OUTCOME EVALUATION OF THE TRAINING COURSE ON THE THEORY OF CHANGE FOR PLANNING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

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ACRONYMS

APP	Annual Performance Plan
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (arm of the OECD)
DORA	Division of Revenue Act
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
GEWE	Gender Responsive Evaluation Guideline
GWM&E	Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation
Log	Frame Logic Framework
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTSF	Medium Term Strategic Framework
NDP	National Development Plan
NEPF	National Evaluation Policy Framework
NMES	National Monitoring and Evaluation System
NSDF	National Spatial Development Framework
NSG	National School of Government
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RBM	Results Based Management
ROI	Return on Investment
SCM	Success Case Method
SPs	Strategic Plans
TOC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the report is to present findings of the outcome evaluation of the training on "Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector" offered by the DPME and NSG. Theory of Change (TOC) has been identified as an important tool to support impact and outcomes planning and specifically the Results Based Methodology and should therefore form the basis for the development of Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans as prescribed by the 2019 Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans (DPME,2023).

The training course on the Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector is aimed at planners, monitoring and evaluation practitioners and programme managers in the national and provincial spheres of government who are involved in government planning processes.

This is a practical non-accredited course targeted at officials and has no relation to any existing Unit Standard and the course material is not Unit Standard based. This is a 3-day, highly interactive public service orientated course, during which delegates are exposed to practical, group discussions and group work with printed and electronic materials. The report is organised into several sections, starting with the methodology, followed by the Theory of Change, literature review, key evaluation findings based on specific evaluation questions and concludes with actionable recommendations

Objectives of the Evaluation

The objectives of the evaluation included the following:
- An assessment of the relevance of the training including the curriculum, materials and methodology
- The extent to which the facilitation of the training appropriately covers the knowledge and application of the TOC in institutional planning
- Assessment of the knowledge gained from the training course
- The extent to which the participants are able to apply the knowledge gained from the training to develop the institutional plans.
- The extent to which the training course led to the development of appropriate resultsbased indicators and targets.
- Exploration of key enabling and inhibiting factors within the institutions to achieve the outcomes of the training course relating to the institutionalisation of results-based institutional planning.

Focusing the Evaluation

This is an outcome evaluation premised on the training on the TOC for Planning in the Public Sector. Outcome evaluation is a type of evaluation that focuses on measuring the results or outcomes of a program or intervention. It is a systematic and objective process that involves collecting and analysing data to determine whether the programme is achieving its intended goals and objectives, and whether the outcomes are meaningful and beneficial to the target population.

Methodology

The evaluation employed a mixed method to evaluate the Theory of Change training course for Planning in Public Sector. A total of 110 trainees from national and provincial institutions responded to the survey. Furthermore all 6 facilitators who facilitated the training responded to the survey questionnaires. Furthermore, various documents were reviewed and analysed. The document review analysis was synthesised to complement the findings. Interviews were held with 8 provincial offices of the premier. It should be noted that the majority of participants who attended the focus group meetings also participated as course trainees. The Department of Home Affairs was used as a case study. An interview was also held with the National School of Government (NSG).

Key Evaluation findings

The evaluation has confirmed that the training content and methodology is relevant to all organisations in terms of their organisational strategies. It has been confirmed by the evaluation that almost all departments use the theory of change methodology to an extent when they undertake their strategic planning and APPs.

Findings - Theme 1: TOC course structure, facilitation and delivery:
- The majority of the respondents rated the course content to be good
- The majority of the facilitators rated the overall structure and flow of the course content to be excellent
- The evaluation revealed that the course content was to a large extent aligned with learner expectations
- Half of the facilitators believed that the course content was somewhat aligned with the participants' skills level
- The evaluation revealed that the majority of facilitators believed that the learning objectives were clear and appropriate for the course duration. It should be pointed out however that the views of the facilitators and that of the trainees on the duration of the course diverges.

- The evaluation has highlighted the fact that the course duration is insufficient for most trainees.
- The majority of facilitators found the course to have a perfect balance between theory and practical exercises
- The majority of facilitators have confirmed through this evaluation that the material provided (slides, handouts and templates) to trainees were useful
- The evaluation revealed that the presentation of the theory of change concepts was in the main clear and understandable. Yet there were respondents that found the concepts challenging.
- The majority of facilitators have confirmed through this evaluation that the training tools provided were effective in supporting the training course facilitation
- The evaluation revealed that most participants actively participated in discussions and activities

Findings - Theme 2: knowledge gained and application:

- The training course was found to be relevant to the work and field of interest for the majority of the trainees
- A significant finding of the evaluation is that the majority of trainees are not highly confident to apply the theory of change concepts in their professional setting which is a major concern
- The majority of trainees (68%) alluded to the fact that they apply the theory of change at their work place as part of their strategic planning or program design process with 5% of the trainees indicating that they use the theory of change in their planning processes sometimes. There was 18% of the trainees who indicated that they do not apply the theory of change in their strategic planning and programme for various reasons.

Findings - Theme 3: Institutionalisation of TOC

- The evaluation has further revealed that the theory of change is still not fully institutionalised in the planning processes of departments and public entities. There has been mixed reaction in that a number of planners were able to apply the knowledge gained, whilst other trainees have encountered resistance in their department as the necessary change management is not in place. Such resistance in many instances came from senior management who are more comfortable with the old way of doing things. This was compounded by the fact that very few senior managers were trained and this has been an inhibiting factor.

- The application of the theory of change is still a challenge in government departments and institutions. Draft 2023/24 Annual Performance Plans and Revised 2020-2025 Strategic Plans of 52 national institutions were assessed by DPME. The review of this assessment pointed to the fact that institutions still encounter challenges with the application of TOC as almost all institutions were advised to reflect the theory of change diagram in the situational analysis and also to ensure that the outputs, output indicators and targets are results based in their submitted plans. There is therefore a need for further support and training to ensure that results-based indicators and targets are reflected in APPs and SPs of institutions.
- The assessment of provincial institutions' APPs and SPs also revealed that various provincial departments were required to improve the alignment between output indicators and outputs to ensure that theory of change is visible. Provincial department needed to improve the crafting of some outputs to ensure that they are adequately aligned to the outcomes. Furthermore, the assessment revealed that the in various departments APPs and SPs, the theory of change was not clearly articulated in their explanation. This pointed to the inability to unpack how the outputs and output indicators translate to the achievement of outcomes and impact.
- The evaluation revealed an outcry from three (3) provinces that the course is expensive and as such it is impossible to train many officials due to budget constraints.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

Theme 1: TOC Course Structure, Facilitation and Delivery

1. **Minor modification of the training course -** it is recommended that the course be slightly modified by inclusion of more practical scenarios. The development of the TOC requires time and certain (though few) participants find it very difficult to conceptualise and implement even after being provided with the theoretical training. The training must be thorough and provide practical scenarios. These should be scenarios that departments can relate to in South Africa. More practical scenarios related to field of work and government planning processes are needed. Furthermore, there should be a practical scenarios where strategic plans are developed to illustrate the actual application of the TOC. There is a need to ensure that the course caters specifically for all sectors. A mix of scenarios are therefore required, and these should be exercises and scenarios that empowers one to plan. Further, there should be an expansion of the modalities of delivery offered that may include a pre-recorded series that allows participants to constantly refer to the teachings.

2. **Course options –** the NSG should continue with providing both the online and physical training as this will facilitate the enrolment of more trainees as choice will be given. The feasibility of having a self-paced online training should be investigated.

3. **Extension of the course duration -** the duration of the training course should be increased. The course needs to be more than the current 3 days so that groups can delve in deeper into the resource material. The NSG should consider and further investigate extending the course duration. The evaluation has revealed the desire by course participants to have the duration of the course extended to 5 days. A further recommendation is that the training should be split in phases. This could include theoretical learning as well as on the job learning where learners can return to provide feedback and obtain further guidance.

4. **Ongoing facilitator training –** it is recommended that course facilitators be trained on an on-going basis to ensure high professional and competency levels when delivering the course. The evaluation has revealed some level of uneasiness with some of the facilitators that have been presenting the course especially during the pilot phase.

5. **Course accreditation –** the feasibility of delivering the Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Service as an accredited course in future should be investigated. This will ensure that the course has gone through standardisation in its content and presentation.

Theme 2: Knowledge gained and Application

6. **Continuous training and refresher courses -** training should be undertaken on a continuous basis. There is a need for more people to be exposed to the training, the frequency of the course should also be looked at as it is crucial for continuous development to occur. The evaluation has revealed that many officials who were trained have since resigned. It is also recommended that more training should be undertaken and those who went to the training before should get a refresher course. The programme for the refresher course should be targeted at specific areas of focus once a needs assessment has been completed. This programme and needs assessment can be largely guided by the post training questionnaire.

7. **Provision of support to departments and institutions –** it is recommended that support with actual development of theory of change in strategic planning be provided. There are instances where officials were trained but still needed guidance on the development of the theory of change. An after-training support or service should be implemented. Peer support and mentoring programmes should be developed to ensure the transfer of leaning into the work place.

Theme 3: Institutionalisation of TOC

8. **Extension of training course to all programme managers in all business units –** it is recommended that the training be provided to all program managers from all organisational business units in departments, rather than focusing mainly on planners. Inviting many officials from the departments to attend is key as change requires team members.

9. **Training of senior managers** - there is a need to train senior officials on the theory of change as they are responsible and accountable for strategic planning. It is strongly recommended that the course be made compulsory for senior managers to improve cooperation and their understanding of the approach during planning and will mitigate the inherent risk of resistance to change. There is therefore a need to target programme managers at Director / Chief Director / Deputy Director General level. The NSG should look into the feasibility of having two separate courses, one for senior managers and a more detail course for planners and programme managers

10. **Change management** – it is recommended that a change management processes be initiated by departments and institutions to obtain buy-in from all role players. This will go a long way in institutionalization of the theory of change in institutional planning. Furthermore, buy in from participants is critical. Many participants saw the training course and the TOC approach as additional work to their already loaded workload

11. **Funding** – the evaluation revealed a need for funding to be availed. Funding for the training course should be prioritised and departments should use their HRD funds to train more officials.

12. **Collaboration with the academic sector** – there is a need for collaboration with the academic sector to enable the design and delivery of comprehensive courses (in the short to medium term) for planning in government. This will enable the building of the required planning competencies over time.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this evaluation was to undertake an outcome evaluation of the training on "Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector" offered by the DPME in collaboration with the NSG. This report seeks to present the findings of the evaluation and recommendations.

The "Theory of Change" (TOC) approach originated in community development programmes in the United States in the 1990s, the TOC became part of a wider family of theory-driven evaluation approaches (Gooding, Makwinja, Nyirenda, Vincent, & Sambakunsi, 2018). The TOC aims to explore and depict the change that has more complexity and systemic understanding of development, rather than utilizing linear process portrait (Hamdy, 2019) advancing with time in the South African context the National Evaluation Policy Framework, which was adopted by the Cabinet on November 23, 2011 (Chetty, 2018) emphasized the necessity of an efficient Theory of Change.

After the introduction of the Revised Framework, DPME in collaboration with the National School of Government (NSG) developed a three-day training course on the TOC for planning in the Public Sector. The aim of this training course is to provide planners, monitoring and evaluation practitioners and programme managers in the public sector with the competencies to apply TOC as a tool for the development of Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans. The course is aligned to the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans and the associated Guidelines. In the past three financial years (2019/20, 2021/22 and 2022/23), a total of 1 621 government officials (i.e., planners, monitoring and evaluation practitioners, and programme managers) at national and provincial institutions were trained.

The challenges in achieving the development goals of both the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) points to weaknesses with institutional planning amongst other challenges in the planning system[1]. The training on TOC for Planning in the Public Sector was offered to some planners, monitoring and evaluation practitioners, and programme managers at both the national and provincial spheres of government.

However, through the assessment of institutional plans, there are indications that training has not led to the institutionalisation of the TOC in the development of institutional plans.

There is lack of understanding of TOC approach and its application in institutional planning[2]. There is malicious compliance with planning frameworks to achieve positive audit outcomes and performance results. There is also poor integration of development goals in institutional planning resulting in sub-optimal development results. This includes the selection of indicators not for their usefulness in understanding performance, but for the ease with which they can be audited / reported on[1]. As such, DPME identified the need to examine the quality of the training, the extent to which the training has contributed to the institutionalisation of TOC in institutional planning as well as its contribution to improving the quality of planning and the achievement of development results.

1.1   Compilation of the Report

The report has followed the approach outlined below to comprehensively evaluate the TOC training course. The sections contained in the report are thus as follows:

- **Methodology:** This section outlined the research design and data collection methods used in the evaluation. It included a discussion of the sampling strategies, tools used for data collection, and analytical approaches adopted to assess how to improve effectively the TOC training course.
- **The Literature Review and Benchmarking Studies:** This section provided an in-depth analysis of international perspective of result-based management, South African monitoring and evaluation evolution and training evaluation models.
- **Evaluation Recommendations:** The key recommendations have been presented in line with the evaluation questions. The findings also explored aspects such as the strategic impact of the training, relevance to organisational goals, challenges and limiting factors and opinions for the future
- **Conclusion and Recommendations:** The conclusion summarised the key findings and has provided recommendations that will offer actionable insights for enhancing the TOC training course, improving implementation processes thereby addressing identified gaps to achieve the intended outcomes as aforementioned.

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[1] Diagnostic Report on the state of Planning in the Nation and Provincial Spheres of government, 2022. DPME. Pretoria
[2] Assessment Report 2023/24 Annual Performance Plans. 2023. DPME

2. METHODOLOGY

This section provides a detailed description of the research design, data collection methods, sampling strategies, and analysis techniques used to meet the aforementioned objectives. It outlines the approach taken to gather and analyse data, ensuring the research's validity and reliability additionally the section also discusses the rationale behind selecting specific methods and how they align with the research goals.

2.1 Research design

The research design for this evaluation was structured to ensure the research questions could be addressed with evidence-based conclusions. For this evaluation, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, allowing the evaluation to benefit from both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. This dual approach facilitated the use of both inductive reasoning, where patterns emerged from qualitative data, and deductive reasoning, where hypotheses were tested against quantitative data. The combination of methods also provided a stronger basis for addressing the research problem. The use of mixed methods, specifically through concurrent triangulation design, allowed the evaluation to collect data from different sources – surveys, interviews, and document review simultaneously, with equal importance given to qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Data from surveys conducted from trainees and course facilitators were complemented by indepth interviews with key stakeholders which included the provincial offices of the premier, NSG and the Department of Home Affairs which was used as a case study. This approach strengthened the evaluation by combining the precision of quantitative data with the rich context provided by qualitative insights.

2.3   Target population

The target population refers to the portion of the population that was accessible for data collection, consisted of:

*   Trainee participants (total population of 1621): Government planners, monitoring and evaluation practitioners, and programme managers from national and provincial spheres of government who participated in the TOC training course. These individuals were selected for their direct involvement in government planning processes and their practical application of the course content in their work.

*   Course facilitators (total population of 6): Facilitators who delivered the TOC training course, as they possess critical insights into the structure, delivery, and impact of the training. Their expertise in designing and executing the course content provides valuable perspectives on its effectiveness and areas for improvement.

*   Representatives from the Offices of Premier (across all nine provinces): These individuals were chosen due to their experience in using TOC for strategic and performance planning at a provincial level. Their input was sought to understand the broader challenges and successes in the application of the TOC concepts in government planning and to gather feedback on the relevance of the training materials and methods.

*   Officials at national and provincial departments (Case studies)

*   The National School of Governance (NSG)

2.4   Sample size and sampling techniques

The research population for the trainees was 1621 and survey questionnaires were issued to all the 1621 trainees who participated in the training. The research population for facilitators was 6 and survey questionnaires were issued to all the facilitators. The probability sampling technique was approved for this evaluation by the project steering committee at project inception. The aim in this regard was to use this technique and draw a sample from the research population of the 1621 trainees. In probability sampling, every unit in the population has a specific pre-assigned probability of being chosen for the sample. This sampling technique offers a scientific method of selecting samples from the population in accordance with the rules of chance (Leedy et al., 2014). Each item in the population is randomly selected and has an equal probability of being included in the sample. Although the technique makes use of the random numbers to determine who is selected, this study casted the net wide to all the trainees in the research population since the response rate was flagged as a risk in the project implementation plan.

A mathematical formula as defined by Yamane (1967) is utilised as strategy to determine a sample size. The formula is outlined below:

$$n = \frac{N}{[1 + N(e)^2]}$$

Where   n=Sample Size
     N=Size of the Population
     e=Margin of error or level of precision

Note: The margin of error utilised is 5%/0.05

Therefore, the research sample for trainees was:

$$n = \frac{1621}{[1 + 1621(0.05)^2]} = 320.83 = 321$$

Therefore, the research sample in terms of the sampling size was 321 trained officials. A total of 110 survey responses were received which represent 34.2% of the sample size (i.e. 6.78% of the research population).

For the purpose of case studies and focus group meetings, purposive sampling was undertaken. The project steering committee agreed on departments to be utilised for case studies and the provincial offices of the premier were also identified as key stakeholders who could enhance this evaluation.

2.5 Data Collection Method

Questionnaires were used as a data collection tool. The method of collecting data through questionnaires was executed on google forms. The purpose was to collect feedback from trainees on the effectiveness of the course content, delivery, relevance of the materials used and most importantly how they have applied the content they have learnt thus far. The questionnaire included both multiple-choice questions as well as open-ended questions. This method was not only applied with the trainee participants but also with the course facilitators. The aim of engaging the facilitators was to be able to understand their perspectives on the effectiveness of the TOC training course, areas for improvement, and trainee participant engagement. The questionnaire is attached to this report as an annexure. Document review and analysis was also undertaken as part of the evaluation. The following documents were analysed and the analysis synthesised to complement the findings:

- Assessment of APP Reports for National Institutions: Draft 2023/24 Annual Performance Plans and Draft Revised 2020-2025 Strategic Plans
- Assessment of APP Reports for Provincial Institutions: Draft 2023/24 Annual Performance Plans
- Learner Guide (Training Manual) for the training course on Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector

To gain deeper insights into the perceptions of the TOC training course, another method used was online focus groups with the Offices of Premier (across the provinces). These meetings were facilitated to explore their experiences with regard to the challenges and successes in using TOC for strategic planning and performance planning. Suggestions for improving the course materials and training methods, identifying specific areas where further support or clarity is needed and the level of confidence gained in applying TOC concepts practically were solicited. Presentations were made at these meetings where participants were given background information on the project. Data was gathered during the meetings on the following points of discussion:

- Relevance to organisational strategy
- Application of learning by participants
- Impact on leadership and decision making
- Benefits experienced
- Training effectiveness
- Support for future implementation
- Challenges and opportunities for improvement

The Department of Home Affairs was used as a case study and officials responsible for planning in the department were interviewed, and accordingly shared key lessons. The NSG is responsible for facilitating the training course and was also interviewed as part of the evaluation. The NSG provided valuable insight to the evaluation and shared key lessons learned during the pilot phase of the training course implementation.

2.6 Data Collection Procedure

Appointment letters from the National Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation were shared with potential interviewees. The questionnaires were submitted to all the trainee participants and course facilitators via email (link) and once completed the information was automatically available. The interviews with Offices of Premier were scheduled and conducted virtually through Microsoft Teams; however, the challenge encountered at this stage was the low return and participation efforts thus emails and telephonic follow ups were made.

This data collection technique employed captured participants' own experiences and interpretation of the training events. The method was very engaging for the participants since it is rooted in a conversational style of asking questions, this created a response environment where the participants provided personal, thorough, and reflective answers about the TOC. A total of 110 trainees responded to the surveys, 6 facilitators also responded to the survey and 8 offices of the premier were interviewed.

2.7   Data Analysis Techniques

Considering that the evaluation adopted a mixed method approach, quantitative data from questionnaires and qualitative data obtained from interviews undertaken virtually was analysed. The data analysis techniques used in the evaluation were statistical analysis and thematic analysis. The quantitative information gathered from the data was analysed using tables, pie charts, and bar graphs from the spreadsheet generated by google forms. The qualitative information gathered from interview transcripts, virtual meetings recordings, and emails was analysed using themes. These involved identifying, coding and categorising patterns within the data contained in the google form excel spreadsheet for the open-ended questions.

2.8   Ethical Issues

The five commonly recognised principles relating to ethical consideration were considered for this evaluation . These include an additional consideration; the use of AI to generate transcripts from the virtual interviews conducted with the stakeholders. These principles are:
- minimising harm,
- respecting autonomy,
- protecting privacy,
- offering reciprocity, and
- treating people equitably.

2.9   Quality Assurance

To ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data collected, several quality assurance measures were implemented:

a. *Survey Tool Quality Review*
    The survey tools were rigorously tested during the pilot phase to identify and correct any issues before full-scale deployment. These tests were conducted internally within the organisation to identify any potential issues with the survey.

b. *Data Validation*
    Data entered through the google form online tool was subjected to automatic validation checks to ensure completeness and consistency.

c. *Preliminary Analysis*
    An initial analysis of the data collected indicates that the data is of high quality, with minimal inconsistencies.

These measures have contributed to the overall reliability of the data, providing a solid foundation analysis.

2.10   Limitations

Low response rate from trainees: A total of 110 survey responses were received from trainees which represent 34.2% of the sample size of 321. In terms of the research population of 1621, this represents 6.78% of the research population. Although the survey response rate is 34,2% of the sample and seems fair, this may not accurately represent the views and experiences of the entire group of participants. The respondents comes from different institutions which provide balance of views in terms of institution representation. A total of 34 responses were received from officials appointed by national government departments and 28 responses received from officials appointed by national public entities. Furthermore, a total of 40 responses were received from officials appointed by provincial governments and 8 responses received from officials appointed by provincial public entities.

The completion of the case study interviews was a significant challenge as not all the identified institutions were available for interviews. The evaluation has therefore relied on one (1) case study.

The unavailability of documents from the NSG which include pre-and post-survey questionnaire reports (such as reaction evaluation forms) from the pilot study had an impact in that there was no analysis of immediate trainee reaction to the training course.

Although there was a concerted effort toward ensuring gender inclusivity in the evaluation through the research design, survey distribution to all participants and virtual session engagements, the theme of gender equality and women's empowerment could not wholly be ascertained due to the participant-responsive nature of the evaluation.

3. THE INITIAL THEORY OF CHANGE

The initial Theory of Change for the Training Course on Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector is outlined below. Firstly, the underlying problem statement is given. Secondly, the intervention is described. Finally, the impact, intermediate outcomes, immediate outcomes and outputs are explained.

Underlying Problem Statement

The Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans (2019) was introduced into the planning system to provide direction on the development of Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Plans and Annual Operational Plans using a results-based methodology for planning. The implementation plan for the recommendations of the implementation evaluation of the original Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans (2010) necessitated that DPME, with the support of National Treasury, Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), and the National School of Government, should make available training and support for roll-out of the Revised Framework and the planning concepts and planning approaches which underpins the Revised Framework.

A critical gap was identified in the competency of planners, M&E practitioners and programme managers to use the Theory of Change in institutional planning processes to develop Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Plans and Annual Operational Plans. The Theory of Change is an important tool to support the Results Based Methodology and should therefore form the basis for the development of Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans as prescribed by the Revised Framework.

The Intervention

After the introduction of the Revised Framework, DPME in collaboration with the National School of Government (NSG) developed a three-day training course on the Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector. The aim of this training course is to provide planners, monitoring and evaluation practitioners and programme managers in the public sector with the competencies to apply the Theory of Change as a tool for the development of institutional plans. The course is aligned to the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans and the associated Guidelines.

Theory of Change for the Intervention

The Theory of Change sets out the identified outputs, outcomes and impact which was implemented to address the underlying problem.

Figure 1: Theory of Change
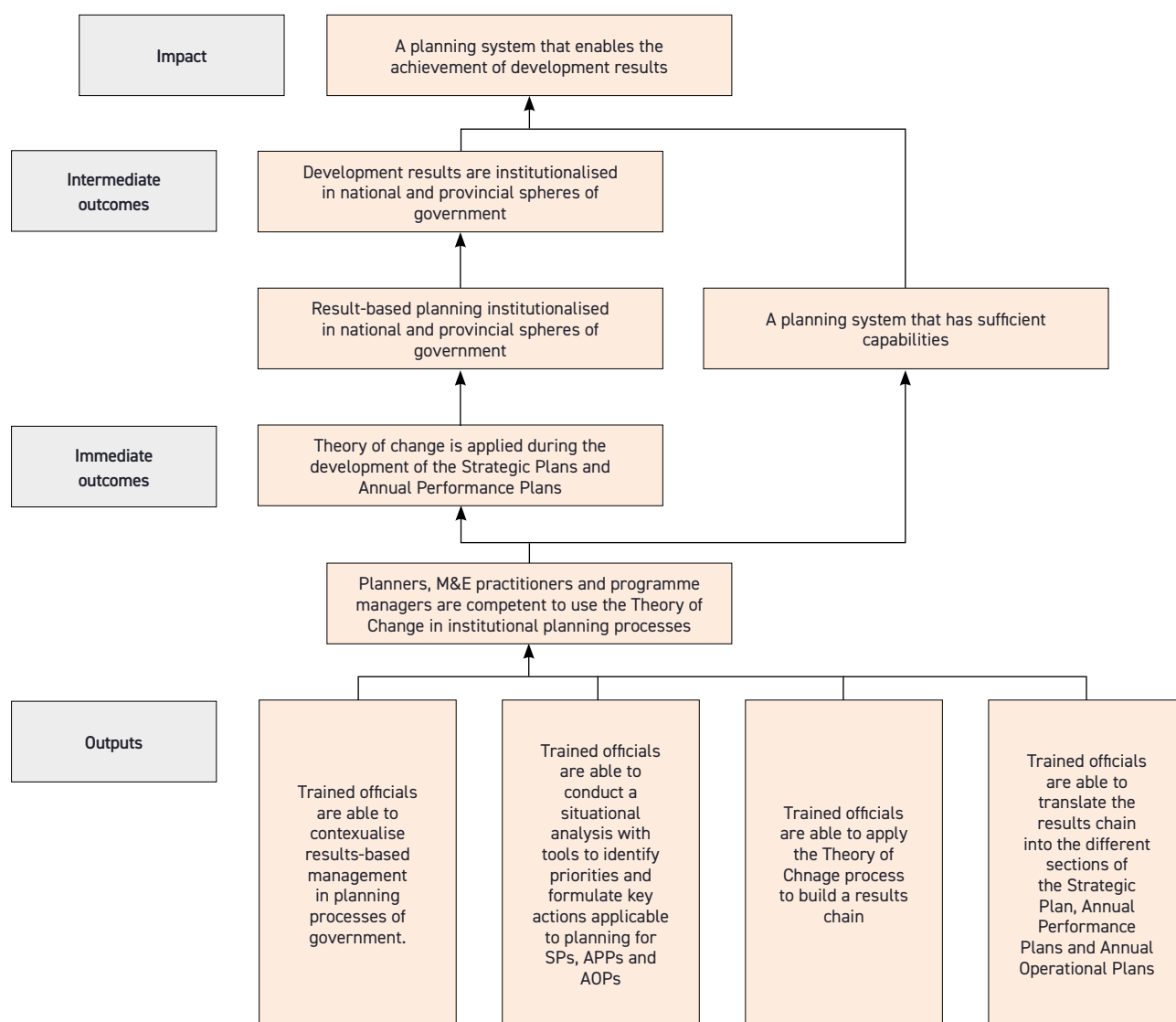
Impact:

- **A planning system that enables the achievement of development results**
  - Description: The impact for this intervention envisages a planning system that enables the achievement of development results. It should be considered that this impact and the broader Theory of Change will be nested within other higher level Theories of Change. For example, the Theory of Change for the Policy Framework for Integrated Planning. Therefore, the envisaged impact does not stretch into the domain of improved development results.

