source: Data provided by NSF on beneficiary expenditure.¹³

6.3.2 Productive efficiency

Does the budget allocation reflect stated programme objectives and goals?

Three key objectives of the programme are to expand student access to TVET colleges, to ensure that TVET colleges have well-capacitated staff, and to enable TVET colleges to provide a broad set of programmes through an extended PQM. Without detailed case studies of all the TVET colleges, it is difficult to determine the extent to which these objectives have been met within each college. We rely on our case study analyses for insights in this regard. However, we are able to utilise statistics from the DHET's 'Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa' reports for the period 2012-2015, to at least assess the extent to which: (a) staff complements at TVET colleges have changed; (b) programme offerings have changed; and (c) the number of learners has increased.

6.3.2.1 Increasing the number of well-capacitated staff

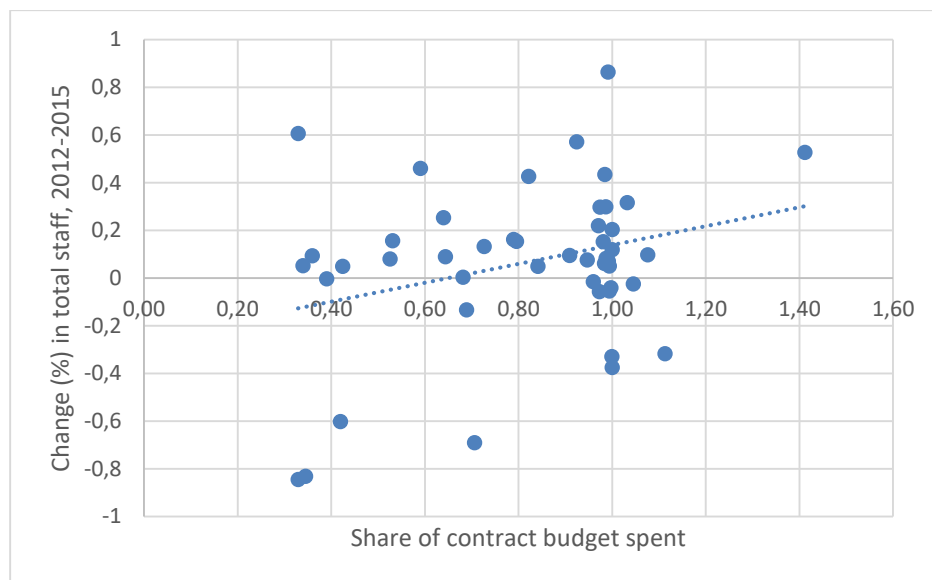
An important aspect of producing well-trained TVET graduates is to ensure that TVET colleges are appropriately staffed.

¹³ In all analyses involving budget expenditure, Northern Cape Rural, Vhembe and West Coast TVET Colleges were excluded since their contract budget periods extend beyond 2015, and have not yet been completed.

Part of the rationale for the programme was to increase staffing capacity, through improving numbers and/or qualifications. Based on data available in the DHET reports, staff complements at TVET colleges increased by almost 8% over the 2012-2015 period (see Figure 16 below. See Figure A1 in the Annexure 6 for a detailed breakdown by college).

Figure 16 presents a correlation between budget share spent and the change in total staff over the programme period. It is evident there is a positive relationship between the budget spending and staff complements in line with the programme objectives.

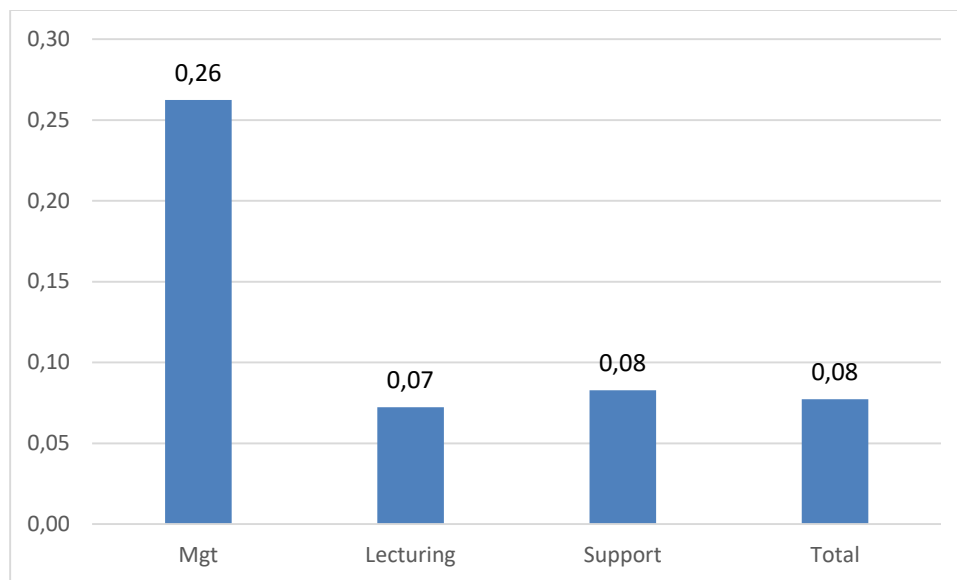
Figure 16: Correlation between budget share spent and change in total staff, 2012-2015



Source: DHET. Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2013, 2014 and 2015; Data on beneficiary expenditure provided by NSF.

However, it is also important to look closely at which staff categories enjoyed the largest gains during the programme period. Available data from the DHET suggests that while there have been increases in lecturing and support staff, by far, the largest increase in the staff cohort has been at the management level (Figure 17).

Figure 17: Change (%) in staff by category, 2012-2015

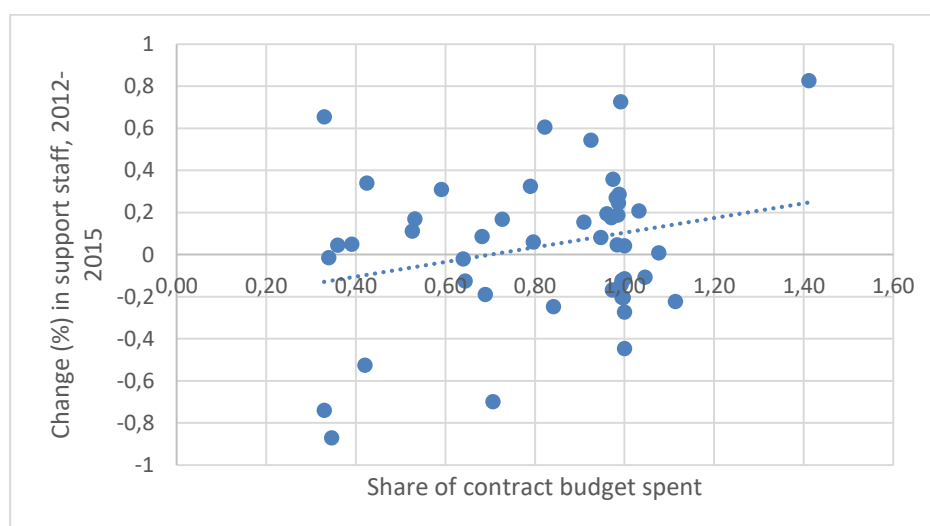


Source: DHET. Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2013, 2014 and 2015.

Figures A2-A4 in Annexure 6 present the data by TVET college which again demonstrates significant variation in experience.

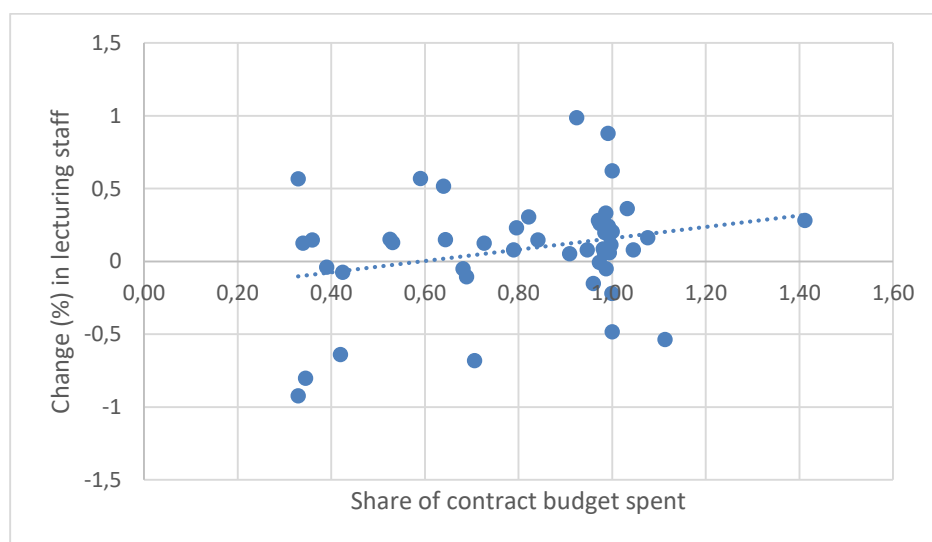
Figure 18 and Figure 19 below present the correlation plots between budget share spent and change by staff category. In each case, there is a positive relationship between budget expenditure and the change in staff complement, with the correlation being higher for support ($r=0.25$) and lecturing ($r=0.26$) staff than for management ($r=0.20$).

Figure 18: Correlation between budget share spent and changes in support staff, 2012-2015



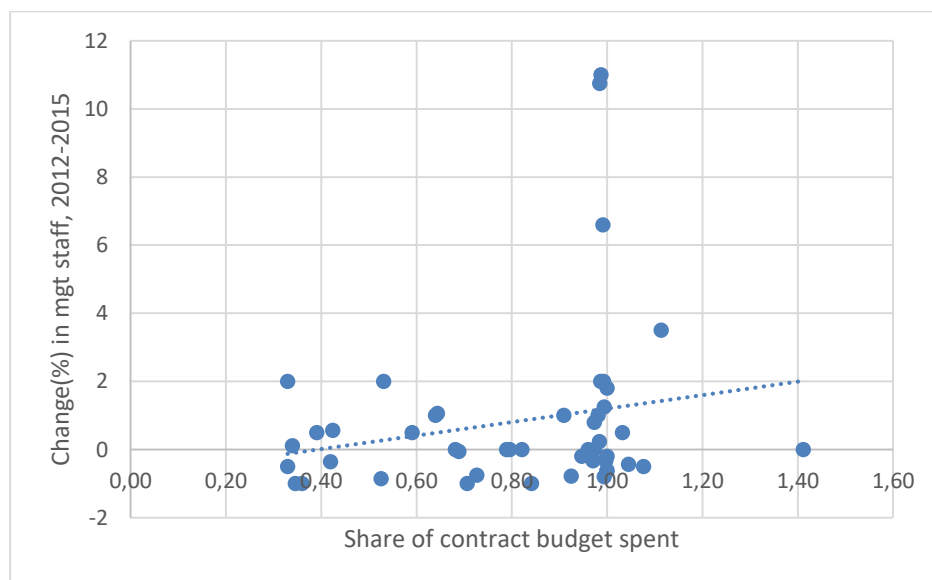
Source: DHET. Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2013, 2014 and 2015; Data on beneficiary expenditure provided by NSF.

Figure 19: Correlation between budget share spent and changes in lecturing staff, 2012-2015



Source: DHET. Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2013, 2014 and 2015; Data on beneficiary expenditure provided by NSF.

Figure 20: Correlation between budget share spent and changes in management staff, 2012-2015



Source: DHET. Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2013, 2014 and 2015; Data on beneficiary expenditure provided by NSF.

Thus, in relation to staff capacitation and development, the available data suggests that:

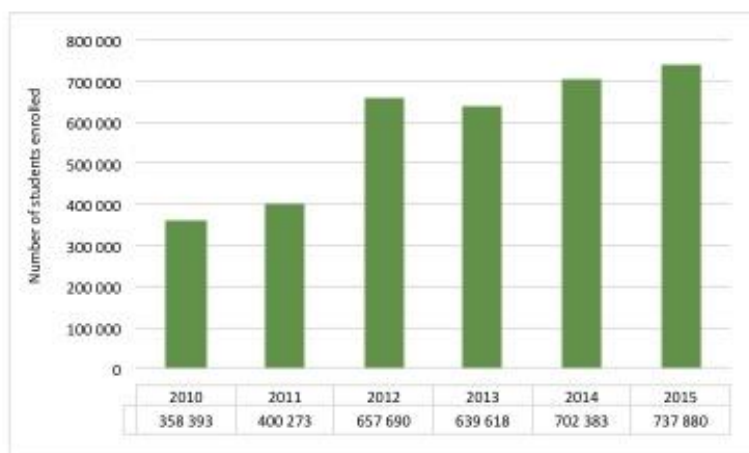
- Staff complements have increased by 8% over the programme period, and these increases are positively related to project budget expenditure.
- The largest increases in staff cohorts have been at the management level but this may be due to low base levels.
- Where budgets have been more fully spent, there are slightly larger changes in lecturing and support staff than in management.

- There is considerable heterogeneity of experience across TVET colleges.

6.3.2.2 Learner enrolments

A critical component of the programme was aimed at increasing the number of learners at TVET colleges. Below we reproduce the data from the Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa report produced by the DHET, which demonstrates an increase in the number of TVET enrolments since 2012. In particular, there was a notable increase between 2012 and 2015 (DHET, 2017: 28). Over the period 2012-2015, enrolments increased by 12%. What is perhaps more interesting is that between 2011 (the year prior to the programme) and 2012, enrolments increased by 64%. Moreover, as Figure 22 shows, the largest share of this increase in enrolments over the programme period has been for female students. It also appears that larger numbers of African students have enrolled while their non-African counterparts appear to have declined in number, although this is difficult to assess correctly due to the category 'Unspecified'¹⁴.

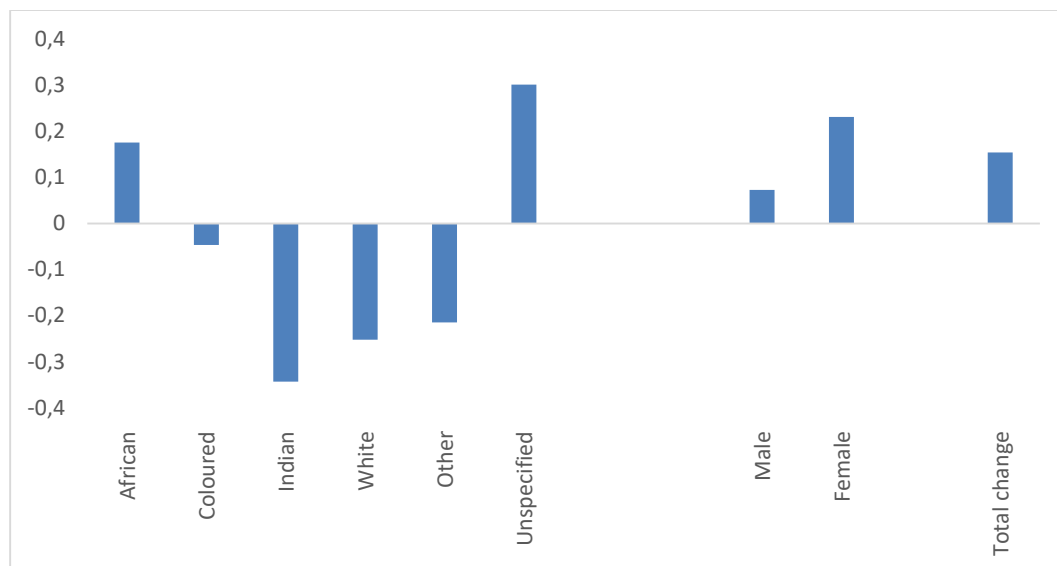
Figure 21: TVET enrolments, 2012-2015



Sources: DHET. *Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014*; TVET College Annual Survey 2015, data extracted in November 2016.

¹⁴ It is not clear whether, and how many students may have declined to declare their race upon enrolment.

Figure 22: Change (%) in enrolments by race and gender, 2013-2015



Source: DHET. *Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2013, 2014 and 2015*; Data on beneficiary expenditure provided by NSF.

As stated before, there is significant heterogeneity in learner enrolment by TVET college. (see Figure A5 in Annexure 6 for details). Some colleges have experienced very rapid growth in learner numbers, increasing their enrolments by 50% or more since 2012. These include: Central Johannesburg, Coastal, Gert Sibande, Ikhala, Ingwe, Western (Westcol), Vhembe and Taletso TVET Colleges. Others have experienced decreases of 30% or more in learner enrolments over the period. These include Boland, Eastern Cape Midlands, Ehlanzeni, Flavius Maroka, Nkangala, Southern Cape, Thekwini, Tshwane South and West Coast TVET Colleges.

A similar picture emerges in the numbers of full-time equivalent (FTE) students, which accounts for part-time students as well as full-time enrolments (Figure A6 in Annexure 6).

Figure 23 and Figure 24 below plot the relationship between budget expenditure and student enrolments. The data show that there is a weak negative relationship between the change in total student enrolments over the period and budget expenditure ($r = -0.14$), while the converse holds true for budget expenditure and the change in FTE student enrolments ($r = 0.27$). This suggests that where larger shares of the contracted budgets were spent, colleges experienced an increase in full-time student enrolments and decline in part-time students. An independent reviewer has pointed out that a possible alternative explanation is that where larger shares of the contracted budget were spent there was a larger increase in Ministerial-approved programme enrolments – which are the only programmes reflected in FTE enrolments.

Figure 23: Correlation between changes in learner enrolments and budget shares spent

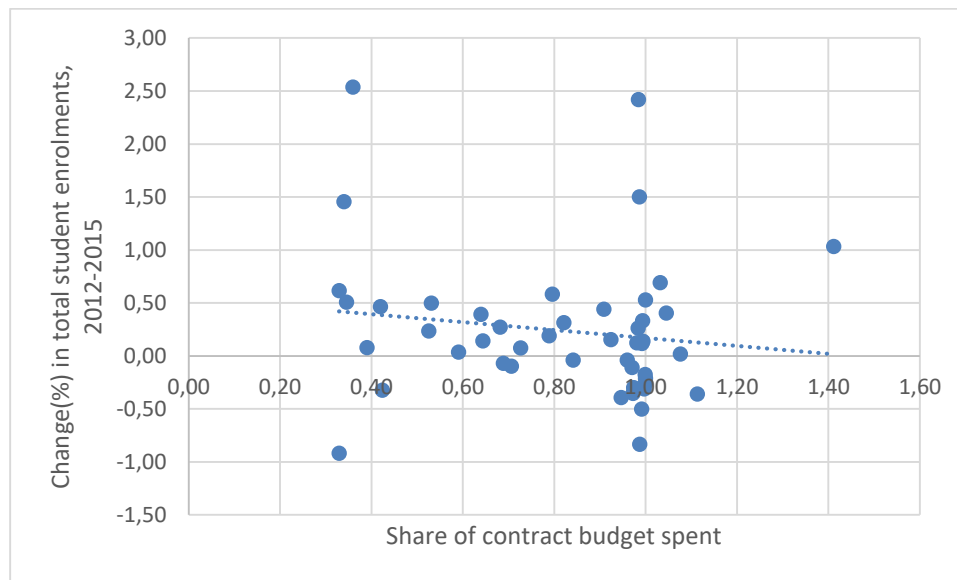
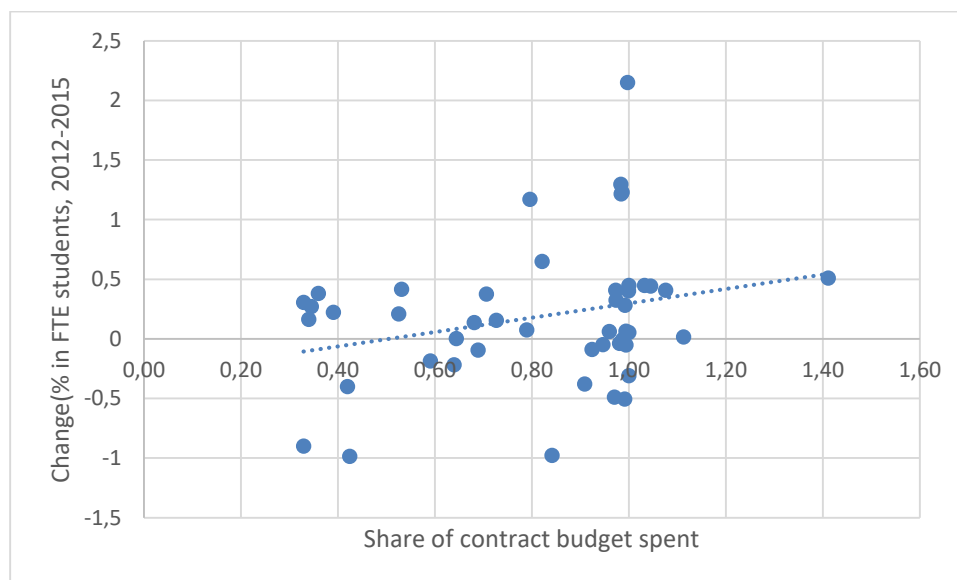


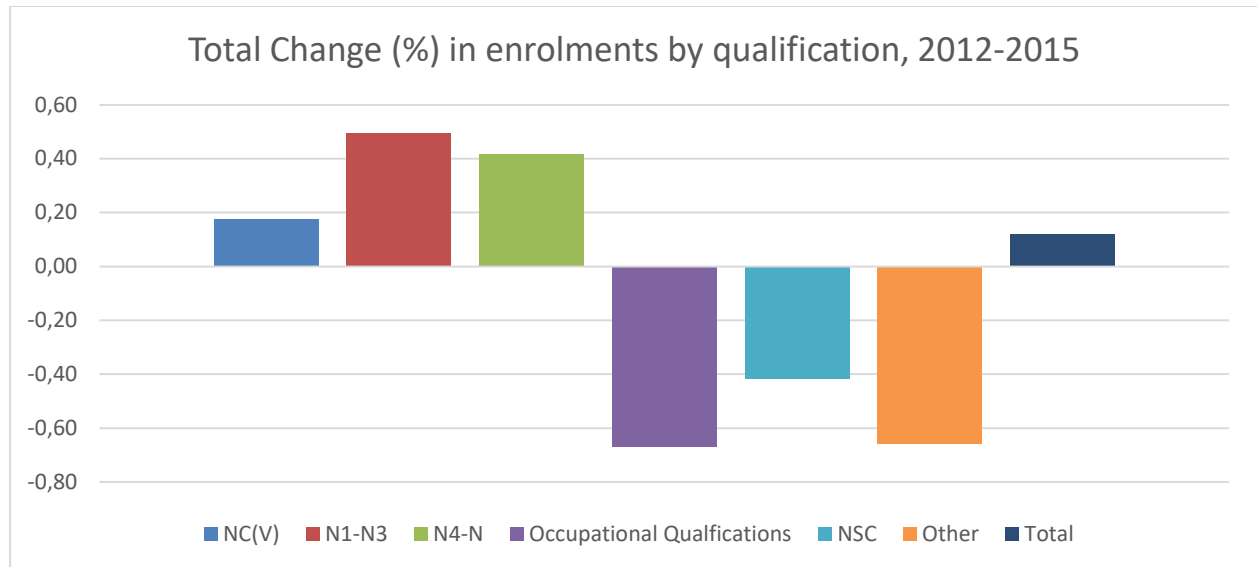
Figure 24: Correlation between changes in FTE enrolments and budget shares spent



6.3.2.3 Student enrolments and qualification type

As stated earlier, a key objective of the programme was to ensure that TVET colleges provide a broad set of programmes through an extended PQM. To explore this, we examined changes in learner enrolment by qualification category for 2012-2015. Since 2012, there has been a 44% increase in the number of students enrolled in N1-N6 programmes, followed by NC(V) programmes with a 17.7% increase. There was a concurrent decline in student enrolments in occupational qualifications and other programmes.

Figure 25: Changes (%) in enrolments by qualification, 2012-2015



Again, there is considerable heterogeneity in terms of college level performance, as is made clear in Figures A7-A10 in Annexure 6.

As Figures 13-15 indicate, there is no strong relationship evident between the changes in student enrolments in particular programmes and budget expenditure.

Figure 26: Correlation between budget share spent and changes in NC(V) enrolments, 2012-2015

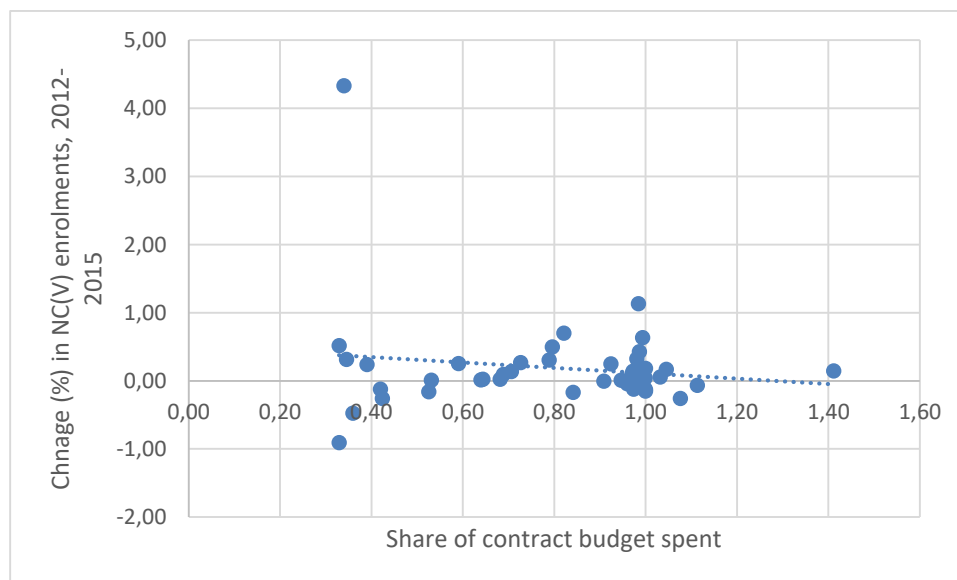


Figure 27: Correlation between budget share spent and changes in N1-N3 enrolments, 2012-2015

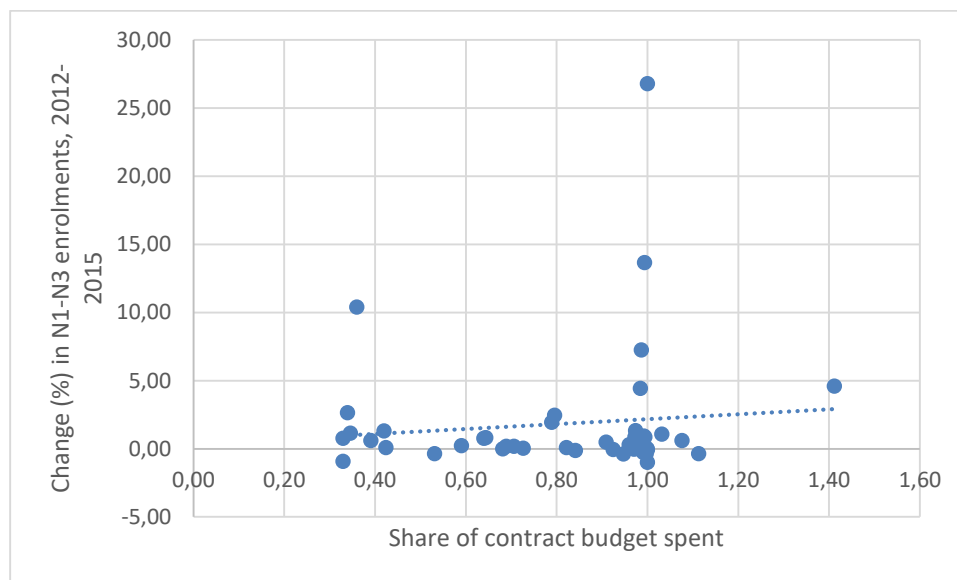
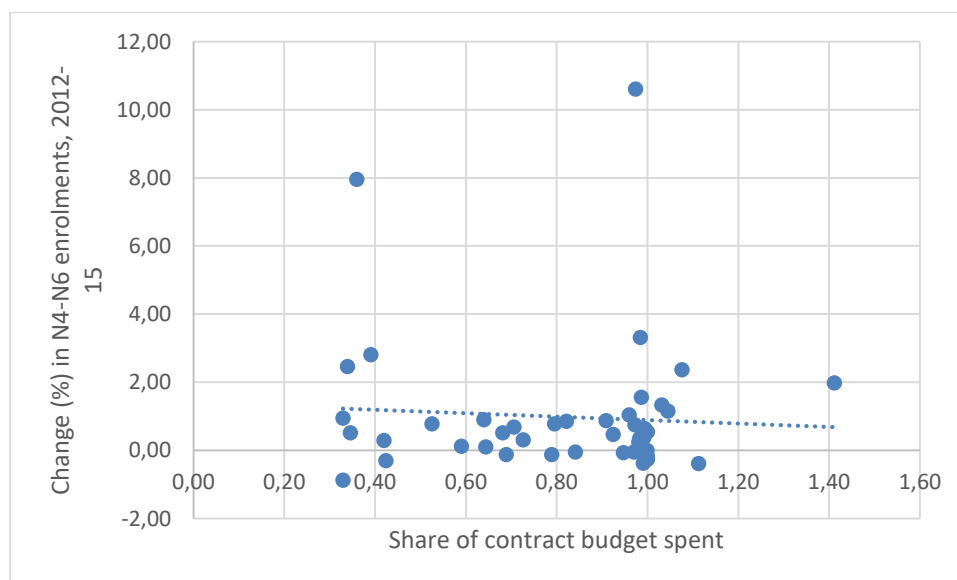


Figure 28: Correlation between budget share spent and changes in N4-N6 enrolments 2012-2015



6.3.2.4 Change in staff:student ratios

Clearly, if the programme was meant to increase the number of learners while at the same time increasing the number of capacitated staff, one would expect to see a change in staff:student ratios. Figure 29 presents the aggregate provincial data for changes in three ratios – lecturer:student ratio, student:institution ratio, and lecturer:institution ratio.

Based on this data, the ratios in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) and the Western Cape appear to reflect the expected trends noted above. In these provinces, there was an increase in the number of lecturers per institution and an overall decline in lecturer:student ratios. However, in KZN, this happened within the context of increasing student numbers, while, in the Western Cape, there was a small decline in student enrolments. In contrast, trends in the

Eastern Cape, Gauteng and Free State are contrary to what the programme’s aims: staffing numbers have dropped in the context of rising student enrolments, thereby raising lecturer:student ratios.

Figure 29: Ratio changes (%) in student, staff and institutions by province, 2013-2015

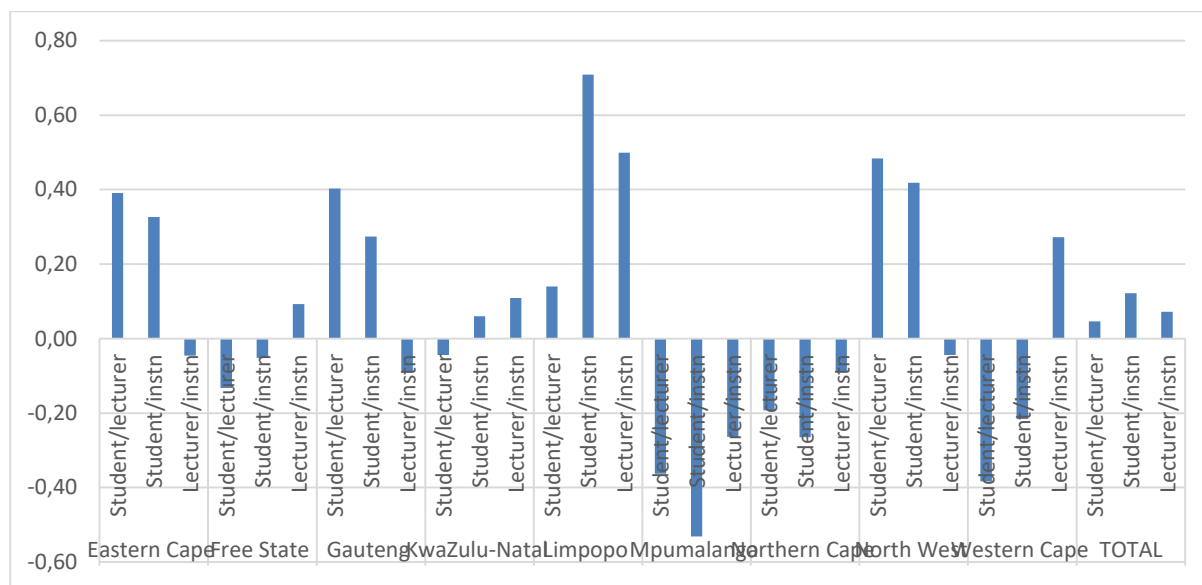


Figure A10 in Annexure 6 presents changes in staff:student ratios by TVET college for the period 2013-2015. The key insight here is that most institutions have experienced an increase in this ratio. Such an increase could have been generated through increasing student enrolments, which is desirable, but it means that this increase has not been matched by an increase in personnel to carry the load. Alternatively, where student numbers have remained constant, it would suggest declining staff numbers. Very few institutions experienced a decline in their staff:student ratios. Such a decline requires closer inspection of the data, since a decline could be brought about by a fall in student numbers (undesirable) as opposed to an increase in staff numbers (desirable). Hence, Figure A11 in Annexure 6 presents the percentage change in student numbers alongside the percentage change in staff numbers for this period. The ideal scenario is one in which the change in both dimensions is positive, but the change in personnel is larger than the change in student enrolments. This only holds for the case of Gert Sibande, Lephalale and Vhembe TVET Colleges.

In summary:

- Over the period 2012-2015, TVET enrolments increased by 12%. What is perhaps more interesting is that between 2011 (the year prior to the programme) and 2012, enrolments increased by 64%.
- Where larger shares of the contracted budget have been spent, colleges have experienced an increase in full-time student enrolments and a decline in part-time student numbers.
- Since 2012, there has been an increase in the number of students enrolled in N1-N6 programmes, followed by NC(V) programmes. Concurrently, there was a decline in student enrolments in occupational qualifications and other programmes.

- Most institutions have experienced an increase in the staff:student ratio. Such an increase could be generated through increasing student enrolments, which is desirable, but it means that this increase has not been matched by an increase in personnel to carry the load. An independent reviewer has suggested that this is a direct result of the high levels of underfunding of TVET colleges. The subsidy increases did not keep pace with the increases in enrolments.

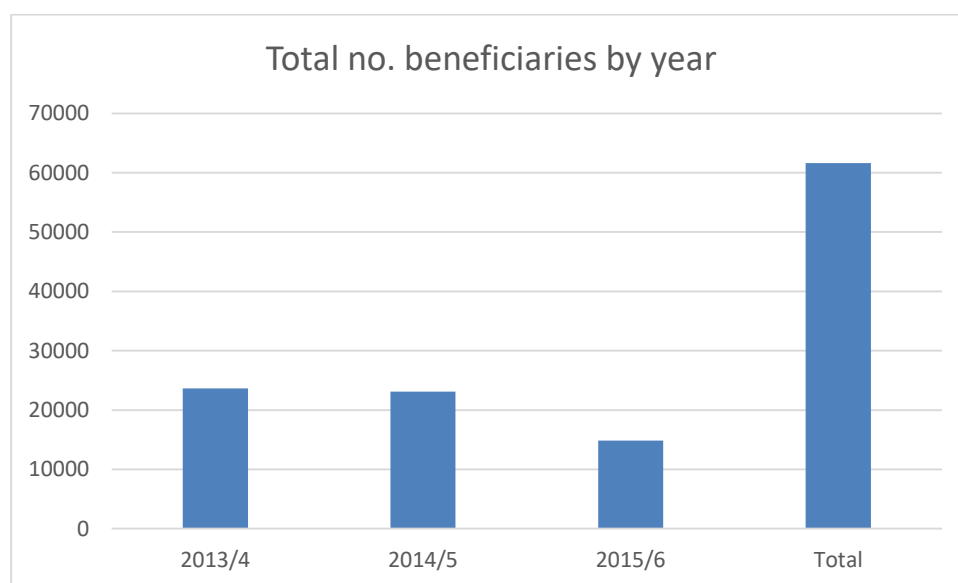
6.3.2.5 Cost efficiency in relation to programme beneficiaries

While the evidence suggests a positive relationship between budget expenditures and student enrolments, student enrolments need not be a good reflection of the number of programme beneficiaries. Below we present data on beneficiary numbers associated with the programme. This data was provided directly by the NSF and is not available in any official publications.

The data suggest that just over 61 000 individuals were beneficiaries of the programme during the 2013-2016 period. Beneficiary numbers were largest during 2013 and 2014, tapering off in the 2015-2016 period, as one might expect.

In the light of the total student enrolments, this suggests that beneficiaries comprised, on average, 3% of total student enrolments in the 2013-2015 period. More specifically, in 2013, there were 23 641 beneficiaries, comprising 3.7% of the 639 618 students enrolled in TVET colleges. In 2014, the 23 122 programme beneficiaries comprised 3,3% of the 702 383 students enrolled, while in 2015, this share dropped to 2% of total student enrolments. Thus, while the programme may have encouraged student enrolments, it is important to be aware that the magnitude of the effect was quite small in relation to student totals.

Figure 30: Total number of beneficiaries



There is, however, a positive relationship between the share of contract budget spent and the total number of beneficiaries ($r=0.17$). This is evident in Figure 31.

Figure 31: Correlation between budget share spent and total beneficiaries, 2012-2015

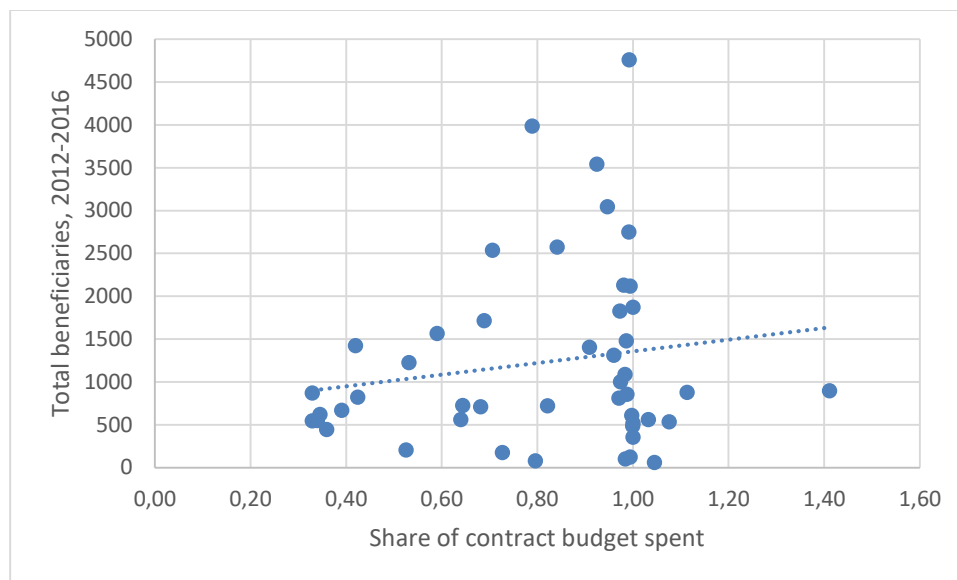


Figure A12 in Annexure 6 presents data on numbers of beneficiaries by TVET college. Again, there is considerable heterogeneity of experience, with Boland, Eastern Cape Midlands, Elangeni, Gert Sibande and Umfolozi TVET Colleges experiencing relatively large numbers of beneficiaries. In contrast, beneficiary levels were much lower in colleges such as Ekurhuleni, Ingwe, Mnambithi and Lovedale TVET Colleges.

There is also considerable variation in the programme cost per beneficiary by college, as demonstrated in Figure A14 (Annexure 6), with cost per beneficiary ranging from a low of R12,537 at Ikhala TVET College to R360,507 at Ekurhuleni East. The average contract cost per beneficiary across all colleges is R64,607, although the actual cost per beneficiary spent to date is slightly lower at R53,058.

Thus, in summary, while there have been a large number of programme beneficiaries, the total number of beneficiaries comprised, on average, 3% of total student enrolments in the 2013-2015 period. As such, the programme’s impact on student enrolments has been modest at best.

6.3.3 Sufficiency of programme timeframes and funding

At best, the efficiency analysis suggests that the programme effects to date have been modest. In evaluating whether this is due to insufficient programme timeframes or insufficient funding, the evidence would tend to suggest insufficient timeframes as a more important factor than funding constraints. While there is considerable variation by college, on average, just under 80% of contracted budget amounts have been spent, suggesting funding may not be the key constraint. Rather, it appears likely that there has been insufficient time to plan and implement the programme of action. The section on implementation above also suggests that not enough technical assistance was provided to the colleges to implement the technical aspects of the programme, and no systems for colleges to learn from one another.

6.3.4 Key point summary

- On average, just under 80% of contracted budget amounts have been spent. There is considerable heterogeneity of experience by TVET college in every dimension considered.
- Staff complements have increased by 8% over the programme period, and these increases are positively related to project budget expenditure. The largest increases in staff cohorts have been at the management level but this may be due to low base levels. Where budgets have been more fully spent, there are slightly larger changes in lecturing and support staff than in management.
- Over the period 2012-2015, TVET enrolments increased by 12%. Where larger shares of the contracted budget have been spent, colleges have experienced an increase in full-time student enrolments and a decline in part-time students. Most institutions experienced an increase in the staff:student ratio. Such an increase could be generated through increasing student enrolments, which is desirable, but it means that this increase has not been matched by an increase in personnel to carry the load.
- Since 2012, there has been an increase in the number of students enrolled in N1-N6 programmes, followed by NC(V) programmes. Concurrently, there was a decline in student enrolments in occupational qualifications and other programmes.
- Beneficiary numbers comprised, on average, 3% of total student enrolments in the 2013-2015 period. While there is a positive relationship between the share of contract budget spent and the total number of beneficiaries, this correlation is weak, and it suggests the programme impact on student enrolments has been modest at best.

6.4 Results – the extent to which the TVET CECDP has been effective in achieving its objectives

Key evaluation question: To what extent has the TVET CECDP been effective in achieving its objectives?

The overall goal of the TVET CECDP was to contribute towards *A skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path* (Outcome 5 of the MTSF: 2014-2019). It aimed to achieve this by equipping TVET students with skills relevant to the needs of the South African economy.

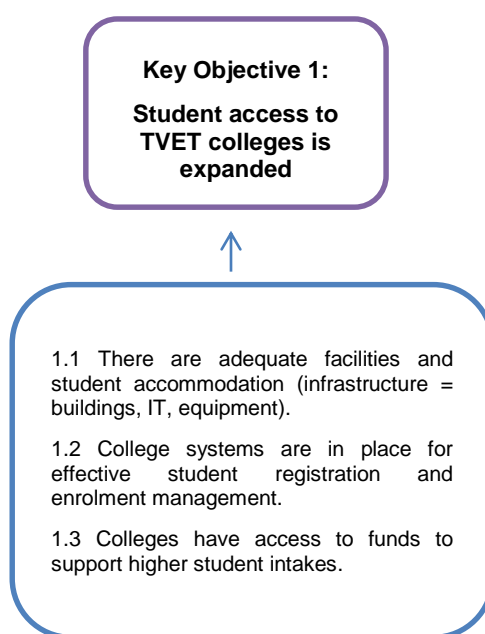
To contribute towards such skills development and to address challenges currently impeding the achievement of good quality technical and vocational learning outcomes, the TVET CECDP was formulated with four key objectives. As stated, these objectives were: a) to address the expansion of student access to TVET colleges; b) support student and lecturer access to WBL; c) build capacity among college staff and; d) facilitate a broader PQM. This section of the report assesses the progress made towards the achievement of these objectives, which are viewed as outcomes of the NSF grant.