Intermediate Outcomes:

- **Development results are institutionalised in Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans**
  - Description: Improved results-based planning will focus institutions on planning for development and the development results put forward in the national, provincial and local government priorities. Instead of planning for inward focused and operational activities; institutional plans will be focused on impact and outcome planning which align with government's development results whilst ensuring that the correct preconditions (outputs, activities and inputs) are chosen and reflected in Annual Performance and Operational Plans.

- Assumptions: Development plans are effectively designed.

- **Result-based planning institutionalised in national and provincial spheres of government**
  - Description: Application of the Theory of Change in institutional planning will lead to institutions planning for results as needed as per the requirements of the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans.
  - Assumptions: Other interventions to institutionalise development results in Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans are effective. For example, the assessment of alignment of the Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans with the national, provincial and local government priorities is effective.

- **A planning system that has sufficient capabilities**
  - Description: Adequate state competency enables the planning system to fulfil the associated planning functions, roles and responsibilities.
  - Assumptions: Enabling environment for undertaking institutional planning.

Immediate Outcomes:

- **Theory of Change is applied during the development of the Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans**
  - Description: Competent planners, M&E officials and programme managers actually use the Theory of Change in institutional planning processes.
  - Assumptions: Provisions of the Revised Framework are effective in supporting the results-based methodology for planning.

- **Planners, M&E practitioners and programme managers are competent to use the Theory of Change in institutional planning processes.**
  - Description: Trained officials are competent in the application of the Theory of Change and are able to apply the planning processes and tools in their institutions when developing the Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Plans and Annual Operational Plans.
  - Assumptions: There is institutional buy-in and adoption for the application of Theory of Change in institutional planning processes.

Outputs:

- **Trained officials are able to contextualise results-based management in planning processes of government.**
  - Description: Trained officials have an understanding of results-based management as well as an understanding of planning concepts, the planning context used in the South African government, government planning processes, and the key components of the Theory of Change and Logic model.
  - Assumptions: Well designed and effective training material, methodology and delivery.

- **Trained officials are able to conduct a situational analysis with tools to identify priorities and formulate key actions applicable to planning for Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Plans and Annual Operational Plans.**
  - Description: Trained officials are able to incorporate the key steps of conducting a situational analysis into the strategic planning processes to various analytical tools; understand the role of a situational analysis related to the strategic planning process; and use various tools such as the problem tree analysis to identify the problem and root causes thereof, as well as the solution tree analysis which seeks to provide solutions to address the problems identified in the problem tree analysis.
  - Assumptions: Well designed and effective training material, methodology and delivery.

- **Trained officials are able to apply the Theory of Change process to build a results chain.**
  - Description: Trained officials are able to understand and apply the concept Theory of Change; identify who should be involved in developing a Theory of Change; develop a results chain using Theory of Change building blocks; indicate how the Theory of Change can be presented; and explain how a Theory of Change will be tested.
  - Assumptions: Well designed and effective training material, methodology and delivery.

- **Trained officials are able to translate the results chain into the different sections of the Strategic Plan, Annual Performance Plans and Annual Operational Plans.**
    - Description: Trained officials are able to use planning tools to measure results, identify baselines and targets; as well as translate the results, indicators and targets with narrative explanations into the different sections of the Strategic Plan, Annual Performance Plans and Annual Operational Plans.
    - Assumptions: Well designed and effective training material, methodology and delivery.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1 Introduction

The training course on the Theory of Change for Planning in the Public is a practical nonaccredited course targeted at officials and has no relation to any existing Unit Standard and the course material is not Unit Standard based. This is a 3-day, highly interactive public service orientated course, during which delegates are exposed to practical, group discussions and group work with printed and electronic materials[3].

The purpose of this course is for participants to gain an understanding of the implementation of the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans (2019) and the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans (2019). It is the intention of the training course to provide participants with the skills to apply Theory of Change (TOC) as a tool for the development of Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Plans and Annual Operational Plans. It provides basic information on key concepts, principles and application of the TOC. Furthermore, participants are provided with an opportunity to engage with the interactive material to stimulate thinking through key concepts and the application of those concepts to real life planning processes (NSG,2019).

The course outcomes include the following:
- Contextualise results-based management in planning processes of government.
- Conduct a situational analysis with tools such as problem tree analysis and solution tree analysis to identify priorities and formulate key actions applicable to planning for Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Plans and Annual Operational Plans.
- Apply the Theory of Change process to build a results chain; and
- Translate the results chain into the different sections of the Strategic Plan, Annual Performance Plans and Annual Operational Plans[4].

The course structure for the Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector training consist of five units depicted in the figure below:

Figure 2: Training course structure on the TOC for planning in the public sector

Unit 1: **Planning Context**

Unit 2: **Situational Analysis**

Unit 3: **Theory of Change**

Unit 4: **Logical Framework**

Unit 5: **Application to Planning Process**

[3] The National School of Government. 2022. Theory of Change for Planning in Public Sector: Learner Guide.
[4] The National School of Government. 2022. Theory of Change for Planning in Public Sector: Learner Guide.

In crafting a literature review Winchester and Salji[5] posit that a literature review is a "critical analysis of a segment of a published body of knowledge through summary, classification, and comparison of prior research studies, reviews of literature, and theoretical articles". In the same vein, Bless *et al*[6] accentuate that "a review of the literature is the way information about what is already known and not known is learned. It is important for the researcher to organise the search of literature around the key concepts to be studied. The purpose of the literature review includes the following: to familiarise the researcher with the latest development in the area of research; and to identify gaps in knowledge, as well as weakness in previous studies; and to study the advantage and disadvantage of the research method used by others". In essence, a literature review is defined as a significant summary and a review of the present state of knowledge in a particular area.

In an endeavour to adequately contextualise the training course within a conceptual paradigm the literature review aimed to provide an understanding of the evolution of the Results Based Management (RBM) approach and TOC as important approaches for improved service delivery within the broader scope of the Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation (GWM&E) System. The focal point was understanding the conceptual basis of Training and Development (T&D) and this was undertaken through the lens of outcome evaluation on the training course in partnership with the National School of Government. Moreover, discourse is presented on the variety of available training evaluation methodologies, their strengths, weaknesses and questions that may be posed per methodology.

4.2   International Perspective on Results-Based Management

The RBM paradigm is a holistic, introspective, interrogative and evidence-led value chain of variables that are interlinked towards the achievement of impacts. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) defines RBM as "a broad management strategy aimed at changing the way institutions operate by improving performance, programmatic focus and delivery. It reflects the way an organisation applies processes and resources to achieve interventions targeted at commonly agreed results"[7]. Subsequently in 1997 the United Nations system adopted the RBM paradigm to improve the quality of its products and services among its many agencies and associated bodies and introduced it among its implementing partners in member states. RBM is commonly known as the 'gold standard'[8] to achieve high quality and high performance in the delivery of the development agenda. Essentially, RBM is based on the TOC[9] pursued by the global community both in the corporate sector and by development professionals to make the world a better place through broader engagement of people, in particular those left behind.

It is important to differentiate between the RBM and other universal concepts of Quality Management Systems. The RBM has its niche in addressing performance and quality matters in the planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation of development and humanitarian programmes especially the ones supported by the UN system. RBM is aimed at delivering efficient, effective and sustainable projects for communities, particularly benefiting those segments of population left behind due to grave social inequalities, economic disparities and perpetuating poverty. Kuzek et al[10] argue that many organisations adopted RBM as a management strategy focusing on performance and achievement of a hierarchical chain of results namely outputs, outcomes and impacts with each component contributing to the next level. The causal links between various levels of results are as important as the results themselves, reflecting the TOC and the roles of providers and other stakeholders. The results based approach is premised on the following themes:

- Common vision (among Stakeholders)
- Leadership and Stewardship
- Ownership and Partnership
- Capacity Building
- Reform of budget processes and financial management
- Realistic outcomes and simplicity
- Devolution of authority
- Learning
- Evidence based decision-making

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[5] Winchester CL, Salji M. Writing a literature review. Journal of Clinical Urology. 2016;9(5):308-312. doi:10.1177/2051415816650133

[6] Bless, C., Smith, H. & Kagee, C. 2006. Fundamentals of Social Research Methods: An African Perspective. Cape Town: Juta & Co Ltd.

[7] UNESCO Results-Based Programming, Management and Monitoring (RBM) Guiding Principles, UNESCO Paris, Bureau of Strategic Planning, January 2008, Online available from http://old.unesco.kz/publications/ed/RBM_guide_en.pdf

[8] Khan, KJ, Begum, N, Razak, A. (2020). Practicing Results Based Management for Enhancement of Quality and Performance of Social Development and Humanitarian Programmes. Universal Journal of Management 8(5): 231-253.

[9] Theory of Change: A Practical Tool for Action, Results and Learning, Annie E. Casey Foundation, www.organizationalresearch.com

[10] Kusek, J.Z. and Rist, R. C, Ten steps to a results- based monitoring and evaluation system, The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank, Washington, 2004, Online available from http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/23/27/35281194.pdf

The above approach helps development managers, training and/or service providers ensure active engagement of stakeholders in the implementation of processes and delivery of outputs and services necessary to achieve clearly stated objectives. Accordingly, learnings from evaluation of results help in evidence based decision making by integrating lessons learned into management decisions and monitoring of, and reporting on performance[11]. When using RBM in development planning, Khan, *et al*[12] indicate that there are four critical components for successful implementation of the RBM paradigm as adapted below:

Figure 3: RMB in Development Planning

Situational Analysis	Involves developing a clear understanding of the problem and focusing on the root cause
Develop the Theory of Change	Developing a clear understanding of the assumptions behind choices about what the key levers of change are, and where efforts should be focussed
Intervention Logic	Clearly state what results must be achieved, and what resources will be necessaryfor the achievement of the results
Performance Variables	Clear indicators, baselines and targets are required to provide a clear basis for monitoring progress and evaluating results.

Source: Adapted from Khan, et al (2020): Practicing Results Based Management for Enhancement of Quality and Performance of Social Development and Humanitarian Programmes

As the final and what the United Nations Development Group (UNDG)[13] argues is the most important element of RBM is ensuring that interventions lead to effective development and a positive change in people's lives. This requires that managers manage better, ensuring that their resources are commensurate with the results they hope to achieve. Results-based decision making is a key dimension of RBM that should not be overlooked. Identifying, developing and managing the capabilities (people, systems, resources, structures, culture, leadership and relationships) are essential for managers to plan for, deliver and assess results.

The RBM finds expression in the TOC that is used as a tool for improving the planning, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation of a programme. There are a number of definitions for the TOC that includes:

The United Nations Development Group (UNDG)-United National Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)[14] defines TOC as

> *"A theory of change is a method that explains how a given intervention, or set of interventions, is expected to lead to specific development change, drawing on a causal analysis based on available evidence".*

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[11] Glossary of Evaluation Terms, Compiled and Edited by [19]Thomas A. Lifvendahl, Ed. D. Term Evaluation P. 5, Online available from http://drtomlifvendahl.com/Glossary%20of%20Evaluation%20Terms.pdf
[12] Khan, KJ, Begum, N, Razak, A. (2020). Practicing Results Based Management for Enhancement of Quality and Performance of Social Development and Humanitarian Programmes. Universal Journal of Management 8(5): 231-253.
[13] UNDG, 2012. RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK-Harmonizing RBM concepts and approaches for improved development results at country level. Accessed 01 October 2024 from: https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/UNDG-RBM-Handbook-2012.pdf
[14] UNDG-UNDAF. 2017. Theory of Change-UNDAF Companion Guidance. http://unsdg.un.org/resources/theorychange-undaf-companion-guidance

Patricia Rogers[15] offers an explanation inclusive of the uses for the TOC

"A theory of change explains how activities are understood to produce a series of results that contribute to achieving the final intended impacts. It can be developed for any level of intervention – an event, a project, a programme, a policy, a strategy or an organisation".

John Mayne[16] offers a definition of TOC

"As an explicit theory of how and why it is thought that a social policy or programme activities lead to outcomes and impacts. TOC are used in the design of programmes and programme evaluation, across a range of policy areas".

Anderson[17] posits that a TOC:

"Develops solutions to complex social problems. At its most basic the Theory of Change explains how a group of intermediate accomplishments set the stage for producing long-term results. The aim of a Theory of Change is to bring about a desired social change; depicting how a complex change initiative will unfold over time. It creates an illustration of all the various moving parts that must operate in concert to bring about a desired ultimate outcome."

South Africa, through the National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF)[18] provides an apt description of the TOC,

'Theory of Change is a tool that describes a process of planned change, from the assumptions that guide its design, to the planned outputs and outcomes and the longterm impacts that it seeks to achieve.'

Critically these definitions indicate a move towards taking deliberate and decisive action thereby making a meaningful impact on society. The TOC progression started as early as the 1970s, where there was increasing debate about how development occurs. Theorists such as Chen[19], Rossi20, and Weiss21 further explored how to apply programme theories to evaluations due to the recognition that economic growth often led to a greater gulf between rich and poor; and that many development projects did not lead to sustainable change thereby questioning the assumptions behind existing development thinking. Voices from the south – such as Freire (the Brazilian educator) and Nyerere (the Tanzanian President and development thinker) – brought in a radically different analysis of the causes of poverty and different approaches to addressing it. Freiran thinking underpins much of theory of change22. He advocated for combining theory and action – 'theory in use' – to create social change.

The current TOC discourse draws on two streams of development and social programming practice: evaluation and informed social action23. From the evaluation side, TOC is an aspect of programme theory, a long-standing area of evaluation thought, developed from 1960s onwards. Programme theory approaches urge a more explicit focus on the theoretical underpinnings of programmes, clearer articulation of how programme planners view the linkages between inputs and outcomes, and how programmes are intended to work, to improve evaluations and programme performance. The spread of the particular strand of programme theory that is known as TOC has no doubt been influenced by the seminal practical guidelines, 'The Community Builders' Approach to Theory Development' that were developed by Anderson24 as part of the Aspen Institute's 1990s initiative that involved evaluators and community development programmers in applying programme theory concepts to the evaluation of complex community initiatives.

However, as James' review[25] highlights, the current interest in TOC as an approach represents the convergence

[15] Rogers, P. (2014). Theory of Change, Methodological Briefs: Impact Evaluation 2, UNICEF Office of Research, Florence.

[16] Mayne, J. 2017. Theory of change analysis: Building robust theories of change. Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation. 32 (2): 155–173. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

[17] Anderson, A.A. 2009. The Community Builder's approach to Theory of Change: A Practical Guide to Theory Development. Aspen Institute.

[18] Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, 2011. National Evaluation Policy Framework. Available: National Evaluation Policy Framework Nov 2019.pdf (www.dpme.gov.za)

[19] Chen, H. T. (1980). The theory-driven perspective [Special issue]. Evaluation and Program Planning, 12, 299-306. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

[20] Rossi, P. H., Freeman, H. E., & Lipsey, M. W. (1999). Evaluation: A systematic approach (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

[21] Weiss, C. H. (1998). Evaluation: Methods for evaluating programs and policies (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

[22] James, C. 2011. Theory of Change Review. A report commissioned by Comic Relief", Comic Relief: http://mande.co.uk/2012/uncategorized/comic-relief-theory-of-change-review/

[23] Vogel, I. 2012. Review of the use of 'Theory of Change' in international development- Review Report. Department of International Development, UK.

[24] Anderson, A. (2005) The Community Builder's Approach to Theory of Change: A Practical Guide to Theory Development, New York: Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change: http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/docs

[25] James, C. (2011) "Theory of Change Review. A report commissioned by Comic Relief", Comic Relief: http://mande.co.uk/2012/uncategorized/comic-relief-theory-of-change-review/

of another, equally long-standing strand of development thought. Since the 1960s, informed action for social change and participatory approaches have advocated a conscious reflection on the theories of development, as a basis for social learning and action. The presence of these different traditions that are blended in the current evolution of theory of change approaches may explain why such a wide range of organisations have taken it up. James argues further[26] that despite taking often very different starting points, driven by different motivations and using different vocabulary and processes, organisations have found TOC thinking a useful approach for exploring and clarifying their thinking about change and how they contribute to it in a particular context.

The process requires stakeholders to be precise about the type of changes they want to achieve, and it should be clear why change is expected to happen in a particular way[27]. Serrat[28] posits a number of advantages for using the TOC approach that includes,

- develop joint understanding of an initiative and surface differences,
- circumscribe and bridge the gaps between local- and national-level changes,
- unearth assumptions,
- strengthen the focus, clarity, and effectiveness of an initiative by better locating the rationale, means, and ends of interventions and measuring their success,
- design strong plans of action,
- clarify lines of responsibility,
- empower people to become more active and involved in a multi-stakeholder and collaborative experiential learning exercise,
- identify resources and check them for adequacy,
- recognise the most appropriate clients, audiences, and partners a sponsor can work and hold open conversations with,
- foster collaboration between stakeholders and avoid duplication,
- communicate work more succinctly with a common language,
- support organisational development in line with the core focus and priorities,

- build a fruitful framework for monitoring and evaluation, and
- address or reform ineffective interventions.

TOC theorists Anderson[29], Vogel[30] and Harries et al[31] concur that developing the TOC comes from understanding root causes and helps to understand the issue being addressed. The key to identifying the outcome is understanding the core issue that is being addressed. TOC is one of the tools that can be used to determine a pathway for achieving desired results. Further they argue that that the elements of the theory include the pathway of change; results and preconditions (impact, outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs); indicators; and assumptions. The primary motivation for the TOC relates to four inter-related components of development planning, a) planning; b) monitoring; c) evaluation; and d) description and communication.

There has been considerable debate and often misinterpretation on the TOC and Logic Model. Serrat[32] adequately affirms that logic model (results framework) is a tactical description of the process of delivering an outcome. It insists on, inputs and activities, the outputs they generate, and the connections between the outputs and the desired outcome. Serrat[33] posits that arguably a recurring weakness is that assumptions are poorly articulated, and stakeholders are unsure about how the change process will unfold across components. He further argues, a TOC is a strategic picture of multiple interventions required to produce early and intermediate outcomes that are preconditions to a long-term change. A strength is that causal pathways specify what is needed for outcomes to be achieved, and assumptions can be tested and measured. Therefore, the TOC enables organisations to think about their work more deeply. Once an outcome has been identified, a results framework can be drawn to explain how it will be reached; thus, a TOC could be underpinned by several logic models. Essentially, logic models and TOC differ markedly in terms of the views and experiences each holds in store vis-à-vis explanation or exploration on the one hand and accountability versus learning on the other.

[26] Ibid
[27] Rogers, P.J. 2008. Using Programme Theory for Complicated and Complex Programmes. Evaluation, 14: 1, pp. 29-48
[28] Serrat, O. 2012. Theories of Change. Georgetown University, in book entitled Knowledge Solutions, pp 237-245.
[29] Anderson, A. (2005) The Community Builder's Approach to Theory of Change: A Practical Guide to Theory Development, New York: Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change: http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/docs
[30] Vogel, I. 2012. Review of the use of 'Theory of Change' in international development. DFID. Available at: http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/pdf/outputs/mis_spc/DFID_TOC_Review_VogelV7.pdf. (Accessed 11 May 2019).
[31] Harries, E. Hodgson, L. & Noble, J. 2014. Creating your Theory of Change. Available from: http://www.thinknpc.org/publications/creating-your-theory-of-change/creating-your-theory-of-change-3/?postparent=12372
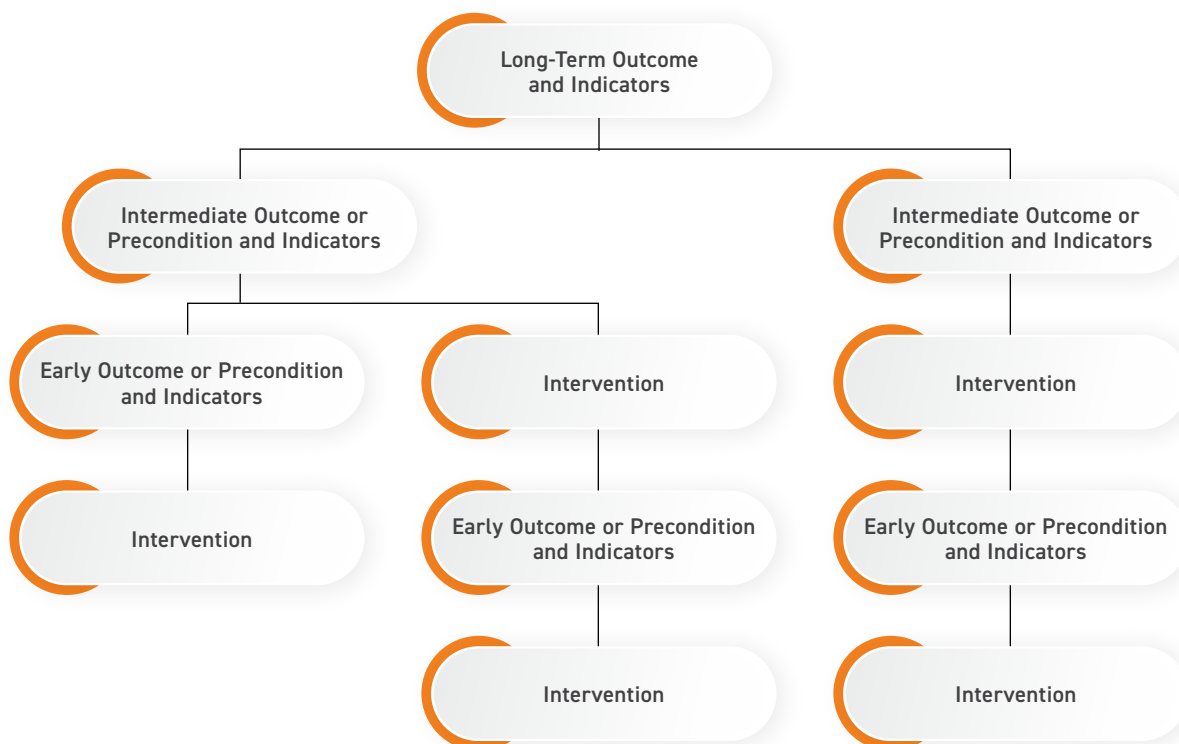[32] Serrat, O. 2012. Theories of Change. Georgetown University, in book en=tled Knowledge Solu=ons, pp 237-245.
[33] Ibid

Very often, the TOC is presented in the Logframe, or Logical Framework as a method of presentation. A Logframe provides a structure for describing the impact, outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs as a results chain and shows the logical linkages between them. Indicators, baselines and targets at each level of the results chain are developed to measure progress towards achieving the desired results. Assumptions and risks form the basis of the Log frame. Indicators and targets developed through the Log frame are reflected in planning documents. Serrat[34] presents the Logical Framework diagrammatically as follows:

Figure 4: Elements in the pathway of change

Source: Serrat, O. 2012. Theories of Change.

As a development approach, the effective use of RBM and TOC leads to clearer understanding of challenges and targeted interventions on a number of policy issues. However, authors, Toffolon-Weiss, Bertrand, and Terrell[35] and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)- Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Joint Venture[36] argue that there are potential challenges that may stymy achieving development results. These include:

- An up-front investment of time and resources is needed at the start of an intervention. The process of establishing an agreed-on set of results and identifying relevant indicators and data sources can be logistically intensive. However, this process is likely to yield greater engagement and ownership among stakeholders and could reduce the resources traditionally required to complete midterm and final evaluations of the project or programme.

- The effects of interventions can be difficult to measure fully. Translating complex processes into a core set of indicators carries the risk of not fully capturing achievements and progress and of missing unintended consequences, because they are generally not noted in the results framework. This reality underscores the importance of having key stakeholders collaborate in developing and approving the results framework by which implementers will be held accountable.

[34] Serrat, O. 2012. Theories of Change. Georgetown University, in book en=tled Knowledge Solu=ons, pp 237-245.
[35] Toffolon-Weiss, Melissa M., Jane T. Bertrand, and Stanley S. Terrell. 1999. The Results Framework—An Innovative Tool for Program Planning and Evaluation." Evaluation Review 23 (3): 336–59.
[36] OECD-DAC Joint Venture on Managing for Development Results. 2008. Managing for Development Results Principles in Action: Sourcebook on Emerging Good Practice, 3rd ed. Paris: OECD

- Results chains can become overly complicated. Attempts to apply quantitative and qualitative measures to complex development processes often end up establishing an unwieldy set of indicators to monitor. Thus importance, relevance, cost, timeliness, and utility are key considerations for determining which set of indicators should be included.

- Involving programme staff in the evaluation process could bias results measurement. Implementers are motivated to collect data that reflect positively on an intervention and its results. Even in cases where a results orientation is integrated throughout the project cycle, evaluators should still be engaged adequately to supervise the monitoring process and to disaggregate the data and conduct analysis that goes beyond what is presented in the results chain.

Ultimately, as authors James[37], Anderson[38] and Weiss[39] posit, RBM and TOC provides important foundations for development initiatives and helps direct stakeholders towards critical development impacts. They concur that RBM and TOC are comprehensive and powerful approaches that must be seen concurrent with investment in time and resources (financial and human resources) at the outset of a programme or intervention to promote and assess development results.

4.3   South African Monitoring and Evaluation Evolution

Governments across the world face tremendous pressure from different stakeholders to demonstrate results[40]. In South Africa, this pressure has much to do with meeting the aspirational goals and ideals of the post-apartheid constitutional contract. The 1994 transition to a constitutional democracy created higher expectations of a better life for the black majority who suffered socio-economic exclusion and deprivation under the apartheid regime[41].

According to Mackay[42], "developing countries have a high demand for effective government Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems in order to ensure proper public sector management. The author also states that the culture of evaluation has become a path to enhance government performance. Hence, developing countries are working to strengthen their existing M&E systems, while others are developing them from scratch". Naidoo[43] argues that in South Africa there have been numerous high-level political assertions supporting monitoring and evaluation, and globally the link between the latter and the former as well as development has assisted to place these in pole position, that is, more than an instrument but also enabling to meaningfully respond to development issues.

As a natural conclusion toward instilling outcomes and impacts, the South African government institutionalised the National Monitoring and Evaluation Systems (NMES) as a critical instrument to achieve efficiency and effectiveness of policy and programmes. The South African Cabinet approved a Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System (GWM&E) in November 2007. The three domains included were programme performance information, socio economic and demographic statistics and evaluation[44] with the clear intention of embedding performance management systems in all government activities. This was the interpretation of the NME in the South African context. The framework asserts that a monitoring and evaluation system is a "set of organisational structures, management processes, standards, strategies, plans, indicators, information systems, reporting lines and accountability relationships which enables national and provincial departments, municipalities and other institutions to discharge their M&E functions effectively. In addition to these formal managerial elements are the organisational culture, capacity and other enabling conditions which will determine whether feedback from the M&E function influence the organisation's decision-making, learning and service delivery[45]".

[37] James, C. (2011) "Theory of Change Review. A report commissioned by Comic Relief", Comic Relief: http://mande.co.uk/2012/uncategorized/comic-relief-theory-of-change-review/

[38] Anderson, A. (2005) The Community Builder's Approach to Theory of Change: A Practical Guide to Theory Development, New York: Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change: http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/docs

[39] Weiss, C. H. (1998). Evaluation: Methods for studying programs and policies (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

[40] Kusek, J.Z., Rist, R.C. and White, E.M. 2005. How Will We Know the Millennium Development Goal Results When We See Them? Building a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System to Give Us the Answers. Evaluation. 11(1):7–26.

[41] National Department of Human Settlement, Ramanna, M. Provide an understanding of the conceptual frameworks and dynamics of informal settlements and upgrading programmes. Paper presented at World Urban Forum Nanjing China, 2008.

[42] Mackay, K. (2007). How to Build M&E Systems to Support Better Government, Washington D.C., The World Bank.

[43] Naidoo, I. A. 2011. The role of monitoring and evaluation in promoting good governance in South Africa: A case study of the Department of Social Development. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand.

[44] The Presidency. 2005. Proposal and Implementation Plan for a Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation System. Pretoria: Government Printer.