6.4.1 Student access to TVET colleges is expanded

This section of the report offers an overview of the achievement of outcomes located within Key Objective 1 of the TVET CECDP. As noted in Annexure A of the ToR for this evaluation, this objective was “...to support TVET colleges to enrol a larger number of students, particularly in artisanal-related programmes and programmes that would support the needs of the economy” (ToR Request for Proposal (RFP)-16/2023, page 2). Thus programme support aimed to improve enrolment in NATED programmes, occupational qualifications and skills programmes based on part-qualifications, to equip students with the necessary skills to generate an income, improve their livelihoods and support the South African economy (*Ibid*).

The underlying programme ToC for Key Objective 1 is that a number of outcomes need to be achieved to enable expansion of student access to TVET colleges. Colleges must ensure that they have adequate infrastructure in place to cater for increased student numbers. Colleges must ensure that there is sufficient staff capacity and that the necessary systems have been set in place to enable effective student recruitment, as well as registration and management processes. In addition, programme funds need to be available to cover the cost of higher student intakes, for example, over-enrolments that would not be covered by the DHET subsidisation of Ministerial programmes nor by SETA grant disbursements. These short-term outcomes – and their contribution to the achievement of expanded student access – are presented in the diagram below.

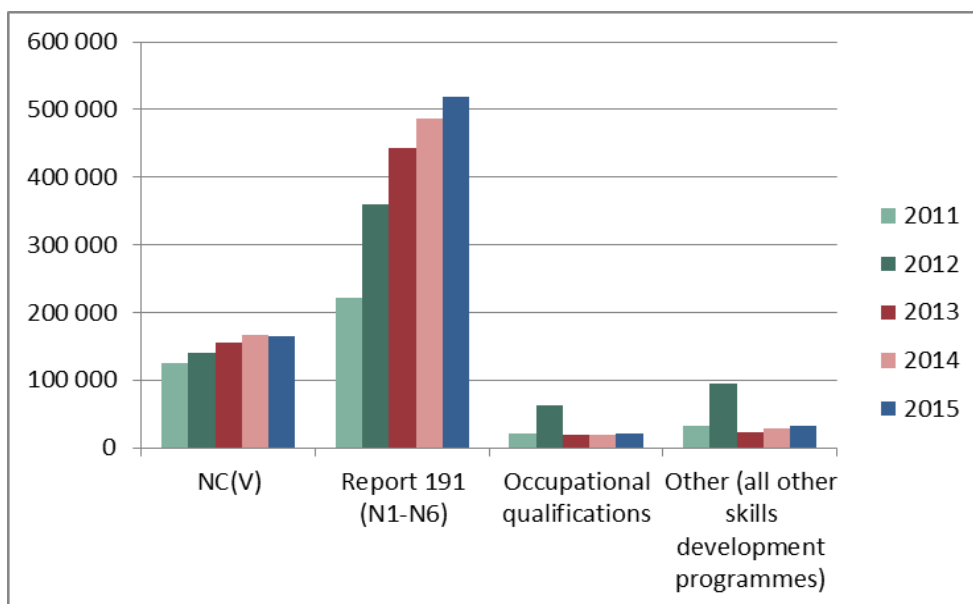
Figure 32: Expanded student access domain from ToC



As noted in the previous section of this report, student enrolments increased by 12% over the programme period 2012-2015. If one looks at enrolments by qualification category, as outlined in Figure 33 below, student numbers for Report 191/NATED programmes increased steadily over the course of the programme, with the highest increase taking place in 2012 at the time of programme commencement. NC(V) enrolments were the second-largest and

indicated a steady level of growth over the four years of 2012-2015¹⁵.

Figure 33: Student enrolment at TVET colleges by qualification category (DHET, 2017)



A high level of enrolment for occupational and skills development programmes is also noted for 2012. This is, however, followed by a drop in enrolments numbers in 2013, with student numbers resembling the intake for the period preceding programme implementation.

The extent to which these changes in student enrolment figures during the programme can be attributed to the TVET CECDP is unclear. Certainly, there are other factors that may have contributed to the increase in TVET college enrolments. For example, it was reported during primary data collection, that NSFAS bursary criteria had changed in 2012 to a less 'stringent' model. It was also reported that this shift in bursary criteria was followed by widespread communication of NSFAS student funding opportunities for TVET in 2013. This would have led to a higher number of NSFAS applications and beneficiaries, which, in turn, would have increased the number of student enrolments at TVET colleges.

However, the programme may have contributed towards the rapid increase in enrolments in 2012 through college over-enrolments (as noted in Section 6 of this report), which were undertaken in anticipation of the NSF funding.

6.4.1.1 There are adequate facilities and student accommodation

The Guidelines for FET Grant Applications (NSF, November 2011: 4) note:

The RFP will consider limited grants to support infrastructure requirements for skills delivery. Applicants will need to demonstrate that the envisaged infrastructure is necessary to attain higher levels of skills delivery.

While respondents at 37 of the 44 colleges which participated in quantitative data collection indicated that funding had been received by their college for activities related to Key Objective 1, only 13% of the 60 respondents who had completed a survey indicated that infrastructure had been a key benefit of programme participation. This indicates that while

¹⁵ However, the 2015 enrolment of 165 459 was 0.6% lower than NC(V) enrolment figures recorded for the previous year (166 433).

grant applications for infrastructural improvements might have been submitted, few of these met the requirements outlined above and were authorised.

Similarly, only one of the 44 colleges that had submitted a close-out report to the evaluation team reported an infrastructural development project implemented at college level that was funded by the TVET CECDP. However, respondents located at nine of the 15 colleges included in qualitative data collection, referred to building purchases and/or renovations or to facility upgrades that had taken place at their colleges within programme timeframes. Such development projects included the establishment of new campuses; campus improvements, such as student support centre and library renovations; the equipping of workshops and media centres; and the establishment of simulation rooms. Unfortunately, not all of the qualitative respondents could confirm that these reported infrastructural developments or facility improvements were a direct result of programme funding¹⁶.

While facility upgrades and student accommodation development were not part of the TVET CECDP, key assumptions¹⁷ were that TVET colleges would have the necessary resources to enable the achievement of programme outcomes and that money would be available from the fiscus to allow for additional infrastructure procurement to accommodate student number increases. However, the participants in this evaluation reported that college facilities are insufficient and, hence, not conducive to expansion of student access.

For example, respondents at eight of the 15 colleges included in the qualitative research component of this study reported that a lack of campus space was one of the main barriers to enhancing student access to TVET colleges. Respondents at three of the colleges¹⁸ reported that – as a result of space constraints – a platoon system had been implemented where classes are rotated over the course of the day. This, it was argued, led to high demands on staff, thus compromising teaching quality. The platoon system was also reported as creating challenges for students in terms of available transport to and from the college at hours ‘outside’ of normal early morning and late afternoon traffic flows.

In addition to space constraints, respondents at three of the colleges reported that their college infrastructure was old, dilapidated and in need of high levels of maintenance and repair. This too was perceived as a challenge to student recruitment and the achievement of higher student enrolments. According to a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) lecturer:

The infrastructure was just like this since 2010¹⁹. They are failing the students. This is affecting teachers negatively because students are running away because they are looking for a nice campus. At engineering, the buildings are falling apart ... the infrastructure is appalling. There are no funds to build new infrastructure. Classes leak when it rains.

Limited and outdated equipment was also reported as a challenge by qualitative respondents²⁰, as was a lack of furniture, teaching aids such as overhead projectors, and tools. Respondents at six of the 15 colleges also noted a lack of adequate IT facilities,

¹⁶ Please refer to the section *Limitations and Mitigations* in Section 2.2.2 of this report.

¹⁷ As conceptualised in the programme ToC.

¹⁸ Two located in Limpopo and one in Mpumalanga.

¹⁹ The TVET recapitalisation programme was in 2010 and this was the last time the TVET colleges received infrastructural funding.

²⁰ Respondents at 10 of the 15 colleges included in qualitative data collection reported equipment-related challenges.

outdated IT equipment and limited IT support.

Respondents at all 15 of the colleges that participated in qualitative data collection also noted a lack of student accommodation as a key barrier to the enhancement of student access. Where student accommodation is reportedly being provided by a college²¹, it is offered at a limited number of campuses only (and rarely at satellite campuses) and is generally considered to be insufficient to cater to the demand. This means that students who do not live in close proximity to a relevant TVET college have to source their own accommodation, which respondents described as being unregulated and hence often substantially more expensive than that which the college might have provided. Those students for whom these extra costs were simply not feasible had to commute over long distances, which contributed to safety risks, late class arrivals and absenteeism (as a result of a lack of funds to pay for transportation). These challenges were exacerbated by limited public transport facilities, particularly with regard to peri-urban and rural campuses.

6.4.1.2 College systems are set in place for effective student registration and enrolment management

As noted above, effective student recruitment, registration and enrolment are prerequisites to enabling higher levels of access to TVET colleges. This section of the report explores the extent to which the TVET CECDP has facilitated the achievement of such outcomes.

The majority (65%) of survey respondents (37) indicated that college enrolment and registration systems had improved as a result of the TVET CECDP. Similarly, respondents at eight of the 15 colleges included in qualitative data collection, reported that improvements to student registration systems and processes had been undertaken over the course of programme. Examples of these initiatives included the adoption of an online registration system (Ekurhuleni East), hiring of additional administrative staff to make student information capture more efficient (Port Elizabeth), compiling registration process outlines for new and returning students (King Sabata Dalindyebo), establishing registration 'work teams' including members of administrative, management and lecturing staff (Vuselela), and providing capacity building on registration processes to lecturing staff (Vuselela).

Respondents at three of the colleges noted improved communication with students prior to registration to inform them about dates, times and requirements was also enabled by more efficient registration processes.

We have streamlined this so it is all working very well. We were able to start teaching by the end of week one last year and this year. We let the students know by SMS what they need to register beforehand so that they can get all the paper work together. (college lecturer)

Unfortunately, respondents could not confirm that these initiatives had been implemented as a direct result of the TVET CECDP.

6.4.1.3 Colleges have access to funds to support higher student intakes

Enhancing student access is greatly enabled through the provision of financial assistance. Such assistance might be allocated directly to students, for example, through bursary schemes, or it might be allocated to those institutions that students attend to subsidise tuition

²¹ This was noted by respondents at four of the 15 colleges.

and other related costs. Financial assistance is of particular relevance in the TVET sector, given that much of its focus is on persons who are classified as NEETs (DHET, 2017).

NSF beneficiary reporting spreadsheets recorded the following number of TVET CECDP beneficiaries, where the term 'beneficiaries' denotes all students that received some form of financial assistance via the programme. Beneficiary figures are captured in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Number of NSF beneficiaries, 2013-2016

Period	Number of beneficiaries
2013-2014	23 641
2014-2015	23 122
2015-2016	14 843

Thus, the NSF spreadsheets indicate that 61 606 students received financial assistance via the TVET CECDP, which enabled their access to a technical and vocational course of study. Although, as noted in Section 7 of this report, programme beneficiaries comprised on average only 3% of the total students accessing TVET colleges, the majority of survey respondents (65% of 60 respondents) felt that student funding had been a key benefit of programme participation.

6.4.2 Key Point Summary

As outlined above, there was a 12% increase in student enrolments over the programme period. However, a number of factors may have contributed to this increase in student numbers. The extent to which this outcome can be attributed to the TVET CECDP is thus unclear.

A lack of infrastructure development at college level, inadequate student accommodation, limited and outdated college equipment, a lack of teaching aids and tools, and inadequate IT facilities were reported as challenges to the expansion of student access. While programme implementation varied across the colleges, these issues were generally not addressed by the TVET CECDP. Evaluation findings do, however, indicate that the programme made some contribution towards improved student registration and enrolment management. While no specific programme mechanisms were set in place to facilitate this, the provision of financial support to colleges did enable their recruitment and appointment of additional management and support staff²².

The majority (65%) of survey respondents (37) also indicated that college enrolment and registration systems had improved as a direct result of the TVET CECDP. This may be the result of the additional staff capacity noted above. In addition, input obtained from qualitative respondents indicates that a number of college initiatives to improve student registration systems and processes were implemented during the programme. While there is insufficient evidence to determine if the TVET CECDP played a significant role in these initiatives, it may be argued that the provision of funding on the basis of expansion of student access may

²² As discussed in Section 6.2.2.

have provided some impetus for such initiatives to be undertaken at some of the colleges.

Therefore, based on the information available to the evaluation team, it is argued that the TVET CECDP did make some contribution towards the enhancement of student access. However, in light of the findings outlined above and given that NSF beneficiaries comprised only 3% of the total number of student enrolments over the programme timeframes, it appears as though this contribution was relatively small. The programme also failed to address a number of infrastructural challenges to the expansion of student access.

6.4.3 Expanded student access to WBL through apprenticeships, internships and learnerships

Key Objective 2 of the TVET CECDP focused on supporting TVET colleges to increase student access to WBL “...through learnerships (including artisanships) and internships” (ToR RFP-16/2023, page 2).

WBL may be defined as:

...an educational approach through which a person internalises knowledge, gains insights and acquires skills and competencies through exposure to a workplace to achieve specific outcomes applicable to employment. (DHET, in Van Staden, 2015).

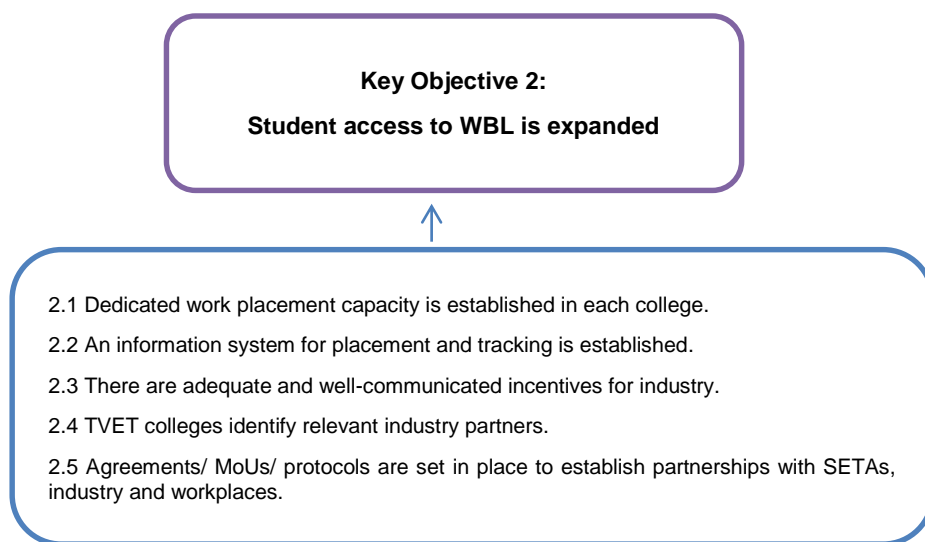
The advantages of WBL are numerous. It enhances students’ learning and contributes towards their skills development, self-confidence and employability. Furthermore, it provides employers with a pool of work-ready applicants, thus contributing productive participants in the South African economy (Van Staden, 2015). However, in order for these advantages to be realised, a well-structured WBL system needs to be set in place to ensure that all work placements are clearly linked to course curricula and learning outcomes, and that placements can be monitored, assessed, quality-assured and accurately reported.

Thus, the underlying ToC for this key objective proposes that TVET colleges need to have a clear understanding of who their industry partners are, and they must ensure that they provide adequate incentives to partners to allow for effective and sustainable WBL partnerships to be formed. The establishment of a dedicated placement and tracking unit in each of the TVET colleges is also required, to provide the necessary management or oversight and monitoring of WBL placements. Such a unit will ensure that WBL partnerships will be clear, well-structured and, importantly, formalised.

In addition, by ensuring that adequate oversight and monitoring of placements take place, systems can be set in place to ensure that WBL is regularly reviewed. Adjustments can then be made if and when necessary, to ensure that WBL is well-aligned to suit the needs of the student, the lecturer, the industry partner and the local economy.

Further, processes can be put in place to address the lack of synergy between the various post-school systems, including TVET colleges and the SETAs (NSF, 2011), and to enhance the TVET sector’s links with industry. These short-term outcomes and their contribution to the achievement of expanded student access to WBL are presented in Figure 34 below.

Figure 34: Expanded student access to WBL domain from the ToC



The number of students that accessed WBL was not consistently recorded across the college close-out reports submitted to the evaluation team. As a result, the total number of student WBL placements over the programme period could not be ascertained. However, input obtained during primary data collection indicated that there had been an increase in the number of students accessing WBL over the programme timeframes. Such an increase was reported by respondents at 12 of the 15 colleges that had participated in qualitative data collection. Survey respondents concurred with 72% agreeing and 28% strongly agreeing that the TVET CECDP had enabled better WBL opportunities for students. There is no data on WBL placements from the NSF to validate this claim. Ways in which the programme might have enabled this are discussed below.

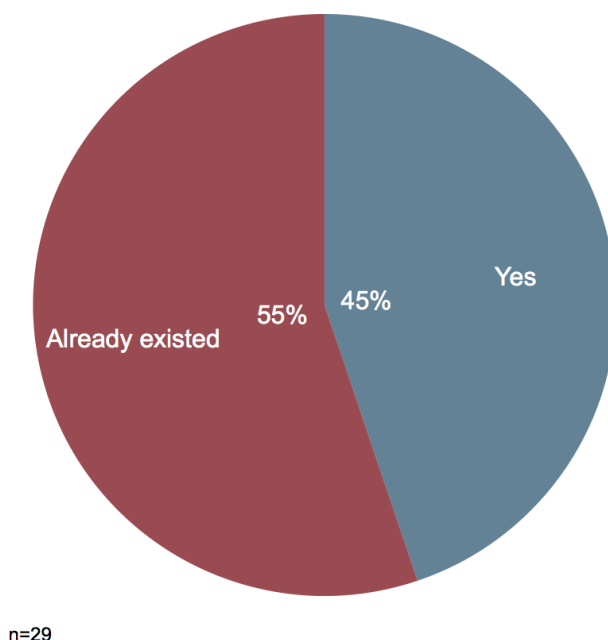
Input obtained during interviews and focus group discussions indicated that WBL placements for both qualifications and part-qualifications varied across colleges. It also appeared as though the level of success achieved with regard to WBL placements was linked to local industry demand for students studying within a particular field as well as industry perceptions of work placement challenges. Respondents at King Sabata Dalindyebo, Mtashana and Westcol TVET Colleges noted that students involved in business studies were generally easy to place, while respondents at Ekurhuleni East and PE TVET Colleges noted hospitality as a study area where placements could not keep up with demand. Similar observations were made by respondents at PE and Boland TVET Colleges regarding student placements for those enrolled to study ECD.

Mixed feedback was received regarding engineering student placements. For example, respondents at King Sabata Dalindyebo and Capricorn TVET Colleges felt that WBL placements in this sector had been well received. However, respondents at Westcol, Coastal and Ekurhuleni East TVET Colleges felt that sourcing placements for students in the engineering sector had been particularly challenging, mainly as a result of industry member concerns regarding student safety and liability for injury compensation.

6.4.3.1 Dedicated work placement capacity is established in each college

It appears as though a number of WBL placement units²³ had been established by colleges prior to the programme roll-out. However, just under half (45%) of survey respondents noted that such units had been established as a direct result of the TVET CECDP. The following graph summarises survey responses to the question: “Did the college establish a dedicated WBL unit as a result of the programme?”

Figure 35: College establishment of a dedicated WBL function as a result of the TVET CECDP



The programme did not adopt any specific mechanisms to enable the establishment of WBL units. Therefore, it is postulated that the provision of funding on the basis of expansion of student access to WBL may have provided a level of impetus for such initiatives to be undertaken within some of the colleges.

Feedback obtained in the course of qualitative data collection supports this finding to some extent. Respondents located at all 15 participating colleges noted that at the time of data collection, WBL oversight units had been in place²⁴ and a variety of initiatives to drive WBL had been implemented at college level over the course of the programme. However, they could not confirm that these initiatives had been as a direct result of the TVET CECDP.

Of interest is that respondents at five of the colleges reported that WBL was not part of an individual, specialised or dedicated unit, but operated as part of other college departments and services, including Student Support, the Skills Development Office and Student Liaison. Furthermore, respondents at five of the colleges reported that the WBL unit was under-resourced and, in four examples, consisted of only one officer to oversee and coordinate

²³ Although the questionnaire and logframe asked whether dedicated placement units have been established, and respondents answered positively, we believe it is more likely that this is a WBL function within an existing unit such as Student Support Services or a business unit.

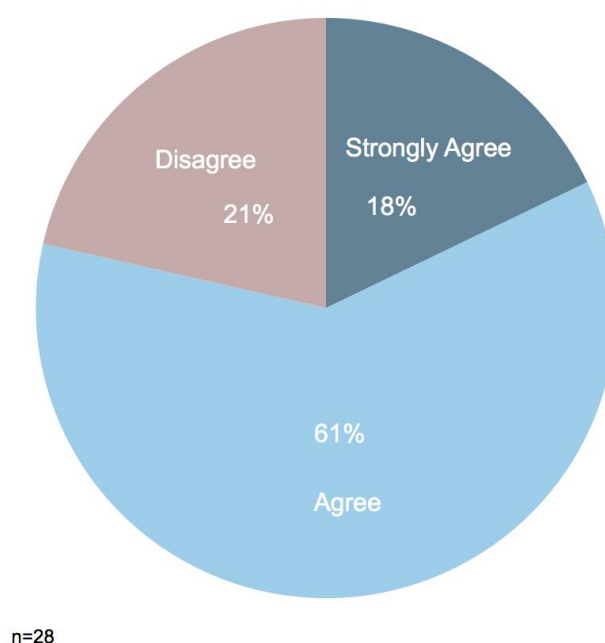
²⁴ Qualitative respondents could not confirm that these units had been established as a direct result of the TVET CECDP.

WBL across all campuses. This indicated that while WBL placement units were being established by colleges, some of these remained under-resourced, an important constraint in the expansion of student access to WBL.

6.4.3.2 Establishment of college information systems for WBL placement and tracking

Survey respondents were asked if their respective colleges had improved their WBL information systems as a result of their participation in the TVET CECDP. As outlined in Figure 36 below, the majority of survey respondents either strongly agreed (18%) or agreed (61%) that their colleges had improved their WBL placement information systems as a result of the programme.

Figure 36: Improvement in college WBL information systems as a result of the TVET CECDP



Respondents from 10 colleges (out of the 15 that had participated in qualitative data collection) noted examples of WBL management and/or WBL information management that were being implemented at their respective colleges. While these WBL management or information management systems were reportedly introduced within the programme timeframes, not all of the respondents could confirm that these had been implemented as a direct result of the TVET CECDP.

Information management systems included the use of registers, databases, logbooks and portfolios of evidence (PoE). The latter two forms of documentation were also utilised as a form of student assessment, aligned to WBL outcomes. Respondents at Capricorn and Boland TVET Colleges reported that work placement monitoring tools had been developed for WBL information management purposes.

In terms of management systems, respondents at three of the colleges noted the establishment of a central WBL coordinating unit, which is supported at campus level by either campus management or lecturing personnel, who may also be responsible for the oversight of workplace monitoring or site visits. The comments below provide further details

of the functioning of such a system, as well as its advantages and disadvantages.

Focus was on learner placements. We have a strategy for the college in terms of this; also have a unit that oversees it and officers at campuses that coordinate it. The deputy campus manager is responsible for that function working at campus level. This is overseen by a central unit. We are trying to say let's all put our efforts together to find placement. We have many learners to place so for one person or one office, may not be able to achieve the numbers. Requires a coordinated effort – so we are not all visiting the same business and possibly giving different input. (college principal)

Every campus has a coordinator and I will oversee and assist them; also give them guidelines for the campus level selection process and they will provide me with the details of the learners. Works well as a system but those people also have other responsibilities like lecturing. They cannot go out whenever they want if there is a meeting or monitoring visit to the employer. Have to see if their classes will be affected. (work placement officer)

These findings indicate that colleges are adopting a variety of systems for WBL placement and tracking. Further research on such systems and their effectiveness is advised as a means of contributing towards the formulation of a clear WBL policy framework.

6.4.3.3 There are adequate and well-communicated incentives for industry

As previously noted, the ToC for the TVET CECDP proposes that adequate incentives need to be provided to industry partners to enable effective and sustainable WBL partnerships. While there is insufficient data to report on the *number* of incentives being offered to industry partners²⁵, qualitative data provide input regarding the *types* of incentive offered by TVET colleges to their WBL partners.

With reportedly limited resources to offer any form of financial incentive, colleges have formulated a variety of alternative approaches to encourage industry support and collaboration. These include reciprocal agreements with industry partners, where the partners provide students with work placements, while colleges provide their staff with skills development and training options to address any employee skills gaps. Respondents at two colleges reported inviting potential and current WBL partners to college events such as open days and business breakfasts to facilitate interaction and relationship-building between industry members, students and college staff. Similarly, a work placement officer reported attending:

...all regional SETA meetings, which are also attended by industries of the particular SETA. These meetings are platforms to meet and facilitate partnerships with industries and business.

Other reported strategies include the offer of corporate gifts, such as diaries, while one respondent noted the college's practice of public acknowledgement of all industry partners as an effective means of enabling good relations and business-college partnerships.

While it could not be ascertained precisely which and how many of these college practices and successes in the pursuit of industry partnerships could be ascribed to the TVET CECDP,

²⁵ Quantitative data on this indicator was not collected as part of the evaluation. It can be collected as part of M&E efforts in the future.

it appears as though programme funding contributed towards the achievement of this short-term outcome. One work placement officer reported:

We had business breakfasts over two years where we invited business partners, municipalities and we introduced Work-Integrated Learning (WIL). We had the NSF carrot with us...sitting here with money in our pockets to pay for stipends. We thanked those who had taken students in the past and, as we grew with that in 2014 and 2015, we could include students to tell about their experience. What we learned with NSF, we were so busy chasing numbers that we forgot to thank the partners. Now we send out appreciation letters at the end of each year. Sometimes it is funny how a simple thank you letter can make a big difference – they feel valued.

As noted in the quotation above, the programme allowed colleges to allocate stipends to students undergoing WBL, which they could use for transport and any other WBL-related costs. This may certainly have encouraged some employers to provide work placements. Further investigation of student stipend support, and the impact that this has on expanding student access to WBL, should be considered.

Of note is that only two respondents reported engaging with industry members regarding the SDL in an attempt to expand student WBL placements.

In terms of WBL, we tried to inform employers about the 1% skills levy that they can utilise that. Tried to get them on board as we needed them to place learners. I have heard from industry members that the 1% levy that they pay is just another tax – they are not worried about claiming it back. So this is our problem – there is lots of money available, but no-one is knowledgeable enough to make use of it. Want to try it again in the future. (college principal)

There is the SDL but not all companies are affiliated with the SETAs or do not know enough about the SDL or do not pay their 1%. The money that can be claimed is not seen as enough to counteract the frustration of claiming it. (work placement officer)

These comments indicate an area requiring further research as a means of expanding student access to WBL.

A positive unintended outcome of the programme was the placement of a number of students in the public sector for WBL purposes. While this was undertaken in an attempt to address the shortage of WBL placement opportunities in the private sector, it might be argued that there were substantial benefits to public sector institutions, such as schools and hospitals, as a result of the additional (free) capacity.

6.4.3.4 TVET colleges identify relevant industry partners

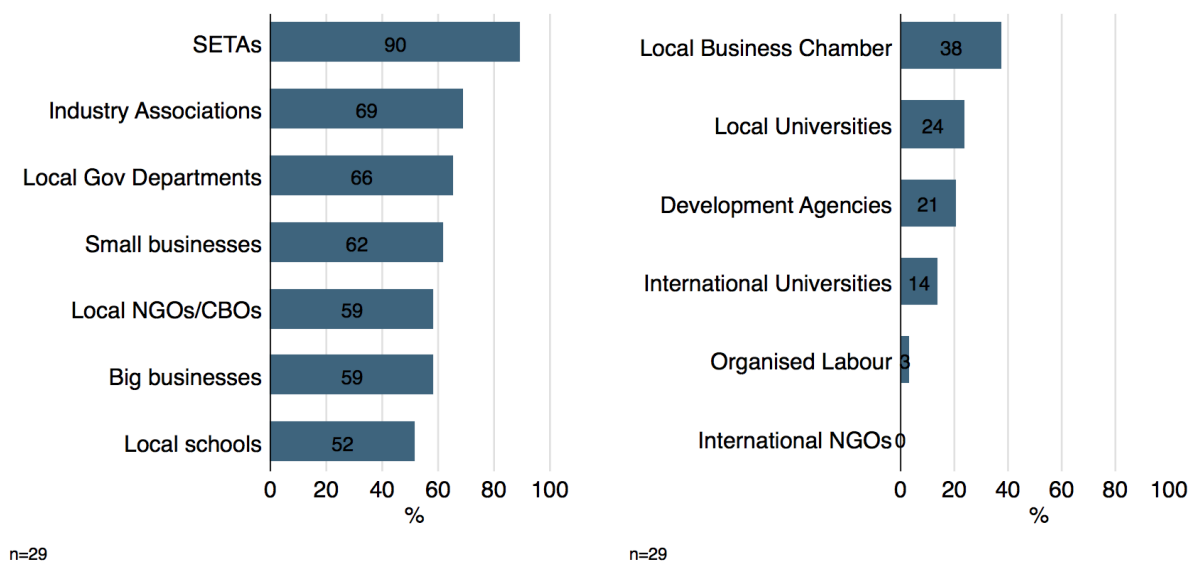
The ongoing identification of relevant industry partners is a vital component of WBL management, particularly in the light of Key Objective 1: Expansion of student access. With increasing student numbers, colleges are under pressure to source additional WBL partners.

Survey respondents were asked about the types of partnerships established for WBL purposes as a result of the TVET CECDP. The majority of those who answered this question noted partnerships with SETAs (90%)²⁶. Partnerships with industry associations, local

²⁶ Similarly, respondents at 12 of the 15 Colleges that participated in qualitative data collection noted either new or strengthened partnerships with SETAs over the programme period. However, respondents could not confirm if these partnerships were directly related to the TVET CECDP.

government departments, small and large businesses, local non-governmental and community-based organisations, and schools, were also reported by the majority of survey respondents. These results are summarised in Figure 37 below.

Figure 37: Partnerships established by colleges for WBL purposes as a result of the TVET CECDP



As noted in the section on the TVET CECDP design process, the primary programme mechanism to achieve objectives was the provision of funding. Decisions regarding facilitation of partnership building for WBL purposes would thus have taken place at college level and input regarding the methods used at each of the 50 TVET colleges was not collected during this evaluation.

6.4.3.5 Agreements / Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)/ Protocols are in place to establish partnerships with SETAs, industry and workplaces

The establishment of formal agreements, via MoU, with WBL partners is an important component of a well-functioning WBL system. Their contribution lies in the specification of roles and responsibilities so that all parties involved have a clear understanding of their purpose in the partnership. Similarly, protocols provide a clear set of rules and guidelines for WBL processes and placements. This section of the report provides an overview of college performance in respect of putting such practices into place, as well as the number of agreements that were formulated with key WBL stakeholders.

Qualitative research participants from eight of the 15 participating colleges reported that WBL protocols are in place. While it appears that some of the colleges have formulated their own guidelines, others have used existing WBL resources, including the DHET WIL Guide and the Swiss-South African Cooperation Initiative (SSACI) WBL guidelines. Similarly, respondents at 10 of the 15 colleges that participated in qualitative data collection reported that formal agreements/MoUs were being established with college WBL partners. However, the extent to which this was taking place appeared to vary across the colleges. For example, one respondent reported that approximately 60% of the college’s agreements with industry were formalised, while another stated:

For every host employer, an MoU is signed between the student, college and host employer – and by SETA if funding is available. This also applies to every placement that was renewed. (work placement officer)

Respondents seemed aware of the benefits of having formal agreements in place.

Even those that were not sure if they wanted to do this, hosting our students, when we go back to them and say that we need to formalise the relationship, they are more confident and they seem to trust us more. Then they do it. (work placement officer)

There are formal MoUs with some companies and this arrangement works well because there are expectations, regulations and timeframes to be met. (work placement officer)

While respondents observed that these practices gained momentum over the course of the programme, the extent to which the establishment of formalised partnerships with SETAs, industry and workplaces was directly linked to the TVET CECDP, could not be determined.

6.4.4 Key Point Summary

Data obtained through primary research indicate that there have been improvements in the number of WBL partnerships, as well as the number of students accessing WBL, with survey respondents reporting these outcomes as a direct result of the TVET CECDP. However, the only evidence of the programme's direct contribution towards these outcomes is colleges' use of NSF funding to provide stipends to students undergoing WBL. The effectiveness of this particular mechanism highlights the importance of stipends as a means of encouraging WBL support.

Feedback obtained from survey, focus group and interview participants provides insights into challenges affecting student access to WBL opportunities. For example, while WBL units have reportedly been established in all of the public colleges, a number of these units operate within other college departments or structures and not as individual units. This indicates that those overseeing WBL would be doing so in addition to other roles and responsibilities, thus limiting their available time to provide adequate WBL oversight. It was also reported that where WBL-specific units had been established, these were often under-resourced, particularly in terms of staff capacity.

The evaluation also found that WBL information and management systems were being set in place and that some colleges were attempting to address capacity constraints through the adoption of decentralised WBL management systems. The variety of such systems reported by evaluation participants as well as the variation among colleges in the formulation and formalisation of WBL protocols and agreements were noted. Further research on these issues would be required to assist in the formulation of a WBL policy framework.

6.4.5 TVET colleges have sufficient and well-capacitated staff

In this section, the achievement of outcomes underpinning Key Objective 3 will be assessed and reported. The ToR for this evaluation noted that the TVET CECDP aimed to support the development of college lecturers *"...to improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly for new programmes that are introduced in the TVET College"* (ToR RFP-16/2023, page 3). College capacity-building interventions were to include WBL opportunities

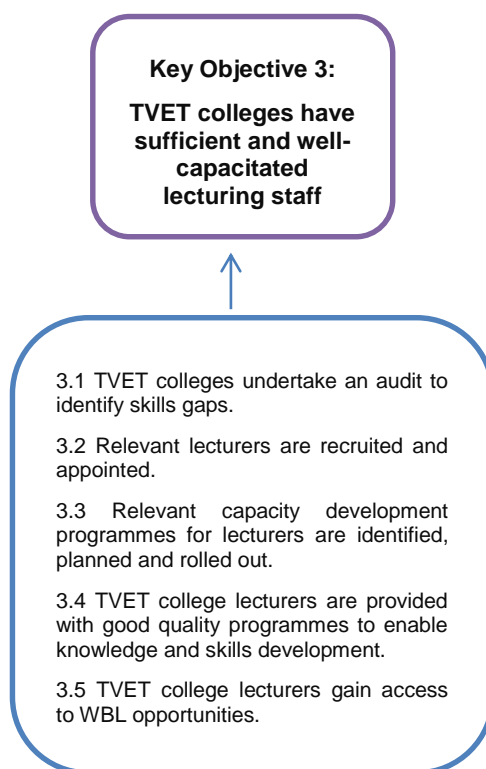
for lecturing staff.

In addition to the above-mentioned aim, it was envisaged that TVET colleges would “...*build project management and administrative capacity*” (ToR RFP-16/2023, page 3). It was intended to ensure that colleges had sufficient capacity for effective programme implementation and higher student intakes. This aspect is, however, discussed in Section 6.2.2 of this report and will not be repeated here.

The pathway of change proposed for Key Objective 3 is that a number of initial outcomes have to be achieved in order to have sufficient staff. Colleges have to undertake regular capacity assessments or skills audits to identify possible skills gaps as well as any gaps in capacity/posts. Following this, colleges will need to prioritise and address any identified gaps through the roll-out of staff development programmes and/or through the recruitment and appointment of additional staff. In terms of professional development interventions aimed at lecturing staff, it is proposed that such interventions should focus not only on content knowledge and on upskilling or ‘top-ups’ of technical knowledge and skills, but also on pedagogical skill development. In addition, facilitating lecturer access to WBL will allow for a holistic approach to lecturer development, which, in turn, will enable lecturers to deliver teaching and learning activities of good quality.

These short-term outcomes and their contribution to the achievement of Key Objective 3 are presented in Figure 38.

Figure 38: Staff capacity domain from the ToC

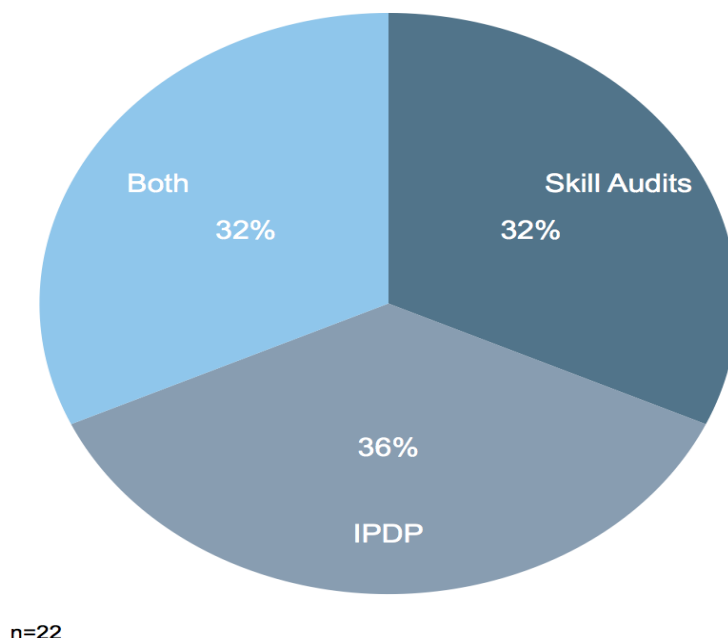


Section 6.3.2 describes the changes in staff:student ratios. A key finding is that most of the colleges have experienced an increase in this ratio which, given the 12% increase in student enrolments, was to be expected. However, an increase in staff:student ratios also indicates that lecturing staff numbers in the majority of the colleges have been insufficiently addressed to cope with expanded student access. However, when asked whether or not their staff numbers were perceived as being sufficient, 51% of the evaluation survey respondents agreed and 27% strongly agreed that the lecturer staff numbers at their respective colleges were sufficient for programme implementation. This issue will be further discussed in the section on WBL below.

6.4.5.1 TVET colleges undertake an audit to identify skills gaps

The programme ToC proposes that – in order to be effective – staff capacity-building interventions should be formulated on the basis of staff capacity assessments. It appears that all the colleges that participated in the survey had systems in place to identify skills gaps. As outlined in Figure 39, skills audits and individual professional development plans (IPDPs) were reported as the methods most frequently used during programme implementation.

Figure 39: Tools used by colleges to assess staff development needs during programme implementation



Respondents located at seven of the 15 colleges that had participated in qualitative data collection, also reported the use of some form of systematic assessment. Apart from the above-mentioned skills audits and IPDPs, interview and focus group participants mentioned lecturer performance evaluations/assessments that reportedly include lesson observations, an assessment of each lecturer’s administrative capacity and pedagogical approach, and a review of student results. This information was used by the appropriate head of department to determine if (and what type) of lecturer capacity development was required. Input provided to the evaluation team did not indicate which, if any, of these assessment processes had been implemented as a direct result of the college’s participation in the programme, nor which had been established prior to the programme.

Respondents at six of the 15 colleges that had participated in qualitative data collection provided feedback regarding skills gaps among lecturing staff all observed that the TVET sector presented a particular challenge in terms of the skills required of teaching staff. While a sound level of industry knowledge and practical skill were required, so too was a level of pedagogical skill. Staff that possessed both skill sets were scarce and difficult to source.

TVET colleges have a conglomeration of different qualifications. We have to get people from industry to come and teach and then they are not teachers. They are qualified trades people who are not educators and if we get educators then they are those that do not have the skills. (project manager)

The experience of some of the lecturers was not the best. They must get more experience. How can you explain concepts and content when you don’t know what is happening in the real world? The company people knew more than the lecturer...had better methods of teaching. (students)

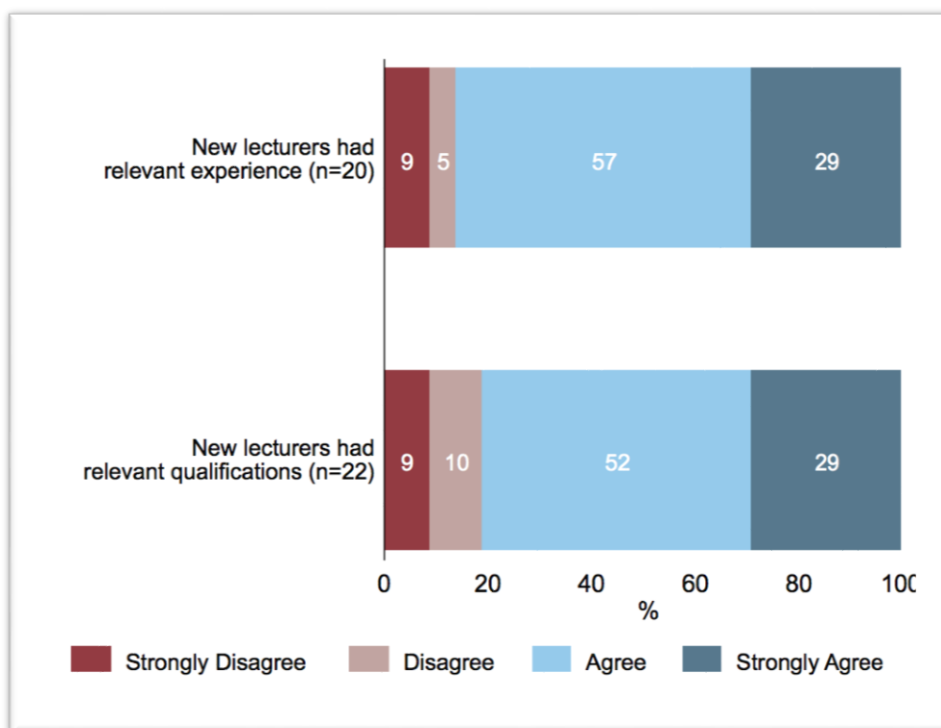
Thus it would appear that skills gaps among college lecturing staff fell into either one (or both) of these categories.

6.4.5.2 Relevant lecturers are recruited and appointed

As outlined in Section 7, staff complements at TVET colleges increased by almost 8% over the programme period. Secondary data sources utilised for the evaluation indicated that the largest increase was among management-level staff, followed by support staff and, lastly, lecturers. However, input obtained during the evaluation survey indicated that the majority of staff appointments that took place as a result of the TVET CECDP were lecturing personnel (117), followed by management (65) and, lastly, support staff (11)²⁷.

The majority of survey respondents felt that the lecturers appointed as a result of the programme, had the relevant experience as well as the relevant qualifications.

Figure 40: Survey respondent perceptions of the quality of lecturers appointed through the TVET CECDP



Qualitative research respondents, including management, support and lecturing staff, and students, were asked about their perceptions of the quality of teaching and learning provided at their respective colleges and whether there had been any observed changes in the quality of teaching and learning over the course of the programme. Respondents at six of the 15 colleges indicated that the quality of teaching staff was generally high, despite the practical or pedagogical skills gaps noted above.