[45] Ibid

According to The Presidency[46], the South African system is designed to achieve "accurate and reliable information on progress made in the implementation of government policies and other public sector programmes which has been collected and updated on a regular, thorough and on-going basis; information on the outcomes and impact achieved by government and other public bodies, which has not only been collected and analysed but also periodically presented, and most importantly, the quality of monitoring and evaluation practices in government and public bodies is continuously improved". The thrust or the essence of the system is an emphasis on the crucial nature of the evidence-based planning, budgeting, and policy execution in government in terms of effective and efficient performance and overall management in the public sector. It is system that should operate as a comprehensive data system for good corporate governance.

Although globally countries are under pressure to implement national evaluation policies in efforts towards transparency and accountability, less than 20 countries have actually implemented national evaluation policies[47]. Further, in Africa, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe have adopted the national evaluation policy instrument (ibid). In South Africa a conducive policy and legislative environment has ensured that the GWM&E is institutionalised as an efficient performance management system.

The National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF)[48] defines evaluation as an orderly and unbiased review of an incomplete or concluded project, programme, or policy, as well as its model, execution, and end-products. The intention is to establish the applicability and accomplishment of objectives, improvement of efficiency, effectiveness, effect, and sustainability. An evaluation should provide data that is reliable and useful, aiding the inclusion of lessons learned into the decision-making course of both the recipients and donors.

In terms of programme performance information, the National Treasury Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information, 2007[49], asserts that "performance information indicates how well an institution is meeting its aims and objectives, and which policies and processes are working. Making the best use of available data and knowledge is crucial for improving the exec tion of government's mandate. Performance information is key to effective management, including planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and reporting. Performance information also facilitates effective accountability, enabling legislators, members of the public and other interested parties to track progress, identify the scope for improvement and better understand the issues involved".

The new performance management system brought about a different set of government-wide outcomes supported by results chain (inputs, activities and outputs) and new institutional innovations in the form of various Sector Delivery Forums and Sector Delivery Agreements including Performance Agreements for political leadership in government[50]. The figure below demonstrates the South African paradigm and the critical processes that are undertaken:

Figure 5: Results Based Management

The development results of achieving specific outcomes *What we aim to change*	**IMPACTS**
The medium term results for specific beneficiaries that are the consequence of achieving specific outputs *What we wish to achieve*	**OUTCOMES**
The final products, or goods and services produced for delivery *What we produce or deliver*	**OUTPUTS**
The process of actions that use a range of inputs to produce the desired outputs and ultimately outcomes *What we do*	**ACTIVITIES**
The resources that contribute to the production and delivery of outputs *What we use to do the work*	**INPUTS**
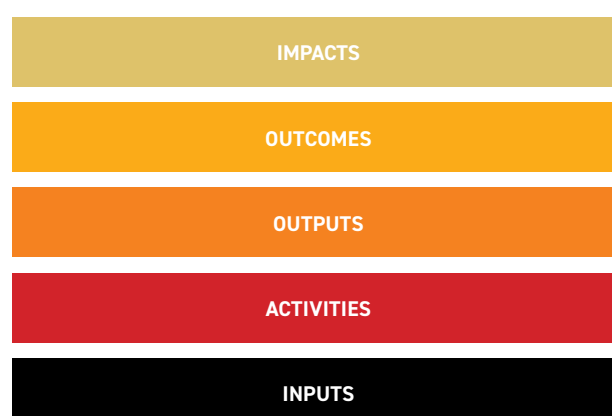
Source: DPME Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans

[46] The Presidency. 2005. Proposal and Implementation Plan for a Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation System. Pretoria: Government Printer.
[47] Tirivanhu, P, Jansen van Rensburg, M. 2018. Assessing gender responsiveness of the Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation System in South Africa, Development Southern Africa, 35:2, 163-178, DOI: 10.1080/0376835X.2017.1396443.
[48] Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, 2019. National Evaluation Policy Framework. Available: National Evaluation Policy Framework Nov 2019.pdf (www.dpme.gov.za)
[49] National Treasury, 2007. Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information. Pretoria: Government Printers.
[50] The Presidency. 2009. Improving Government Performance: Our Approach. Pretoria: The Presidency.

Outcome Evaluations

A key aspect of the GWM&E is expressed through the NEPF and contextualised in the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans. In summary, the NEPF[51] presents the objectives, strategies, and implementation plans to improve government performance with the aim to enhance government performance through credible and quality evaluations. The revised NEPF integrates state-owned entities into the National Evaluation System and addresses gender equality, youth development, and concerns of persons with disabilities. The policy framework is based on lessons from the 2017/18 evaluation of the National Evaluation System and extensive consultations during the 2018/19 financial year. The NEPF aligns with the Gender Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation and Auditing Framework (GRPBMEA) adopted in 2019. As the NMES is evolving in South Africa there has been a concerted shift in the past 2 decades towards engendering NMES. This has played a critical role in bringing to the fore themes of gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights as cross-cutting themes.

Arguably South Africa has one of the most progressive legislative and policy environments towards promoting gender equality. This is largely premised on inheriting an apartheid system of disenfranchisement of black people in general and women in particular. The effects of such marginalisation are still felt today. In response South Africa is a signatory to a number of international instruments promoting gender equality and the protection of women's rights. These include the following, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Southern African Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development, Millennium Development Goals, Sustainable Development Goals, Beijing Platform for Action and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women.

Moreover, the following policy instruments have been developed, the Framework for Transforming Gender Relations, Commission for Gender Equality Act (1996), Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill (2013), National Gender Policy Framework, Gender Equality Strategic Framework and Gender Policy Framework for Local Government. A National Gender Machinery, which comprises government and civil society, was formed in 1997. Institutionally government has established (April 2020) the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities with the mandate to lead on socio-economic transformation and implementation of the empowerment and participation of women, youth and persons with disabilities through mainstreaming, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation.

The DPME Gender Responsive Guidelines35 entrenches gender considerations in all evaluations undertaken by government. The Guideline aims to support and guide evaluators and commissioners of evaluation in initiating, managing and/or using gender-responsive evaluations by providing direction, advice and tools for every step in the evaluation process: planning and budgeting for evaluations, commissioning evaluations, preparation, conducting, reporting, evaluation use and follow up and the institutionalisation of evaluations. The Guidelines prescribes that gender-responsive evaluation approaches will take into account the fact that issues of gender equality need to be addressed at different levels:

Figure 6: Gender Equality Needs
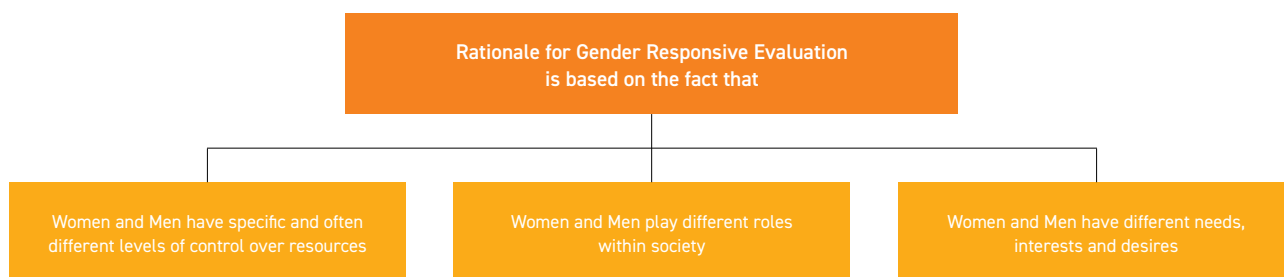
Source: DMPE Gender Responsive Evaluations Guidelines, 2021.

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[51] Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, 2019. National Evaluation Policy Framework. Available: National Evaluation Policy Framework Nov 2019.pdf (www.dpme.gov.za)

Although gender responsive themes permeate the scope of this assignment, a concerted effort will be made to ensure that the sample strata will reflect gender responsive attributes. Moreover, during questionnaire development and analysis emphasis will be placed on ensuring compliance with the Gender-Responsive Evaluation Guidelines.

The NEPF[52] provides minimum standards for evaluations across government. Its main purpose is to promote quality evaluations, which can be used for learning to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and impact of government interventions. This is achieved by reflecting on what is working or not working, and then revising interventions accordingly. It seeks to ensure that credible and objective disaggregated evidence from evaluations is used in planning, budgeting, organisational improvement, policy review, as well as ongoing programme and project management to improve performance. It provides for the use of various evaluation approaches in addressing complex issues and sets out a common language for the undertaking of evaluations in the public service. According to the NEPF[53], evaluations should seek to provide an objective view through rigorous research methods to inform conclusions about performance, reasons for good performance and poor performance, and to suggest recommendations for improvement.

The NEPF mandates evaluations to permeate all processes of government to achieve the desired impact. Although this review focusses on outcome evaluations it is important to demonstrate the full package of evaluations that guides the performance management system in South Africa. Accordingly, the NEPF[54] identifies six (6) types of evaluations that may be conducted across government. Briefly these are a) diagnostic evaluations that are used to conduct a situational or status quo analysis prior to an intervention; b) design evaluations that is undertaken to analyse the TOC, internal logic and consistency of a programme; c) implementation evaluations determine if an intervention has made an impact; d) outcome evaluations measure the degree to which an intervention has had an impact or effect on recipients of the intervention; e) economic evaluations measure the cost vis-à-vis the benefit of an intervention; f) impact evaluations55 determines and measures changes in outcomes with the implementation of a particular intervention; and, g) intervention synthesis seeks to collate evaluations over a period to identify generalised findings.

Outcome evaluations differ from other forms of research, reporting, and studies in several ways[56]. First, outcome evaluations generate knowledge that has wider benefits and may be more applicable to other settings and over time than the information generated by monitoring activities, process evaluations, or performance assessments. Second, outcome evaluations require different kinds of data collection. Most notably, they require attention to gathering information from appropriate comparison groups so that valid inferences can be made about the impact of a particular programme compared with what would have happened without it or with a different programme. Third, outcome evaluations are not required for all programmes and projects. Rather, they are best targeted to programmes that are new or expanding and for which effectiveness has not been established.

Outcome evaluation is important for several reasons and forms the goals to undertake such an exercise. This includes[57]:

- Accountability: Outcome evaluation provides evidence-based information on the effectiveness of a programme, which can be used to demonstrate accountability to stakeholders, such as funders, policymakers, and programme participants.
- Continuous improvement: By measuring outcomes and identifying areas for improvement, outcome evaluation can help programme managers and stakeholdersto continuously improve programme performance and achieve better results.

52 Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, 2019. National Evaluation Policy Framework. Available: National Evaluation Policy Framework Nov 2019.pdf (www.dpme.gov.za)
53 Ibid
54 Ibid
55 Outcome and impact evaluations are closely correlated and the definition of impact evaluations by the NEPF includes measuring outcomes and defines impact as a change in the target population or social conditions that has been brought about by the programme/intervention (i.e. a change that would not have occurred had the programme or intervention not been implemented).
56 Center for Global Development. (2006). When will we ever learn? Improving lives through impact evaluation. Center for Global Development.
57 DPME, updated March 2024. Guideline on Impact Evaluation 2.2.13

- To inform decision-making: Outcome evaluation can provide information that can be used to inform decision-making about programme design, implementation, and resource allocation, by identifying programme and interventions that are achieving their intended outcomes and providing the greatest benefits to the target population. Resource allocation: Outcome evaluation can help stakeholders to determine the most effective and efficient ways to allocate resources, by identifying programme and interventions that are achieving their intended outcomes and providing the greatest benefits to the target population.

- Learning and knowledge sharing: Outcome evaluation can generate new knowledge (as it relates to theoretical foundations, processes) and insights about what works and what doesn't work in programmes and interventions, which can be shared with other stakeholders and used to inform future programme design and implementation.

However, not all programmes warrant an outcome evaluation. Outcome evaluations should be used selectively when the question being posed calls for a strong examination of causality. Outcome evaluation has many benefits, but it is important to be aware of its limitations and challenges. By carefully considering these limitations and addressing them in the evaluation process, programme managers, policymakers, and other stakeholders can ensure that the evaluation is reliable, valid, and useful for improving programme performance. Some of these challenges and limitations include:

- **Attribution**: It can be difficult to attribute changes in outcomes solely to the programme or intervention, as external factors and other interventions may also be contributing to changes. This will be explored based on the focus group sessions that will be conducted.

- **Data quality**: The accuracy and reliability of data collected can be impacted by issues such as participant bias, self-report bias, and data collection methods.

- **Timing**: Outcome evaluation may be conducted after the programme has ended, which may limit the ability to make changes to the programme design or implementation in response to the findings.

- **Programme complexity**: Outcome evaluation may be limited by the complexity of the programme or intervention being evaluated, particularly when the programme is multifaceted or has multiple components.

- **Generalisability**: The findings of outcome evaluation may not be generalisable to other populations or contexts, particularly when the programme is specific to a particular population or community.

- **Ethics**: Outcome evaluation raises ethical issues related to informed consent, confidentiality, and privacy, particularly when vulnerable populations are involved.

The important question to ask is, what is at stake? Will evidence about the success of the programme, programme modality, or design innovation inform important decisions? These decisions often involve budgetary allocations and programme scale. If there are limited budget implications or if the results will affect only a few people, it may not be worth doing an outcome evaluation.

Although the results based approach has been touted as a panacea management tool that could be used to improve organisational performance results and policy outcomes[58]. And, government creating an enabling policy, legislative and institutional environment, the extent to which the approach has been institutionalised within the South African public service remains a subject of ongoing public management and governance discourse. Ramogayane and Jarbandhan[59] argue that despite the adoption of an outcomes-based approach since 2009, an RBM paradigm has yet to be embedded in the South African public service due to existing bureaucratic culture and the paucity of technical skills. Further, they expand their argument to include,

a) the administrative legacy of the apartheid system of inefficiency that was inherited,

b) the implementation of performance-based incentives and consequences remains fragmented,

c) rules and compliance-based traditional management practices persist,

d) short-term orientation to government performance creates more challenges in delivery because the focus is on an electoral cycle of five years,

e) poor organisational learning and evidence-based decision-making, and

f) silo-based approach to public service delivery persists.

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[58] Hatton, M.J and Schroeder, K. 2007. Results-Based Management: Friend or Foe? Development in Practice. 17(3):426–432.
[59] Ramogayane, R., Jarbandhan, D.B., 2018. Embedding a Results-based Management Culture to Improve Public Service Performance in South Africa: Critical Considerations. Administratio Publica 138 Vol 26 No 2 P138-157.

Training and Development (T&D) in South Africa

An important instrument to test progression and institutionalisation of the GWM&E is the outcome evaluation of the training on "Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector" offered by the DPME and National School of Government. Over the past financial years (2019/20, 2021/22 and 2022/23), a total of 1 621 government officials (i.e. planners, monitoring and evaluation practitioners, and programme managers) at national and provincial institutions were trained. The training course is envisaged to provide planners, monitoring and evaluation practitioners and programme managers in the public sector with the competencies to apply the TOC as a tool for planning to improve the plans such that they are results-based and ensure the institutionalisation of government's development agenda.

The training course was premised on the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans[60] and the Guidelines for Implementation of the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans[61]. The Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans guides national and provincial government institutions in short and medium term planning, emphasising a results-based approach. It aligns with legislation, regulations, and long-term policy directions. The Revised Framework aims to institutionalise national development planning, including for women, youth, and people with disabilities, and aligns planning with budgeting, reporting, monitoring, and evaluation processes. It encourages evidence-based policy making and outlines stakeholder roles. As the name suggests the Guidelines for Implementation of the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans demonstrates critical steps to be undertaken when completing strategic plans and annual performance plans. It provides a concise tool and processes for undertaking

crafting of the strategic plans and annual performance plans. Most importantly, the Guidelines presents a thorough sequential cascading of steps that creates linkages from the entire TOC value chain. It is envisaged that if this process is followed conscientiously there should be marked improvement in implementation and consequentially service delivery.

The South African Vision expressed in the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030[62] depends on the capacity of its human resources to respond to the ever-changing needs of the citizens. Further, NDP envisages state institutions which are adequately provided with skilled and committed personnel. Several authors, including Mamokhere[63] and Hough[64], have argued that the government's inability to adequately meet the community's service needs is a root cause of the poor quality of service. Inadequate human resource policies, lack of employee capacity, poor planning, and lack of monitoring and evaluation are some highly publicised causes of poor service delivery in South Africa (Makanyeza et al[65]).

Ryklief and Tengeh[66] posit that T&D is a set of formal and informal lessons given to workers to improve their abilities and knowledge. Effective training and development will equip workers with the knowledge and skills to perform specific tasks as required. Therefore, Karia et al[67] argue that T&D are vital to an organisation as it facilitates adopting and adapting to new technologies, making organisations remain relevant. It further allows management to correct behaviour and improve performance. According to Long et al[68], the following factors need to be considered to deem training and development effective: the cost of the training, the nature of the training, the training in relation to existing training policies, the ability of the training to close the gap between the competence of the employees and their job requirements and the significance of the training in relation to its correlation with the organisations productivity.

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[60] Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, 2019. Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans. (www.dpme.gov.za)

[61] Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, 2019. Guidelines for the Implementation of the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans. (www.dpme.gov.za)

[62] Republic of South Africa. 2012. National Development Plan 2030: Our future – make it work. Pretoria: Presidency of South Africa.

[63] Mamokhere, J., (2019). An exploration of reasons behind service delivery protests in South Africa: A case of Bolobedu South at the Greater Tzaneen Municipality. International Conference on Public Administration and Development Alternatives (IPADA). http://hdl.handle.net/10386/2669

[64] Hough, M. (2008). Violent protest at local government level in South Africa: Revolutionary potential? Scientia Militaria: South African Journal of Military Studies, 36(1), 1-13. https://hdl.handle.net/10520/AJA10228136_1

[65] Makanyeza, C, Kwandayi, H and Ikobe, B. 2013. Strategies to improve service delivery in local authorities. International Journal of Information Technology and Business Management. 15. 1-11.

[66] Ryklief, M and Tengeh, R. 2022. The importance of training and development for government officials in South Africa. International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science (2147- 4478). 11. 642-656. 10.20525/ijrbs.v11i6.1990.

[67] Karia, A. O., Omari, S., Mwanaongoro, S., and Kimori, Y. 2016. Importance of training and development on performance of public water utilities in Tanzania. African Journal of Education and Human Development, 2(2), 10-18.

[68] Long, C. S., Kowang, T. O., Chin, T. A., and Hee, O. C. 2016. Improving organizational performance through training function: A Review. International Business Management, 10(4), 475-478.

Further, Aguinis and Kraiger[69], Anlesinya and Amponsah-Tawiah[70] posit that for an organisation to be competitive based on the skill and knowledge of its employees, it needs to realise the importance of T&D. Training and development is, in fact, a psychological research process aimed at improving the well-being of employees and the efficiency of an organisation. Effective training interventions can be assessed based on the following four factors: employee satisfaction, client satisfaction, management's satisfaction and the overall improvement in productivity of employees post-training.

Training and development is a continuous process of capacity and capability development. According to Saha[71], governments face a continuous challenge in delivering services to the public. One primary reason is the continually shifting conditions and increased demand for essential services. As South Africa and the rest of the world adapt to the 4th industrial revolution, the government must modernise its services, upskill and educate its officials accordingly[72]. Moreover, according to Howard[73], who agrees with Saha, citizens' expectations of government and its capacities have grown due to their increased knowledge and expertise in the digital age. As a result, governments must also adapt to meet the needs of their citizens. Therefore, government's development efforts must increasingly focus on education and training.

Centeno, van Bavel and Burgelman[74] identify the following areas that require training and development that needs to be addressed in an attempt to improve public administration:
- adopt an evidence-based decision-making approach;
- constantly examine the needs of citizens;
- acknowledge the intermediaries who are often the gatekeepers of communities; and
- build relationships and encourage collaboration.

In South Africa Mohlomi and Mutereko[75] contend that the need for T&D in the workplace is both theoretical and pragmatic and finds expression in legislation such as the Skills Development Act, No. 57 of 1998, and the Skills Development Levies Act, No. 9 of 1999, which provides a regulatory framework for skills development in the workplace. In the public sector, each department is expected to provide training for its employees. The primary vehicle to drive T&D in South is the National School of Government (NSG) which draws its mandate from the Constitution, and with particular reference to 195(1) (h), which stipulates that: "good human resource management and career-development practices, to maximise human potential, must be cultivated[76]". Furthermore, the NSG, as a national public service department, draws its mandate from national legislation, the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation 103 of 1994),as amended; the Public Finance Management Act, 1999; Section 19 of the Treasury Regulations and the 1998 White Paper on Public Service Training and Education. This policy and legislative mandate enables the NSG to fulfil a function of providing training or causing the provision of training to occur within the public service[77].

Bell et al[78] assert that although studies on T&D can be traced back to the early twentieth century, recently researchers have shown an increased interest in how such training is associated with performance. For instance, Reichard and Schröter's[79] investigation into the education and training of Public Administration and Management in Europe shows that it has become more academic and open

[69] Aguinis, H., and Kraiger, K. 2009. Benefits of training and development for individuals and teams, organizations, and society. Annual review of psychology, 60(1), 451-474. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163505
[70] Anlesinya, A. & Amponsah-Tawiah, K. (2020). Towards a responsible talent management model, European Journal of Training and Development, 44 (2/3), 279-303. https://doi.org/10.1108/EJTD-07-2019-0114
[71]Saha, P. 2008. Government e-Service Delivery: Identification of Success Factors from Citizens' Perspective. Unpublished PhD thesis. Luleå University of Technology: Sweden
[72] Oke, A. & Fernandes, F.A.P., 2020. Innovations in teaching and learning: Exploring the perceptions of the education sector on the 4th industrial revolution (4IR). Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity, 6(2), p.31. https://doiorg/10.3390/joitmc6020031
[73] Howard, M. 200). E-government across the globe: how will'e'change government. e-Government, 90, 80. https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net
[74] Centeno, C., Van Bavel, R., & Burgelman, J. C. 2005. A Prospective View of e-Government in the European Union. Electronic Journal of e-Government, 3(2), 83-90. https://academicpublishing.org/index.php/ejeg/article/view/430
[75] Mohlomi, N and Mutereko, S. 2019. Training and Development in the Public Sector: A Case Study of a Provincial Department in KwaZulu-Natal. 8. 106 -133.
[76] The National School of Government. Strategic Plan 2020-2025. www.nsg.gov.za
[77] Ibid
[78] Bell B. S., Tannenbaum, S. I., Ford, J.K., Noe, R. A., and Kraiger, K. (2017) 100 years of training and development research: What we know and where we should go. Journal of Applied Psychology, 102: 305-323
[79] Reichard, C. and Schröter, E. (2018) Education and training in public administration and management in Europe. In The Palgrave Handbook of Public Administration and Management in Europe (pp. 41-60). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

without the traditional "internal" public service inclination. Consequently, graduates from such programmes lack occupation-specific skill sets required for positions in the public sector – a gap which T&D should fill. Tsotetsi[80] examines how T&D is used to capacitate teachers in the South African education system. However, Mohlomi and Mutereko[81] argue that there is little information or research on how T&D is conducted in the South African public sector.

To delve deeper into T&D for the public service in South Africa literature suggests that there is significant difference between accredited courses and non-accredited courses. Kopelow and Campbell[82] indicate that the primary differences between accredited and non-accredited courses are, "accredited training is nationally recognised and taught up to a quality-assured standard approved by the quality assurer. Whereas non-accredited courses aren't regulated, meaning quality and consistency can vary. Accredited training courses count as recognised qualifications for the participant and non-accredited courses may not receive the same recognition as an accredited course. Participants in accredited courses undertake some form of examination to test their knowledge which may be interpreted as knowledge being instilled and practical application is made easier".

Quality-assessment and accreditation are not only important for public administration programmes and academic departments but also for students. Students will be assured of quality when enrolling for a programme knowing that such programmes provide the knowledge and skills required for effective and efficient governance and service delivery. As Garcia et al[83] state, "accreditation is a process of quality control and can differ by context and mode of learning, thereby requiring some standardisation". Such accreditation concerns the mission of the programme, the fit thereof with the contents,

pedagogical concerns, the organisation and staff, the formative and summative assessment of students, and the evaluation of the programme by the students[84]. Standards are set to ensure conformity and criteria that needs to be exceeded in order to get accredited. Accreditation is an assurance of the quality of programmes. If a programme is not accredited, students are unsure about its quality, subsequently the absence of accreditation of public administration programmes results in questions being asked about their quality by students and employers[85].

In terms of literature on TOC Training the information is sparse and will require more in-depth collation of information, however, James[86] argues that TOC training is crucial in enhancing the skills and capacities of organisations to develop, implement, and evaluate programmes more effectively. He argues further that while TOC is a powerful tool, its application requires a nuanced understanding of strategic planning, critical thinking, and systems mapping. Training courses, therefore, aim to provide participants with a structured process for articulating their organisational theories of change, often accompanied by real-world examples and practical exercises.

Training courses on TOC typically cover several key components[87]:

- **Basic Concepts**: Overview of TOC, its benefits, and its application in various sectors.
- **Stakeholder Engagement**: Techniques for involving stakeholders in the TOC development process.
- **Developing TOC Frameworks**: Guidance on creating logical sequences from activities to outcomes.
- **Assumptions and Risks:** Identifying assumptions and external factors that may impact outcomes.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)**: Incorporating TOC into M&E frameworks to track progress and measure impact.

[80] Tsotetsi, C. T. (2018) The implementation of professional teacher development policies: A continuing education perspective. (Doctoral dissertation, University of the Free State).

[81] Mohlomi, N and Mutereko, S. 2019. Training and Development in the Public Sector: A Case Study of a Provincial Department in KwaZulu-Natal. 8. 106 -133.

[82] Kopelow, M., & Campbell, C. (2013). The benefits of accrediting institutions and organisations as providers of continuing professional education. Journal of European CME, 2(1), 10–14. https://doi.org/10.3109/21614083.2013.779580

[83] Garcia, M., Perez, L.D., and Hayashi, R. 2021. Accreditation of Online Courses in Higher Education— Early Adopters in the European Union, India, Indonesia, and Malaysia. ADB BRIEFS NO. 196. Pp. 1–12. DOI:http://dx.doi.org/10.22617/BRF210411-2. Available at: https://www.adb.org/ publications/ online-courses-highereducation-eu-india-indonesia-malaysia.

[84] Van Jaarsveldt, L.C., De Vries, M.S., and Kroukamp, H.J. 2019. South African students call to decolonize science: Implications for international standards, curriculum development and Public Administration education. Teaching Public Administration. 37(1):12–30.

[85] Gaston, P.L. 2013. Higher education accreditation: How it's changing, why it must. Stylus Publishing, LLC

[86] James, C. (2011) "Theory of Change Review. A report commissioned by Comic Relief", Comic Relief: http://mande.co.uk/2012/uncategorized/comic-relief-theory-of-change-review/

[87] Ibid

In terms of effectiveness of TOC Training, Serrat[88] posits that TOC training can significantly improve participants' understanding of complex systems, programme evaluation, and strategic planning. In particular, organisations that engage in TOC training report greater clarity in their programme goals, better alignment between their activities and outcomes, and enhanced accountability. One key finding from the literature is that TOC training fosters critical thinking, helping participants to challenge assumptions and assess the feasibility of their goals. This, in turn, strengthens programme design and evaluation.

Mohd Said et al[89] have examined the impact of TOC training on organisational performance and found that organisations with staff trained in TOC demonstrated stronger monitoring and evaluation practices and were better able to adapt their programmes in response to changing conditions. Similarly, Vogel[90] highlights that TOC training improves communication within organisations, particularly around shared goals and expectations.

Despite the benefits, there are challenges associated with TOC training courses. One common critique posited by James[91] is that the theoretical nature of TOC can be difficult to grasp for participants without prior experience in programme design or evaluation. To mitigate this, Mohd Said et al[92] recommends that trainers focus on practical applications and provide participants with hands-on exercises. Another challenge is ensuring that TOC frameworks remain adaptable over time. As programmes evolve, their theories of change may need to be revisited and revised, requiring ongoing training and support.