Responses obtained during interviews and focus group discussions at two additional colleges were mixed, with some respondents observing that the quality of teaching and learning was good, while others noted shortfalls in lecturer capacity. No responses regarding the quality of lecturers or of teaching and learning were recorded for the remaining seven colleges, nor did the respondents included in this evaluation report any significant changes in

²⁷ These numbers are not conclusive as only 22 of the 44 colleges that had participated in the survey, had indicated that additional staff had been appointed as part of the programme and – of these – eight had noted that they were not sure of the number of appointees. This highlights gaps in the college’s M&E capacity and systems.

the quality of lecturers or in the quality of teaching practice over the programme period.

Overall, feedback indicated that staff capacity and skill varied across colleges and possibly within colleges and even departments. The following quotations are representative examples of the responses obtained.

Staff are currently not well-qualified. Some of them are lazy and do the minimum. There are those who take the extra teaching just for the money – they are not committed. (college principal)

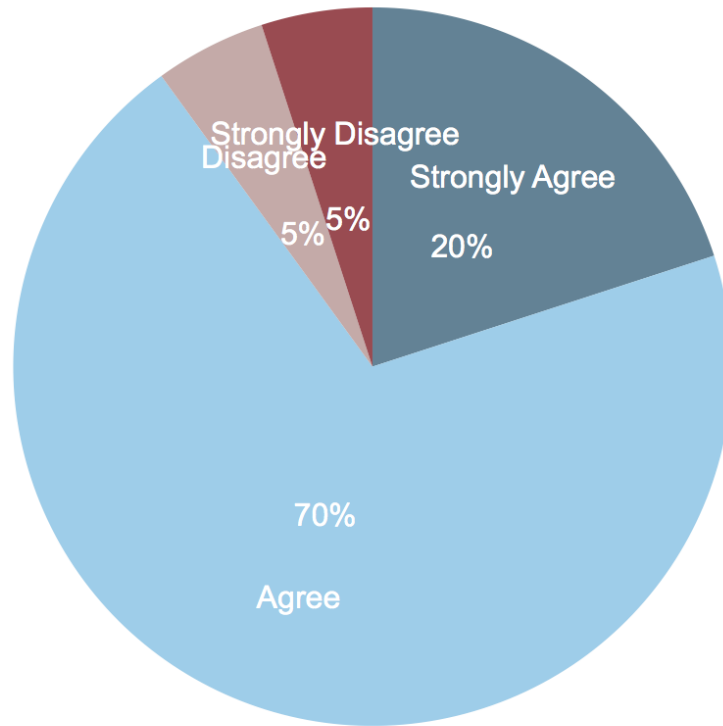
The quality of the education and training offered at this college is good. The majority of our teaching staff are qualified above the required level...Honours and Master's degrees...we are rated one of the best colleges nationally. So we are able to achieve our desired outcomes as per projections and targets; for example, certification rate and placement of interns. (college principal)

6.4.5.3 Relevant capacity development programmes for lecturers are identified, planned and rolled out

Respondents noted that salary budget parameters limited the number of new staff that could be appointed by colleges. The upskilling of existing staff members was thus a sound means of addressing programme Key Objective 3. This section provides an overview of the number and type of staff capacity development programmes that were rolled out at college level as a result of the TVET CECDP.

Survey respondents were asked to indicate if college staff had received training to upskill and top up their capacity over the course of the programme. Their responses are summarised in the graph below.

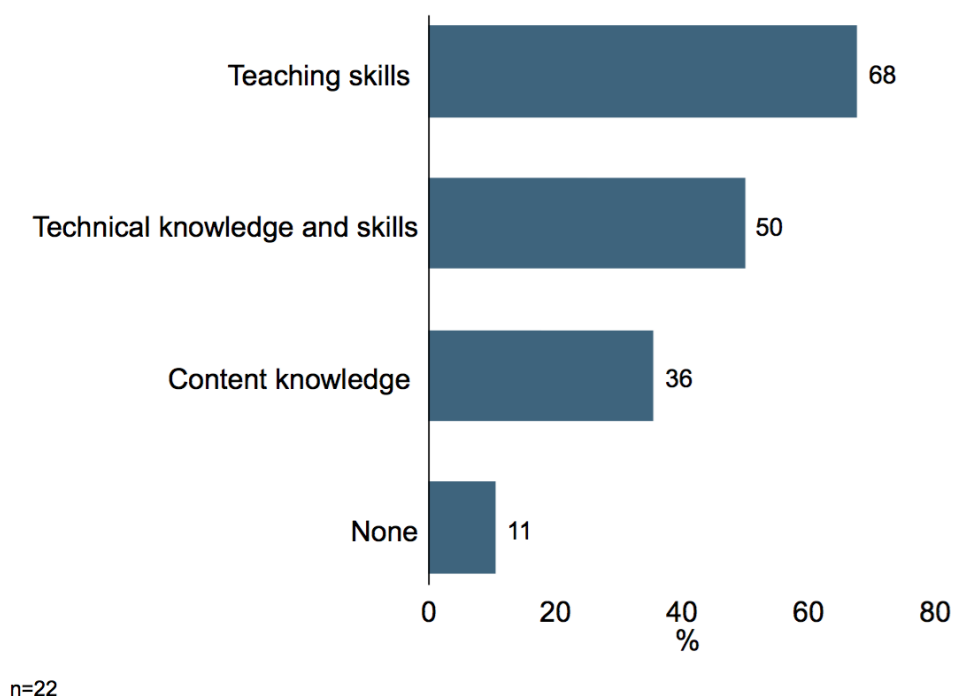
Figure 41: Lecturing staff received the necessary training to upskill and top up existing capacity during programme implementation



n=20

As shown in Figure 41, the majority of the survey respondents either agreed (70%) or strongly agreed (20%) that lecturing staff had received training to upskill and top up their capacity during the implementation of the programme. Input was also obtained via the survey regarding the categories or types of staff development that were offered to lecturing staff. These are summarised in Figure 42 below.

Figure 42: Additional training received by lecturing staff as part of the TVET CECDP



Based on the figures above, it would appear that most of the capacity development among lecturing staff focused on teaching skills (68% of 22 respondents) followed by training in technical knowledge and skills (50%) and content knowledge (36%). This is supported by qualitative research findings, where respondents from seven of the 15 colleges reported the provision of assessor and moderator training. Other forms of support, development and training provided to college staff are noted in Table 6.

Table 6: Examples of support, development and training programmes rolled out to staff

Type of support, development and training		Number of colleges providing training
Teaching skills	Assessor and moderator training	7
	Facilitation skills	3
	Higher Diploma in Education and Training	3
	Classroom management	1
	Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT)	1
Content knowledge	National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 6 in discipline / subject matter	1
Other	Project management	3
	Computer skills; for example, Excel	2
	Administration, HR and finance	1
	Career development / career counselling	1

However, feedback obtained from some of the respondents indicates that some college staff elected to participate in courses that upskilled them in areas relevant to their own personal career plans and not necessarily for their future in the college. Possible reasons for this included the current lack of a clear articulation framework, staff recognition and incentives for those who elected to further their studies and gain higher qualifications related to the TVET sector. It was also reported that colleges provided limited opportunities for lecturer career advancement.

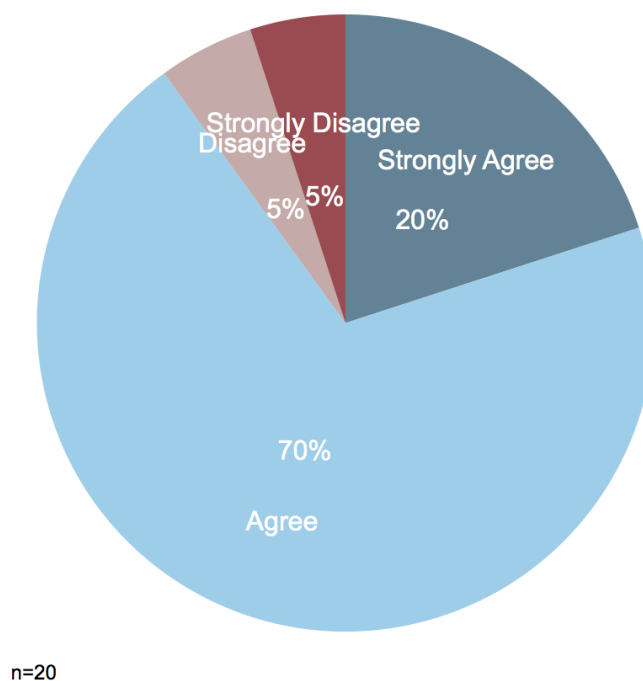
The limited range of programmes currently available for those wishing to gain further TVET-relevant qualifications is another possible challenge to providing staff – particularly lecturers – with capacity development opportunities. While short learning programmes, such as the Vocational Education Orientation Programme or VEOP (NQF level 5) (Jacobs & De Wet, 2013) and assessor and moderator training, are available and relevant to capacity-building needs, full professional TVET-specific qualifications are still being formulated in line with the Policy on Professional Qualifications for Lecturers in TVET (DHET, 2013).

6.4.5.4 TVET college lecturers are provided with good quality programmes to enable knowledge and skills development

This section examines respondents’ views of the provided capacity development programmes and assesses the extent to which participants in these programmes found them relevant and effective in addressing skills gaps.

The majority of survey respondents either agreed (65%) or strongly agreed (20%) that the training provided to staff as a result of the programme had been effective, as noted in the graph below.

Figure 43: Survey respondents' perceptions of the effectiveness of staff development programmes provided as a result of the TVET CECDP



Similar feedback was obtained in the course of qualitative data collection at 15 TVET colleges. Here, the majority of the lecturers, principals and project managers who had answered questions regarding the training provided, reported that it had been of good quality and relevant to staff needs:

Capacity development as assessors and moderators was received to set quality question papers to test knowledge, skills and application. It is reflected in the quality of our teaching (and) examining methods. For example, this college...we used to be last nationally and now we are in the top 10. (FGD – college lecturers)

The classroom management was amazing and the companies that did the computer training were very good. The assessor and moderator training was also very good...duration and content all good. (It was a) three-day training, we submitted our portfolio and within a few weeks we got certificates. We also did a LoLT course that helped a lot with mixed language classrooms – for example, they taught us to put the main words on the walls so that the students can pick them up more quickly. (FGD – college lecturers)

However, the *management* of staff development initiatives appears to vary across the colleges. Respondents from one college noted:

Course attendance could be planned for and substitute lecturers or class time changes made to accommodate our attendance at the course. (FGD – lecturers)

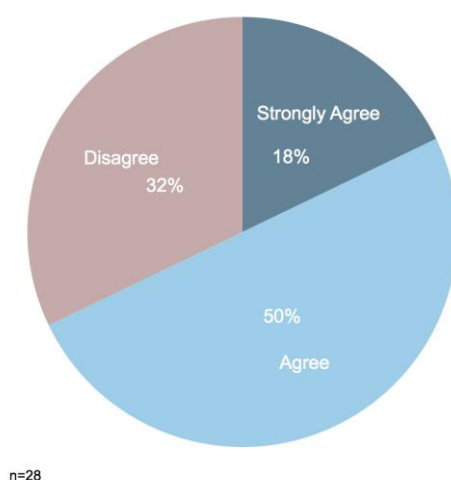
However, respondents at two other colleges reported that staff development initiatives had not been well managed:

(Staff development) was not managed well. It was not distributed equally or to suitable people. The assessor and moderator training could only be attended by four lecturers due to late notification. So it was attended by admin staff...but not even relevant to them. (FGD – college lecturers)

6.4.5.5 TVET college lecturers gain access to WBL

The number of lecturers who accessed WBL over the programme period was not consistently recorded in the submitted college close-out reports. However, the majority of survey respondents (68%) felt that there had been an improvement in WBL opportunities for lecturers as a result of the TVET CECDP. Their feedback is summarised in Figure 44 below.

Figure 44: Perceptions regarding improved WBL opportunities for lecturers as a result of the TVET CECDP



However, feedback obtained during the qualitative research component of this evaluation was mixed. Respondents at eight of the 15 colleges noted that lecturer WBL was taking place and respondents at four of these colleges provided examples of successful placements. Two of these noted:

We have partnerships with ESKOM and CENTLEC that offer WBL for lecturers in electrical engineering. Also have an international partnership in the United Kingdom; two lecturers are going to be visiting lecturers there. (college principal)

Work-integrated learning for lecturers was offered through a partnership with Anglo Gold Ashanti. Eight lecturers were taken to work there for 18 months and were certified as fully-fledged artisans. They came back with a qualification in addition to the exposure that they received. (college principal)

However, respondents at two of these eight colleges reported that lecturer WBL had only commenced in 2014 and 2015 respectively, while respondents at another two colleges noted that finding placements (and getting lecturers to agree to participate in WBL) was an ongoing challenge.

By contrast, respondents at four of the colleges reported that staff WBL was poor or simply not happening. Reasons for this included high staff workloads and limited time, causing reluctance among college staff to undergo WBL. Colleges noted that staff WBL often took place over holiday periods to overcome the challenge of full teaching programmes and to limit the expenditure required for staff replacements. However, this measure had reportedly also encountered staff resistance:

Work-integrated learning is now gaining momentum, but it is a difficult concept. You must see it from the lecturer's point of view...they are strapped for time. (They) also work on Saturdays and evenings, but time is a problem. So then the holidays

come...but the holidays are a resting period to recharge their batteries. Now we want to expose them to the world of work when they have this workload? When would they do it? Holidays are suggested, but they are clearly not keen. (college principal)

Lecturers are very hesitant though...they have time constraints, also have a lot of administrative work that they are required to do. Perhaps they are also worried that they will be in the workplace with the learners...that they may expose their own knowledge gaps to the learners, which makes them very hesitant. There are a lot of reasons that they give. (work placement officer)

Respondents at two colleges noted that lecturers were encouraged to visit students undergoing WBL as a means of engaging with industry counterparts and remaining up to date with industry developments. As noted by one work placement officer:

(Lecturers) are encouraged to visit work sites regularly as part of the monitoring of students and to find out what types of activities the students are engaged in.

It was argued that this presented an alternative to lecturer work placements, given the time and resource constraints.

6.4.6 Key Point Summary

Evidence provided to the evaluation team regarding the number of lecturing staff appointments as a direct result of the programme was limited and inconclusive. However, survey findings indicated that training had been provided to lecturers as part of the TVET CECDP and that the training had generally been perceived as being effective in addressing skills gaps. This indicated that the funding provided via the programme had contributed towards capacitation of some of the colleges' lecturing staff. However, the extent to which this had contributed towards the achievement of Key Objective 3 appears to be limited. For example, interviewees and focus group participants did not report any significant changes in the quality of teaching and learning provided at their respective colleges over the course of the programme, but did refer to the ongoing challenges of pedagogical and technical skills gaps among college staff.

In addition, a number of challenges impacting on the achievement of staff capacity building were reported in the course of this evaluation. These included staff salary budget parameters, which affected the hiring of additional staff members, the lack of success achieved with regard to staff WBL placements and a lack of staff motivation to participate in WBL opportunities. Input obtained regarding training initiatives implemented as a result of the programme indicated that these were not aligned in any way to PQM adjustments nor did they address subject/content knowledge and technical skills gaps among college lecturers in the absence of WBL. Coupled with reports of poorly managed capacity development programmes at some of the colleges, this indicated that college capacity to plan and roll out staff development interventions required additional support and guidance. The limited number of education qualifications that were specific to the requirements of TVET lecturers added to these constraints.

However, the evaluation found that college capacity and systems to conduct regular skills audits and to identify skills gaps were in place. This would enable the implementation of future staff development programmes.

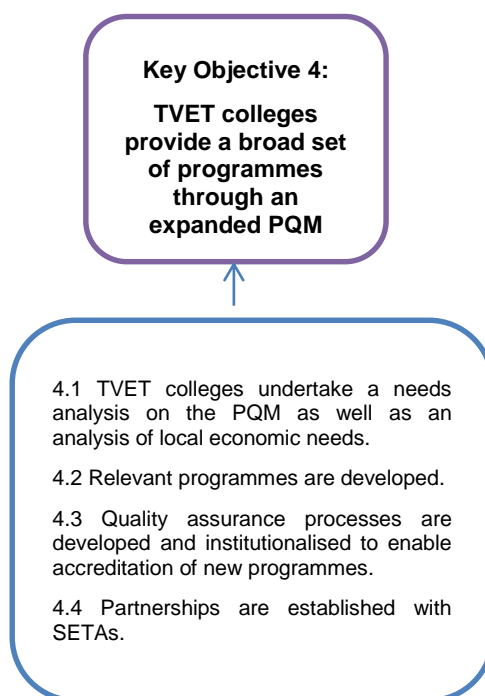
6.4.7 TVET colleges provide a broad set of programmes through an expanded PQM

An overview of the achievement of outcomes located within Key Objective 4 of the TVET CECDP is provided below. The aim of this objective was “...to support TVET colleges to offer a broader set of programmes through an expanded programme and qualification mix (PQM)” (ToR RFP-16/2023, page 2), to ensure that students could be offered a wider set of programme choices, aligned to local economic needs.

The underlying programme ToC for Key Objective 4 is that, where additional programme offerings are in place, these must be contextually grounded and industry-relevant. An analysis of the existing PQM and local skills requirements would need to be conducted for TVET colleges to identify such programmes. Following this, programmes would be developed, accredited and added to the PQM. This process would be facilitated by the colleges’ formulation of partnerships and agreements with relevant SETAs to facilitate accreditation and guide programme development. PQM expansion would also need to include the institutionalisation of quality assurance processes, as required for the accreditation of new programme offerings.

These short-term outcomes and their contribution to the achievement of Key Objective 4 are represented in Figure 45.

Figure 45: Expanded PQM domain from the ToC



The DHET acknowledges that “the range of courses on offer at public TVET colleges is very diverse with some colleges offering up to 300 different courses” (DHET website: TVET Overview). These courses can be grouped into three broad categories of qualifications and part-qualifications; namely, the NC(V), the Report 191/NATED programmes and occupational programmes (DHET, 2017). The DHET TVET college website offers a slightly different classification of course types provided by public TVET colleges, noting NC(V) programmes, Report 191/NATED programmes, National Higher Certificate programmes, learnerships,

skills programmes, and non-formal enrichment programmes (DHET website: Course Types). In contrast, the respondents included in this evaluation referred to the three pillars of the PQM; namely, Ministerial programmes (NC(V) and NATED), occupational programmes and skills development courses. As noted in the White Paper the PQM in TVET colleges is complex and difficult to understand. It appears that this remains the case.

Irrespective of the classification of qualifications and part-qualifications, TVET courses are located across a variety of industry fields. These include agriculture; design, arts and culture; business, commerce and management; education, training and development; engineering, manufacturing and technology; services, including hospitality and tourism, hairdressing and beauty therapy; building construction; and security (DHET website: Course Types). The 'course-mix' or PQM varies from college to college as well as across campuses. This measure of flexibility within the TVET sector aims to ensure that programme offerings are relevant to the skills demands of the surrounding area. The extent to which this is being achieved will be discussed below.

Feedback obtained during qualitative data collection indicates that views regarding TVET relevance to skills development needs are generally highly positive. Respondents at 11 of the 15 sampled colleges felt that their colleges offered a wide variety of programmes and that these addressed the interests and needs of students in their areas. The TVET combination of theoretical and practical instruction, which is perceived as contributing substantially towards students' work readiness, contributing to this perception. Respondents at two of the colleges also noted articulation with higher education institutions, such as UNISA and the universities of technology, as a key contributor to TVET colleges' relevance to skills development needs. The NQF level 2 New Venture Creation qualification was specifically noted by some of the participating students and lecturers as being a useful course offering for its fostering of entrepreneurial skills.

However, focus group and interview participants also noted that the content of some of the college courses was outdated (three colleges). This was noted with specific reference to the NATED programmes, whose curricula have reportedly not been updated for a number of years. One respondent asserted that the NC(V) programmes also required updating. Other factors reported as impacting negatively on TVET colleges' ability to address skills development needs included infrastructural constraints, specifically a lack of access to modern or updated equipment, and lecturers who lacked current industry knowledge. This meant that graduating students' skills were often not aligned to current technology and industry demands. Respondents at one college noted that part-qualifications were also a challenge in terms of addressing skills development needs as students graduated with incomplete skill sets, which led to frustration among employers.

6.4.7.1 TVET colleges undertake a needs analysis on the PQM as well as an analysis of local economic needs

The majority of survey respondents (86% of 21 respondents) reported that a needs analysis had been undertaken at their college in consideration of PQM expansion, in line with TVET CECDP requirements.

This was supported to some extent by input obtained during qualitative data collection, where interviewees reported on college processes undertaken in support of such analyses over the course of the programme. These included regular consultations with industry and SETAs (three colleges), conducting SWOT analyses with a focus on areas serviced by the college (one college), and reviews of the NDP as well as provincial and Local Economic

Development strategies (four colleges). However, interviewees could not confirm if these needs analyses had in any way been linked to the TVET CECDP.

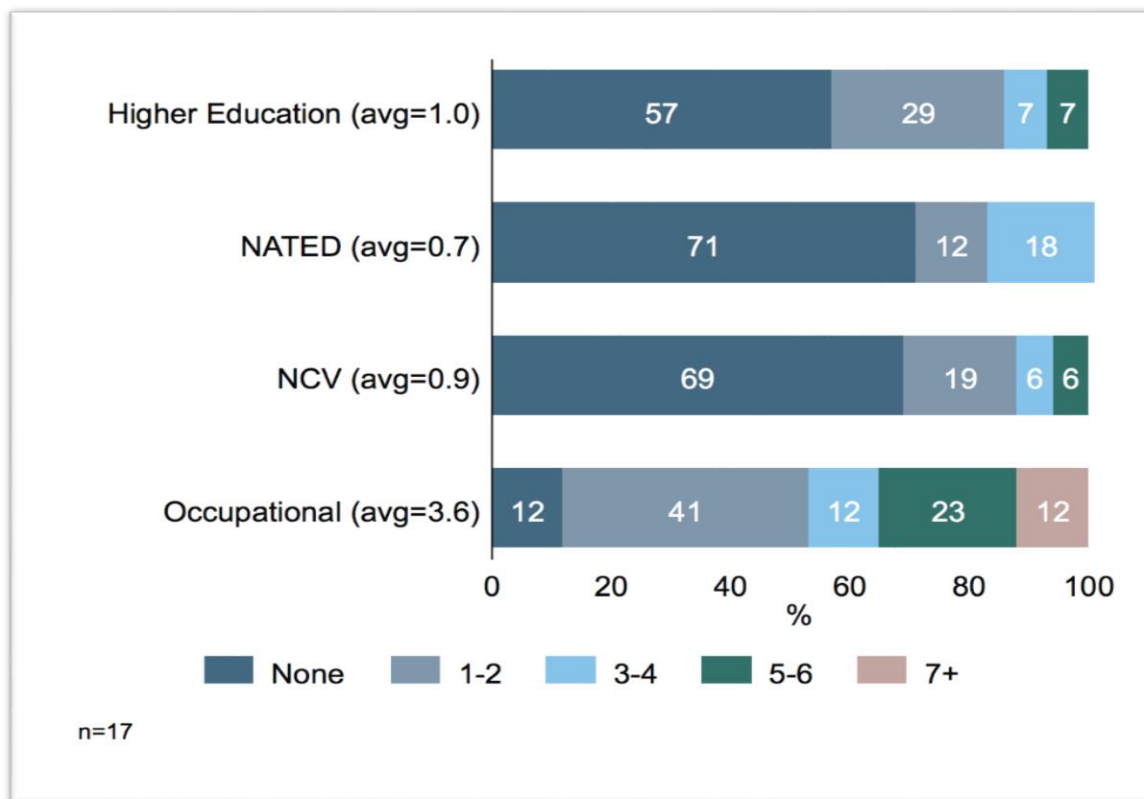
6.4.7.2 Relevant programmes are developed

What emerged from the qualitative data is that some of the colleges were undertaking needs analyses (as outlined above) and on the basis of such analyses were identifying additional programmes for possible inclusion in their PQM. A variety of examples of contextually relevant, additional programmes identified for college PQM expansion were noted during qualitative data collection. These included:

- Transport and logistics (noted by respondents at Motheo TVET College due to the central/landlocked position of the Free State);
- ECD (noted by respondents at PE TVET College in response to high levels of community demand);
- Mixed farming (noted by respondents at Gert Sibande TVET College as a result of increasing access to land in the area);
- Primary agriculture (noted by respondents at King Sabata Dalindyebo TVET College with reference to their Engcobo campus, given its location in the rural OR Tambo district);
- Tourism and hospitality (noted by respondents at King Sabata Dalindyebo TVET College with reference to their Coffee Bay campus given its popularity as a tourist destination);
- Air-conditioning and refrigeration programmes (noted by respondents at Ekurhuleni East TVET College in response to a demand for these services in the area).

Interviewees and focus group participants could not confirm that these additional programmes had been identified as a direct result of programme participation. However, survey respondents were asked to report on the number of new courses introduced at their respective colleges as a direct result of the TVET CECDP. Figure 46 below summarises the responses obtained.

Figure 46: Number of new courses introduced as a result of the TVET CECDP



As outlined above, survey data indicated that most of the new courses introduced fell into the occupational programme category, while fewer colleges elected to introduce new NATED or NC(V) courses. Reasons for this were not clear, but it might be argued that colleges were already offering a high number of NATED and NC(V) programmes so any uncovered gaps in the PQM would be best addressed through the introduction of occupational programmes. Furthermore, much of the focus of the TVET CECDP was on the expansion of occupational programme offerings. Respondents at two of the colleges also argued that the introduction of new NATED or NC(V) programmes was *outside of the colleges' control* and in the hands of the DHET. This assertion was based on the application process required for college PQM additions and the fact that the DHET could deny permission to introduce a course; for example, in the event that the college was deemed to have insufficient resources for the new programme offering or insufficient enrolments for existing courses.

6.4.7.3 Quality assurance processes are developed and institutionalised to enable accreditation of new programmes

Survey respondents were asked if the college had established quality assurance processes for the accreditation of new programmes as a result of the TVET CECDP. All of those that answered this question (21) indicated that such processes had been set in place. However, there is insufficient data to report on the number of new programmes introduced as a result of the TVET CECDP *that also received accreditation* during the programme. Qualitative data indicates that a number of colleges (respondents from five colleges reported this) have received accreditation for programmes that were previously not accredited. It was also reported that a number of accreditation applications were in progress:

We received accreditation for programmes that were not accredited before. Normally it can take two years, but we worked speedily. We have not achieved

(accreditation) for all of them, but we are moving in the right direction. (college principal)

We have more accreditation with the SETAs than before and this has increased our bouquet of programmes. (college principal)

Unfortunately, these outcomes could not be confirmed as being a direct result of the TVET CECDP.

6.4.7.4 Partnerships are established with SETAs

College partnerships and agreements with relevant SETAs are an important component of PQM expansion. Such partnerships will not only guide the identification and development of new programmes, but will also facilitate the accreditation of any new programme offerings. This section of the report assesses the extent to which partnerships with SETAs were established by the TVET colleges as a result of the programme.

As noted in Figure 37, 90% of survey respondents reported partnerships with SETAs when asked whether partnerships were established as a result of the TVET CECDP. Qualitative data also indicates that active engagement and collaboration between colleges and SETAs was taking place at some of the colleges:

Occupational programmes...this is the future of the college. We are working with SETAs to fund new programmes including NSF funding...Mechatronics, Renewable Energy and Maritime Studies. (college principal)

This college hosts five SETAs...CATHSSETA supporting hospitality and tourism faculty, the construction SETA and Services SETA that is supporting us with the artisan development academy and other programmes at the college...BankSETA that assisted with implementing the Accounting Technician qualification, and the Water and Electricity SETA that saw the start of the learnership in waste water treatment with 16 municipalities in this province in 2014. (college principal)

We mainly work with AgriSETA and the construction SETA...helped us to get programme approval of qualifications so that students can be certified. (learner support officer)

The extent to which this increased collaboration with SETAs was a direct result of the TVET CECDP could not be determined.

Despite these positive reports of college-SETA engagement, SETA accreditation was described as a lengthy, time-consuming and cumbersome process by respondents at two of the participating colleges. Furthermore, staff capacity to develop and accredit course materials was noted by respondents as being limited, exacerbated by a lack of knowledge of accreditation systems and requirements. In an attempt to overcome these challenges, colleges reported outsourcing accreditation applications at times as well as the development of course materials, which had cost and budget implications. Evaluation participants also noted that the accreditation process was not standardised across SETAs. This too led to confusion and delays and hampered the achievement of outcomes related to PQM expansion.

6.4.8 Key Point Summary

In terms of the TVET CECDP's contribution to college programme offerings through support

of PQM expansion, the evaluation found that some progress had been achieved at college level, but this had been fairly limited. For example, fewer than half (21 of the 44) of the survey respondents had indicated that college quality assurance processes for programme accreditation had been implemented as a result of the TVET CECDP and only 17 survey respondents reported the introduction of new courses as a result of the programme. This may be a result of the reported challenges associated with accreditation, which had been described by evaluation participants as a lengthy, confusing and time-consuming process.

Primary data indicates that college stakeholders are keenly aware of the need to meet local economic needs as well as the benefits of doing so. The majority of survey, interview and focus group participants reported that needs analyses had been undertaken regularly at their respective colleges. Evaluation findings also pointed to good levels of engagement and collaboration between some of the colleges and relevant SETAs. This indicates that a number of the colleges have the necessary capacity, partnerships and processes in place to determine appropriate areas of PQM expansion. However, their capacity to act upon this requires further support, coupled with improved accreditation processes.

6.4.9 Overall goal: Graduates from TVET colleges have technical and other skills relevant to the needs of the South African economy

This section of the report focuses on the overall programme goal; namely, that graduates from TVET colleges have technical and other skills relevant to the needs of the South African economy. The discussion centres on the indicators developed to assess the level of achievement of this goal in relation to the CECDP, as noted above.

Input obtained in the course of qualitative data collection reveals mixed perceptions regarding the ability of TVET colleges to produce graduates with sufficient skills to meet the South African economy's needs. For example, respondents at five of the 15 colleges that participated in qualitative data collection reported that the education and training being provided by the TVET sector was equipping TVET graduates with skills relevant to and sufficient to meet local, provincial and national needs. This is supported by the findings outlined in section 6.4.4 of this report which confirm that colleges are attempting to offer programmes that are contextually relevant to local economic needs. In addition, data obtained from the NSF indicates that 25 027 (41%) of the CECDP beneficiaries were enrolled in courses that are categorised as a scarce skill.²⁸

However, respondents at two of the colleges argued that optimal practical skills development had yet to be achieved within the TVET sector and that this was hindering the employability and potential economic contribution of TVET college graduates. Barriers to the development of practical skills were mainly ascribed to a lack of adequate resources and staff capacity within colleges as well as limited levels of access to WBL. These factors have been discussed in the sections above.

Respondents also noted the current lack of employment options available to youth in the country, arguing that a lack of TVET college graduate absorption into employment was not necessarily indicative of shortcomings and a lack of relevance in TVET college education and training, but rather a consequence of limited growth in the South African economy.

²⁸ The full list that this statistic is based on can be found in Annexure 7 - Tables for section 6.4.

Certainly students that participated in evaluation focus group discussions voiced concerns regarding their difficulties in finding employment.

These concerns are echoed in a NORRAG Policy Brief (NN46, 2011), which states, “*Around the world there are large numbers of young people who are unemployed, a shortage of a skilled labour force, economies that are not growing fast enough to provide jobs, and education systems that are not supplying adequate skills to the economy*”. This makes it clear that, globally, the TVET sector is required to engage with a complex array of issues, and contribute to the formulation of solutions to these issues. Programmes are often developed based on the assumption that teaching technical and vocational skills relevant to the needs of the economy will lead to employment. The challenge then lies in what to do when there are limited available jobs and low levels of job creation.

Teaching for self-employment is one proposed solution (De Mauro Castro, cited in NN46, 2011), which corresponds to views expressed by a number of students and college staff who were involved in this evaluation noting the potential contribution of TVET to entrepreneurial ventures and future self-employment²⁹:

Yes, I feel that I have gained the type of skill (that will allow me to make a valuable contribution to my community). If your business grows, you can employ people and empower other businesses by outsourcing for different services. Yes, with ECD I can start my own business. Because I have a certificate and I am qualified. People can feel confident for me to provide this service in the community. (FGD – student)

Learners are skilled now because of the TVET programmes in ECD, New Venture and Hairdressing. They can operate and stand on their own because of the training. (SSI – project manager)

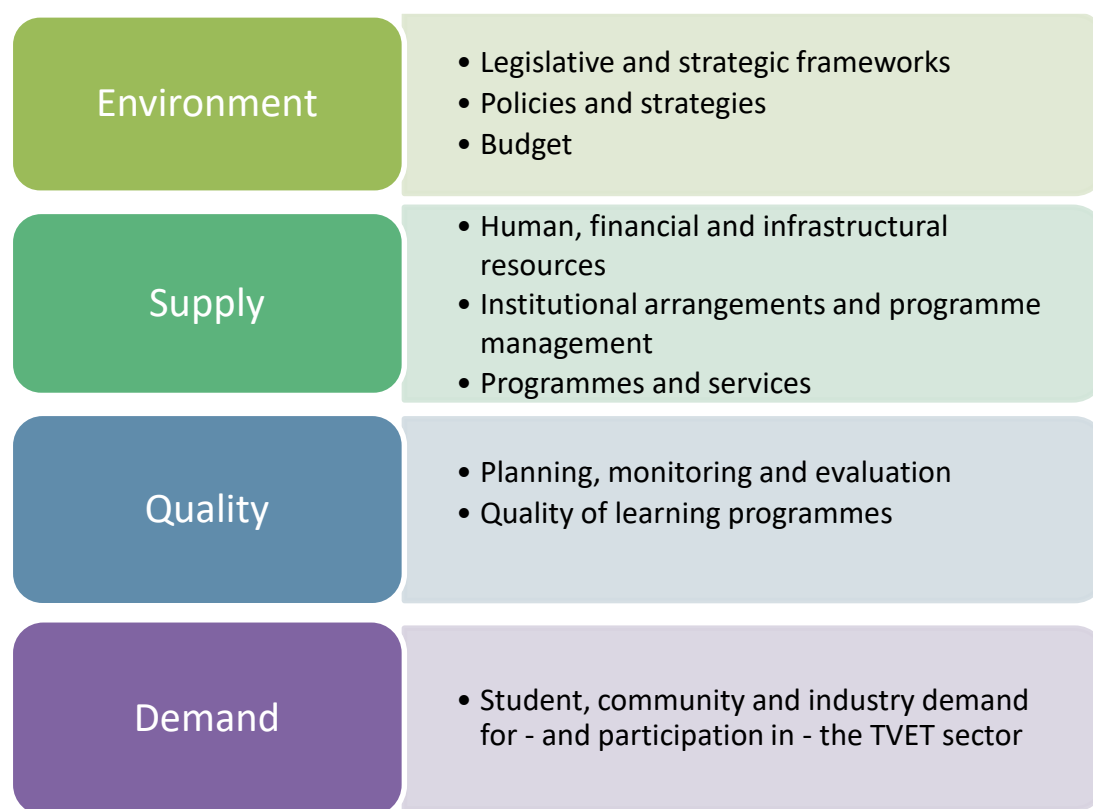
Additional research to explore the expansion of programme offerings such as New Venture Creation would provide more insights into ways in which the TVET sector could provide skills relevant to challenges within the South African economy.

6.4.10 Enablers and barriers to the achievement of outcomes

A systems approach will be used to provide a framework for the analysis of factors that either enabled or hindered the achievement of programme outcomes and key objectives. As noted in the proposal submitted for this task, four main domains will be used as a means of analysing enablers and barriers. These domains are listed in the diagram below, which includes examples of the aspects to be investigated within each domain.

²⁹ This was observed particularly among evaluation participants in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal colleges.

Figure 47: Systems framework for analysis of enablers and barriers to achievement of outcomes



6.4.10.1 Environment

An enabler of the TVET sector programmes is the supportive environment provided by government policy and funding. As noted in the White Paper (2013: xii), “*The DHET’s highest priority is to strengthen and expand the public TVET colleges so that they become institutions of choice for a large proportion of school leavers*”. An overview of the policy framework was provided in Section 4.

Respondents included in primary data collection referred to the provision of support by the DHET and the NSF as a key enabler in achieving outcomes, specifically in terms of expanding student access. This support was noted as being primarily the provision of financial assistance as well as the changes made to NSFAS bursary criteria. Another consideration here was the level of security and stability that the TVET CECDP funding timeframes provided to colleges. As noted by a college principal:

The NSF gave us security of funding for three years, unlike the unstable and irregular SETA grant funding. This made strategic planning quite do-able and built security for three years.

Another environmental enabler noted in the course of this evaluation is the colleges’ alignment of their NSF proposals with their strategic plans, which are informed by local and regional needs as well as national strategies. This alignment ensured that the integration of the TVET CECDP into colleges’ internal processes was greatly improved.

The current lack of a clear WBL policy framework is also affecting outcome achievements for Key Objective 2. The DHET is in the process of formulating such a framework, with the aim of establishing a set of standardised concepts and common practices and principles to enable WBL funding and quality control (Van Staden, 2015). However, in the interim,

colleges face a number of difficulties. According to Blom (2016), these may be grouped into five categories: conceptual differences; the status of the worker-learner within the workplace; roles and responsibilities of WBL stakeholders; quality assurance arrangements; and employer incentives. All of these challenges were noted in the course of data collection for this evaluation and are briefly described here:

- A number of colleges noted that, while WBL is aimed at the enhancement of learning and skills development, many students and employers perceive it as a practice aimed at enhancing employability. Thus, students are often hired by businesses providing WBL placements prior to completion of their study programme. Such practices reduce college student throughput and limit future WBL placements within the business that has gained additional capacity.
- The often lengthy time periods required in industry lead to students disengaging from the college, often not returning to complete their studies or to receive their certificates.
- Aligned with this fundamental conceptual difference are differing perceptions of the status of the student entering the workplace (employee or worker-learner) and confusion regarding labour practice. This impacts on the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders involved in WBL, as well as on WBL quality assurance systems. For example, if the student is regarded foremost as a learner, the college is responsible for his/her placement and monitoring, and for the formulation and oversight of assessment processes. However, some of the colleges reported that students were required to source their own WBL placements and to negotiate the terms thereof with the employer. Where the student is regarded foremost as an employee, challenges arise in terms of compensation, insurance and the responsibility of ensuring that the student is adequately equipped to perform his/her duties.
- These conceptual variations lead to a lack of consistency in the allocation of stipends to students undertaking WBL. It was also reported that disputes have arisen when learners requested the same compensation and benefits as employees or wanted to be provided with full-time employment following WBL placement.
- Finally, a lack of incentives for businesses providing work placements (combined with the above-mentioned challenges) is limiting the number of placements that can be secured for TVET students. Colleges reported adopting a system of internal WBL in an attempt to overcome this challenge. This requires student placements at the college itself for the required WBL component. An innovative approach, this too is not without its challenges:

The college opened our doors to students who need to complete their N6, their practical component. There were all the challenges we faced with them – they take us to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) because they want to become full-time employees, but we try as a responsible employer to give them the opportunity to do their practical so that they can get their diploma and become employable. (college principal)

The key financial constraint to sustainability of the expansion of the TVET colleges is the current funding model that funds posts for the Ministerial programmes NATED and NC(V), and not occupational programmes, or the staff to run the occupational programmes. The current model of using project funding to support occupational programmes is not appropriate as such funding is short-term in nature. It does not provide colleges with the

continuity and stability or the necessary staff appointments that they need to effect PQM expansion.

6.4.10.2 Supply

As reported above, funding allocated to the TVET colleges by the NSF was used to recruit and hire additional staff as well as to provide capacity development interventions to address staff skills gaps. Respondents from seven of the 15 colleges that participated in the qualitative data collection noted this support and these interventions as a key contribution to the achievement of outcomes, specifically *Key Objective 3: TVET colleges have sufficient and well-capacitated lecturing staff.*

However, a number of barriers related to the achievement of this objective were noted by evaluation participants. These include the following:

- Low salary levels for those working in the TVET sector

Respondents at seven of the 15 colleges involved in qualitative data collection felt that staff salaries were not competitive and hence insufficient to attract and retain well-qualified staff. As a result, TVET colleges have to rely on ill-qualified candidates or recently qualified college graduates to address capacity shortfalls. The low levels of compensation were also noted as providing insufficient motivation to staff to improve their qualifications or to recruit well-qualified staff from better-paid positions in industry.

- Limited staff security

Respondents at three of the colleges noted that budget parameters for staff salaries encouraged the employment of part-time and contract staff at TVET colleges. Given the nature of their employment, these staff have limited job security and, it was argued, low levels of loyalty to the institution. Contract appointments and the lack of job security were also viewed as deterrents to staff's engagement in capacity development initiatives. When contract staff participate in such initiatives, it is also to the college's detriment as these skills are lost at the end of the contract period.

- Limited higher education qualifications for the development of TVET lecturers

The Policy on Professional Qualifications for Lecturers in TVET (DHET, 2013) provides for a set of professional qualifications that cater specifically for TVET lecturers. As such, it provides the basis for the construction of core curricula for TVET lecturer qualifications that might be used by higher education institutions for programme development. However, these curricula are still being formulated and current options for TVET lecturers' professional development are limited. This impacts negatively on attempts to address the skills gaps specific to those providing teaching and training in the TVET sector.

Respondents at six of the colleges felt that college systems had initially been incompatible with programme administrative requirements or insufficient to allow for effective programme implementation and management. This had hampered programme roll-out at colleges and thus the achievement of objectives. It was noted that college departments tend to work in isolation of one another and that this too had hampered outcome achievements. It was suggested that the adoption of such a 'silo approach' is based on the distinction between 'traditional' staff – who offer the Ministerial programmes – and the skills development

contract staff³⁰.

While colleges did endeavour to address capacity and skills gaps related to programme implementation, it is argued that WBL units remained under-resourced and ill-equipped to cope with the high number of student work placements required. This barrier to enhanced access to WBL will require attention going forward.

Finally, a lack of adequate infrastructure, equipment and IT support was noted by respondents at nine of the 15 colleges that participated in qualitative data collection as one of the main challenges to expansion of student access.

6.4.10.3 Quality

Linked to the observations regarding additional staff capacity above, respondents also asserted that staff appeared more confident in their roles as a result of the capacity development interventions. Observations regarding improved teaching and learning as well as improvements in student performance were also recorded during primary data collection. In addition, respondents at four of the colleges involved in the qualitative data collection asserted that a key enabler of their achievements was the calibre of their staff whom they described as being dedicated and results-orientated.

It might be argued that the assessor and moderator training, provided as part of college staff capacity development, was an enabler of the reported improvements in college quality assurance and improved accreditation processes.

6.4.10.4 Demand

Colleges reported on the adoption and execution of a variety of student recruitment strategies that, it is argued, played an important role in enabling increased levels of student demand for education and access to TVET colleges (Key Objective 1). Eleven of the 15 colleges involved in qualitative data collection reported some form of recruitment strategy. These included the use of community radio (two colleges) and local newspapers (two colleges), school visits and presentations (five colleges), and the hosting of parents' evenings and open days (two colleges). Respondents at Thuba Mokate campus of Westcol TVET College conducted a door-to-door marketing drive to recruit students, while the same college also reported approaching youth centres in the surrounding area and offering career guidance at local schools about available courses and financial assistance options.