Moreover, Khan et al[93] argue for the importance of context when delivering TOC training. Programmes operating in different sectors or regions may require customised training approaches. For example, TOC training for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in international development may need to focus more on cross-cultural factors and global issues, while training for local organisations may emphasise community engagement and local governance structures. Effective TOC training programmes often adopt interactive and participatory approaches to ensure that participants engage deeply with the material. Workshops, case studies, group discussions, and simulations are commonly used to help participants apply TOC principles to their specific contexts. Furthermore, TOC trainers are encouraged to provide ongoing mentorship and support to ensure that participants are able to refine and implement their TOC frameworks after the course[94].

Vogel[95] emphasises the role of peer learning in TOC training, suggesting that group-based training settings foster collaboration and the exchange of ideas. This not only enhances participants' learning but also builds networks of practitioners who can support one another in the future.

The literature on TOC training courses reveals that these programmes are essential for improving strategic planning, evaluation, and accountability in development and social change contexts. While TOC training offers numerous benefits, such as enhanced critical thinking and stronger programme design, there are challenges in ensuring its practical application. Ongoing support, context-specific training, and participatory approaches are crucial for maximising the impact of TOC training. As more organisations adopt TOC as a core component of their strategic processes, the demand for effective training courses will likely continue to grow .

Of importance is the translation of theory into practice Wrenn[96] asserts that "it is imperative that students in professional programmes be able to put into practice what they have learned in the classroom". Further,

[88] Serrat, O. (2017). Theories of Change. In: Knowledge Solutions. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-0983-9_24
[89] Mohd Said, Nur & Halim, Nuron, Abdul Manaf, Suhaily and Adenan, Nur. 2022. The Impact of Training and Development on Organizational Performance. Jurnal Intelek. 17. 113-123. 10.24191/ji.v17i2.18177.
[90] Vogel, I. 2012. Review of the use of 'Theory of Change' in international development-Review Report. Department of International Development, UK.
[91] James, C. (2011) "Theory of Change Review. A report commissioned by Comic Relief", Comic Relief: http://mande.co.uk/2012/uncategorized/comic-relief-theory-of-change-review/
[92] Mohd Said, Nur & Halim, Nuron, Abdul Manaf, Suhaily and Adenan, Nur. 2022. The Impact of Training and Development on Organizational Performance. Jurnal Intelek. 17. 113-123. 10.24191/ji.v17i2.18177.
[93] Abdul Ghafoor Khan, Khan, A., Muhammad, A., Khan, Abdul, R., & Khan, G. 2011. Impact of Training and Development on Organizational Performance. Global Journal of Management and Business Research Type, 11. Retrieved from https://globaljournals.org/GJMBR_Volume11/8-Impact-ofTraining-and-Development-on-Organizational-Performance.pdf
[94] Ibid
[95] Vogel, I. 2012. Review of the use of 'Theory of Change' in international development- Review Report. Department of International Development, UK.
[96] Wrenn, Jan & Wrenn, Bruce. 2009. Enhancing Learning by Integrating Theory and Practice. International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. 21.

Hutchings[97] posits "What's at stake is the capacity to perform, to put what one knows into practice". To help students become capable and competent practitioners requires that they have training in self-awareness, knowledge acquisition, and skill building (Kramer[98]). According to Shebib[99], practitioners need to have skills in four areas: relationship building, exploring or probing, empowering, and challenging. An essential additional skill is the ability to gain and utilise knowledge from practice (Dorfman[100]). On the discourse on practical learning and theoretical grounding, Wrenn[101] argues that as important as experience is as a great teacher, it cannot replace what can be best taught in a classroom and vice versa.

A case could be made that the best learning environment is created when these two learning modalities are integrated within a course rather than partitioned throughout multiple courses in the curriculum. Boud et al[102] add that the facilitator experience is valuable for the following reasons, a) the instructor has credibility through maintaining active client contact, b) the instructor has credibility through keeping clinical practice skills current (including maintaining licensure), c) teaching becomes grounded in practice, d) the instructor is able to relate theory to practice effectively, e) students can detect whether a teacher is comfortable in his/her clinical area, f) positive role modelling can occur (for example, the use of critical thinking), and g) the instructor has opportunities for updating course content based on practice experiences and exposure to new challenges (Good & Schubert[103]).

Modalities for immersing theory and practice includes active learning, constructivism, real world learning and adult education. Authors (Boud et al[104], Wrenn[105], Bonwell and Eison[106]) concur that although experience may be the foundation of learning, it does not automatically or even necessarily always lead to it. Using an active learning environment can enhance the integration of practice and theory in the classroom. Active learning characteristics includes, a) students are involved in more than listening, b) less emphasis is placed on transmitting information and more on development of students' skills, c) students are involved in higher order thinking (analysis, synthesis, evaluation), d) students are engaged in activities (such as writing, reading, discussing, and observing), and e) greater emphasis is placed on students' exploration of their attitudes and values. (Bonwell & Eison[107]). One important component of the active learning model that distinguishes it from other learning models is an emphasis on experience rather than merely listening as a means of acquiring knowledge (Bonwell & Eison[108], Coulshed[109], Felder & Brent[110]). Miller and Boud111 argue that experience is indispensable for learning to occur: "Experience cannot be bypassed; it is the central consideration of all learning" (p. 9).

In terms of constructivism, Windschitl[112] notes that it is based on the belief that learners work to create, interpret, and reorganise knowledge in individual ways. "These fluid intellectual transformations occur when students reconcile formal instructional experiences with their

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[97] Hutchings, P. 1990. Assessment and the way it works: Closing plenary address, Association of Higher Education Conference on Assessment, Washington, DC

[98] Kramer, B. J. 1998. Preparing social workers for the inevitable: A preliminary investigation of a course on death, grief, and loss. Journal of Social Work Education, 34(2), 211-227.

[99] Shebib, B. 2003. Choices: Counselling skills for social workers and other professionals. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

[100] Dorfman, R. A. 1996. Clinical social work: Definition, practice and vision. New York, NY: Brunner/Mazel.

[101] Wrenn, Jan & Wrenn, Bruce. 2009. Enhancing Learning by Integrating Theory and Practice. International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. 21.

[102] Boud, D., Cohen, R., & Walker, D. (1993). Introduction: Understanding learning from experience. In D. Boud, R. Cohen & D. Walker (Eds.), Using experience for learning (pp. 1-17). Bristol, PA: Society for Research into Higher Education.

[103] Good, D. M., & Schubert, C. R. 2001. Faculty practice: How it enhances teaching. Journal of Nursing Education, 10(9). 389-396.

[104] Boud, D., Cohen, R., & Walker, D. 1993. Introduction: Understanding learning from experience. In D. Boud, R.Cohen & D. Walker (Eds.), Using experience for learning (pp. 1-17). Bristol, PA: Society for Research into Higher Education.

[105] Wrenn, Jan & Wrenn, Bruce. 2009. Enhancing Learning by Integrating Theory and Practice. International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. 21.

[106] Bonwell, C. C., & Eison, J. A. 1991. Active learning: Creating excitement in the classroom. Washington, DC: Eric Clearinghouse on Higher Education.

[107] Ibid

[108] Ibid

[109] Coulshed, V. 1993. Ac=ve learning: Implica=ons for teaching in social work educa=on. Bri=sh Journal of Social Work, 23(1), 1-13.

[110] Felder, R., & Brent, R. 2003. Learning by doing. Chemical Engineering Educa=on, 37(4), 282-283.

[111] Miller, N., & Boud, D. 1996. Anima=ng learning from experience. In D. Boud & N. Miller (Eds.), Working with experience (pp. 3-13). New York, NY: Routledge.

[112] Windschitl, M. (1999). The challenges of sustaining a constructivist classroom culture. Phi Delta Kappan, 80, 751-757.

existing knowledge, with the cultural and social contexts in which ideas occur, and with a host of other influences that mediate understanding" According to Gordon[113], this suggests that teachers should promote experiences that require students to become active learners—scholarly participators in the learning process. Freire[114] likewise argued that learning requires active participation of the student, and that knowledge arises out of a shared process of inquiry, interpretation, and creation this is interpreted as pragmatic constructivism.

According to Gordon[115], this suggests that teachers should promote experiences that require students to become active learners—scholarly participators in the learning process. Freire[116] likewise argued that learning requires active participation of the student, and that knowledge arises out of a shared process of inquiry, interpretation, and creation. More specifically, Gordon cites Dewey's[117] belief that genuine knowledge derives not from abstract thought, or by acting uncritically, but rather by integrating thinking and doing, by getting the mind to reflect on the act. Another element of pragmatic constructivism is attributed to Freire's[118] notion of problemposing education, where the teacher is no longer one who only teaches, but one who also learns through the dialogue with the students. Similarly, students in this model are not only learners, but also take on the responsibility of becoming co-teachers in the learning process.

In the Handbook of Experiential Learning and Management Education, Hornyak, Green, and Heppard[119] assert that people learn best from direct experience coupled with guided reflection and analysis. Citing the work of Kolb[120] and Fenwick[121], they make the point that experiences alone are not sufficient for learning to take place. Experience must be followed by reflective thought and an internal processing that links the experience with previous learning, transforming the learner's previous understanding in some manner. Learning, therefore, takes place within a cycle that includes action, reflection, and application. Such cycles are common to many experiential learning models involving real-world experiences. For example, Kember[122], in his book, Action Learning and Action Research, refers to a learning cycle involving planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

In the South African context, Vyas-Doorgapersad[123] posits that training and development have changed from being action-oriented to being results-oriented. The focus of training and development has shifted from merely designing, developing, and conducting training programmes to aligning individual learning needs and competency requirements to organisation strategy and ensuring that individual and organisational performance are enhanced as a result (Fourie, 2004). Importantly, "building contextually on learners' existing frames of reference, being learner-centred, adding value, developing attitudes of critical inquiry and preparing students for continued learning in a seamless world is the emphasis and one of the focal points of the discipline and field of Public Administration, amongst others" Waghid (2002, p. 476).

Vyas-Doorgapersad[124] argues that the critical skills deficit in South Africa necessitates a turnaround strategy to address the capacity gaps and this must ensure that curricula are geared towards a combination of approaches. These approaches include problem-based learning, performance-orientated and situation emergent training, project management approach to managerial problems and emphasis on indigenous knowledge management[125]. In terms of problem-based learning, Sy-

[113] Gordon, M. (2009). Toward a pragmatic discourse of constructivism: Reflections on lessons from practice. Educational Studies, 45, 39-58.

[114] Freire, Paulo. [1970] 1994. Pedagogy of the oppressed.(Original work published 1970) (Trans. Myra Bergman Ramos). New York, NY: Continuum.

[115] Gordon, M. (2009). Toward a pragmatic discourse of constructivism: Reflections on lessons from practice. Educational Studies, 45, 39-58.

[116] Freire, Paulo. [1970] 1994. Pedagogy of the oppressed.(Original work published 1970) (Trans. Myra Bergman Ramos). New York, NY: Continuum.

[117] Dewey, J. (1929/1988). The quest for certainty. In J. A. Boydston (Ed.), The later works, Vol. 4: 1929 (p. 30). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press

[118] Freire, Paulo. [1970] 1994. Pedagogy of the oppressed.(Original work published 1970) (Trans. Myra Bergman Ramos). New York, NY: Continuum.

[119] Hornyak, M., Green, S. G., & Heppard, K. A. (2007). Implementing experiential learning. In M. Reynolds & R.Vince, (Eds.), The handbook of experiential learning and management education (pp. 137-152). New York, NY:Oxford University Press.

[120] Kolb, D. (1984). Experiential learning. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

[121] Fenwick, T. J. (2001). Experiential learning: A theoretical critique from five perspectives. RIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education (ER 385:11. Retrieved from http://www.cete.org/acve/textonly/mp_fenwick_01.asp

[122] Kember, D. (2000). Action learning and action research: Improving the quality of teaching & learning. London, UK: Kogan Page.

[123] Vyas-Doorgapersad, Shikha. (2014). Public Administration Training and Development in Africa: The Case of the Republic of South Africa. Journal of Public Affairs and Education. 20. 10.1080/15236803.2014.12001804.

[124] Ibid

[125] Ibid

Aves[126] advances that it involves a myriad of issues and concerns that necessitates a very effective instructional method that challenges students 'to learn how to learn'. Studies (Fourie[127], Kerrigan and Luke[128]) on problem-based learning explore that this learning is feasible for students as future public administrators to develop adequate knowledge and skills focusing on problem-solving, decision-making, and critical thinking. These traits are vital for public administrators to inculcate significant intellectual contribution in public policymaking processes (Winberg[129]).

On the other hand, Powell[130], asserts that project-based learning not only provides opportunities to review and redesign mainly content-based curricula, and largely traditional teaching and learning practices, but also shapes graduates who are prepared for the world of work and lifelong learning. However, before identifying and designing projects, it is necessary to focus on the bigger picture, which is curriculum design. Project-based learning requires thoughtful involvement with curriculum design. Outcomes-based curriculum design is a fairly complex process that challenges some of the more traditional curriculum development approaches that are currently practiced and is deemed a key focal point in the South African Public Administration landscape[131]. Project-based learning is an approach that could go a long way toward bridging the gap between policy development and its operation, advances Powell[132]. This form of learning is imperative for public administrators because it commands technological-based cognitive skills for critically assessing the areas of inquiry with interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary understanding. This nature of learning has positive impacts on effective planning and implementation of government policies and programmes that demand project management expertise and competencies.

Vyas-Doorgapersad[133] asserts that the concept of knowledge generation and knowledge management are complex phenomena and are associated with supporting, creating, disseminating, and transferring knowledge. In the South African context, the field of public administration is viewed from a knowledge management environment wherein universities are seen as learning organisations with a continuum of learning taking place. Emergent new forms of knowledge production have had a profound effect on South African higher education policy and the development of a "high skills" society[134] (Winberg, 2006). It is worth mentioning that these knowledge perspectives are one of the current focal training areas in the National School of Government's training programme for public servants in South Africa.

In a training course the participants and their participation is of significance. Fraser-Moleketi[135], 2007, believes that while a number of initiatives undertaken by the South African public service on management development had moved in the right direction. She believes a number of challenges remained. Naidoo[136] affirms that most employees attend training simply because they are forced to attend and they have signed binding contracts of having to attend a training session and that appears to be a norm. This means that this apathy contributes towards staff not performing their tasks in an effective and efficient way. If training is implemented as a tickbox exercise for the number of training offered, it would be impossible to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of training programmes (Van Zyl[137]). McNamara[138] highlights that, effective training and development includes using sound principles of performance management and good, basic training techniques. In acknowledging that he lists the processes to be followed and phases that could be followed as:

[126] Sy-Aves, L. 2005. The problem-based learning approach: Its issues and concerns. Paper presented at the Network of Asia-Pacific Schools and Institutes of Public Administration and Governance (NAPSIPAG) Annual Conference 2005. Beijing, 5–7.

[127] Fourie, D. 2004. Training needs analysis for middle management: A South African public service experience. Journal of Public Administration, 39(4.1), 492 –506.

[128] Kerrigan, J. E., & Luke, J. S. 2013. Public administration education and training in the 3rd world: Problems and opportunities. Policy Studies Review, 8(4, Summer), 912–994.

[129] Winberg, C. 2006. Undisciplining knowledge production: Development-Driven higher education in South Africa. Higher Education, 51(2), 159–172.

[130] Powell, P. 2007. Arguments for implementing project-based learning. Journal of Independent teaching and Learning, 2, 13–21.

[131] Vyas-Doorgapersad, Shikha. (2014). Public Administration Training and Development in Africa: The Case of the Republic of South Africa. Journal of Public Affairs and Education. 20.

[132] Powell, P. 2007. Arguments for implementing project-based learning. Journal of Independent teaching and Learning, 2, 13–21.

[133] Vyas-Doorgapersad, Shikha. (2014). Public Administration Training and Development in Africa: The Case of the Republic of South Africa. Journal of Public Affairs and Education. 20.

[134] Winberg, C. 2006. Undisciplining knowledge production: Development-Driven higher education in South Africa. Higher Education, 51(2), 159–172.

[135] Fraser-Moleketi, G. 2007. Keynote address for the Public Service and Administration. Senior Management Service Conference. 13 September 2007

[136] Naidoo, Goonasagree. 2009. Strengthening Senior Management Skills in the South African Public Service: A Rational for Strategic Leadership. 3-15.

[137] Van Zyl J. J. L. 1994. The art of purpose-directed management in local government, revised edition, Pretoria and bound by Sigma Press (Pty) Ltd.

[138] McNamara, T. (1997). What do we mean by social identity? Competing frameworks, competing discourses. TESOL Quarterly 31.3, 561–567.

- "an analysis of the organisational needs and training goals which, when reached, will equip learners with knowledge and skills to meet the organisation's needs. Usually, this phase also includes identifying when training should occur and who should attend as learners;
- designing a training system that learners and trainers can implement to meet the learning goals. This typically includes identifying learning objectives (which
- culminate in reaching the learning goals), needed facilities, necessary funding, course content and sequence of lessons; and
- developing a training 'package' of resources and materials including, for example, developing audio-visuals, graphics and manuals to implement the training package, including delivering the training, support group feedback, clarifying training materials, administering tests and conducting the final evaluation. This phase can include administrative activities such as copying, scheduling facilities, taking attendance data and billing learners" (Ibid) Mpofu and Hlatywayo[139] believes quality employee training and development that can be achieved from quality programmes and highly qualified facilitators leads to improved employee performance and consequently improves service delivery. This is supported by Nadler[140] who believes all the human resource development activities are meant to improve performance of the present job of the individual. To train new skills for new jobs or new positions in the future and to foster general growth for both individuals and the organisation so as to be able to meet the organisation's current and future objectives.

Further, research suggests that there are many modalities and approaches for enriching the learning experience and ensuring that there is sufficient integration of theory and practice.

4.4 Training Comparative

In South Africa the provision of training on TOC is limited. Further, in terms of international spread of training on TOC there are service providers spread across mainly developed countries. The table below is a brief summary of the organisations nationally and internationally that offer training on TOC.

Table 1: TOC Training Comparative

Name of Institution	Course Name	Course Duration	Objectives
National School of Government	Theory of Change for Planning in Public Sector	3 days	Specifically developed for officials of government (planners and implementers) who need to develop a Theory of Change and logical framework for the results chain which will be translated into the strategic plans, annual performance plans, operational plans, programmes, projects. This will assist monitoring and evaluation practitioners to evaluate plans based on the Theory of Change.
Stellenbosch University	Advanced Public Sector M&E: Theories of Change and Indicator Development	3 days short course	To create capacity in the public sector to develop and assess performance indicators and to adopt appropriate indicators to measure progress and evaluate results.

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[139] Mpofu, M. & Hlatywayo, C. 2015. Training and development as a tool for improving basic service delivery; the case of a selected municipality. Journal of Economics, Finance and Administra=ve Science, 20(39), 133-136.
[140] Nadler, L.1984. The Handbook of Human Resources Development. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Name of Institution	Course Name	Course Duration	Objectives
University of Cape Town (South Africa)	Faculty of Law Democratic Governance and Rights Unit Theory of Change Course	8 weeks online short course and 5 day in-person	There is access to justice and fair, accountable, independent and transparent judiciaries and justice systems in Africa
Southern Hemisphere (South Africa)	Theory of Change Learn about Theory of Change as an approach, product and process for programme planning, monitoring and evaluation in complex settings.	2 weeks virtual (1.5 days per week), or 2.5 days face to face.	Gain a deeper understanding of the Theory of Change, the practical implication and benefits thereof. Ensure that the theory of change is communicated through programmes; knowledge on programme evaluations and when and how to use the theory of change
Udemy	Mastering Theory of Change	3.5 hours on-demand video	To ensure that learners understand the core concepts and principles of Theory of Change and its relevance in relief, humanitarian, and development work. Learn how to develop TOC frameworks to articulate pathways of change, set clear objectives, and align interventions with project goals. Explore real-world case studies and best practices of TOC applications in relief, humanitarian, and development projects. Gain insights into effective strategies for stakeholder engagement, data collection, monitoring, evaluation, and adaptive management. Learn how to integrate TOC principles into every stage of the project cycle, from needs assessment and programme design to implementation and evaluation. Discover how TOC enhances monitoring and evaluation practices by providing a framework for tracking progress, measuring outcomes, and learning from experience. Explore tools and techniques for designing M&E frameworks based on TOC principles and using data to drive decision-making. Foster a culture of learning, reflection, and collaboration within your organisation or project team.
The Centre for Theory of Change Inc (New York City)	Theory of Change Certification Course	2 month online course	Promote quality standards and best practices for the development and implementation of Theory of Change, with a particular focus on its use and application in the areas of international development, sustainability, education, human rights and social change.

Name of Institution	Course Name	Course Duration	Objectives
New Economics Foundation (NEF) Consulting (London)	Theory of Change Training	1 day for in-person 2 days online	• Be able to describe a theory of change and when it is appropriate to use it. • Understand what an outcome is and describe the similarities and differences between a theory of change and a logic model or impact map. • Feel able to design a process and discussion guide for engaging with stakeholders. • Feel confident using the component parts of a theory of change and to communicate their strategic value. • Find a personal approach to visualising and describing a theory of change. • Plan for how you will test and communicate your theory of change.

4.5 Training Evaluation Models

Thus far the literature review has presented discourse on RBM, TOC, the South African content as it relates to GWM&E as well as creating linkages with T&D. Therefore in the context of the outcome evaluation for the training course it is important to present literature on the key evaluation models for training, including their features, strengths, weaknesses, and application in various contexts that will inform the evaluation. Evaluating the effectiveness of training programmes is crucial for organisations aiming to optimise learning outcomes and ensure that training investments deliver tangible results. A wide range of evaluation models has been developed over the years to assess the impact of training. These models help organisations understand whether the training objectives were met, how well the participants applied what they learned, and how the training affected overall organisational performance. Further, evaluating training programmes is essential to ensure that investments in human capital development yield tangible outcomes, improve performance, and contribute to organisational goals.

Kirkpatrick's four-level training evaluation model is a well-established, simple, and widely accepted framework for assessing the effectiveness of training programmes. Its strengths lie in its clear structure, comprehensive approach, and ability to link training outcomes to behaviour and organisational results. However, its weaknesses include challenges in measuring higher levels of evaluation (behaviour and results), resource intensity, an overemphasis on tangible outcomes, and difficulties

in isolating training impacts from other organisational factors. Despite these limitations, it remains a popular and useful model for organisations looking to evaluate the impact of their training programmes.

Phillips' ROI model is a powerful tool for organisations looking to quantify the financial return of training programmes, making it especially useful for justifying training investments to stakeholders and aligning training outcomes with business goals. However, its focus on financial returns can be a limitation, as it can obscure non-financial benefits and overlook the challenges of accurately isolating and measuring the true impact of training. The model is also resource-intensive and may not capture the long-term or intangible outcomes of training.

Kaufman's five levels of evaluation is a comprehensive and forward-thinking model that goes beyond traditional evaluation by considering the broad impacts of a programme. Its strengths lie in its thoroughness and alignment with strategic goals, but its weaknesses include the potential for high resource demands and the challenge of measuring broad, long-term societal impacts effectively the Success Case Method is a powerful evaluation tool for identifying and learning from instances where training has had a clear and positive impact. Its focus on real-world outcomes and success stories can provide actionable insights for programme improvement. However, its emphasis on success cases might lead to a biased perspective, and its resource-intensive nature could make it difficult to implement consistently, especially in large or resourceconstrained organisation.

Anderson's Model offers a broad, multifaceted view of learning evaluation but may be challenging to implement due to its complexity and resource demands. Its strength lies in providing a comprehensive understanding of both the process and outcomes of learning, but it may require careful adaptation to specific educational contexts

Developed by Warr, Bird, and Rackham (1970), the CIRO Model of training evaluation is a framework designed to assess the effectiveness of training programmes. It pays particular attention to the context of training, emphasising pre-training evaluations. It stands for Context, Input, Reaction, and Output, each representing a key area of evaluation. the CIRO model is a useful and structured tool for evaluating training programmes, but it can be limited by its focus on immediate outcomes and reliance on participant feedback.

Modern Trends in Training Evaluation

Blended Models: Many organisations today combine elements of different models. For example, Kirkpatrick's framework is often combined with Phillips' ROI analysis to assess both qualitative and financial outcomes. Data-Driven Evaluation: With advancements in technology, organisations increasingly use Learning Management Systems (LMS) and Big Data to track training metrics. Data-driven models allow for more real-time feedback and personalised training assessments. Learning Transfer and Impact Evaluation: Researchers such as Baldwin and Ford (1988) have focused on the transfer of learning to the job. Contemporary models emphasise how training can lead to behaviour change, not just knowledge acquisition.

Best Practices for Training Evaluation

- Set Clear Objectives: Before implementing training, set clear and measurable goals.
- Use Multiple Metrics: Combine qualitative (e.g., feedback, interviews) and quantitative (e.g., test scores, business KPIs) methods.
- Link Training to Business Outcomes: Ensure the training objectives align with organisational goals.
- Conduct Ongoing Evaluations: Evaluation shouldn't only occur at the end of the training. Ongoing assessments allow for continuous improvement.
- Stakeholder Involvement: Include key stakeholders in the evaluation process to ensure all perspectives are considered.

4.6 Conclusion from literature review

An important instrument to test progression and institutionalisation of the GWM&E is the outcome evaluation of the training on "Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector" offered by the DPME and National School of Government. Over the past financial years (2019/20, 2021/22 and 2022/23), a total of 1 621 government officials (i.e. planners, monitoring and evaluation practitioners, and programme managers) at national and provincial institutions were trained. The themes that have permeated this literature review focused on the discourse around the RBM paradigm and its intricate relationship with the TOC. The literature demonstrates that RBM is experiencing considerable shift due to it now being touted as the 'gold standard' by the UNDG. This is of critical importance for a few reasons that includes trends in globalisation, the 4th industrial revolution, an increasing aware citizenry and creating mechanism to bridge the economic divide between the rich and poor. It is laudable that South Africa has since 2007 embraced the NMES through the GWM&E. A key aspect of the GWM&E is expressed through the NEPF and contextualised in the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans.

Further, institutional, legislative and policy mandates have been institutionalised in government. Yet, researchers argue that the entrenchment of RBM eludes us due to a number of factors that includes, existing bureaucratic culture; the paucity of technical skills; the administrative legacy of the apartheid system of inefficiency that was inherited; the implementation of performance-based incentives and consequences remains fragmented; rules and compliance-based traditional management practices persist; short-term orientation to government performance creates more challenges in delivery because the focus is on an electoral cycle of five years; poor organisational learning and evidence-based decisionmaking; and silo-based approach to public service delivery persists. Within this environment conducting an outcomes evaluation of the training course will need to give conscientious consideration to the evaluation results. Literature suggests that outcome evaluation has many benefits, but it is important to be aware of its limitations and challenges. By carefully considering these limitations and addressing them in the evaluation process, programme managers, policymakers, and other stakeholders can ensure that the evaluation is reliable, valid, and useful for improving programme performance.

The important question to ask is, what is at stake? Will evidence about the success of the programme, programme modality, or design innovation inform important decisions? These decisions often involve budgetary allocations and programme scale. If there are limited budget implications or if the results will affect only a few people, it may not be worth doing an outcomem evaluation.

Literature discourse further suggests that training in general and specifically for TOC is of critical importance. Training and development is a continuous process of capacity and capability development. Quality-assessment and accreditation are not only important for public administration programmes and academic departments but also for students. Students will be assured of quality when enrolling for a programme knowing that such programmes provide the knowledge and skills required for effective and efficient governance and service delivery. TOC training is crucial in enhancing the skills and capacities of organisations to develop, implement, and evaluate programmes more effectively. While TOC is a powerful tool, its application requires a nuanced understanding of strategic planning, critical thinking, and systems mapping. Training courses, therefore, aim to provide participants with a structured process for articulating their organisational theories of change, often accompanied by realworld examples and practical exercises. Further arguments were posited for accredited and non-accredited courses and when consideration is given to ensuring the professionalisation of the public sector, accreditation is an assurance of the quality of programmes. If a programme is not accredited, students are unsure about its quality, subsequently the absence of accreditation of public administration programmes results in questions being asked about their quality by students and employers.