Barriers noted in the domain of demand include the following:

- **TVET colleges lack a set of clear admission and assessment/selection criteria.** Thus, students are being enrolled for programmes for which they do not have the necessary level of knowledge or skill. Students are also admitted to courses for which they are 'over-qualified'; for example, students with a Grade 12 enrolling for NC(V) Level 2 programmes. Respondents argued that these challenges lead to frustration and low motivation and boredom for those for whom much of the course content is a repetition of school-based work.

A NORRAG policy brief (NN46, 2011) notes many challenges being experienced globally within the TVET system, which has to deal with "*...heterogeneous groups of learners. Some are early school drop-outs, some with incomplete school qualifications and some with*

³⁰ This was noted by one of the external reviewers.

complete but poor school qualifications and varying social and economic contexts". This highlights the need not only for sound admission and selection systems and well-resourced student academic support services, but also for adequate information-sharing with potential students to allow them to make appropriate study choices and to ensure appropriate college entry levels:

If the selection process is not done properly it hinders the teaching process because this is a skills course and you have Grade 10 and 12 learners in the same class. You have two different levels of aptitude and ability to grasp the learning materials. (FGD lecturer)

We are not allowed to profile the student to see if they are suitable. We have to give them access if they have the matric results, so we enter students into programmes and not into careers. (FGD – lecturer)

- **There is a high-level of variation among TVET students in terms of their economic and social contexts as a result of shifts in TVET student demographics.** As noted by a project manager:

We come out of a system that is no longer applicable. In the past, the child came to college and then went home and it was not our problem. Now we need a student support system...they cry, have trauma, fall pregnant...do not go home and get their problems solved by their parents with a medical aid. Parents are often very far away. I feel that we need to address these issues.

- **Misperception among members of the public regarding the quality of a TVET education** is another barrier to the achievement of *expanded student access to TVET colleges*. According to one project manager:

Some learners are told that colleges are inferior because if you fail your matric then you can go to a TVET college. If you fail your Grade 10, you can go to a TVET college! Don't want to be with these types of people. Seen as the place for failures. There is no status or prestige associated with TVET colleges.

Respondents felt that these misperceptions hindered their attempts to recruit students, particularly those with higher academic achievement levels, and hampered their achievement of higher student enrolments as well as throughput.

The DHET's support in student recruitment and in addressing negative perceptions of the TVET sector were also noted by respondents

Yes, in 2013 we had high enrolment numbers because NSFAS student funding for TVET colleges was communicated to the public and the DHET went to rural areas to invite students to apply to TVET colleges. (FGD – lecturer)

- The perception among industry members that TVET colleges produced poor quality learners is another barrier to achieving expanded student access to WBL. This was noted by respondents at four colleges as hampering their WBL placements.
- Other barriers reported as affecting outcomes related to expansion of student access included **delays with NSFAS bursary disbursements, poor management of national examination processes, hampered communication of TVET student examination results and lengthy waits for student certificates**. The latter point was reported by a number of respondents in the course of this evaluation, with some noting waiting periods

of five years or more. It was argued that this affected not only the colleges' throughput rates, but also fuelled the negative perceptions of the TVET sector described above.

- **Lack of adequate academic and psycho-social student support services** being provided at colleges. Provision of academic and psycho-social support is likely to enhance retention of students. There is little point in enhancing access if the same students are not going to be able to complete their studies for various reasons.

6.4.11 Key point summary

- Perceptions are mixed regarding the ability of TVET colleges to produce sufficiently skilled graduates to meet the South African economy's needs, the key challenge being the development of a sufficient level of practical skills among TVET students.
- Questions were also raised regarding the assumption that adequately skilling graduates would lead to their employment, particularly in an economy characterised by limited growth.
- TVET colleges' inclusion of entrepreneurial programmes demonstrates potential in addressing such constraints on employment.
- In terms of *expansion of student access*, findings indicate that student numbers have risen by 12% over the course of the programme timeframes. However, the extent to which the TVET CECDP contributed to this outcome is unclear.
- A number of challenges to the expansion of student access were also noted during this evaluation, coupled with the colleges' limited ability to support and sustain enrolment levels. Thus, it appears that the programme's level of achievement in supporting student access was limited.
- The TVET CECDP's funding of student stipends during WBL placements supported *access to WBL*.
- However, challenges affecting WBL placements include under-resourced WBL units, negative perceptions within industry of the quality of TVET students and the lack of a clear WBL policy framework.
- The number of lecturers appointed as a direct result of the TVET CECDP is unclear. However, the evaluation found that training was provided to lecturers as a result of NSF funding and that this was perceived by evaluation participants as being effective in terms of *staff development*.
- A number of challenges in terms of staff capacity building were reported, including a lack of staff WBL placements, poorly planned and managed capacity development programmes, and the limited number of education qualifications that address the pedagogical and technical skill gaps reported among TVET college lecturers.
- In terms of outcomes achieved for *PQM expansion*, evaluation findings point to good levels of engagement and collaboration between some of the colleges and SETAs as well as sufficient college capacity to determine appropriate areas for PQM expansion.
- However, the extent to which this can be directly attributed to the TVET CECDP appears to be limited.
- College quality assurance processes for programme accreditation have been set in place as a result of the programme, but a limited number of colleges reported PQM expansion as a result of their programme participation.

- Challenges affecting the achievement of PQM expansion included lengthy and often confusing accreditation processes, as well as a lack of staff capacity to undertake such processes and to compile new course materials.

6.5 Presentation of findings on sustainability

Key evaluation question: How was the programme integrated with existing programmes in TVET colleges, and what implications does this have for programme sustainability?

This section looks at sustainability more broadly than just in terms of the integration of the programme into the college environment.

Sustainable development makes financial sense. Within an environment of finite or limited resources, strategies must be devised to ensure that longer-term benefits are extracted from catalytic interventions.

This implementation evaluation came at the end of the first cycle of the TVET CECD Programme and it was still unclear which (or if) other courses would receive further funding. Many respondents indicated that their programmes would continue, albeit on a smaller scale. The majority of the comments received – 80% – expressed positive sentiments about sustainability, signalling that the programmes started during the TVET CECD Programme would continue beyond the funding period. However, others felt that there would be negative implications for colleges and students.

The biggest threat to sustainability was the availability of funds, to continue with what the colleges had started. While some colleges have been able to find funds within their budgets for this, others have not. It is clear that colleges have different opportunities for third-stream income, some have good relationships with SETAs, industry partners and other training providers for income and work placements, whereas others do not.

6.5.1 Expanded capacity to manage projects and the aspects of the programme

Where the project was **aligned and integrated** with colleges' strategic planning process, it has been embedded into their core management goals and operations:

Plans, time management, communication, risk management, financial management etc. The systems are in place now and we will be able to manage new projects. This took some time. (project manager)

The fact that colleges recognise and believe in the importance of the four aspects funded by this NSF project is also a critical factor for sustainability:

All four objectives exist. Student access is a burning issue. Quality mix changing and there is a need to review curriculum. Learner access to the workplace is important because without experiential training access to jobs is limited. Staff capacity building is needed to improve capacity. Technology is changing. (college principal)

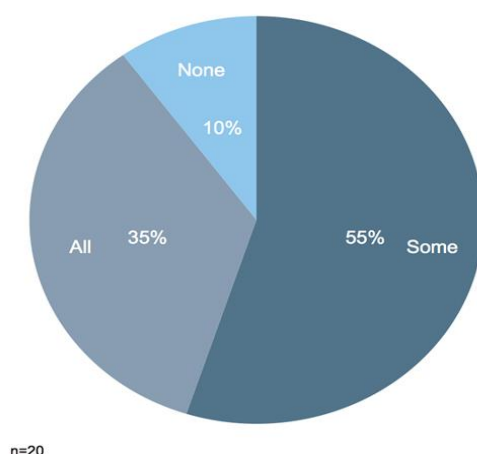
Interventions were integrated. They became part of the KPAs on which college staff were evaluated. (work placement officer)

6.5.2 WBL

The funding of stipends in this project was a key success factor for the WBL, but, without this, colleges are concerned about the future of work placement.

Without funding it is difficult. Placement only happens where possible. Without funding it is impossible to continue especially because each batch of funding is earmarked for something specific. (work placement officer)

Figure 48: Partnerships established with industry associations as part of the programme



Of those who responded, 35% (20) indicated all the partnerships still exist and 55% indicated that some of the partnerships have continued.

The close-out reports (four) reported on stakeholder relations and how this was a key mechanism for sustainability of the WBL component. Colleges built relationships particularly with SETAs, employers, industries, NGOs and public sector employers.

6.5.3 Expanded staff capacity

The survey respondents were asked whether they continued to employ the additional staff that they had appointed (see Figure 12 for staff appointed). Of the 10 colleges that could confirm that they had hired extra lecturing staff, only two colleges had retained all of them, three colleges retained none of their additional lecturing staff, while five colleges retained some of them (on average 52%). Thus, seven out of 10 colleges retained at least some of their extra lecturing staff. The PQM data below shows that fewer than half of the colleges continue to offer the courses introduced during the programme.

Colleges have used various strategies to continue funding staff development or to retain staff:

Staff capacity comes to an end from NSF side in 2016; so if it is the emphasis of the college council that we should continue with this and invest in our own staff's future,

then they must put money forward for this. A staff bursary fund needs to be put in place again – estimate around R650,000 per year – that is what we spent on the NSF programme. Colleges should not be dependent on NSF for day-to-day programmes. (project manager)

The Skills Centre will be able to train up to the level of artisanship and assess students. It is attracting students from other provinces who are prepared to pay for this opportunity. The utilisation of existing staff members allowed for skills retention. (college principal)

We have built up a cadre of young people who are willing and capable of supporting other students. This will be supported and grown. Every year we train more tutors and this will keep on growing. (academic support officer)

The insecurity of contract positions is the main reason that colleges are unable to retain staff:

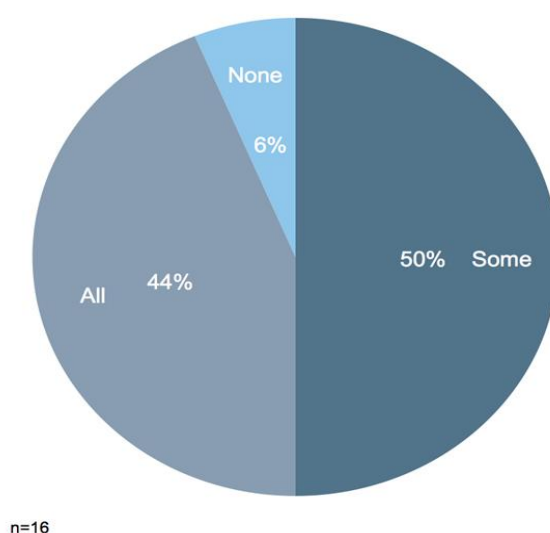
The main mistake of the TVET is failure to look at succession plans... Skilled people leave the institution without building capacity in others. When the project is over, people are retrenched and they get work elsewhere. Some of our programmes have been stopped because of lack of capacity. (project leader)

Another problem was with the proposal/procurement process itself. There was no guarantee that you would receive what you applied for and this limited planning, design and implementation. We lost some contract staff because there was no longer term vision. (college principal)

6.5.4 Expanded PQM

The survey captured an overview response about courses that were continued beyond the programme funding. Of those who responded, 44% are still offering all the courses introduced during the programme.

Figure 49: Is the college still offering the courses that were introduced as a result of the programme?



The following comments provide some insights into this result:

Agriculture course (new) will be sustainable because both commercial and emerging farming industry. Hospitality programme will be sustainable also because the college had acquired a hotel and the students will get WBL and work placement there. Tourism students will also get exposure to work. (college principal)

The college continues to offer electrical/mechanical engineering course using college staff and most of the resources was made available through the TVET programme. (college principal)

The college now has adequate equipment and resources to maintain regular intake for several key engineering programmes – NC(V) and NATED programmes – and it has partnerships in place to ensure appropriate workplace experience for these students. (college principal)

Newly added engineering programmes and other continue – number for trade courses are capped at 15 per cohort, making them manageable. (project manager)

With more NSF funding programmes have expanded to Craft Enterprise, Handwork skills, artisan development (DSPP), tourism guides, ICB levels 2 to 4, a UNISA programme in Accounting. (work placement officer)

A key factor promoting sustainability is the possible demand for the skills that the college is producing:

Programmes that are sustainable here are business studies programme because of the environment; because of economic boom motorcar numbers are high so motor mechanics and panel beating. Plumbing will be sustainable because there's a housing boom and growth in the area. Fishery is going to be introduced next year [2018] and will be sustainable. (college principal)

Accreditation status and accreditation of workshops were also mentioned in the close-out reports as sustainability measures, as was the infrastructure and equipment bought as part of the project. The acquisition of needed equipment allowed for longer-term planning.

The fact that 45% of the colleges in the survey indicated that they had established a WBL unit as part of the programme means that this aspect is likely to be a feature in these colleges and be sustainable.

Besides adding the skills programme focus to many colleges, the quantitative survey revealed several areas of 'value-add' according to the respondents. In total, 68% of the respondents agreed that there was an improvement in WBL opportunities for lecturers as a result of the programme; 97% agreed that the colleges had developed additional strategies to engage with industry as a result of the TVET programme; and only 45% stated that they had established a dedicated WBL unit as a result of the programme. For the others it had already existed.

6.5.5 Financial sustainability

While most of the respondents interviewed for the qualitative data (90%) indicated that there was a need for more and longer-term funding, some felt that their colleges could manage. There is also the belief that the SETAs are going to play a major role in the sustainability of the TVET colleges. The NSF is of the view that this is a catalytic process that should eventually be taken over by the colleges as a mainstream function.

The NSF gets regular funding to assist with short- and longer term skills needs. The idea is to kick-start the process of moving towards occupational focus with colleges, using the NSF funding as a catalyst. Eventually, the programme will have to move to mainstream and be funded through the fiscus. The risk is that colleges will not be ready to offer this as a mainstream offering. (KII)

As seen below, different views emerged, and it is clear that there are colleges that have strategies for financial sustainability and others that do not.

But I will answer in one sentence: without funding, nothing is possible. Our hands are tied. It would be better if colleges are allowed to do things to generate income. Like have people in the college who are doing carpentry and welding etc. on behalf of the college and we sell and save money for what the DHET is not funding. (project manager)

Yes, the programme is going to be sustainable. The community is on board and the students understand the programme. The college components that include lecturers and support staff understand the programme. Business partners are on board. SETAs are visible with financial support since 2015 and SETAs are concentrating on their mandate, they now fund bursaries and they are also now funding things like resources at the college which did not happen before. (work placement officer)

Colleges were instructed to open a separate bank account for the management of the NSF funds. This requirement facilitated the differentiation between NSF and fiscal revenues. In some cases, there were delays in transfers on the part of the NSF and the colleges had to compensate, particularly when this affected the payment of stipends to students. These dedicated accounts and the quarterly reporting requirements assisted colleges with financial management and reporting.

6.5.6 Enablers of programme sustainability

- There was alignment between the TVET CECD programme objectives and what colleges were doing. A number of respondents indicated that the objectives were captured in their own strategic plans.
- Where strategic partnerships with SETAs and industry resulted in success for students, the college and industry, there will be a basis for even more successful ventures in the future.
- As a catalytic process, the TVET CECD programme has allowed for the development of skill sets among college staff that, if managed properly, will be available to many more students.
- Colleges have introduced occupational courses that are now part of their 'normal' course offering.
- Some colleges now have additional equipment and resources for use with an additional intake of students in several key engineering programmes.
- Colleges can use the evaluation findings to reflect on lessons learned, use best practices, and develop alternative and realistic strategies to address challenges with implementation.

6.5.7 Barriers to programme sustainability

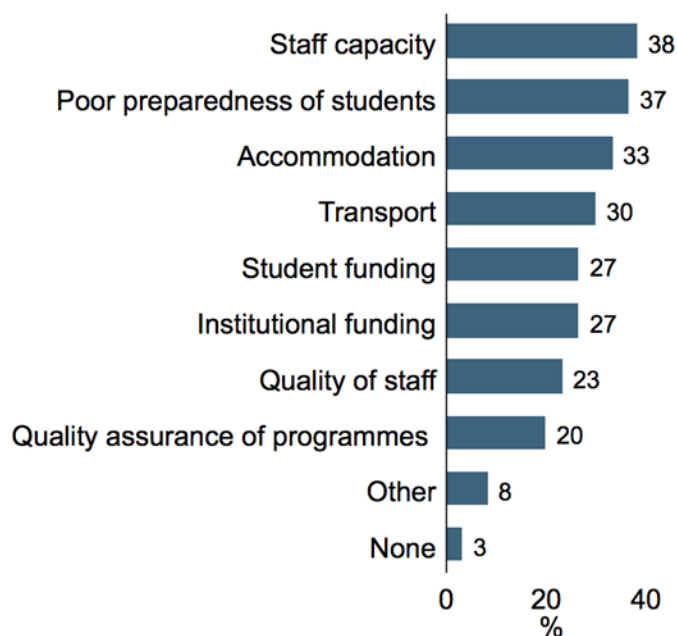
There are workload concerns and infrastructural problems. The increase in student numbers, without the appointment of staff members to take on the additional responsibilities, has been cited as the biggest challenge for the expansion programme.

A summary of close-out reports revealed that some colleges found monitoring and reporting to be a challenge (four), particularly the claiming process and the complicated templates that they were required to use. There were 11 mentions of staff challenges from the close-out reports, including: lack of capacity and the need for capacity-building opportunities (two), excessive workloads of the lecturers (two), the limited project management skills (four), the burden placed on college administration (one), the need for extra classes (one), and part-time practitioners perceiving projects purely as money-making exercises (one).

Other challenges included: the delayed project start, changes in community demands, the effect on quality provisioning due to the rapid expansion, funding breaks in funding cycles between NSF grants leading to loss of staff and/or student revolt, the lack of trade test centres, short timeframe for proposal writing and reporting, the complicated, unhelpful supply chain management system TVET colleges deal with, and the inability of some SETAs to support the colleges.

The issue of staff capacity was identified by the majority of the respondents as the biggest challenge faced by the colleges. Unless these challenges are addressed, expansion is threatened. The figure below illustrates the prevalence of the challenges among respondents.

Figure 50: What were the main challenges of the programme for the college?



n=60

6.5.8 Key point summary

- There was adequate alignment between the programme objectives and what colleges had been offering. Colleges struggled with the expansion aspect of this mandate as there were too many challenges with resourcing.
- Staff capacity was listed as an enabling factor when staff members were able to develop the required skills and competence to offer new courses. It was also a barrier when the college did not have the staff or capacity to deliver on courses.
- Staff capacity development remains a barrier for sustainability.
- Strong relationships with industry and SETAs are important.
- Project management capacity has been enhanced at the colleges including improved systems for managing administrative data, financial systems and reporting. This bodes well for sustainability, as does their enhanced confidence to apply for project funding in the future.

7 CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

7.1 Design

- The way the programme was designed indicates that it was viewed more as an opportunity to release funds for the TVET sector into the four objective areas, rather than reflecting a coherent programme strategy. In fact, the programme was highly complex. The colleges were required to venture into territory that they were not familiar with, and to forge relationships with stakeholders and deliver outcomes in a short space of time. It was hence too complex for the NSF to manage as a grant alone as it required more input into WBL and curriculum development than the NSF could provide.
- For programmes to be effective there needed to be more consultation among the different role-players in the TVET sector in planning and designing this programme. The role-players include the TVET Branch of the DHET, the NSF and the University branches of the post-school sector.
- There did not appear to be a shared understanding of the overall objectives of the programme, neither was the programme's intent communicated to all stakeholders (colleges and partners). These are important conditions for successful programme design.
- Regional and local economic contexts, the HR capacity of colleges and the infrastructural requirements for the CECDP were not sufficiently factored into the design. There were too many unchecked assumptions about these factors that affected programme effectiveness.

7.2 Effectiveness of implementation

- A key success factor was the good project (grant) managers from the NSF who were able to build relationships at college level, and guide colleges through the management and reporting of financial and non-financial data.
- For colleges to prepare successful proposals they need sufficient forewarning and time. The results emphasise the importance of having clear guidelines for aspects such as eligibility (scope), financial management, procurement and monitoring and reporting. Sufficient time and the participation of a wider range of stakeholders at college level is necessary for improved proposals, programme design and buy-in from all staff. Proposals need to be evidence-informed, and enough time is needed to ensure that the projects are aligned to local needs, and appropriate to the capacity of the college. A good practice identified was that a number of colleges aligned their proposals to their strategic plans, which were already informed by local needs. Time was needed to prepare good budgets that include all the costs, including hidden costs of management of a project of this nature (such as printing and administration costs).

- The importance of providing funding for a strong project management function, including financial management and auditing is confirmed by the findings. It is better to have a dedicated project manager, than have someone perform this function as an addition to his or her primary job. The appointment of project management and administrative staff to manage and coordinate the operations, M&E and financial reporting for this project was crucial to success. Colleges that integrated the management of the project into their regular management and reporting processes indicated that this worked very well. This helps to ensure that all management are informed about the project and are able to filter the information down through the system. The key to doing this is to align the project to strategic planning processes.
- Colleges need to have good data gathering, management and validation systems in place if they are to continue receiving project funding from the NSF or other entities.
- To adequately assess the success of the TVET system, it is important that the M&E system be expanded to include quality measurements such as the quality of teaching, the quality of lecturer training and the throughput rate. This will require the input of the DHET, and is a joint responsibility of the NSF and the DHET.
- Work placement requires strong administrative support, as well as the ability to follow up with students and employers on the quality of the work placement. IT systems can be used to facilitate the quantitative tracking of students, but face-to-face or telephonic contacts are also necessary to ensure that the students are getting what they need from the work placement, and to get feedback from the workplace.