In undertaking the outcome evaluation of the training course literature was reviewed to determine which training evaluation methodology would best suit this evaluation. A number of models were presented and the strengths and weaknesses of the models were analysed. Further modern trends in training evaluations were highlighted which range from blended models that often present as a combination of Kirkpatrick's framework with Phillips' ROI analysis to assess both qualitative and financial outcomes, to data-driven evaluation models that takes cognisance of technological advancements and allows for more real-time feedback and personalised training assessments, to learning transfer and impact evaluation which focusses on continuous training leading not only acquisition of knowledge but also behavioural change of participants.

In this exercise, a blended model of training evaluation was used drawing strongly from Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Model because it is a well-established, simple, and widely accepted framework for assessing the effectiveness of training programmes. This was supplemented with Kaufman's model because it expands on Kirkpatrick's by emphasising both micro (individual) and macro (organisational/societal) benefits. Kaufman's five levels of evaluation is a comprehensive and forward-thinking model that goes beyond traditional evaluation by considering the broad impacts of a programme. The motivation for choosing a blended approach for the training evaluation methodology was premised on this being a current best practice approach to use blended models. Secondly, was the intention of this outcome evaluation to extrapolate rich data that incorporate the perspectives of all key stakeholders from the training course as such could not be confined to the individual (participant) training experience and impact.

In terms of participants commitment and challenges, the survey questionnaire extracted important information to determine the impact of the training course on the ability of the participant to implement the outcomes of the course.

Ultimately, the outcome evaluation of the training course is a key determinant of the progression of the training course into its next phase. The discourse presents a clear argument that the benefits of understanding and implementing the RBM and TOC will greatly improve service delivery and performance, yet there must be due consideration to the number of challenges and factors that surround training and development in the South African context.

5. EVALUATION FINDINGS

5.1 Findings From Document Review Analysis

5.1.1 Assessment of Annual Performance Plans and Strategic Plans

Assessment Reports of APPs and SPs for National Institutions

The application of the theory of change is still a challenge in government departments and institutions. Draft 2023/24 Annual Performance Plans (in certain cases these included revised 2020-2025 Strategic Plans) of 52 national institutions were assessed by DPME. The review of this assessment reveals that all 52 institutions were advised to reflect the Theory of Change diagram in the situational analysis and also ensure that the outputs, output indicators and targets are results based.

Assessment Reports of APP reports for provincial institutions

The application of theory of change is also still a challenge in provincial departments. The Draft 2023/24 Annual Performance for provincial institutions were assessed by DPME and revealed the following common challenges:

- Departments were advised to update the theory of change
- Departments were advised to reflect the section on theory of change in the explanation of planned performance over the medium-term period section.
- Further work was required by provincial departments to elaborate on how the outputs, output indicators and targets contribute to the attainment of outcomes and the impact in the strategic plans as well as to clearly reflect on theory of change in terms of performance per programme.
- The theory of change was not clearly articulated in the explanation of most departments. This could be as a result of the departments inability to unpack how the outputs and output indicators reflected translate to the achievement of outcomes and impact outlined in the 2020-25 Strategic Plan.
- Departments needed to improve the crafting of some outputs to ensure that they are adequately aligned to the outcomes.

5.1.2 Training Manual

The training manual (learner guide) for the training course on the Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector has been reviewed and is concise and clear. There are a total of 12 activities contained in the manual (over and above the introductory activities) which assist in testing and applying the knowledge gained. It is recommended that the NSG (curriculum development unit) investigate the possibility of modifying or adding scenariobased exercises and case studies to enhance the learning comprehension.

5.2 Findings from Primary Data Collected

The evaluation findings presented are derived from in-depth interviews and an online survey with 110 responses received out of 1621 issues from trainees and 6 responses received from facilitators. Focus group meetings and interviews were also held with the following Offices of the Premier:
- Eastern Cape Province
- Free State Province
- Gauteng Province
- Kwazulu-Natal Province
- Limpopo Province
- Mpumalanga Province
- North-West Province
- Northern Cape Province

Profile of the respondents

A total of 110 trainees responded to the online survey comprising of 65 females and 45 males. A total of 34 respondents are appointed at national government with 40 respondents appointed by provincial governments. National and Provincial public entities accounted for 36 respondents with 28 respondents from national public entities and 8 respondents from provincial public entities. A detailed list of departments where the trainees are appointed is attached as an annexure to this report.

The table below indicates the profile in terms of the positions that the trainees hold and the number of positions per category. The majority of respondents are currently at deputy director / manager level (44,5%) followed by directors / senior managers (18%) and assistant director at 12%. The profile of the respondents therefore enriches this evaluation as this offer a mix of seniority and assumed experience. Furthermore, this profile supplements the finding that very few senior managers were trained on the course.

Table 2: Position of Respondents

Position	Number	Percentage (%)
Chief Director / General Manager	5	4,5%
Director / Senior Manager	20	18%
Deputy Director / Manager	49	44,5%
Assistant Director	13	12%
Planning Officer / Specialist	12	11%
Admin / Coordinator	4	4%
Other	7	6%
Total	**110**	**100%**

The table below also confirms that the respondents possess the necessary qualifications as revealed by the table below where the majority of respondents (36%) hold honours / postgraduate degrees followed by a substantial percentage (30%) of respondents who possess masters' degrees and a further 21% with bachelor degrees. It is a recommendation that trainees accessing this course must be in possession of minimum three years post-school qualification. The table thus confirm that 97% of respondents met the recommended entry requirement for enrolling on the course. There was however 3% of respondents who did not indicate their qualifications.

Table 3: Qualifications of Respondents

Highest Qualification	Number	Percentage (%)
PhD	4	4%
Masters (NQF9)	33	30%
Honours / Postgraduate Diploma (NQF8)	40	36%
Bachelor degree / B-Tech (NQF7)	23	21%
National Diploma (NQF6)	7	6%
Not indicated	3	3%
Total	**110**	**100%**

The findings are arranged into three themes described below:
Theme 1: TOC course structure, facilitation and delivery covered the following:
- General course content and structure – this covered the structure and flow of training course, alignment of course content with trainee expectations, learning objectives and appropriateness of course duration, balance between theory and practical exercises as well as course material and resources

- Course facilitation and delivery – this covered the comprehension of course units by trainees, effectiveness of training tools used during training, trainee participation and engagement.

Theme 2: knowledge gained and application covered the following:

- Relevance and applicability
- Confidence in application of TOC concepts
- TOC concepts comprehension
- Trainee application of TOC at their work place

**Theme 3: Institutionalisation of TOC**

- Institutionalisation of TOC in departments
- Trainees perspectives on success factors for institutionalisation of TOC
- Challenges hindering institutionalisation of TOC

5.3 Theme 1: TOC Course Structure, Facilitation and Delivery

5.3.1 General Course Content and Structure

The trainees were requested to rate the overall course content of the Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector. Figure 7 below reveals that the majority (63,9%) of the respondents rated the course content to be good followed by 21,3% of the respondents who rated the course to be excellent. There is however a percentage of trainees (13%) who rated the course content to be average. Notably, there is 1,8% of respondents who rated the course content to be poor.
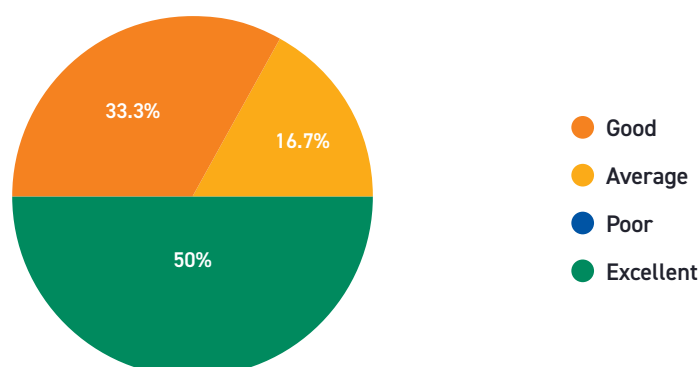
Figure 7: Rating of Course Content
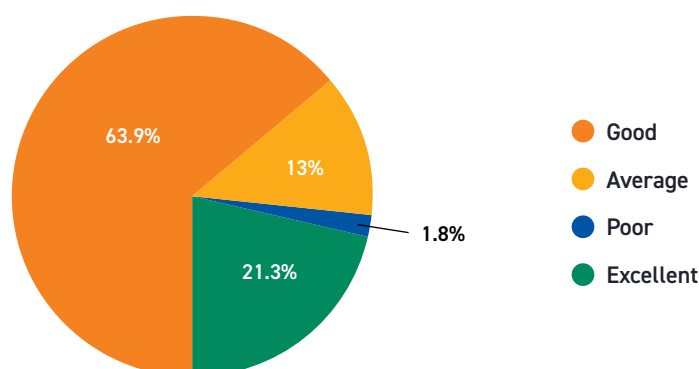
Structure and Flow of the Training Course

The facilitators were requested to rate the overall structure and flow of the Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector training course. Figure 8 below reveals that the majority (50%) of the facilitators rated the overall structure and flow of the course content to be excellent followed by 33,3% of the facilitators who rated the course structure and flow to be good. There is however a percentage of facilitators (16,7%) who rated the course structure and flow to be average.

Figure 8: Rating of Course Structure and Flow

Alignment of course content with trainee expectations

As highlighted by Figure 9, the evaluation revealed that the course content was to a large extent aligned with learner expectations with 62,4% of trainees indicating that their expectations were met and a further 12,8% of the trainees indicating that the course content was aligned and exceeded their expectations. There is however a significant number of trainees (12,8%) who indicated that the course content has somewhat met their expectation and few respondents (0,9%) who indicated that their expectations were not met

Figure 9: Alignment of Course Content with Trainees' expectations

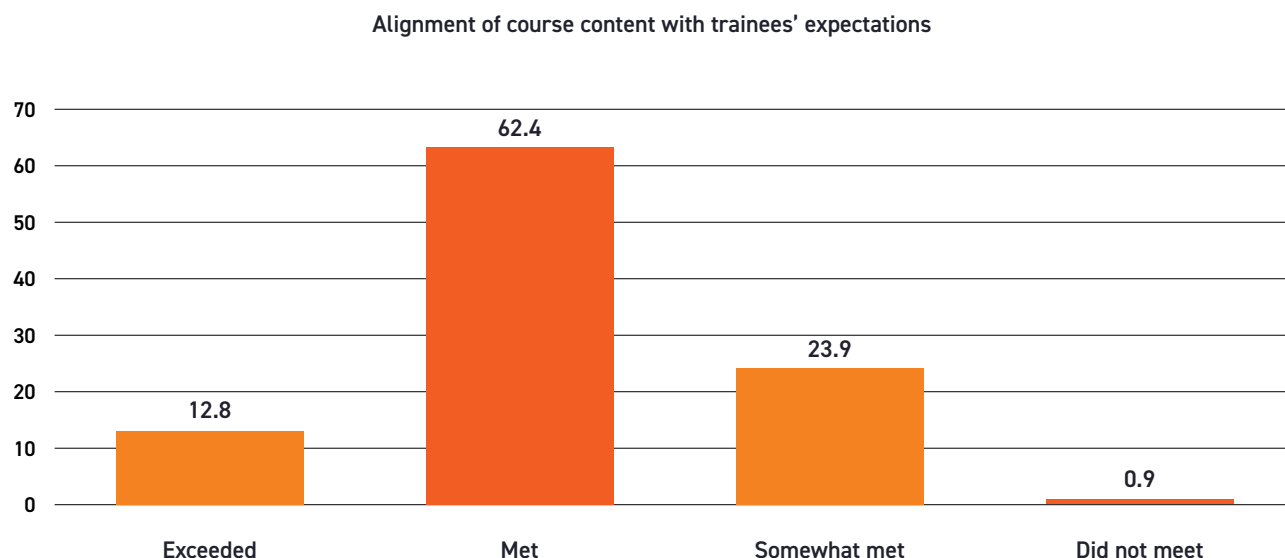Alignment of course content with trainees' expectations

Figure 10 below reveals the alignment of the course content with the participants skills level and knowledge of the theory of change from the facilitator's perspective. Notably, half of the facilitators (50%) believed that the course content was somewhat aligned with the participants' skills level, 33,3% of the facilitators found the course content to be mostly aligned with the trainees' skills and knowledge of the theory of change and only 16,7% found the course content to be very well aligned with the participants skills and knowledge of the theory of change.

Figure 10: Content Alignment with Participants Skills and Knowledge
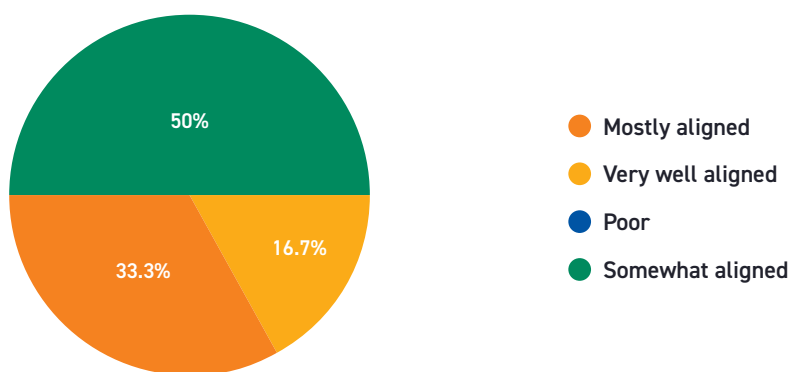
**Learning objectives and appropriateness of course duration**

As highlighted by Figure 11 below, the evaluation has revealed that the majority of facilitators believed that the learning objectives were clear and appropriate for the course duration with the 50% agreeing and a further 33,3% of facilitators who strongly agreed that the learning objectives were clear and appropriate for the course duration.

Figure 11: Learning Objectives and Appropriateness of Course Duration
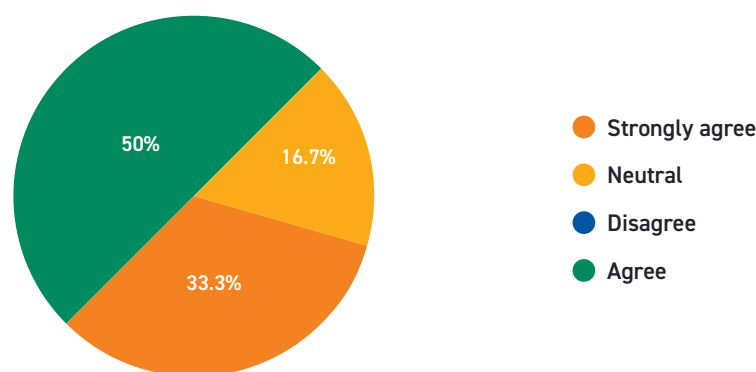
Legend:
- Strongly agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Agree

(Pie chart values: 50%, 33.3%, 16.7%)

It should be pointed out however that the views of the facilitators and that of the trainees on the duration of the course diverges. The evaluation has highlighted the fact that the course duration is insufficient for most trainees. The suggestion from the focus group meetings with the provincial offices of the premier is that the course should be extended to 5 days with 5 out of 8 provinces engaged indicating that the duration course is insufficient with 4 provinces recommending a 5 day duration for the course. The insufficient course duration was also highlighted by trainees in their responses to the survey questionnaire.

Balance between theory and practical exercises

The majority of facilitators (66,6%) found the course to have a perfect balance between theory and practical exercises. Figure 12 below reveals 16,7% found neither the theory nor practice of the course to be sufficient with 16,7% indicating that more practical exercises are needed. There has been an outcry from trainees of a need for the course to contain more exercises as well as practical examples which are relevant and department / institution specific.

Figure 12: Balance Between Theory and Practical Exercises

Balance between Theory and Practical Exercises

(Bar chart values: Perfect balance 66.6, More practical exercises needed 16.7, Neither theory nor practice was sufficient 16.7)
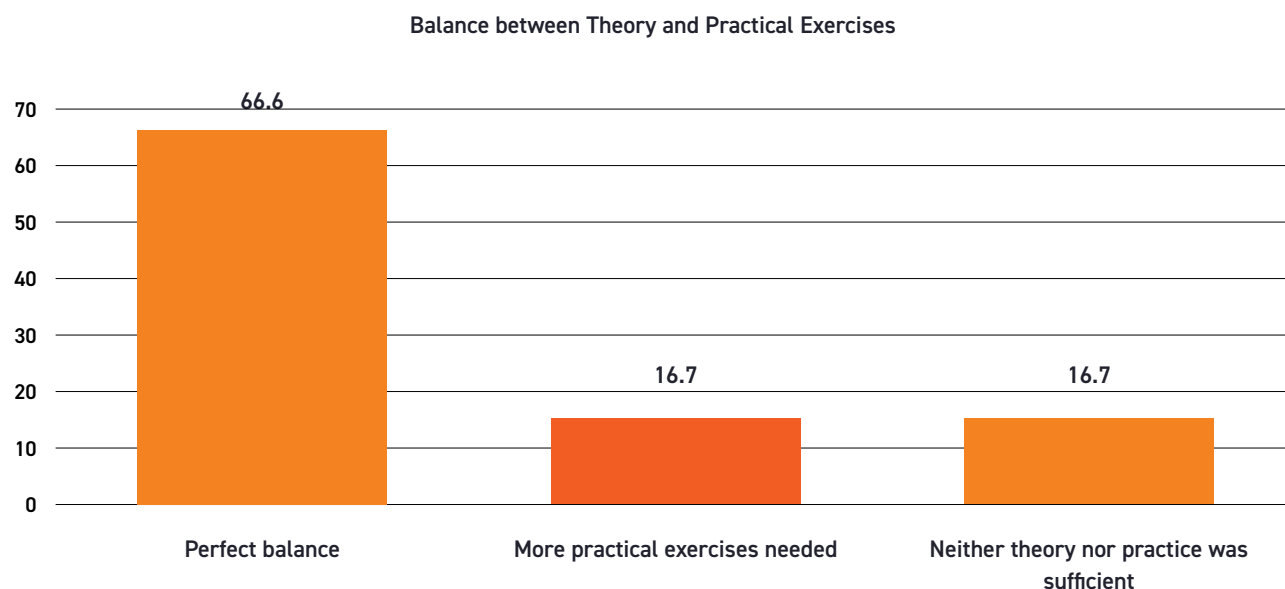
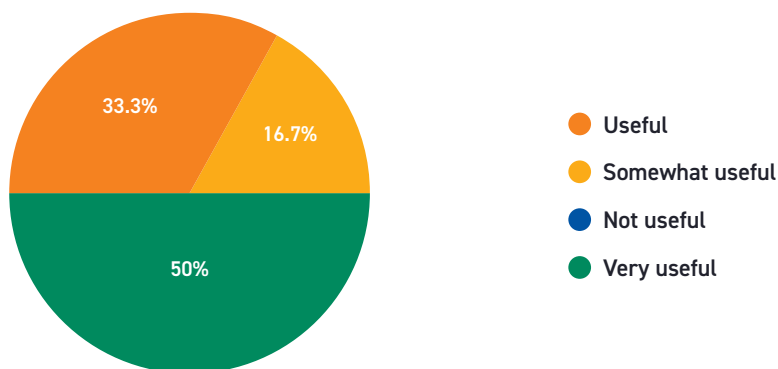**Course material and resources**

The majority of facilitators have confirmed through this evaluation that the material provided (slides, handouts and templates) to trainees were useful as shown in Figure 13 below. At least 50% of the facilitators confirmed that the material was very useful with a further 33,3% of facilitators confirming that the material was useful.

Figure 13: Usefulness of Material Provided

The training course facilitators have confirmed that additional material or resources are needed to enhance the trainees learning experience. These should include:

- Participants materials like note cards
- More examples
- Detailed information on Outcomes and setting of Indicators
- Videos
- Extensive use of actual planning, monitoring and evaluation resources (from strategic planning/datasets/evaluation processes and reports) from real existing systems/projects

5.3.2 Course Facilitation and Delivery

The evaluation revealed that the presentation of the theory of change concepts was in the main clear and understandable as shown in Figure 14 below. As revealed by Figure 14 below the majority of the respondents (51,9%) found the presentation of the TOC concepts to be clear and a further 34,3% found the concepts to be very clear. Notably, 12% of the respondents found the theory of change concepts to be somewhat clear and few respondents (1,8%) who indicated that the concepts were not clear which is concerning though in the minority.

Figure 14: Presentation of the Theory of Change Concepts

Presentation of the TOC Concepts
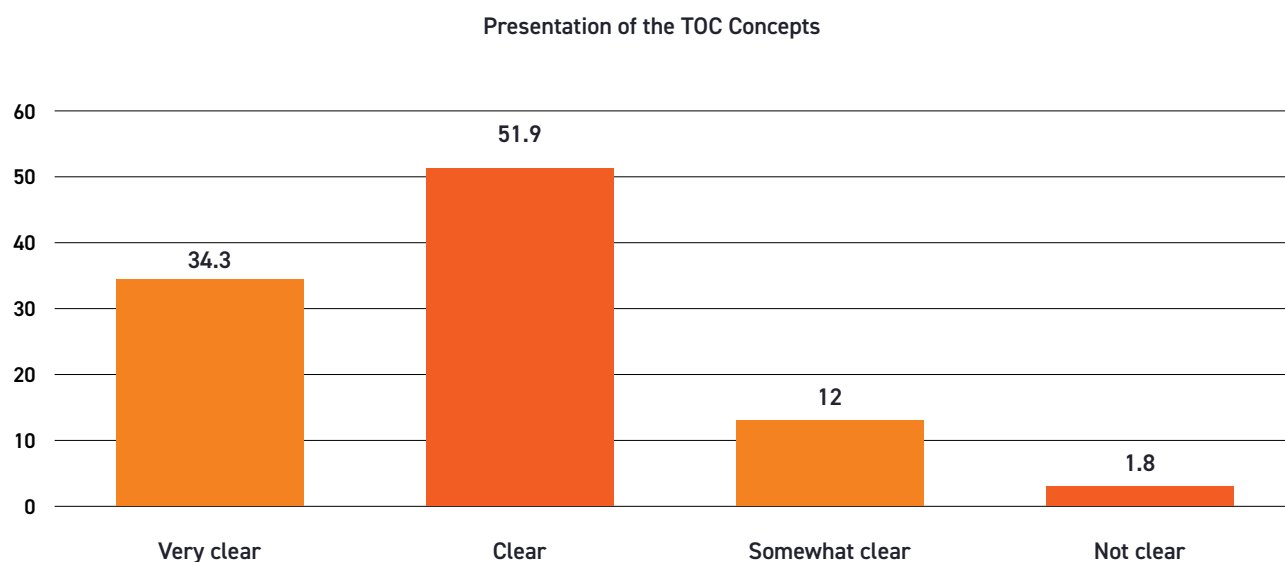
Comprehension of course units by trainees

The evaluation revealed that the easiest course units to comprehend by the trainees were both Planning context Unit (26,6%) of respondents and Situational Analysis Unit (26,6%) of respondents as shown by Figure 15 below. The evaluation further revealed that the challenging course units for the trainees as indicated in the Figure 16 below were the Logical Framework Unit (34,3% of respondents) followed by the Theory of Change Unit (28,3% of respondents) and the Application to Planning Process Unit (19,2% of respondents)
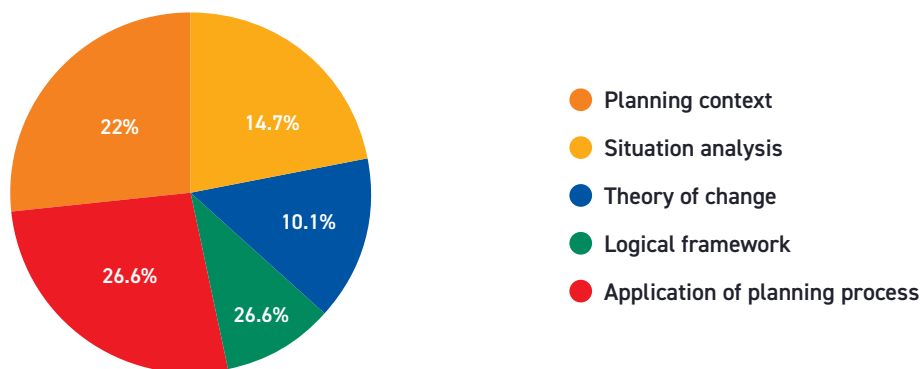
Figure 15: Course Comprehension

Legend:
- Planning context
- Situation analysis
- Theory of change
- Logical framework
- Application of planning process

Figure 16: Challenging Course Units

Legend:
- Logical framework
- Application of planning process
- Planning context
- Situation analysis
- Theory of change
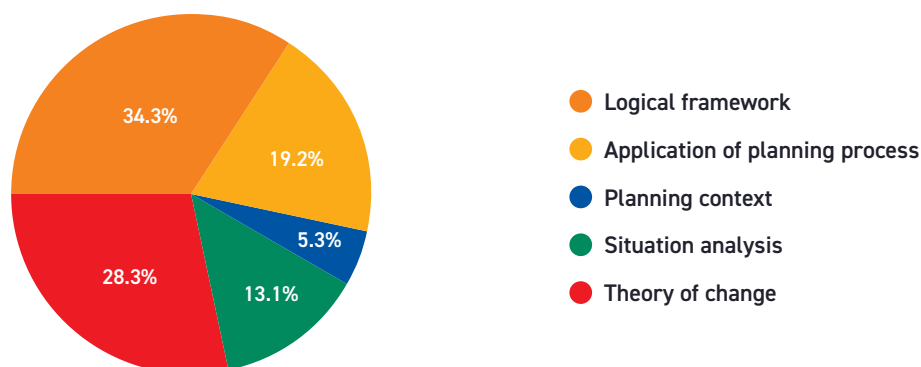
Effectiveness of training tools during training

The majority of facilitators have confirmed through this evaluation that the training tools provided (i.e., slides, handouts, videos) were effective in supporting the training course facilitation. Figure 17 below reveals that 83,3% of the facilitators found the training tools supported the facilitation effectively with 50% of the facilitators finding the training tools to have supported the training facilitation very effectively followed by 33% of facilitators who found the training tools to have supported the training facilitation effectively and 16,7% who found the training tools to have supported the facilitation somewhat effectively. There is a need to enhance the training tools and accommodate the concerns of all facilitators to ensure that the tools support the facilitation effectively without reservations.

Figure 17: Effectiveness of Training Tools

Legend:
- Effectively
- Somewhat effectively
- Not effectively
- Very effectively
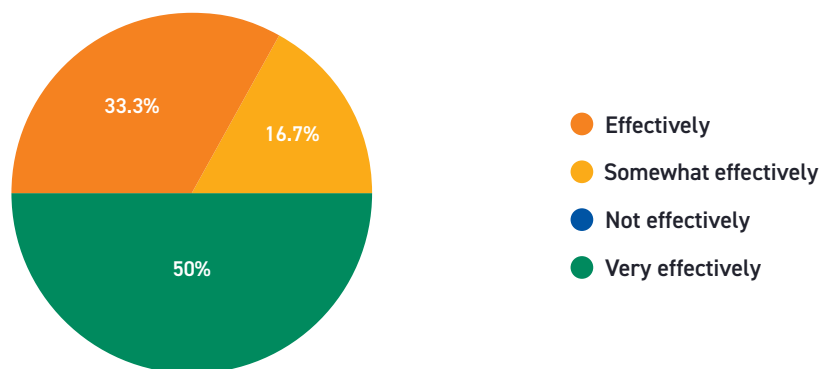
The facilitators have identified the following challenges encountered in delivering the training course:

- The schedule is not properly allocated. The Introductory Unit and Unit 1 do not take that much time yet they are allocated the same period as Units 2 & 3. Units 2 & 3 are very intense, they should not be allocated a day. They need more than a day. This needs to be looked at carefully
- The course needed more time to do activities and apply the activities to the trainees' own work environment
- There is a need to distinguish between Outcomes and Output and thus a lot of time needs to be spent on these

Trainee participation and engagement

The evaluation revealed that most participants actively participated in discussions and activities. Figure 18 below illustrates that the majority of facilitators (66,7%) believe that most participants participated in discussions and activities during the training course which is critical for training course success. A total of 33,3% of the facilitators believe that only few trainees participated in discussions and activities with one facilitator (representing 16,7% split) who believed that some trainees participated and another facilitator (representing 16,7% split) who believed that only few trainees participated in discussions and activities during the course.

Figure 18: Trainee Participation in Discussion and Activities

Balance between Theory and Practical Exercises
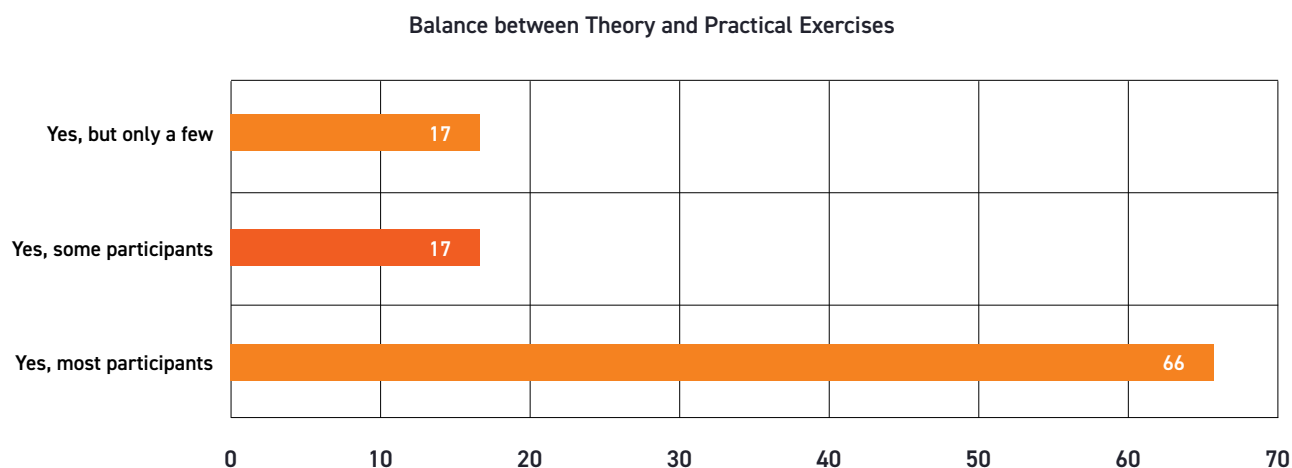

Figure 19 below highlights the facilitators opinion on the level of engagement of the participants during the course and the majority of facilitators confirmed that the participants were engaged during the training course with 50% of the facilitators believing that the participants were very engaged and a further 33,3% of participants who believed that the participants were engaged.

Figure 19: Participants Engagement
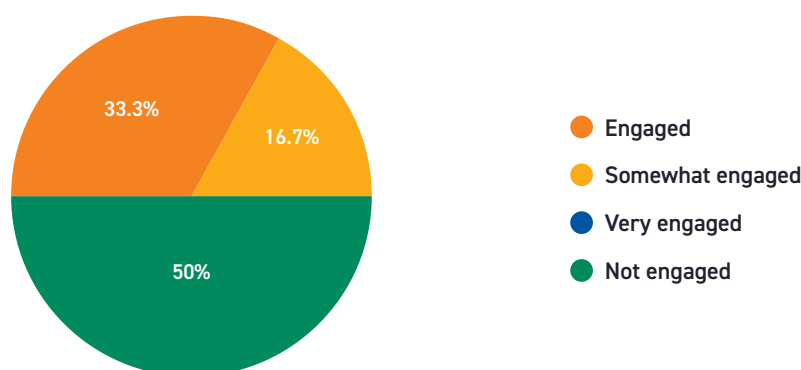
The facilitators identified the following activities or content which seemed to resonate most with participants

- Working on work-related challenges
- Problem tree and solution tree development
- Development of indicators
- Logical Framework
- SWOT, PESTLE, Stakeholder analysis
- EBPMI Cycle, Problem Tree, Solutions Tree, TOC, Indicators, linking of planning to monitoring and evaluation

5.4   Theme 2: Knowledge gained and Application

Relevance and applicability

The training course was found to be relevant to the work and field of interest for the majority of the trainees. Figure 20 below reveals that 50% of trainees found the course to be highly relevant to their work with 39,8% who found the course to be relevant. The figure below further reveals that 8,3% of the trainees found the course to be somewhat relevant with only 1,9% of the trainees who found the course not relevant to their work.

Figure 20: Relevance of the Course to Trainees Work
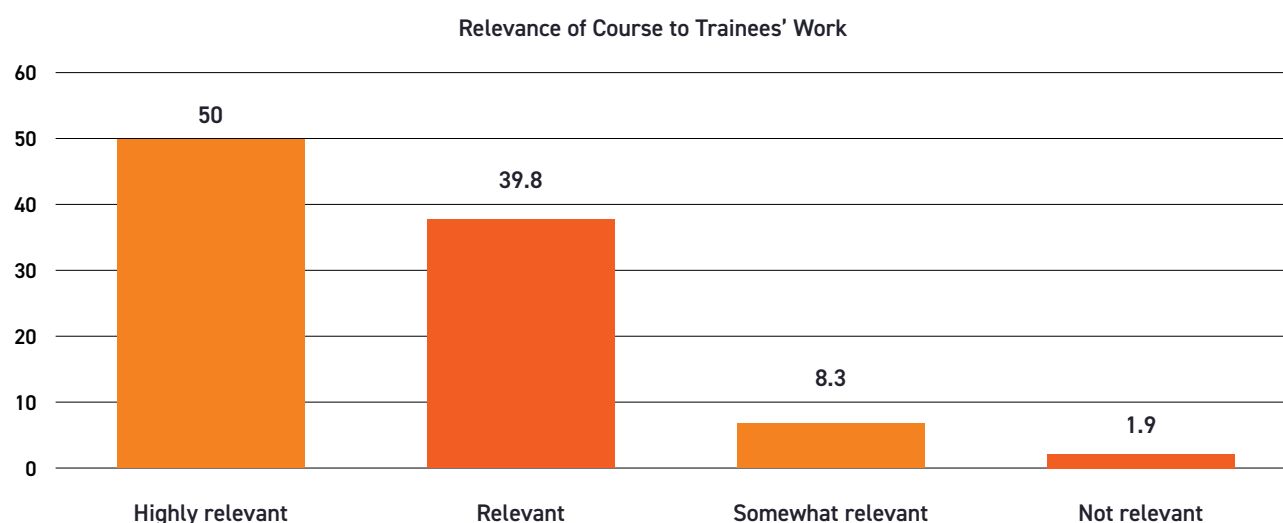
Confidence in application of TOC concepts

A significant finding of the evaluation is that the majority of trainees are not highly confident to apply the theory of change concepts in their professional setting which is a major concern. The figure below reveals that the majority of the trainees (44%) are somewhat confident of applying the theory of change concepts in their professional setting with only 41,3% of trainees indicating that they are very confident of applying the theory of change concepts in their professional setting. The evaluation revealed that 11% of the trainees are not sure if they can apply the theory of change concepts to their professional setting with a further 3,7% of the trainees revealing that they are not confident of applying the concepts.

Figure 21:Confidence in Applying TOC Concepts

Confidence in applying TOC Concepts
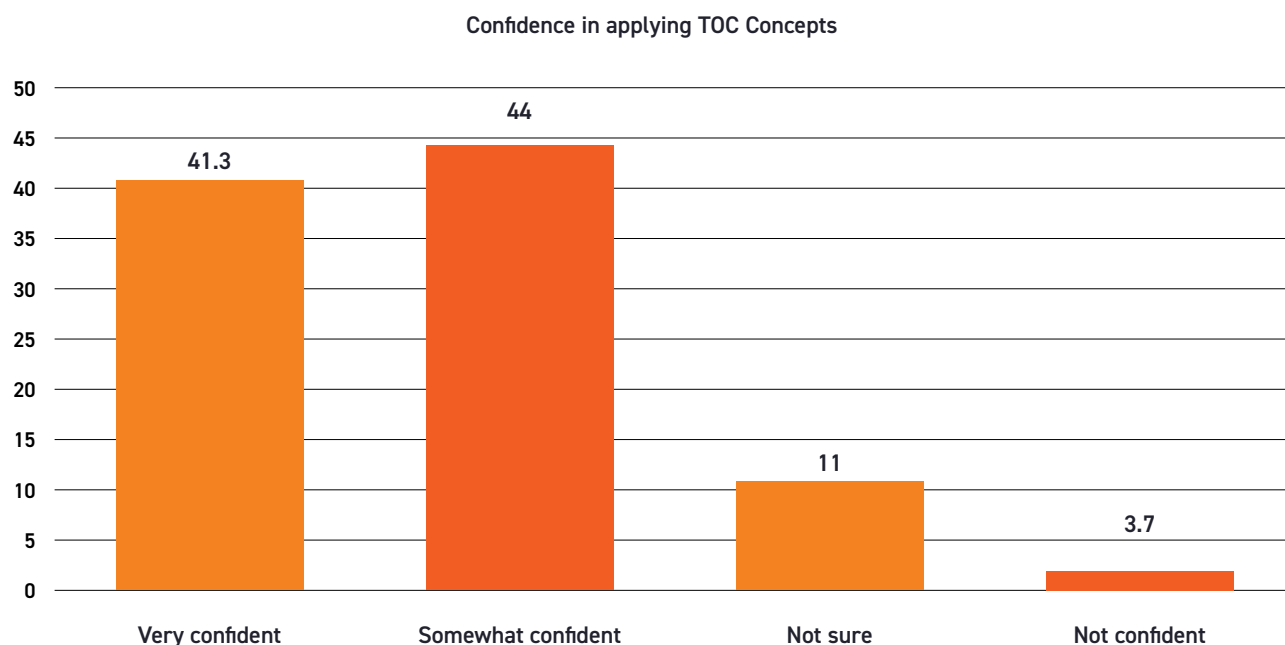
As highlighted by Figure 22 below, the evaluation has further revealed that the majority of the facilitators (50%) felt very confident and 16,7% felt confident that the theory of change content brought positive impact to the trainees. There was however 33,3% of the facilitators who felt somewhat confident that the theory of change content brought positive impact to the trainees. This is a cause for concern and is also confirmed by the trainees' suggestions that they require more training on the theory of change.

Figure 22:Facilitators perspective on the impact of Theory of Change on Trainees
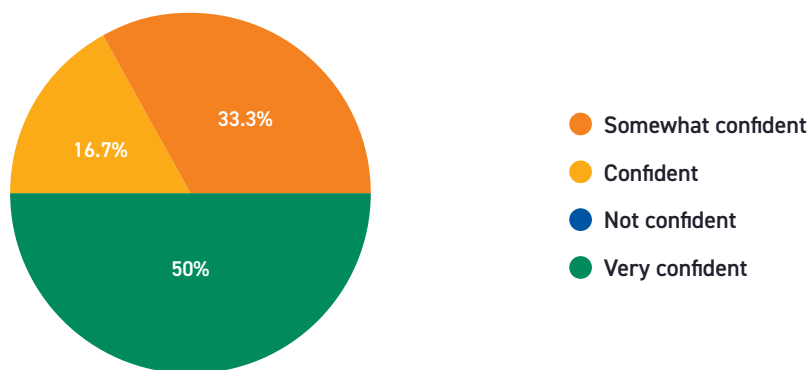
TOC concepts comprehension

Figure 23 below highlights the extent to which facilitators believe that the trainees understood the concepts of the theory of change. The majority of facilitators (50%) believed that the trainees understood the concepts of the theory of change very well with a further 16,7% of who believed the trainees understood the concepts well. There

is however a concern as 33,3% of the facilitators believe that the trainees understood the concepts of the theory of change somewhat. This further emphasize the fact that the theory of change concepts are not easy and that more strategies should be implemented by the NSG, DPME and appointed facilitators to ensure that these concepts are simplified and easy to understand by all trainees.

Figure 23: Perspective on Ease of TOC Concepts Comprehension

The facilitators were split with regard to the trainees' application of the theory of change during practical exercises. The figure be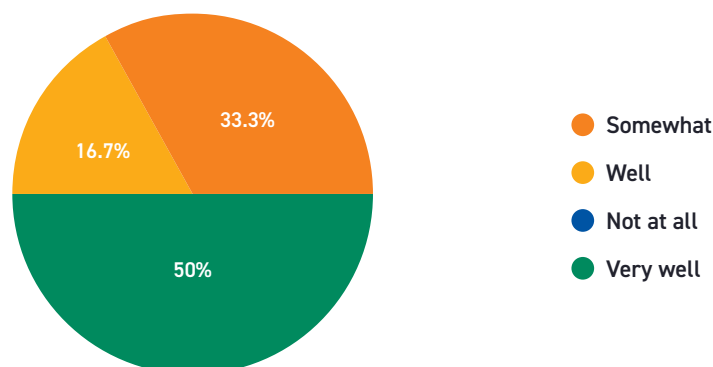low reveals a concern where half of the facilitators believe that the trainees applied the theory of change during practical exercises somewhat. Notably,

none of the facilitators believe that the trainees applied the theory of change during practical exercises very well. This points out to a need for more training and more practical and relevant exercises to ensure comprehension of the theory of change.

Figure 24: Trainees' Application of TOC During Practical Exercises
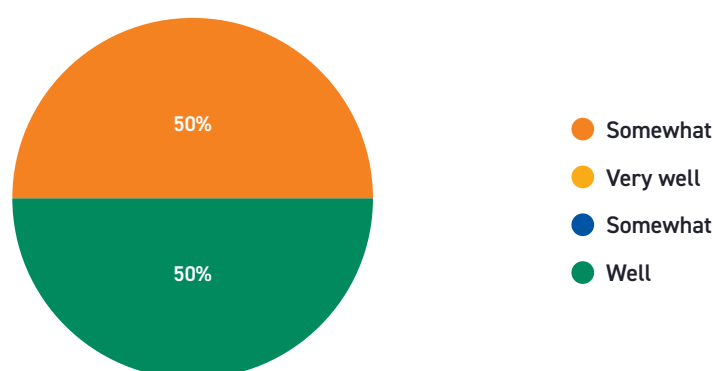
The facilitators noticed the following areas where trainees struggled with the concepts or exercises:

- They struggled with terminology such as pathways of change. Some struggled to understand the difference between a TOC and a logical framework
- Development of indicators at Outcome level
- Understanding of Impact

- The basic RBM methodology is difficult for them to grasp initially.
- They struggled with the basic cause and effect chains in pathways.
- They struggle with English communication. They tend to communicate in one, two or three words instead of full sentences.

Trainee Application of TOC in their work place

The majority of trainees (68%) alluded to the fact that they apply the theory of change at their work place as part of their strategic planning or program design process with 5% of the trainees indicating that they use the theory of change in their planning processes sometimes. There was 18% of the trainees who indicated that they do not apply the theory of change in their strategic planning and programme for various reasons. It should be noted that of those respondents who indicated that they do not apply the theory of change at their work place, 25% confirmed that they were not involved with planning processes.

Figure 25: Trainee Application TOC

Trainee Application of TOC
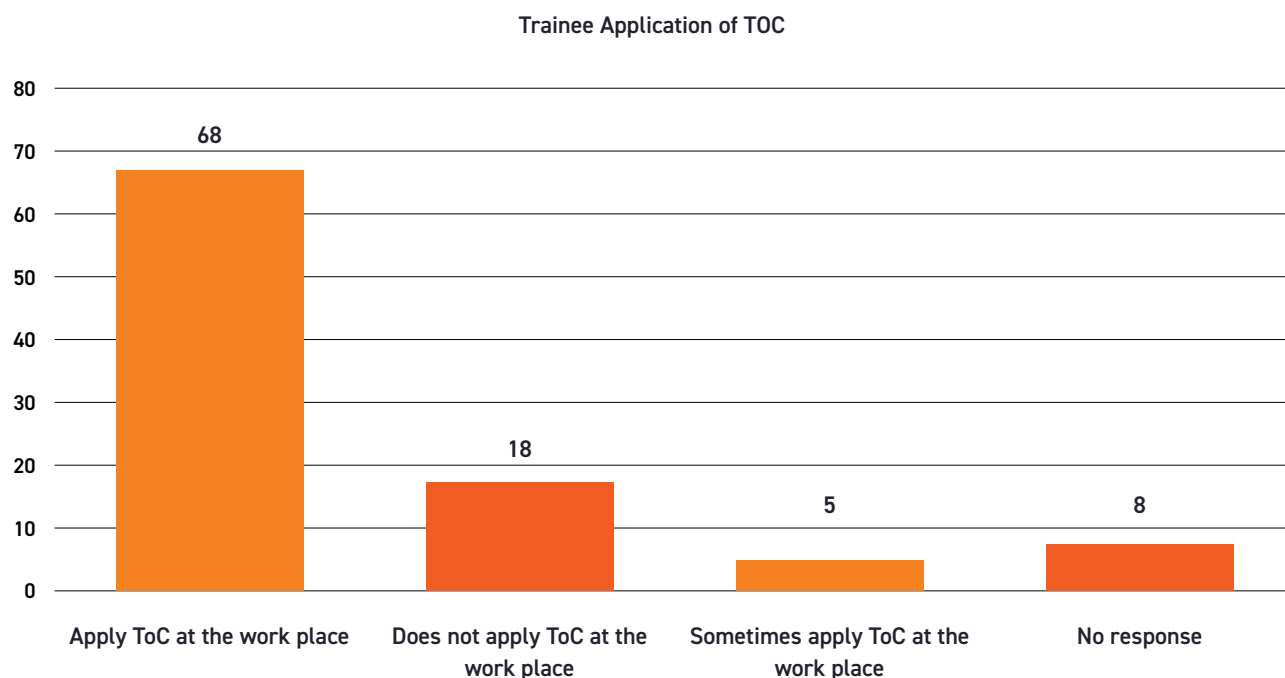
5.5 Theme 3: Institutionalisation of TOC

The evaluation has further revealed that the theory of change is still not fully institutionalised in the planning processes of departments and public entities. The figure below reveals that only 57,9% of the trainees who indicated that the theory of change is institutionalised in the planning process of their departments or institution. A significant percentage of trainees (42,1%) confirmed that theory of change is not institutionalised in the planning processes of their departments or institutions.

Figure 26: Institutionalisation of TOC in Departments
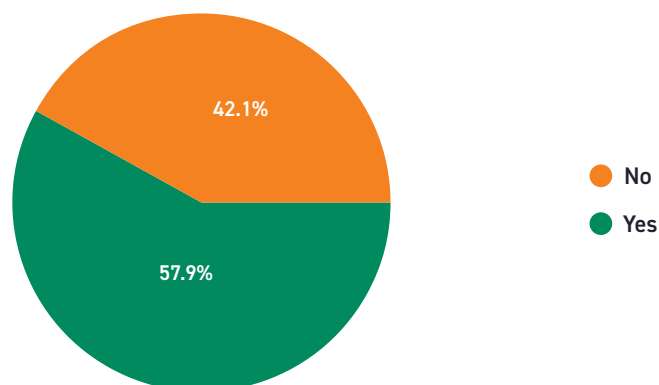
Trainees' perspectives on success factors for Institutionalisation of TOC

The successful integration of the Theory of Change (TOC) within departments was significantly influenced by the presence of robust strategic planning and reporting units, as well as strong research, monitoring, and evaluation sections. These critical success factors ensured that the departments were well-equipped to implement and sustain TOC methodologies effectively. Some trainees indicated that they relatively follow the processes taught whilst other trainees reported that their plans are aligned with recommended frameworkdespite the few gaps and weaknesses. In other institutions, planning documents have been developed and there is a need for all the executives to understand this approach and extending training course to the executives would assist. Other trainees reported that management in their departments undertook training to have context when developing indicators and targets and this has proven to be a success.

Communication becomes key as other trainees reported that the strategic management units communicated and implemented the theory of change for the 2020/25 cycle. The role of planners was also found to be key in that planners guided managers using TOC during the development of Sector Plan, Strategic Plan, APP, AOP and customised sector indicators. In this regard, the planning process is informed by the NDP, draft MTDP and other National and Provincial Priorities.

Trainees' perspective on challenges hindering institutionalization of TOC Accordingly, the trainees who indicated that TOC is not institutionalized in their departments (42%), outlined the reasons in the table below as inhibiting factors to the institutionalisation of TOC in the planning processes. Notably, 10% of the respondents indicated resistance and lack of support from top management as a factor contributing to the none institutionalization of TOC.

Table 4: Trainees' Perspective on Inhibiting Factors

Trainees' perspectives on Inhibiting factors	Number
Lack of understanding of TOC / Uncertainty on application / Programme managers and senior managers not trained	9%
Resistance / Reluctance / Lack of support and buy-in from top management / Those trained not process owners	10%
Support required / Capacity issues	2%
TOC viewed as a planning function only	6%
Not sufficient time dedicated to planning	2%
Other	13%
Total	**42%**

The interviews with the provincial offices of the premier revealed the reasons outlined in the table below as inhibiting factors for the institutionalization of the TOC in strategic planning processes of departments:

Table 5: Provincial Perspective on Factors Inhibiting Institutionalisation of TOC

Province	Inhibiting Factors
Eastern Cape	• Application of TOC is hindered by high staff turn-over of those who have been trained • Some departments are receptive and conducive to the changes while others are not
Free State	• Senior managers have not been trained and are still stuck in the old way of doing things • Few people were trained on TOC coupled with high staff turnover of those who have been trained
Gauteng	• Critical implementors (programme managers) did not attend the training 69 • Difficulty in leadership and management embracing the concepts and methodology of TOC
Kwazulu-Natal	• There is a tendency of a push back by senior management. Change management throughout the process is necessary • Some planners attended the training but still cannot comprehend the methodology
Limpopo	• The training did not target decision makers • Planners do not embrace change and have attitude towards TOC • Those who did not attend training are lagging behind and thus contributing to the slow pace of institutionalisation
Mpumalanga	• There are some officials who demonstrate a lack of understanding of TOC and still needs support • Not all decision makers can confidently apply TOC
North West	• Officials are in their comfort zone and do not embrace change • Planners are being undermined by senior managers and thus unable to implement / apply TOC
Northern Cape	• The application of TOC is inconsistent due to lack of understanding by some officials • There is a lack of appetite for improvement

5.6   Suggestions for Improvement and Overall Satisfaction

5.6.1   Suggestions by Trainees and Facilitators

The following aspects were identified by the trainees as key aspects that can help with the improvement of their current and future projects. Suggestions for improvement were further made and are highlighted in the table below:

Table 6: Aspects Identified and Suggestions for Improvement - Trainees

Aspect Identified and suggestions for improvement	
Training should be provided to all program managers from all organisational business units, rather than focusing mainly on planners. Inviting many officials from the departments to attend is key as change requires team members and one cannot do it alone. The course also needs to include programme managers, so they can better understand the planning context, because planners normally struggle to explain the planning context to programme / content owners.	There is a need to conduct formal assessments. The course should be a competency-based course for strategic planning practitioners. The course should be accredited. There is a need to allocate more time, attendees could be requested to submit a portfolio of their intervention programme which should include all areas e.g. stakeholders, situational analysis, budget, checking alignment to government apex goals. This portfolio should be assessed and provided with feedback.
The training must be thorough and provide practical examples and exercises. It is critical that more relevant examples be given. These should be examples that departments can relate to in South Africa.	Logical framework using different types of outputs (Qualitative & quantitative) is key however the Log framework in the course turns to be rushed through. More time should be allocated for this in order for the trainees to comprehend
The group work, which involved using actual scenarios as examples was very useful in cementing an understanding of the TOC concept. This should be maintained.	Training should be undertaken on a continuous basis especially before new government interventions or every five years. A refresher training on a yearly basis can be useful and can even be an online refresher training course.

Aspect Identified and suggestions for improvement	
The training on setting indicators, setting of targets was very useful. Clarity on the development of outcomes, especially the complexities of multilevel outcomes (i.e., intermediate out etc.) vs the ultimate outcomes is still required.	Better facilitators and more knowledgeable facilitator are required. The facilitators need to have more experience in development and institutional planning in the government context. The trainers should be familiar with the government programmes and the facilitation of the course should be by an expert who can assist managers in understanding the application of their work in relation to the planning process
More practical examples related to field of work and government planning processes are needed. The examples suitable for oversight departments such as Treasury are required as well as all examples were relevant to first line service delivery departments. There is therefore a need for examples that are relevant to all sectors.	Ratio of facilitators for attendees needs to be looked at to ensure a conducive learning environment.
There should be a practical exercises where a strategic plans are developed to illustrate the actual application of the TOC. There is a need to ensure that the course caters specifically for the sector and examples should be from that specific department. A mix of examples are therefore required not just the easy ones. These should be examples that empowers one to plan.	The key aspects of situational analysis should include ethics and integrity
There is a need to be trained again on the TOC since some of the officials were new in the planning field when they were first trained and could not comprehend the concepts. The course should spend more time on the theory of change aspect of the training. Crafting of outcomes and outcome indicators is still very difficult to comprehend.	The identification and handling of root causes to be started at national level for provinces to adopt for standardisation. Provinces to embark on their provincial exercises to identify and handle root causes for their province specific issues.
It would be great to see examples of institutions that have applied the theory of change and achieved the impact they have 71 stated so that lessons learned can be shared. Relevant case studies should be included. Customisation of the training by using specific government interventions as examples or case studies is crucial for the institutionalisation of TOC in departments.	Workshopping of TOC to real life scenarios is critical. There is a need for more examples on using Theory of Change for planning
The duration of the training course should be increased. The course needs to be more than the current 3 days so that groups can really delve in deeper into the resource material. The NSG should consider extending the duration to 5 days.	Training should be split in phases. Learning everything in one week is too rushed and compromises understanding.
It would be best if learners are trained per department and not all departments together. It would also be good to train officials who have at least 3 years in the field. If you are new in the field, it is difficult to relate to the course content. Grouping of similar institutions and having more specific examples to that sector/type of organisation could.	More emphasis should be on the application of the theory. The practical application of the theory and contextualising it to the department being workshopped or taught is critical for implementation.
Interdepartmental learning is required. It would be interesting to see how the planning tools were used by one institution in developing its strategic plan and how they went about it.	The Training material should use consistent examples and take into account majority of departments are about service delivery. The training should also be split between public entities and national departments as per the revised framework for SP and APP.
There is a need to train senior officials on the theory of change as they can be stumbling block when changes occur. It is strongly recommended that the course be recommended for senior managers to improve cooperation and their understanding of the approach during planning. It will mitigate the inherent risk of resistance to change. There is therefore a need to target programme managers at Director / Chief Director / Deputy Director General level	Online training would suffice

The trainees have identified the following additional topics or areas wishing that they could have been covered in the theory of change training

- Stakeholder Engagement Strategies, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Framework Integration
- Implications of data, baseline on evaluations.
- Latest developments such as scenario planning and how it is applied practically as well as the use of AI - opportunities and limitations
- The practical application of TOC and its evaluation 72
- Application of TOC on current socio-economic situation such as unemployment. Clear legal distinction application between Politics and Administration

- Alignment of Planning to Budgeting and Risk Management
- Evaluations and add a snippets of Monitoring
- Ethics and integrity as a key factor in bringing about change
- Need analysis for the training in Public Sector
- Case studies on Theory of Change
- Setting of SMART targets

The following aspects were identified by the facilitators and areas for improvement highlighted. These are included in the table below:

Table 7: Aspects Identified and Areas of Improvement - Facilitator Perspective

Aspect identified and areas for improvement	
Buy in from participants is critical. Many participants saw the training course and the TOC approach as additional work to their already loaded workload	Attitude of senior managers to change and leaving the training sessions to attending to other issues needs to be addressed through further a change management process.
In certain instances, the "right participants" were not sent to be trained, and they struggled as a consequence. It is important that relevant officials be sent to future trainings. This will go a long way in ensuring that there is full comprehension of the concepts and better implementation as the right people would be trained	A lot depends on how much additional preparation the facilitator does in advance. It is also important for the facilitator to develop his or her own supporting materials especially for online facilitation. · With face-to-face facilitation it is easier to establish the level of understanding and proficiency that the participants have so it is easy to adjust the activities. · The development of the TOC is time consuming and generally participants find it very difficult to conceptualise and implement even after providing them with the theoretical training. · Challenges are experienced when participants are not in the M&E environment and have simply been sent to the training to fill in for others.
The trainees struggled articulating the results they will deliver. It is recommended that trainees first go through the M & E module on indicators, communicating in full sentences and articulating results to ensure a better grasp of the concepts.	It is important that the course be streamlined. The course should be structured in an ordered way so as to allow for easy flow.
All the examples and exercises in the learning material must relate to trainees working environment. For example, if they are in the Education Sector, they should be given learning material with education related content.	Further material or articles on how to craft Outcome and Outputs should be explored in order to enhance the trainees comprehension of the concepts

5.6.2 Overall Satisfaction by Trainees and Facilitators

Satisfaction by trainees

The evaluation has revealed that the majority of trainees were happy with the overall quality of the training course. Figure 27 below reveals that 60,6% of trainees were satisfied with the quality of the training course with a further 21,1% of the trainees who were very satisfied with the training course. Notably, 15,6% of the trainees were neutral with 2,7% of the trainees indicating that they were dissatisfied with the quality of the training course.