7.3 Implementation Efficiency

- There is considerable heterogeneity of experience among the colleges on all indicators, including the lecturer:staff ratio; percentage of budget spent and student enrolment. There is some modest evidence of programme impact, but in the absence of more detailed, programme-specific data, it is difficult to separate out programme-specific outcomes from broader college outcomes.
- It appears likely that perhaps insufficient time has elapsed in order to properly assess the full programme impact. Comparing programme data to overall TVET sector data shows that the programme made a modest impact. For example, the total enrolments for the programme are only 3% of total enrolment in the TVET colleges. Sector data shows that, on average, most appointments were at a managerial level, whereas programme-specific data indicates that most increases were in lecturing staff. It also appears that funding is not the key constraint to programme success, since only 80% of budgets had been spent by 2016 on average. Another example is that whereas the number of occupational programmes decreased overall, there was greater expansion in this category under the CECDP.
- The analysis suggests that better targeting of resources and more joint planning are required at the PSET and at the college level so that, for example, increases in student enrolment are matched with higher staff complements. While student enrolments may have increased, it appears that staff complements have not, on average, adapted fast enough to cope with higher student numbers. Moreover, it appears that the most staff increases occurred at the managerial level, and while it is true that strategic oversight is required to implement a programme successfully, it is

also critical that the lecturing staff complement is sufficiently large to cope with the increased student numbers, to ensure manageable workloads and quality.

7.4 Achievement of outcomes

Overall goal

The high levels of unemployment and lack of economic growth in South Africa indicate that employment opportunities for TVET college graduates are limited. While TVET college students are perceived to have an advantage through their practical training over those graduating from other higher education institutions, it appears that they still encounter challenges in finding employment. The assumption behind the ToC that if people have an education they will get jobs, is not a given in a context of high unemployment and little economic growth to create jobs, particularly in the rural areas.

Key Objective 1: Expansion of student access

- The evidence demonstrates that student access cannot be expanded without consideration of TVET college capacity in terms of infrastructure, human resources and student accommodation. For future programme success, the funding model needs to be sufficiently flexible to address resource and infrastructural constraints where these become apparent.
- The evidence gathered during this evaluation also points to the importance of college provision of student support services (including financial, academic and psycho-social support). Access cannot be enabled without due consideration of support to ensure student retention and throughput, without which, access is meaningless.

Key Objective 2: Expanded access to WBL

- Incentives for employers to provide WBL opportunities are crucial. Many employers do not claim their SDLs because of the administrative burden imposed by the SETAs. Students also need a stipend or they will seek employment elsewhere, not necessarily related to their qualifications. Most students have families depending on their ability to earn. Hence the inclusion of an allocation for the colleges to pay a stipend to their students for WBL was a key success factor. Innovative strategies to incentivise employers to provide WBL opportunities were uncovered in this evaluation and include skills exchanges with placement providers where their staff members are trained by the college in exchange for student and/or lecturer WBL placements and the colleges themselves providing WBL opportunities for students.
- To facilitate access to WBL opportunities, WBL oversight cannot be assigned to those with additional duties, such as student liaison officers. It requires a dedicated and well-resourced function to ensure that students and staff will be accommodated in the workplace to facilitate programme-relevant learning outcomes.
- The evidence indicates that forming and fostering partnerships with SETAs and industry are essential to the success of the TVET sector. Not only do these relationships ensure that curricula, training methods and staff keep up with industry changes and developments, they also enable college access to support in the form of funding and WBL placements.

Key Objective 3: Sufficient and well-capacitated college staff

- Evaluation findings highlight the gaps in capacity-building programmes for TVET lecturing staff. To achieve the objective of well-capacitated staff in the TVET sector, the development of programmes and course offerings specific to the pedagogical and technical requirements of TVET are urgently required.
- The evidence also shows that TVET lecturers are reluctant to participate in WBL. This was ascribed to lecturer workloads and administrative duties. Hence, for a programme like this to succeed, adequate support structures and incentives are required to facilitate lecturer participation in WBL opportunities.

Key Objective 4: Expansion of the PQM

- The current TVET sector PQM remains complex and confusing. It was noted that curricula reviews and changes were required to ensure that TVET colleges could provide a broad set of programmes relevant to skills development needs.
- The accreditation and certification by SETAs is a barrier to successful expansion of the TVET colleges, as their systems are inefficient.
- For future programmes to be successful, TVET staff capacity to develop new courses and apply for accreditation requires attention.

7.5 Achievement of results / outcomes

Overall goal: Graduates from TVET colleges have technical and other skills relevant to the needs of the South African economy

The high levels of unemployment and lack of economic growth in South Africa indicate that opportunities for TVET college graduates are limited. While TVET college students are perceived to have an advantage through their practical training over those graduating from other higher education institutions, it appears that they are still encountering challenges in finding employment.

7.6 Sustainability

- More systematic engagements between colleges, industry and the DHET, with the assistance of the NSF, are needed.
- Much more time should be spent on the planning stages to ensure successful implementation of large-scale programmes. This will ensure the development of guiding principles and practices that promote sustainability.
- TVET colleges are facing many demands and challenges and are finding it difficult to cope. These challenges relate to management capacity, historical inefficiencies, lack of resources and/or a combination of related factors and need to be addressed.
- Where capacity was made available, for example the appointment of a project manager, significant progress became possible.
- Continuity of funding is important for college planning purposes and to reduce student drop-out rates. Hence time lapses should not occur between funding cycles (for example between NSF I and NSF II). Colleges cannot be expected to bankroll the NSF from their own funds.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Design

R1. It would be good practice for the NSF and DHET to use a systems approach to the planning and design of future programmes in the TVET sector. Future planning should take the following into account:

1.1 The DHET and NSF should engage in joint planning with post-school stakeholders to ensure common understanding of the goals, objectives and key focus areas and how these address the problem(s) identified.

1.2 The ToC needs to be designed using the framework of **institutional systems strengthening** that usually has the following elements:

1.2.1 Enabling Environment (policy, legislation); Governance and Leadership; Appropriate Funding; Sufficient Human Resource Capacity; Appropriate Programmes and Services; Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation; Communications, and Changing Social Norms.

1.2.2 All the assumptions in the ToC need to be verified to see that they are plausible before programme implementation begins. A feasibility stage and due-diligence assessment carried out by the NSF and the DHET must determine whether these assumptions are in place.

1.3 The programme design needs to be expanded to provide sufficient support for all aspects including technical assistance for the non-financial aspects of the programme. The DHET needs to play a role in this together with the NSF.

1.4 There is a need for more programme-related data to be collected at the college level. Non-financial data that should be included in an effective M&E system for support to colleges should include indicators about work-based learning, staff capacity development and curriculum development.

1.5 At a systems level, the funding model for colleges needs to change to facilitate sustainability. In the absence of such change, the NSF must recognise that colleges need longer project cycles to help with planning their enrolments and PQM. The funding cycle could be extended to align with the natural cycles of the colleges, with a half-way point re-assessment of funding continuation based on key performance indicators and pre-identified critical milestones.

1.6 To adequately assess the success of the TVET system, it is important that the M&E system be expanded to include quality measurements such as the quality of teaching, the quality of lecturer training and the throughput rate. This will require the input of the DHET, and is a joint responsibility of the NSF and the DHET.

8.2 Effectiveness of implementation

The ToC for the CECDP states that the three main functions of the NSF for the implementation of this project were: 1) effective grant management; 2) effective implementation management; and 3) effective M&E systems. The evaluation findings confirm that these are indeed essential elements of successful grant management, but a fourth NSF function should be effective technical support (see R3.1 below). The recommendations below are intended to help improve these functions.

1) Effective grant management

R2. The NSF needs to improve its processes for application and assessment of proposals, specifically:

2.1 The NSF should allow more time for project proposal writing which requires research to be conducted into the needs of the local community and business, and which will benefit from an internal participatory process with a wide range of college staff. The NSF can issue intentions to release funds in advance so that colleges can prepare responses to calls for proposals in advance. The NSF also needs to release calls for proposals earlier and build in enough time to assess applications so that there are no gaps in funding between project cycles. The NSF must bring colleges in a province together for briefing meetings on proposal writing.

2.2 The NSF must improve due diligence to assess the appropriateness of the proposal and the funding amount in accordance with the capability of the applicant college.

2.3 The NSF must develop detailed guidelines for funding eligibility, scope of projects, and financial, monitoring and reporting requirements, and provide project managers with training in understanding and using these guidelines.

2.4 The NSF must provide a more detailed budget template accommodating all allowable itemised expenses that projects can include, such as project management, administration and financial officers.

2) Effective implementation

R3 To strengthen implementation, the NSF (in cooperation with the DHET), needs to ensure more support for colleges to implement the non-financial aspects of the grant. The following can be considered:

3.1 Establish technical advisory support to the colleges for each of the key focus areas of the grant. For this programme they would have been enrolment of students, WBL, staff capacity development and PQM expansion.

3.2 The DHET can help to establish or strengthen existing communities of practice. The DHET should ensure that regional offices provide support to colleges to share and learn from one another. Different stakeholders can be encouraged to meet in communities of practice, such as project managers and lecturers working on PQM.

3) M&E systems:

R4. There is a need to significantly improve the administrative data monitoring systems at TVET colleges to facilitate better planning and improved outcomes monitoring. The following need to be attended to in this regard:

4.1 The DHET should use its existing information and monitoring systems to help monitor the projects implemented through the NSF. For example, SETA quarterly reports include a performance measure that allows for reporting on the number of partnership agreements established. This data is provided to the DHET and could be used for programme monitoring, specifically with reference to interventions aimed at WBL and PQM expansion.

4.2 In general, the DHET should improve its broader monitoring systems to monitor pass rates and throughput. The DHET has data from its monitoring system, such as reports from the TVET colleges and the SETAs, which can be used to better understand efficiencies in the TVET sector. There is a need to streamline reporting at college level by using existing monitoring and reporting systems related to the DHET.

8.3 Outcomes

R5. It is recommended that a higher level of emphasis be placed on the development of entrepreneurial skills to enable TVET graduates to become self-employed as opposed to job-seekers. Existing programme offerings, such as New Venture Creation, could possibly be expanded to this end. Such initiatives must, where possible, be strengthened by colleges' existing partnerships with business and local government to enable graduates access to small venture start-up capital and equipment.

Key Objective 1: Student access to TVET colleges is expanded

Increased student access should not be implemented at the expense of quality and throughput, as this results in extensive inefficiencies in the system and many disappointed youth. The following must be done by the DHET and the TVET colleges to facilitate student access and retention:

R6. The DHET needs to address the issue of low student pass rates (throughput). A more in-depth study of this issue is recommended for evidence-gathering that might inform solutions.

6.1 Colleges must explore models for student support services to address high levels of student attrition. Such services must include academic and study support, including counselling, career guidance, assistance with financial support and financial support applications.

6.2 Sound career guidance should be provided during student recruitment processes to ensure that students are provided with a clear idea of TVET – and the types of programmes that they are enrolling for. The DHET can work with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) to improve career guidance at a high school level, starting from Grade 7.

6.3 Further research regarding the prevailing perceptions of the TVET sector is required. These perceptions can then be addressed via improved communication strategies aimed at students and industry members.

Key Objective 2: Expanded student access to WBL

The enabling environment and institutional framework for WBL needs to be strengthened so that placements can be expanded. The following needs to be done to enable this:

R7. A clear policy framework for WBL is required, and administration of funding of work placements must be improved. The WBL policy framework must be aligned with labour legislation to ensure that the legal responsibilities of those providing placements is clearly articulated to avoid disputes regarding learner employment status and compensation. Engagement with unions regarding WBL must also be considered.

7.1 A dedicated WBL function must be established at all colleges, either in a WBL unit or as part of another business unit such as Student Support Services. This function must be adequately resourced and include the appointment of dedicated staff that are capacitated to support WBL. In addition, WBL unit staff must be equipped with the necessary information on possible incentives for WBL placement providers so that these can be shared with industry.

7.2 The system of incentives for WBL needs to be improved. Employers require improved access to SETAs to facilitate SETA payments for learnerships. The ability of employers to claim their SDLs also needs to be enhanced. Alternatively, funding for student stipend provision must be increased and colleges allowed to administer and manage this funding.

Key Objective 3: TVET colleges have sufficient, well-capacitated staff

R8. The policy on professional qualifications for lecturers in TVET (Government Gazette No 36554, Notice 410, 11 June) needs to be implemented urgently, taking the following into account:

8.1 Staff capacity has been cited as the biggest challenge to sustainability. This needs to be addressed through a planned process involving all partners in the post-school sector first, and then at the college level. This will include the systematic implementation of the full professional qualifications structure for college lecturing staff.

8.2 To encourage ongoing staff development, a mentoring system should be implemented at TVET colleges. This will allow experienced and skilled staff members to transfer skills to junior and newly appointed staff members.

8.3 Communities of practice should be established to facilitate learning exchanges for college staff, including management, lecturing and support staff members, and to support and enable staff with WBL.

8.4 The current funding model that funds posts for Ministerial programmes (NATED and NC(V)) should include occupational programmes as well as staff to run the occupational programmes. The current model of using project funding to support occupational programmes is not ideal as such funding is short-term in nature. It does not provide colleges with the continuity and stability that they need for PQM expansion and for the necessary staff appointments to effect this.

8.5 The incentivisation of staff capacity development should be explored and review of staff salary scales should be conducted.

Key Objective 4: TVET colleges provide a broad set of programmes through an expanded PQM

R9. A concerted effort needs to be made at a sector level by the DHET and other PSET stakeholders, particularly SETAs, to ensure that the PQM is better structured and administered.

9.1 A situation analysis of the TVET sector PQM is recommended to provide the DHET with a sound level of understanding and to inform the review of the curricula for the NATED and NC(V) programmes.

9.2 College staff need to be capacitated regarding accreditation processes and requirements, as well as on how to address PQM gaps and how to produce required course materials.

8.4 Sustainability

R10. Since the findings show that there is great heterogeneity among colleges, the DHET and the NSF can consider implementing more focused, targeted interventions at colleges where there is a match between the policy intentions of government and the strengths and capabilities of the colleges. The DHET and the NSF need to explore the data from the college reports further, and develop a strategy for a more tailored approach for each college. Each college should be asked to provide a sustainability report that identifies what aspects of the project are being continued and to identify aspects that need support to ensure that the changes that have been achieved are not lost. In order to help with this, the following can be implemented:

10.1 More streamlined cooperation between the NSF and DHET can be developed, for example with the implementation of the DHET turnaround strategy for colleges, curriculum development, lecturer capacity development and centres of excellence.

10.2 Realistic lead times for colleges and multiple stakeholders/partners to develop proposals that include sustainability elements. Colleges should be required to think about exit strategies at mid-term. Specifically, there should be plans to retain staff that have been hired on contract, otherwise critical outcomes will be short-lived.

10.3 The biggest barrier to the sustainability of the TVET college sector, and occupational programmes in particular, is the uncertainty of funding and the many different funding streams coming to the colleges. This funding model needs to be reviewed to enable colleges to plan properly and hire appropriate staff. One suggestion is that all funding streams should go directly to the DHET, which should pay funds to the colleges. In this way the DHET would be responsible for one integrated PQM, and the colleges would only have one partner to report to and would have the security to plan long term.

9 ANNEXURES

All the annexures are contained in a separate file as individual attachments, except for Annexure 11.

Annexure 1: References

Literature

Akoojee, S. 2016. Developmental TVET rhetoric in action: the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training in South Africa. *International Journal for Research in Vocational Education and Training*, 3(1), pp. 1-15.

Branson, N., Hofmeyr, C., Papier, J. & Needham, S. 2015. *South African Child Gauge*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town.

Gewer, A. 2010. Improving quality and expanding the Further Education and Training College system to meet the need for an inclusive growth path. Development Bank of Southern Africa.

JET Education Services. 2016. *Tracer Study of the Transition of NCV students from TVET Colleges to the Labour Market*. For the DHET and Employment Promotion Programme. Cape Town: DPRU, UCT.

Kraak, A., Paterson, A. & Boka, K. (eds.) 2016. *Change management in TVET colleges: lessons learnt from the field of practice*. South Africa: African Minds and JET Educational Services.

Lolwana, P., Ngcwangu, S., Jacinto, C., Millenaar, V. & Martin, M.E. 2015. Understanding barriers to accessing skills development for youth in Argentina and South Africa: Synthesis Report. REAL Centre (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa), IDES, PREJET (University of Buenos Aires, Argentina) and NORRAG (Geneva, Switzerland).

Maclean, R. & Pavlova, M. 2013. Vocationalization of secondary and higher education: pathways to the world of work. *Revisiting global trends in TVET: reflections on theory and practice*. p. 40.

Papier, J. 2011. Vocational teacher identity: Spanning the divide between the academy and the workplace. *Southern African Review of Education*, 17, pp. 101-119.

Tikly, L. 2013. Reconceptualising TVET and development: a human capability and social justice approach. *Revisiting global trends in TVET: reflections on theory and practice*, pp. 1-39.

Government Publications

DNA Economics. 2014. Expenditure Performance Review; National Skills Fund. Final Report. Pretoria.

Human Resource Development Council for South Africa (HRDC). 2014. Synthesis report of the TVET Technical Task Team. Strengthening and supporting TVET Colleges for expanded access and increased programme quality.

Republic of South Africa. 2011. National Skills Fund, Department of Higher Education and Training, Department of Higher Education and Training – FET Roadshow.

Republic of South Africa. 2012. *National Development Plan – Vision for 2030*. National Planning Commission. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2012a. *Green Paper on Post-School Education and Training*. Department of Higher Education and Training, Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2012b. Address by the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande at the meeting with FET Colleges. Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2012c. *National Skills Development Strategy III*. Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2012d. *Turnaround Strategy for TVET Sector*. Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2013. *Policy on Professional Qualifications for lecturers in TVET*. Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2013. *White Paper for Post-School Education and Training*. Department of Higher Education and Training. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2013. *White Paper on Post-School Education and Training*. Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2014. *Medium Term Strategic Framework*, Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2014. *Performance and Expenditure Review. Technical and Vocational Colleges*. National Treasury. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2016. *Education Sector Report 2015-2016. Towards and Education and Training System that is driven by Quality, Accountability and Impact*. Auditor-General, Pretoria.

Republic of South Africa. 2016. Terms of Reference for Implementation Evaluation of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training College Expansion and Capacity Development Programme, DPME, 13 June 2016.

Republic of South Africa. 2016. *Tracer Study of the transition of NCV students from TVET Colleges to the Labour Market*. National Skills Authority. www.nationalskillsauthority.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Draft-report-of-the-NCV-TVET-Tracer-Study-NSA-funding.pdf

Republic of South Africa. 2016d. Strategic Plan 2015/16-2019/20. Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2016a. *Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa: 2014*. Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2016b. *Training provided to educators based at TVET Colleges*. Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)
<http://www.dhet.gov.za/Public%20FET%20Colleges/Number%20of%20educators%20trained%20per%20college.pdf>

Republic of South Africa. 2016c. *Milestones 2009-2016, An Overview*. Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). Pretoria: Government Printer.

Various. 2016. TVET College Close-out reports.³¹

Websites

UNESCO. <http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/>. Accessed: 25 July 2016.

UNESCO's Position Paper on Education Post-2015.
unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002273/227336E.pdf

Annexure 2: Methodology: Evaluation analytical framework

Annexure 3: Proposed revised ToC and Logframe

Annexure 4: Evaluation instruments

Annexure 5: Case studies

Annexure 6: Efficiency tables (Section 6.3)

Annexure 7: Outcomes section tables (Section 6.4)

Annexure 8: Terms of reference for the evaluation

Annexure 9: List of colleges in the sample

Annexure 10: Some good practices identified and recorded

³¹ Excluding Ingwe TVET College, Central Johannesburg TVET College, Ekurhuleni West TVET College, South West TVET College, Tshwane North TVET College and Tshwane South TVET College, as they were not submitted.

Annexure 11: Input on funding model from Boland TVET College in response to the validation workshop:

Currently state funds received by colleges consist (mainly) of the following streams:

1. Conditional grant
2. NSFAS
3. NSF
4. SETAs.

Each of these streams has its own complex systems of control resulting in time-consuming, less efficient and costly processes that might include duplication. These often causes time delays, limited cash flows and frustration at the college level.

Boland TVET College proposes one funding (income) stream (centralised) for colleges elaborated and motivated as follows:

In practice the college should receive funds from the DHET only, irrespective of whether the source was the NSFAS, NSF, SETAs or the conditional grant. The disbursement from the DHET would then be based on an **all-inclusive approved PQM**. Currently the DHET approves the PQM that includes Ministerial-approved programmes only. In actual fact the college has a much more comprehensive PQM which includes all the programmes funded by the above-mentioned streams.

Some of the implications of implementing the above-mentioned proposal might be:

1. More efficient (cost saving) processes for disbursement to colleges.
2. Time saving (i.e. saving money).
3. Colleges will not have to follow time-consuming and labour-intensive tender processes to access SETA programmes. Colleges and SETAs are both competencies of the Minister of Higher Education and Training and colleges should be the main delivery arm for the SETA programmes.
4. The two employers per college will be reduced to one. Currently colleges have a college payroll for staff in the occupational (SETA) leg and another payroll with the DHET (for PERSAL staff). Both groups deliver a service that resorts under the Minister of Higher Education and Training and all should be DHET staff.

Accepting and implementing the above-mentioned proposal of one all-inclusive PQM and disbursing the funds from one centralised system (DHET) will certainly create a much more efficient and effective way of financial management with definite cost-effective and timesaving benefits. These savings could then be utilised for enrolling thousands more students that might make a difference in alleviating the skills shortages in South Africa.