Figure 27: Overall Satisfaction - Trainees

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
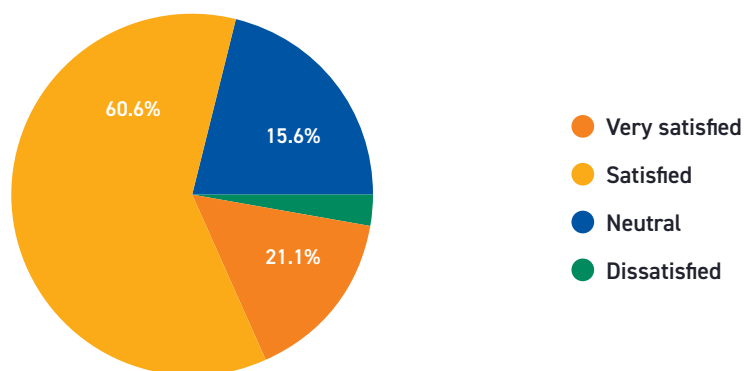
The majority of trainees indicated that they would recommend the training course to others. Figure 28 below reveals that the majority of trainees (63,9%) would definitely recommend the training course to others followed by 25,9% of trainees who indicated that they would probably recommend the training to others. Notably, 9,3% of trainees indicated that they are not sure if they would recommend the training course to others with .an insignificant percentage (0,9%) indicating that they would definitely not recommend this course to others.

Figure 28: Trainees Recommendation of the Training Course

- Definitely
- Probably
- Not sure
- No
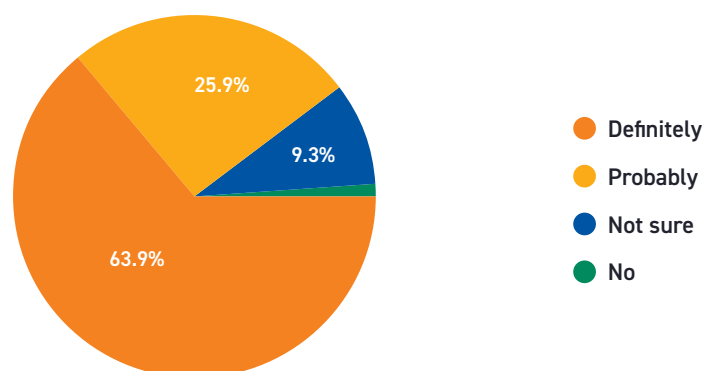
The trainees indicated the most valuable takeaway from the theory of change training course to include the following:

- The need to do and review SWOT analysis
- Stakeholder analysis which has since been an important tool
- The value of the theory of change in planning
- Application of the TOC in a live context - real problem solving
- Planning approaches and processes in the public sector
- The result based approach in planning and result chain

- Problem tree analysis
- Logical framework
- Setting outcomes with impact
- Situational analysis

Satisfaction by facilitators

The majority of the facilitators have expressed through this evaluation, overall satisfaction with the quality of the training course. Figure 29 below illustrates that 50% of the facilitators were very satisfied with the overall quality of the training programme with further 33,3% of facilitators being satisfied.

Figure 29: Satisfaction with the Quality of Training course
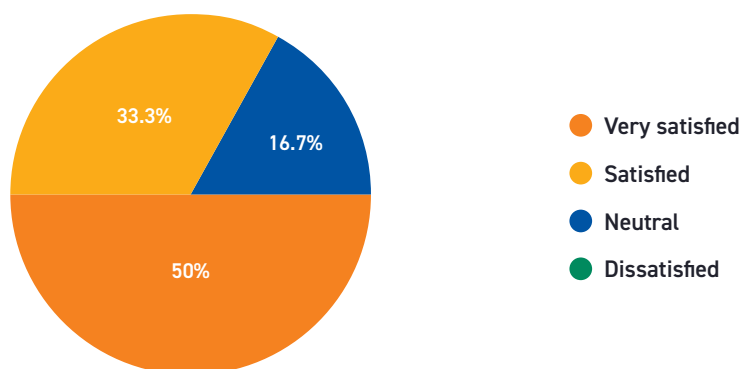
The majority of the facilitators have confirmed that they are interested in facilitating this training course. As can be seen from Figure 30 below, 83,3% of facilitators confirmed interest in facilitating this course in future with 16,7% showing a lack of interest in facilitating this course in future.

Figure 30: Facilitators Future Participation in the Training course
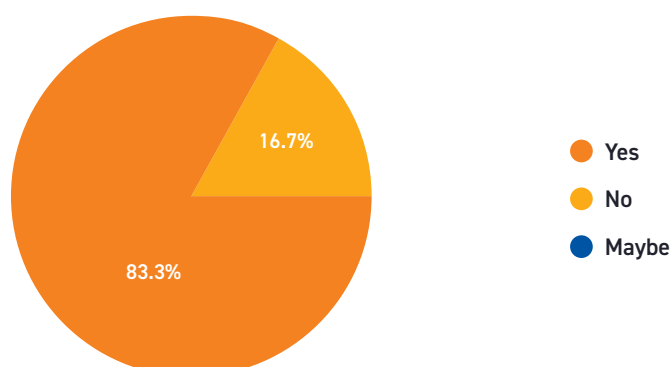
5.7   Provincial Perspective

5.7.1   Eastern Cape Province

The Eastern Cape Office of the Premier confirmed that the training was relevant to organizational strategy and assisted different institutions with their planning processes. The institutions are, however, at different levels in terms of implementation and positive impacts are seen where training has taken place. The office of the premier has been driving the training in the province. There is therefore an uptake and an understanding of the benefits that the training can provide.

The application of the TOC in planning processes is not at a level where it should be and sometimes there is a rush and limited information that is available to apply the methodology. There is a need to reinforce this training in the province. The province indicated that there were issues with the facilitator that undertook the training. The facilitator was not competent and had to be changed. The province raised the fact that other tools and alternatives other than the TOC should be investigated and explored. The province indicated that departments in the province are not homogenous, some are more receptive and conducive to the changes while others are not. In departments where there was good attendance of the programme one witnessed good application. In certain instance the application of TOC in planning processes has been hindered by high turn-over of staff especially with regard to resignations of officially who had been trained. The province concluded that applying TOC takes time, the province is not where it wants to be and it is still in a processes to improve. A refresher course will assist in this regard.

The province confirmed that they have benefited from the training course as it assisted to ensure collaboration between planners, evaluators, researchers and programme managers. The impact is not yet seen but will be felt in future. The province has indicated that the training was to a certain degree effective. The province recommend that the training should be broken down over a several period to allow official to go back and apply their learning in their work environment and bringing back the feedback to the training. The current course duration is limited. The province further recommends that more training should be undertaken and those who went to the training before should get a refresher course and that support with actual development of TOC is required. There is a need for

more people to be exposed to the training, the frequency of the course should also be looked at as it is crucial for continuous development to occur. It will be interesting to have the course accredited and ensure that facilitators are up to speed with what is expected of them. A final recommendation was that the NSG and DPME should avail a pool of resources to support (in the initial phase) provinces.

5.7.2   Free State Province

The province indicated that the training took place a while back and the application of the learning varies. There are instances where the application is not happening and some of the plans remains the same. The province indicated that the provincial health department is applying the TOC methodology while other departments are thumb-sucking where their targets are even incorrectly crafted and there is non-application of TOC. The TOC was new to many officials.

The concern of the province is that not many people were trained. The training in the province has targeted planners and senior managers were not trained and thus are still stuck in the old way of doing things. Change management is lacking. A custom made training course should be made for managers which should be flexible enough to stimulate their attendance. Overall, the training had minimum effect as change comes over time. There needs to be a re-think if the TOC and its methodology fits in government processes.

5.7.3   Gauteng Province

The Gauteng Office of the Premier alluded to the fact that the course is critically relevant because National Government has the revised framework and all government departments have to comply. This is a relatively new concept for government and there must be understanding so that it can be effectively applied. The course is most often attended by Planning M&E officials, however the critical implementors, Programme Managers do not attend. The role of planning is to guide on how the process should unfold and implementors are tasked with implementing. When there is a lack of understanding from the implementors there are challenges in application. The training on the TOC is critically important because it demonstrates alignment to the broader strategic direction of government. There is a need for better collaboration and understanding between Planning M&E and Programme Manager to enhance M&E practices.

The province confirmed that the TOC is work-in-progress. The is high turnover of staff and this disrupts the investment in the official because they move positions and take that knowledge with. There has been difficulty in leadership and management embracing the concepts and methodology of TOC. Many prefer to the 'old' methods without considering the impact this has on reporting and performance management. Leadership and management must also attend the course to get an understanding of the TOC and its application. While the TOC concepts from the training is being applied, there is a significant gap due to limited attendance of Programme Managers who are tasked with implementation. This gap creates fragmentation and impacts on the effects of strategic planning and decision making within the Departments.

There has been improvements in some departments however it is not consistent. The changes in management often creates fragmentation and this is evidenced in the reporting. A number of the entities have been trained and there is improvement in their plans. In many instances there has been streamlining of decision making, however, there is still a lag or delay in Departments embracing the TOC. The most common complaint is that the TOC is too complex and rigid. This complaint is most prevalent from Programme Managers who have not attended the training course.

There has been significant progress since 2020 in departmental performance and this has been evidenced in the audit outcomes. The Department of Community Safety has been cited as an example of notable progress.

The province confirmed that the training content is effective; however the 3 day format is not sufficient to grasp TOC. The course is almost rushed to ensure that all topics are covered in the time frame. This limits the timeframe for engagements and discussions. The facilitators understand the concepts and engage well. There is sufficient support for the training course however due to budget constraints and exclusion of Programme Managers the effectivenes of the course will be marginal. The course should be appropriately positioned for new and seasoned officials.

The province request that the course should ideally be accredited so that participants will pay more attention. Most often participants are on their laptops attending to other issues. The venue of the training should be considered carefully to avoid distraction. Training programme should expand beyond planners and include Programme Managers. Trainers/facilitators should be allocated

Departments and conduct training more regularly to retain the knowledge. The course should be extended to 5 days. The venue should ideally have no network connectivity to keep participants focussed. Inter-departmental learning platforms will assist to deepen understanding.

5.7.4   Kwazulu-Natal Province

The province confirmed that application of the TOC is implemented. However MANCO does not understand this process and there is push back from managers. The theory of change in planning is not institutionalized. Planners in KZN have been trained and some are comfortable to use the TOC methodology difficult as it is. There are other planners who were sent for training but still cannot comprehend the methodology. The province works with the provincial training academy (PPSTA) to ensure roll out of the training. The province indicated that the cost of the course is a prohibiting factor to training more officials.

The province confirmed that there is technical compliance and all departments follow the framework. It will take long to see credible plans coming out and while planners are taking a logical view to planning they are not responsible for APPs as it is an executive function and executives do not fully understand the process.

With regard to the training effectiveness, the province will not advocate for the TOC course to be online as it takes a while to comprehend and thus physical interaction is required. Furthermore, there are very few who can train on the TOC very well. Bad facilitators have been encountered by the province. A tailor made course should be designed for MANCO where they can spend 1 day training on theory and another day in a strategic planning session at their work place. A change management process throughout is necessary. Brown bag exercises should be explored.

5.7.5   Limpopo Province

The Limpopo Office of the Premier has confirmed that the training is relevant to the organisational strategy. The training is relevant to the development of strategic plans and APPS. However, the only problem is that it did not target the decision makers (Senior Managers). With regard to the application of learning by participants, the province has confirmed that some participants are applying the concept of theory of change. Notably, those who did not attend the training are lagging behind and generally do not apply the TOC methodology. The province indicated that in certain instances planners do not embrace change and

have attitude towards the TOC. Furthermore, the province reported that the trainee participants are not given an opportunity to apply what they have learned.

With regard to the impact on leadership and decision making, the province confirmed that there is an improvement and impact on those still around. The only problem is that departments send to training irrelevant people and those close to retirement. There are no benefits experienced because of resistance form the top. Some departments send to TOC training the employees who about to retire. Some trained employees have since left government with all the knowledge. In 2024 the department through the DPME and NSG has conducted a refresher course, and training for new planners that just joined the department.

Regarding training effectiveness, the province alluded to the fact that overall, the training is fine, facilitators are good, resources are fine. The training is effective, but the 3 days course is too short. It is recommended that the course be held over a 5 day period to allow for more practical work. The 3 days course is enough when there are good facilitators. Some facilitators are not up to scratch. The TOC training needs to be elevated to Programme Managers on top and not only limited to planners. This is, it should include Director Generals and Chief Directors. To get support, people at the top management should be trained as well for at least 2 days to appreciate it. There is lack of buy in from top management. The challenge is that participants are not understanding the concept. More people need to be trained.

5.7.6   Mpumalanga Province

The Mpumalanga Office of the Premier confirmed that the training is relevant to the organisational strategy. The training is relevant and assisted departments to develop outcomes, Annual Performance Plans and 5-year plans. The TOC summarises the three plans above and give the pictorial view. Some departments in the province are however still using the SWOT analysis. With regard to the application of learning by participants the province has confirmed that it is a 50/50 situation and depends on the participants level of understanding. Generally, the training has not assisted all participants to apply the TOC in planning processes and some officials still needs support.

With regard to the impact on leadership and decision making, the province confirmed that TOC is having an impact because it has managed to link all the different plans. It simplifies planning through integration. Not all decision makers can confidently apply the TOC. They should be given a period of 5-10 years for it to sink, as application of change takes time. New employees need to be trained as well. Benefits have been experienced and the results are visible, as departments can identify outcomes, impacts and inputs using the TOC. Future planning depends on it.

Regarding training effectiveness, the province alluded to the fact that the 2 to 3 days training is not enough as processes are rushed to cover time. It should be extended to 5 days to allow individual exercises to thoroughly check their understanding. The province has recommended that the TOC training should be extended to Programme managers/Senior managers, and not focus only on planners, M&E etc. Furthermore, It must be a requirement that all general managers should be trained.

5.7.7   North-West Province

The North-west Province Office of the Premier has confirmed that the training was relevant and rigorous. Some departments took the process serious while others took it lightly. The weakness is on implementation which is lacking. The province indicated that TOC requires patriotic people. The province indicated that some officials are in their comfort zones and do not want to embrace change brought by TOC. TOC is not institutionalised because of unwillingness. The APPs and strategic plans are seen as products of planners and not for entire departments or institutions.

Application of learning has been coming forth mainly from planners and M & E practitioners. The first phase of training was attended by planners and M & E practitioners. The second phase of the training was aimed at programme Managers who reflected less interest in taking part in the training course. The Planners and M & E officials are trying to implement, but programme managers are not coming to the party. Programme managers resist and are comfortable with the status quo. TOC has nevertheless led to improvement in monitoring and evaluation especially as it relates to outcomes and inputs-based evaluation. With regard to the impact on leadership and decision making, the province confirmed that the planners are trying to influence the thinking and decisions using TOC, but because of their rank in organisations they tend to be undermined, which is unfortunate as they are not the ultimate decision makers.

The province confirmed that the benefits are experienced as the officials understand the TOC and how it should be implemented, however the ball lies with management to implement. The province has reported that during the second phase of the compilation of the APPs and strategic plans, some departments opted not to apply the TOC. Some departments, according to the province oppose the TOC because they do not want "self-introspection to avoid exposing their own weaknesses".

The training was effective according to the province and the 3 (three) day course duration is sufficient. It is only for participants to realise they are duty bound to read the materials and further consult the facilitators where they experience challenges even after the training. The province has suggested that there is a need to establish planning forums within departments and this will assist in discussing how TOC can be improved. Furthermore, departments can source funding to expand the training for their officials. The provincial and national planning forums can used for assistance and support. The North-West OTP is therefore open to support the departments in this regard.

Regarding challenges and opportunities for improvement, the province highlighted the lack of support and buy in by programme managers and lack of alignment between budgets and departmental programmes. The Treasury department should ensure budgets talk to plans. As an example, TOC talks of spatial transformation, but no budget is aligned to such a programme. The province concluded that TOC should continue to be applied across government departments because it is a good tool. DPME is commended for introducing the TOC and training, but unfortunately some officials are not embracing it. The implementation lies with practitioners and programme managers accordingly.

5.7.8   Northern Cape Province

The province has confirmed that training is important to align with the revised strategic planning frameworks. Officials from the Planning and M&E unit attended the pilot course. There is application however it is not consistent because of lack of understanding and deliberation on the importance of TOC. In many instances there is theoretical understanding of the TOC, however, its practical application in departmental planning remains limited. For example, there are often discrepancies between impact statements in strategic plans and the standardised indicators in annual performance plans. There is a lack of

appetite for improvement and this is based on the annual feedback received. Benefits have been experienced in the province. There has been progress however it is still very sporadic and inconsistent. The training is effective and the 3 day format is sufficient for grasping the TOC. The course material sufficiently covers the TOC and practical application. The facilitators (from what we remember) were effective and allowed discussion and engagements to instil the knowledge. The on-going discussions in M&E forums among departments to improve understanding of TOC is important.

The province has made recommendations which are key for better implementation. Follow-up sessions should be introduced to reinforce the concepts learned with practical examples being showcased. This practical component will enhance understanding and serve as a focal point for referencing against practical material. An opportunity exists to accredit the course which would allow to deepen the impact and broaden participation. The process of accreditation may require for the course to be completely restructured to allow for more days. Continuous application of the TOC is highly recommended and this can be undertaking in informal sessions (such as brown bag) to keep practitioners engaged. One of the challenges may be participant commitment to the engagement sessions. A broader range of stakeholders is important to ensure that the TOC concepts are applied throughout the institutions. The inclusion of accounting officers and management is important. Dedicated training at the Departmental level should be pursued to improve application of TOC. Development of indicators for tracking progress to the application of TOC is critical.

5.8   Case Study

Department of Department of Home Affairs
The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) started preparing for the institutionalisation of the Theory of Change for their planning processes after the framework was revised even before the formal training was undertaken by NSG. The department contracted a lecturer from the University of the Witwatersrand to address them and to assist them with their institutional planning in their particular the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. The DHA officials had a bit of background of what the theory of change is about and how it should work by the time they went for training.

The department has 7500 employees and in the planning directorate there are only 3 officials responsible for extensive planning programme on an annual basis. The

department has a session with EXCO and the Minister where the scene is set for the planning process to unfold. A minimum of two departmental workshops are held annually where strategies are discussed and the theory of change is explained and discussed. The department has 8 branches and 9 provincial regional offices and there are no dedicated planners nor M&E officials in each of these branches. The branches are then requested to identify someone to take on the role of planning over and above their other responsibilities.

The department confirmed that they use the theory of change as their planning instrument and this was included in their 2022 Strategic Framework that the department developed. The department realised that planners within the department were comfortable using the methodology but their branches (especially branch management) were struggling a lot with the concept of theory of change. Various workshops were introduced to the branches to assist them with the theory of change concept.

The department has confirmed that the training was relevant to their organisational strategy and it is critical for implementation. A total of 10 officials attended the training consisting of 3 officials from planning, 5 officials from M & E and a further 3 officials from other branches. The department has raised the fact that theory of change should be embedded in organisational culture and that if you don't apply it on a regular basis you are more likely to forget the concept. The department has indicated its intention to expand this training programme to senior management service (SMS) within the department. The department indicated that they really struggle to get officials to comply with crafting indicators and targets that comply with the smart principles which is the issue of culture. It seems that officials would like to keep things openminded so that it gives room for negotiation when targets are not achieved.

The DHA recommend that DPME should engage various departments in order to make it compulsory as there a lot of competing priorities. Having follow up sessions is critical. With regard to the facilitation of the course the department alluded to the fact that sometimes different interpretation of the TOC are received from facilitators an example being the interpretation by the lecturer from Wits as well as the NSG facilitator. It is therefore important that the same message be communicated by facilitators.

Further recommendation by DHA was that the course should be delivered physically and not online as the concept is not one of the easiest to comprehend and with online training one tends to be overwhelmed by a lot of information. With regard to the training of senior managers, the department cautioned that it is difficult to get managers to do training just for a day and as such NSG must make it as easy as possible for senior management service to attend. The course must be structured in such a way that it shows benefits and value add holistically not only in planning but in a personal space as well. The final recommendation from DHA is that the NSG should look into regular, more simplistic communication on the theory of change either through refresher courses, government news flash or brochures which might also be electronic.

Lessons learnt from the case study

- It is critical that the existing training course be supplemented and that training on theory of change concepts be undertaken on a regular basis. The DHA was able to grasp the concept as they had additional training from the University of the Witwatersrand, this went a long way in assisting the to comprehend the concepts.
- Departments should identify officials who could be given the additional role or responsibility of planning within the various units. This will ensure that a culture of planning is inculcated within departments.
- Constant communication with all units in departments is key. Branch workshops aimed at educating the non-planners assisted DHA to ensure planning instruments such as TOC are applied.
- Planning with senior management is also key to institutionalise the TOC processes in institutional planning. DHA was able to apply TOC principles to management buy in as a result of bi-yearly planning and strategy sessions that are held between planners,
- EXCO and the Minister

5.9   The Role of NSG

The NSG is responsible for facilitating the Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector training course. The NSG has confirmed as fact that the majority of trainees who were trained during the pilot phase were planners and there were few to none executives and senior managers. The NSG has confirmed that recent intake of trainees include Directors, Chief directors and Deputy Directors General who now attend the training. Furthermore, the capacity of MANCO and EXCO is being built and the NSG is offering strategic support in person to assist departments in their strategic planning sessions. This is however subject to senior managers enrolling for the course.

Due to the fact that facilitators were few the project took longer and there was a codependency as an official from DPME had to form part of the training and such resource was not always available in mass. The NSG has observed that for officials who are less experienced, the course duration is insufficient while for the seasoned planners the duration is sufficient. The NSG has also confirmed that they are satisfied with the current facilitators as these were senior managers in the public service and possess the requisite qualifications and experience to facilitate this training.

With regard to the course being a credit bearing course as requested by various officials, the NSG indicated that this should not be looked in isolation and that this could be looked at through the occupational qualification route (OCTO) or this be aligned as part of the university qualifications. This matter will have to be thoroughly investigated and currently there is no evidence that this does have an influence of course participation.

The following lessons learnt were therefore highlighted by the NSG:

- Officials were not allowed the space to implement what has been taught. This is exacerbated by the fact that mainly planners were trained and not senior managers and as a result there has been resistance
- A blended approach is required which should include both training as well as post training support to departments / institutions. This support could be provided directly at a time when departments are preparing their strategic plans and are holding their strategic planning sessions. This support could also include the provision of "quick reference guides" for trainees

- Post peer learning is critical. Peer learning environments in NSG platforms could be used for this course in future
- There is a need to train more people. There is a high demand for the course and implementation will improve as more and more people are trained.
- There is a need to prepare and adapt the training course material for the online environment

6. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this evaluation was to undertake an outcome evaluation of the training course on the "Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector" offered by the DPME and NSG. The research design for this evaluation was structured as a comprehensive plan to ensure the research questions could be addressed with evidence-based conclusions. For this evaluation, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, allowing the evaluation to benefit from both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques.

The literature indicates the importance of training and development in TOC as a critical enabler for successful government planning. Further, training and development on a continuous basis is a cornerstone for building capacity and capability. A consistent theme during the interview sessions was the need for the content of the training to include practical exercises and scenarios that will enable participants to more effectively grasp the theory of change concepts. Hutchings[141] posits "What's at stake is the capacity to perform, to put what one knows into practice". To help students become capable and competent practitioners requires that they have training in self-awareness, knowledge acquisition, and skill building (Kramer[142]). According to Shebib[143], practitioners need to have skills in four areas: relationship building, exploring or probing, empowering, and challenging. An essential additional skill is the ability to gain and utilise knowledge from practice (Dorfman[144]). On the discourse on practical learning and theoretical grounding, Wrenn[145] argues that as important as experience is as a great teacher, it cannot replace what can be best taught in a classroom and vice versa. A case could be made that the best learning environment is created when these two learning modalities are integrated within a course rather than partitioned throughout multiple courses in the curriculum.

Training evaluation methodologies were explored. A number of models were presented and the strengths and weaknesses of the models were analysed. Further modern trends in training evaluations were highlighted which range from blended models that often present as a combination of Kirkpatrick's framework with Phillips' ROI analysis to assess both qualitative and financial outcomes, to data-driven evaluation models that takes cognisance of technological advancements and allows for more real-time feedback and personalised training assessments, to learning transfer and impact evaluation which focusses on continuous training leading not only acquisition of knowledge but also behavioural change of participants. The impact evaluation on the training course found that the there was a mixed model approach that leaned toward Kirkpatrick's four-level model and Kaufman's five levels of evaluation. The structure of the learner guide and pre and post survey questionnaires indicated that the course focussed on level 1 reaction; level 2 learning; level 3 behaviour and level 4 results as defined by Kirkpatrick. Further, elements of Kaufman's level 1 input; level 2 process; level 3 acquisition; level 4 application and level 5 societal/organisational impact was evident in the responses received from participants that spoke to the effectiveness of the delivery of the training course.

A total of 110 trainees responded to the online survey comprising of 65% females and 45% males. A total of 36 respondents are appointed at national government with 41 respondents appointed by provincial governments. Public entities accounted for 33 respondents. A detail list of departments where the trainees are appointed is attached as an annexure to this report. A total of 6 facilitators were appointed to facilitate the training course. All facilitators responded to the online survey comprising of 50% females and 50% males. It should be noted that 2 facilitators started facilitating this course at the inception of the training course, one facilitator commenced in 2018 while the rest of the facilitators commenced in the year 2019.

The evaluation has confirmed that the training content and methodology is relevant to all organisations in terms of their organisational strategies. This is corroborated by the literature that asserts that modalities for immersing theory and practice includes active learning, constructivism, real

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[141] Hutchings, P. 1990. Assessment and the way it works: Closing plenary address, Association of Higher Education Conference on Assessment, Washington, DC

[142] Kramer, B. J. 1998. Preparing social workers for the inevitable: A preliminary investigation of a course on death, grief, and loss. Journal of Social Work Education, 34(2), 211-227.

[143] Shebib, B. 2003. Choices: Counselling skills for social workers and other professionals. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

[144] Dorfman, R. A. 1996. Clinical social work: Definition, practice and vision. New York, NY: Brunner/Mazel.

[145] Wrenn, Jan & Wrenn, Bruce. 2009. Enhancing Learning by Integrating Theory and Practice. International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. 21.

[146] Boud, D., Cohen, R., & Walker, D. 1993. Introduction: Understanding learning from experience. In D. Boud, R. Cohen & D. Walker (Eds.), Using experience for learning (pp. 1-17). Bristol, PA: Society for Research into Higher Education.

world learning and adult education. Authors (Boud et al[146], Wrenn[147], Bonwell and Eison[148]) concur that although experience may be the foundation of learning, it does not automatically or even necessarily always lead to it. Using an active learning environment can enhance the integration of practice and theory in the classroom. Active learning characteristics includes, a) students are involved in more than listening, b) less emphasis is placed on transmitting information and more on development of students' skills, c) students are involved in higher order thinking (analysis, synthesis, evaluation), d) students are engaged in activities (such as writing, reading, discussing, and observing), and e) greater emphasis is placed on students' exploration of their attitudes and values. (Bonwell & Eison[149]). One important component of the active learning model that distinguishes it from other learning models is an emphasis on experience rather than merely listening as a means of acquiring knowledge (Bonwell & Eison[150], Coulshed[151], Felder & Brent[152]). Knowledge has indeed been gained. There is however an outcry that the course should be restructured and simplified and practical examples relevant to departments be given as part of the course. The evaluation has revealed that trainees still struggle with the development of credible based indicators and targets required to populate the Strategic Plans and APP and that more practical training is still required in this regard. very few senior managers were trained has been an inhibiting factor.

The NSG has already started to address some of the short comings identified in the evaluation. The NSG is responsible for facilitating the Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector training course. Literature suggests that in the South African context, the field of public administration is viewed from a knowledge management environment wherein universities are seen as learning organisations with a continuum of learning taking place. Emergent new forms of knowledge production have had a profound effect on South African higher education policy and the development of a "high skills" society[153] (Winberg, 2006). It is worth mentioning that these knowledge perspectives are one of the current focal training areas in the National School of Government's training programme for public servants in South Africa. The NSG has confirmed as fact that the majority of trainees who were trained during the pilot phase were planners and there were few to none executives and senior managers. The NSG has confirmed that recent intake of trainees include Directors, Chief directors and Deputy Directors General who now attend the training. Furthermore, the capacity of MANCO and EXCO is being built and the NSG is offering strategic support in person to assist departments in their strategic planning sessions. This is however subject to senior managers enrolling for the course.

[146] Boud, D., Cohen, R., & Walker, D. 1993. Introduction: Understanding learning from experience. In D. Boud, R. Cohen & D. Walker (Eds.), Using experience for learning (pp. 1-17). Bristol, PA: Society for Research into Higher Education.
[147] Wrenn, Jan & Wrenn, Bruce. 2009. Enhancing Learning by Integrating Theory and Practice. International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. 21.
[148] Bonwell, C. C., & Eison, J. A. 1991. Active learning: Creating excitement in the classroom. Washington, DC: Eric Clearinghouse on Higher Education.
[149] Ibid
[150] Ibid
[151] Coulshed, V. 1993. Ac=ve learning: Implica=ons for teaching in social work educa=on. Bri=sh Journal of Social Work, 23(1), 1-13.
[152] Felder, R., & Brent, R. 2003. Learning by doing. Chemical Engineering Educa=on, 37(4), 282-283.
[153] Winberg, C. 2006. Undisciplining knowledge production: Development-Driven higher education in South Africa. Higher Education, 51(2), 159–172.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are thus made:

Theme 1: TOC Course Structure, Facilitation and Delivery

1. *Minor modification of the training course* - it is recommended that the course be slightly modified by inclusion of more practical scenarios. The development of the TOC requires time and certain (though few) participants find it very difficult to conceptualise and implement even after being provided with the theoretical training. The training must be thorough and provide practical scenarios. These should be scenarios that departments can relate to in South Africa. More practical scenarios related to field of work and government planning processes are needed. Furthermore, there should be a practical scenarios where strategic plans are developed to illustrate the actual application of the TOC. There is a need to ensure that the course caters specifically for all sectors. A mix of scenarios are therefore required, and these should be exercises and scenarios that empowers one to plan. Further, there should be an expansion of the modalities of delivery offered that may include a pre-recorded series that allows participants to constantly refer to the teachings.

2. *Course options* – the NSG should continue with providing both the online and physical training as this will facilitate the enrolment of more trainees as choice will be given. The feasibility of having a self-paced online training should be investigated.

3. *Extension of the course duration* - the duration of the training course should be increased. The course needs to be more than the current 3 days so that groups can delve in deeper into the resource material. The NSG should consider and further investigate extending the course duration. The evaluation has revealed the desire by course participants to have the duration of the course extended to 5 days. A further recommendation is that the training should be split in phases. This could include theoretical learning as well as on the job learning where learners can return to provide feedback and obtain further guidance.

4. *Ongoing facilitator training* – it is recommended that course facilitators be trained on an on-going basis to ensure high professional and competency levels when delivering the course. The evaluation has revealed some level of uneasiness with some of the facilitators that have been presenting the course especially during the pilot phase.

5. *Course accreditation* – the feasibility of delivering the Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Service as an accredited course in future should be investigated. This will ensure that the course has gone through standardisation in its content and presentation.

Theme 2: Knowledge gained and Application

6. *Continuous training and refresher courses* - training should be undertaken on a continuous basis. There is a need for more people to be exposed to the training, the frequency of the course should also be looked at as it is crucial for continuous development to occur. The evaluation has revealed that many officials who were trained have since resigned. It is also recommended that more training should be undertaken and those who went to the training before should get a refresher course. The programme for the refresher course should be targeted at specific areas of focus once a needs assessment has been completed. This programme and needs assessment can be largely guided by the post training questionnaire.

7. *Provision of support to departments and institutions* – it is recommended that support with actual development of theory of change in strategic planning be provided. There are instances where officials were trained but still needed guidance on the development of the theory of change. An after-training support or service should be implemented. Peer support and mentoring programmes should be developed to ensure the transfer of leaning into the work place.

Theme 3: Institutionalisation of TOC

8. *Extension of training course to all programme managers in all business units* – it is recommended that the training be provided to all program managers from all organisational business units in departments, rather than focusing mainly on planners. Inviting many officials from the departments to attend is key as change requires team members.

9. *Training of senior managers* - there is a need to train senior officials on the theory of change as they are responsible and accountable for strategic planning. It is strongly recommended that the course be made compulsory for senior managers to improve cooperation and their understanding of the approach during planning and will mitigate the inherent risk of resistance to change. There is therefore a need to target programme managers at Director / Chief Director / Deputy Director General level. The NSG should look into the feasibility of having two separate courses, one for senior managers and a more detail course for planners and programme managers

10. *Change management* – it is recommended that a change management processes be initiated by departments and institutions to obtain buy-in from all role players. This will go a long way in institutionalization of the theory of change in institutional planning. Furthermore, buy in from participants is critical. Many participants saw the training course and the TOC approach as additional work to their already loaded workload

11. *Funding* – the evaluation revealed a need for funding to be availed. Funding for the training course should be prioritised and departments should use their HRD funds to train more officials.

12. *Collaboration with the academic sector* – there is a need for collaboration with the academic sector to enable the design and delivery of comprehensive courses (in the short to medium term) for planning in government. This will enable the building of the required planning competencies over time.

8. PROPOSED THEORY OF CHANGE

Theory of Change for the Training Course on the Theory of Change for Planning in the Public Sector

Underlying Problem Statement

The initial TOC captured in Chapter 3 identified a critical gap in the competency of planners, M&E practitioners and programme managers to use the TOC in institutional planning processes. However, the results of the outcome evaluation indicates that the underlying challenge is more than the competency factors of the practitioners. The challenges briefly summarised includes challenges with management and leadership, lack of post training course support, training course efficacy in terms of duration, selection criteria of participants needs to include a wider range of stakeholders, high management and staff turnover creates knowledge gaps, and teaching on more practical application of TOC in various institutions. Despite the introduction of the training course the application of the TOC in institutional planning has not gained the overwhelming traction as envisaged. Although there are a few pockets of successful application, there is a clear disjuncture from the understanding of the theoretical foundations of the TOC to its practical application. This may be largely attributed to the existing bureaucratic culture that includes fragmented implementation of performancebased incentives and consequence management; compliance-based traditional management practices persist; an electoral cycle of five years leading to short-term orientation of government performance; poor organisational learning and evidence-based decision making; a general shrinking fiscus where human resource development is supplanted to other urgent spending priorities; and the persistent silo-based approach to service delivery.

Theory of Change Emanating from the Outcome Evaluation The TOC sets out the identified outputs, outcomes and impact which was collated and analysed from the outcome evaluation.
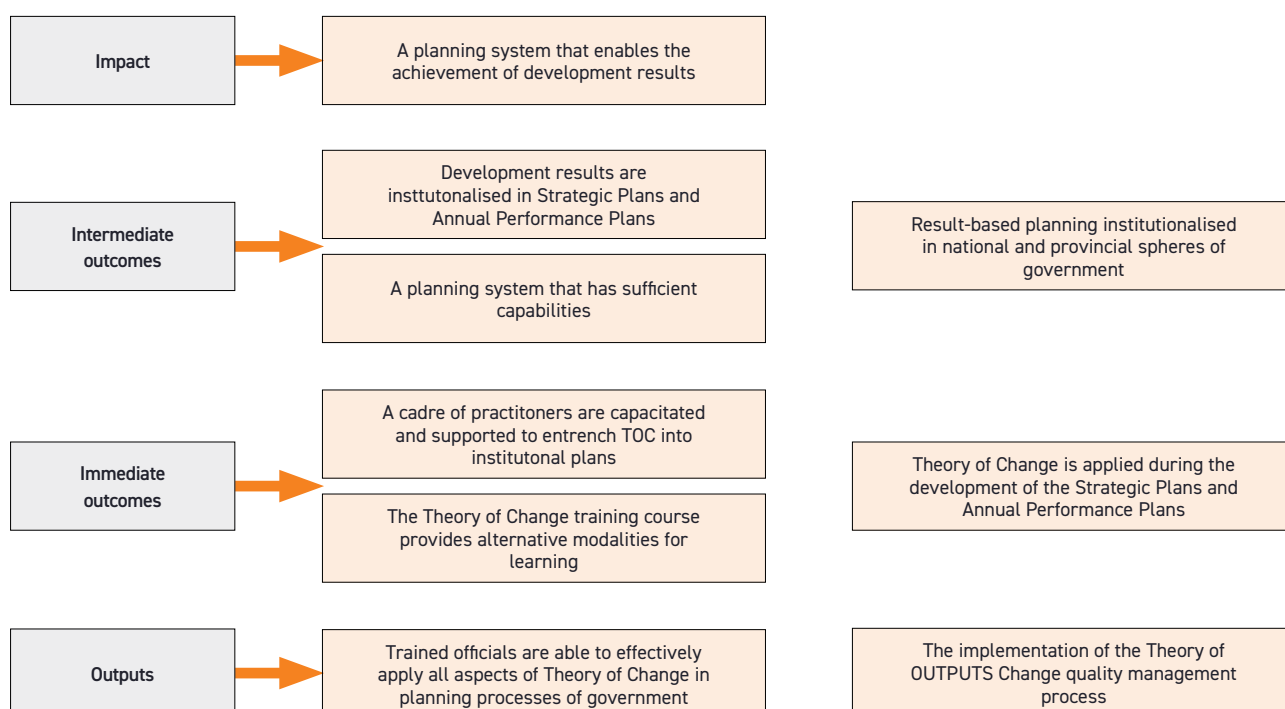
Figure 31: Proposed Theory of Change

Table 8: Impact, Outcome and Outputs

IMPACT	A planning system that enables the achievement of development results **Description:** The outcome evaluation results and implementation of the recommendations will enable the achievement of development results. This TOC forms a stream that will feed into the other higher levels Theories of Change.
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES	Development results are institutionalised in Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans **Description:** Improved results-based planning will focus institutions on planning for development and the development results put forward in the national, provincial and local government priorities. Instead of planning for inward focused and operational activities; institutional plans will be focused on impact and outcome planning which align with government's development results whilst ensuring that the correct preconditions (outputs, activities and inputs) are chosen and reflected in Annual Performance and Operational Plans. **Assumptions:** The recommendations from the outcome evaluation are implemented.
	Result-based planning institutionalised in national and provincial spheres of government **Description:** Application of the TOC in institutional planning will lead to institutions planning for results as needed as per the requirements of the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans. **Assumptions:** Other interventions to institutionalise development results in Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans are effective.
	A planning system that has sufficient capabilities **Description:** Adequate state competency enables the planning system to fulfil the associated planning functions, roles and responsibilities. **Assumptions:** The recommendations from the outcome evaluation relating to continuous engagement sessions and including a wider range of practitioners/stakeholders is implemented.
IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES	A cadre of practitioners are capacitated and supported to entrench TOC into institutional plans **Description:** The TOC course is expanded to include stakeholders in the value chain of planning and implementation. This will include senior management and political office bearers. **Assumptions:** Practitioners are committed and there is institutional buy-in to the training and other engagement interventions recommended in the outcome evaluation.

IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES	Theory of Change is applied during the development of the Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans **Description**: Competent planners, M&E officials and programme managers actually use the Theory of Change in institutional planning processes. **Assumptions**: Provisions of the Revised Framework are effective in supporting the results based methodology for planning.
	The Theory of Change training course provides alternative modalities for learning **Description**: The training course is reviewed offering different modalities that may include online videos, course accreditation, and peer learning platforms **Assumptions**: There is buy-in from the DPME and NSG to undertake different modalities.
OUTPUTS	Trained officials are able to effectively apply all aspects of Theory of Change in planning processes of government **Description**: Trained officials have an understanding of results-based management; key steps to conduct a situational analysis; build a results chain; understanding of planning concepts and context used in the South African government, government planning processes, and the key components of the Theory of Change and Logic model. **Assumptions**: Training material, methodology and delivery is well designed, effective and responsive to the outcome evaluation recommendations.
	The implementation of the Theory of Change quality management process **Description**: The quality management process relates to the application and implementation of the Theory of Change training course at the level of training, frequency of training, training material/modalities, facilitators and post training support, and translation and implementation of Theory of Change in Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Plans and Annual Operational Plans. Different modalities for training are used that demonstrates practical scenarios and application of TOC for trained officials. A wider range of officials are included in the training that will incorporate implementation and management officials. The course duration of 5 days ensures a comprehensive programme of training and learning. Post training support will ensure that there is consistent engagement and capacitation of trained officials through learning platforms and engagement sessions. Data/information availability and validity is confirmed. **Assumptions**: The quality management process/system improves the development and implementation of Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Plans and Annual Operational Plans.

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ANNEXURE B: SUMMARY OF EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND FINDINGS

Table 9:Summary of Evaluation Questions and Findings

Key Evaluation Question	Findings
Relevance of the training including curriculum, materials and methodology?	The evaluation has confirmed that the training content and methodology is relevant to all organisations in terms of their organisational strategies. It has been confirmed by all the provincial offices of the premier engaged that almost all departments uses the theory of change methodology to an extent (correctly or incorrectly so) when they undertake their strategic planning and APPs.
To what extent does the facilitation of the training appropriately cover the knowledge and application of the TOC in institutional planning?	The evaluation has revealed that the course content is good and aligns to the trainees' expectations.
Has knowledge been gained?	The trainees confirmed that the presentation of the theory of change concepts were clear and understandable. Knowledge has indeed been gained. There is however an outcry that the course should be restructured and simplified and practical examples relevant to departments be given as part of the course.
To what extent have participants applied the knowledge gained from the training to develop the institutional plans?	The has been mixed reaction in that while other planners were able to apply the knowledge gained, others trainees have encountered resistance in their department as the necessary change management is not in place. Such resistance in many instances came from senior management.
To what extent has the training course led to the development of appropriate resultsbased indicators and targets?	The evaluation has revealed that some trainees still struggle with the development of appropriate results-based indicators and targets and that more practical training is still required in this regard.
What are the key enabling or inhibiting factors within the institutions to achieve the outcomes of the training course relating to the institutionalisation of results-based institutional planning?	Resistance to change and lack of buy-in from senior management has been a key inhibiting factor to the institutionalisation of TOC in the planning processes of many departments / institutions. This is exacerbated by the fact that very few senior managers were trained.

ANNEXURE C:RESPONDENT DEPARTMENTS

Departments / Entities from with Trainees Responded	
DPME	73
GDE: Head Office	
Gauteng Office of the Premier	
GFC	
Department of Military Veterans	
TASEZ	
Department of Military Veterans	
RTMC	
Department of Military Veterans	
Gauteng Department of Infrastructure	
Gauteng Human Settlements	
`Department of Military Veterans	
Correctional Services	
Home Affairs	
Limpopo Tourism Agency	
Gauteng Community Safety	
Gauteng Department of Roads and Transport	
Department of Mineral Resources and Energy	
Council for Geoscience	
Community Schemes Ombud Service	
NRWDI	
SAQA	
State Theatre	
Gauteng Provincial Treasury	
DMRE	
ASB Entity	
Mineral Resources and Energy	
Correctional Facilities	
Gauteng Enterprise Propeller	

Departments / Entities from with Trainees Responded
Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA)
Gauteng Sport Arts Culture and Recreation
Statistics SA
Limpopo Gambling Board
Statistics SA
Gauteng Tourism Authority
National Transport
Independent Police Investigative Directorate
South African Council for Educators (SACE)
Stats SA
Department of Military Veterans
KZN Public Works
LEDET
Stats SA
KwaZulu-Natal Public Works & Infrastructure
North West Department of Arts, Culture, Sports & Recreation
Human Sciences Research Council
Mmabana Arts, Culture and Sport Foundation
Cross Border Road Transport Agency
Mpumalanga Office of the Premier
Statistics South Africa
Municipal Demarcation Board
Basic Education
KZN Office of The Premier
National Nuclear Regulator
North-West Office of the Premier
Gauteng Roads and Transport
Mpumalanga Office of the Premier
KZN Office of the Premier
Military Veterans
Department of Defence

Departments / Entities from with Trainees Responded
CHIETA
CHIETA SETA
Cross Border Road Transport Agency
National Skills Fund
BANKSETA - Banking Sector Education and Training Authority
Transport Education Training Authority
DALRRD
DALRRD
Social Housing Regulatory Authority
National Department of Transport
National Nuclear Regulator
National Sport, Arts and Culture
Human Settlements
National Public Works and Infrastructure
Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
Mine Health and Safety Council (MHSC)
Department of Public Works
Department of Trade, Industry and Competition
National School of Government
Limpopo Office of the Premier
Stats SA
Cross Border Road Transport Agency (DoT)
Sports, Arts and Culture
Northern Cape Office of the Premier
Gauteng Office of the Premier
Limpopo Office of the Premier
Gauteng Enterprise Propeller
Human Settlements
COGTA Free State
Mpumalanga Department of social development
Mpumalanga Department of Social Development

Departments / Entities from with Trainees Responded
North-West Department of Social Development
Gauteng Office of the Premier
Department of Public Works and Infrastructure
North-West Office of the Premier
LEDET
North-West Department of Economic Development Environment Conservation and
Tourism
North-West Provincial Treasury
North-West Department of Agriculture & Rural Development
North-West Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation
and Tourism
Free State Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
Free State Public Works and Infrastructure
North West Gambling Board
North-West Arts, Culture, Sports and Recreation
North-West Province
Limpopo Department of Education
Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and
Environmental Affairs
DESTEA
COGTA Free State
Free State - Sport, Arts, Culture & Recreation

ANNEXURE D: EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

Questionnaires for Trainees, Facilitators and Senior Management: Evaluation of TOC training course

(A) Questionnaire for Trainees to evaluate a Theory of Change (TOC) training course cover several areas to gather comprehensive feedback. These areas include content quality, relevance, delivery, engagement, and outcomes. Below are suggested questions that can be included:

General Course Content

1. How would you rate the overall content of the Theory of Change training course?
a) Excellent
b) Good
c) Average
d) Poor

2. Was the content of the course aligned with your expectations?
a) Exceeded
b) Met
c) Somewhat met
d) Did not meet

3. How clear and understandable was the presentation of the Theory of Change concepts?
a) Very clear
b) Clear
c) Somewhat clear
d) Not clear at all

Relevance and Applicability

4. How relevant was the Theory of Change training to your work or field of interest?
a) Highly relevant
b) Relevant
c) Somewhat relevant
d) Not relevant

5. Do you feel confident in applying the Theory of Change concepts in your professional setting?
a) Very confident
b) Somewhat confident
c) Not sure
d) Not confident

6. Can you identify specific aspects of the training that will help you improve your current or future projects?

Trainer Evaluation

7. How would you rate the facilitator's knowledge of the subject matter?
a) Excellent
b) Good
c) Average
d) Poor

8. How effectively did the facilitator engage with participants and encourage interaction?
a) Very effectively
b) Effectively
c) Somewhat effectively
d) Not effectively

Training Materials and Resources

9. How helpful were the materials provided (slides, handouts, resources) in supporting your learning?
a) Very helpful
b) Helpful
c) Somewhat helpful
d) Not helpful

10. Was there sufficient time allocated for exercises, group work, or discussions to deepen your understanding?
a) Yes, plenty of time
b) Yes, but more time would have been useful
c) No, not enough time
d) No time for exercises

Learning Outcomes

11. To what extent do you feel the training improved your understanding of how to create or assess a Theory of Change in the planning processes of your department?
a) Significantly improved
b) Moderately improved
c) Slightly improved
d) Not improved

12. Please rate your knowledge and understanding of result-based management in planning processes of government
a) Above average
b) Average
c) Poor
d) Non existent

13. Please rate your knowledge and understanding of the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans
a) Above average
b) Average
c) Poor
d) Non existent

14. Please rate your knowledge and understanding of the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans
a) Above average
b) Average
c) Poor
d) Non existent

15. In order to effectively implement TOC in the planning processes of your department, do you require further training?
a) Yes
b) No
c) Not sure

Suggestions for Improvement

16. What aspects of the course could be improved to better suit your learning needs?
17. Are there additional topics or areas you wish had been covered in the Theory of Change training?
18. Do you have any recommendations for improving the delivery or structure of the course?

Overall Satisfaction

19. How satisfied are you with the overall quality of the Theory of Change training course?
a) Very satisfied
b) Satisfied
c) Neutral
d) Dissatisfied

20. Would you recommend this course to others?
a) Definitely
b) Probably
c) Not sure
d) No

21. What was the most valuable takeaway from the Theory of Change training course for you?
22. In your opinion, what is the main reason the Theory of Change is not institutionalised in planning processes of your department?

(B) Questionnaire for Facilitators to evaluate a Theory of Change (TOC) training course helps gather insights on the course's structure, delivery, participant engagement, and potential areas for improvement. This questionnaire will provide valuable feedback on the effectiveness of the training from the facilitator's perspective and help identify opportunities for improvement. Below are suggested questions for facilitators:

Course Content and Structure

1. How would you rate the overall structure and flow of the Theory of Change training course?
a) Excellent
b) Good
c) Satisfactory
d) Poor

2. Were the learning objectives clear and appropriate for the course duration?
a) Strongly agree
b) Agree
c) Neutral
d) Disagree

3. Was the content aligned with participants' skill levels and knowledge of the Theory of Change?
a) Very well aligned
b) Mostly aligned
c) Somewhat aligned
d) Not aligned

4. How would you evaluate the balance between theory and practical exercises in the course?

a) Perfect balance

b) More theory needed

c) More practical exercises needed

d) Neither theory nor practice was sufficient

Facilitation and Delivery

5. How confident were you in delivering the Theory of Change content?

a) Very confident

b) Confident

c) Somewhat confident

d) Not confident

6. How effectively did the training tools (slides, handouts, videos) support your facilitation?

a) Very effectively

b) Effectively

c) Somewhat effectively

d) Not effectively

7. Were there any challenges in delivering the content or managing the time? If so, what were they?

Participant Engagement

8. Did participants actively participate in discussions and activities?

a) Yes, most participants

b) Yes, some participants

c) Yes, but only a few

d) No, minimal participation

9. How engaged were participants during the training sessions?

a) Very engaged

b) Engaged

c) Somewhat engaged

d) Not engaged

10. What activities or content seemed to resonate most with participants?

Effectiveness of the Course

11. To what extent do you believe participants understood the core concepts of the Theory of Change?

a) Very well

b) Well

c) Somewhat

d) Not at all

12. How well did participants apply the Theory of Change during practical exercises or case studies?

a) Very well

b) Well

c) Somewhat

d) Not well

13. Did you notice any areas where participants struggled with the concepts or exercises? If yes, please explain.

Course Materials and Resources

14. How useful were the provided materials (slides, handouts, templates) for participants?
a) Very useful
b) Useful
c) Somewhat useful
d) Not useful

15. Were any additional materials or resources needed to enhance the participants' learning experience?

Challenges and Improvements

16. Were there any specific challenges you encountered in delivering the course? If yes, please describe them.
17. How could the course structure or content be improved to better support facilitators in delivering the training?
18. Are there any additional resources, tools, or exercises you would recommend for future courses?

Overall Satisfaction

19. How satisfied are you with the overall quality of the training program?
a) Very satisfied
b) Satisfied
c) Neutral
d) Dissatisfied

20. Would you be interested in facilitating this training again in the future?
a) Yes
b) No
c) Maybe

(C) Questionnaire to gather insights from Heads of Departments and Senior Managers on the effectiveness of a Theory of Change (TOC) training course. The questions focus on the strategic impact of the training, relevance to organizational goals, and the potential for applying TOC in their teams or departments. Below are suggested questions tailored for senior leaders:

Relevance to Organizational Strategy

1. How relevant was the Theory of Change training to your department's outcome?
a) Highly relevant
b) Relevant
c) Somewhat relevant
d) Not relevant

2. How well does the Theory of Change approach align with the way your department plans and executes projects or programs?
a) Very well aligned
b) Well aligned
c) Somewhat aligned
d) Not aligned

Application of Learning

3. Do you believe your team has applied the Theory of Change concepts learned in the training?

a) Yes, definitely

b) Yes, with some support

c) Unsure

d) No, not likely

4. How useful is the Theory of Change methodology for improving monitoring and evaluation within your department?

a) Extremely useful

b) Useful

c) Somewhat useful

d) Not useful

5. Have you seen any early indications of how the training is being implemented within your team or department since the course ended?

Impact on Leadership and Decision-Making

6. Has the training influenced how you view strategic planning and decision-making?

a) Yes, significantly

b) Yes, to some extent

c) No change

d) Not applicable

7. Do you feel more confident in guiding your team through complex change processes using the Theory of Change approach?

a) Very confident

b) Somewhat confident

c) Neutral

d) Not confident

Training Effectiveness

8. How effective was the training in improving your team's understanding of the Theory of Change methodology?

a) Very effective

b) Effective

c) Somewhat effective

d) Not effective

9. Do you believe the training duration was sufficient to cover all relevant aspects of the Theory of Change?

a) Yes, it was sufficient

b) Could have been longer

c) Could have been shorter

d) Not sure

Support for Future Implementation

10. What additional support or resources would your department need to implement the Theory of Change framework effectively?

a) More follow-up training

b) Internal coaching/mentoring

c) Additional tools and resources

d) Other (please specify)

11. Would you recommend further Theory of Change training for other teams or departments within the organization?
a) Yes
b) No
c) Maybe, depending on the context

Training Materials and Resources

12. Are there any additional tools or resources that you believe would enhance the effectiveness of the Theory of Change framework in your department?

Challenges and Opportunities for Improvement

13. Were there any challenges or barriers encountered by your department in applying the Theory of Change approach? If so, what were they?

14. In your opinion, what improvements could be made to the training to better meet the needs of senior managers and leaders?

15. How could the Theory of Change training be better customized to align with your department's specific goals and challenges?

Overall Evaluation

16. How satisfied are you with the overall quality and impact of the Theory of Change training for planning in the public service on your department?
a) Very satisfied
b) Satisfied
c) Neutral
d) Dissatisfied

17. In your opinion, did your department receive a return on investment as a result of your team's attendance of the course
a) Yes
b) No
c) Maybe

18. Would you be open to hosting or encouraging more Theory of Change workshops in the future for your teams?
a) Yes
b) No
c) Maybe

NOTES

OUTCOME
EVALUATION OF
THE TRAINING
COURSE ON
*THE THEORY OF
CHANGE FOR
PLANNING IN
THE PUBLIC
SECTOR*