

Report on the Monitoring of Workplace Skills Plan Implementation

Research Conducted in December 2016

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ATR	Annual Training Report
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HR	Human resource
HRD	Human resource development
HRDSA	Human Resource Development Council of South Africa
NDP	National Development Plan
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
OFO	Organising Framework for Occupations
PIVOTAL	Professional, vocational, technical and academic learning
PSETA	Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority
PMDS	Performance Management Development System
PDP	Personal Development Plan
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SSP	Sector Skills Plan
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
WIL	Work Integrated Learning
WSP	Workplace Skills Plan

1. INTRODUCTION

The Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA) is one of the 21 Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and is a statutory body established through the Skills Development Act of 1998 to enable its stakeholders to advance the transversal skills in the Public Service sector. PSETA is therefore mandated to play an active role in the development of a “capable state” of the sector through the promotion and facilitation of skills development initiatives. Therefore research is a key component in providing evidence to inform decision making and to improve on skills planning and delivery systems and services within the SETA.

The Skills Planning and Research (SP&R) department within PSETA was established to address Goal 1 of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III, to set up a credible institutional mechanism for skills planning. The core function of the department is to uplift the research and skills planning activities of the SETA with the aim that these may directly contribute to the establishment of a reliable institutional mechanism for skills planning for the sector.

1.1. BACKGROUND

The NSDS III acknowledges that there is currently no institutional mechanism that provides credible information and analysis with regard to the supply and demand for skills. SETA’s form an integral part of the implementation of the Skills Development Act and the Skills Development Levies Act, in accordance with Section 10(1) of the Skills Development Act.

The PSETA has a statutory mandate to develop and annually update a Sector Skills Plan (SSP) within the framework of NSDS and in line with the guidelines provided by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

The SSP serves as the blue print through which the PSETA is able to accurately identify the skills needs and trends in the public sector. By conducting annual updates to the SSP, the SETA is better equipped to initiate projects that serve the current and projected skills demand of the public sector.

The SSP must be based on credible research on skills development needs within the public service sector. There is also a need for the SSP to disaggregate the scarce and critical skills needs per province, in order to accurately reflect the actual skills needs per individual province thereby identifying and implementing PIVOTAL Programmes linked to the SSP.

In support of the development of the SSP, the Skills Planning and Research department receives, analyse and evaluates Workplace Skills Plan and Annual Training Report (WSP/ATR) data to ensure that reliable data is used in updating the SSP each year.

In an attempt to improve quality of reporting on skills development in the public service sector, the SP&R Department initiated a study to understand challenges facing departments in implementing their submitted WSP/ATR 2016/17 and also to learn best practice approaches employed by others.

1.2. RESEACRH AIM/PURPOSE

The purpose of this research project is to;

- monitor the implementation of the Workplace Skills Plans (WSP) and Annual Training Report (ATR) for the year 2016/17 in ensuring that stakeholders implement according to their plans and that there is no misalignment or variance in terms of the reporting;
- support and better understand stakeholders who are experiencing challenges with regard to implementing their WSP;
- assist the PSETA in ensuring they meet their stakeholder expectations; and
- Establish impact of skills development in the workplace.

1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of WSP/ATR/PIVOTAL (Annexure 2) Implementation Monitoring were to:

- Monitor compliance with Skills Development legislation.
- Ascertain a clear stakeholder understanding on PIVOTAL programmes.
- Encourage stakeholders to report accurate skills development information that is a true reflection of the state of skills in the public service sector.
- Recognise departments that are doing exceptionally well in the implementation of training and development in the sector.
- Establish relationship challenges experienced by SDFs, training Committees and recognised organised labour representatives during consultation.
- Establish impact of training and development initiatives to increase productivity in the workplace.

2. PROCEDURE/ RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The SP&R department developed a questionnaire which consisted of administrative questions and operational questions. The questions were informed by the analysis of the WSPs received for the 2016/17 financial year, which identified variances in terms of training implemented and expenditure on training.

The PSETA researchers then sampled 36 organisations across 9 provinces, which comprised of national departments, provincial departments, legislatures and public entities who submitted their WSPs in the 2016/17 financial year. Out of the 36 sampled organisations, 31 participated in the study, as displayed in table 1 below, which was conducted in December 2016.

Table 1: Response rate for the study

Total number of Departments sampled	Total number of department responses	Total percentage of responses
36	31	86%

Source: PSETA survey data

3. DATA DEMONSTRATION AND ANALYSIS

The 31 respondents includes 5 provincial legislatures that improved understanding of legislature as a sub-sector. The designed questionnaire has 15 questions to respond as the attempt to understand challenges facing organisation to implement their authorised Workplace Skills Plan for the year 2016/17. The list of questions are contained in the table which follows.

LIST OF PREPARED QUESTION FOR SAMPLED DEPARTMENTS
1. Complete organisational details?
2. Please outline your department's consultation process followed in the development and approval of the WSP/ATR PIVOTAL plan and report?
3. Does your department monitor training budget expenditure according to planned training?
4. Have you implemented any training to address identified departmental priority skills?
5. Have you allocated budget for unemployed learners?

6. Please indicate your department's staff complement?
7. What is your understanding of PIVOTAL programmes?
8. Did you submit the PIVOTAL Plan?
9. Did your department implement training for current employees including disabled employees?
10. Did your department officially appoint an SDF?
11. Did your department nominate Training Committee Members?
12. To what extent is there involvement of your recognized organized labour on issues of training and development of staff?
13. Has there been a reduction of turnover and absenteeism?
14. Has there been an increase in productivity?
15. How did the training affect employee performance

The data collected has been analysed and presented in the form of tables and graphs. It is important to note that some of the questions posed were open ended questions, resulting in the collection of responses which cannot be tabulated into graphs. These have been presented in accordingly.

Table 2: Consultation processes followed by departments in compilation of their WSPs

Department	Processes followed in the consultation of WSP compilation by various departments
Department of Health (Limpopo)	All hospitals do training needs analysis at four levels: At National level, b) Ministerial level, c) Use auditor's reports to see common skills challenges and Health and Welfare SETA (HWSETA) Sector Skills Plan. 2. At Institutional level continuous monitoring and evaluation is done as preparation for NHI. Then critical focus areas are identified.3. Teams: both Professional, Support and Non-support. Training committee attendance register Once skills Audit is done the training needs are identified. Compile WSP, Invite the training committee. Discuss needs analysis (meet twice a month) or when need arise.

<p>Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (Limpopo)</p>	<p>There is established training committee at district level consult to inform them about the collection of training needs. HQ HR coordinate the PMDS issue about the importance of PDP's. Training Committee extract the information from the developed template that is populated and taken back to head office. Prioritization of key 5 training areas are identified. SDF meeting is convened with 5 district representation and head office. WSP is then presented to the provincial Skill development forum. Followed by submission to the executive management. Get input from Management then Align the training to the APP.</p>
<p>Education (Mpumalanga)</p>	<p>There is a Provincial Skills Development Committee (PSDC), circuit development committee, schools development committee (comprised of teachers and labour union). In PSDC: every unit is represented, where the skills gaps in the units are noted, evidence is brought forward, and the interventions must be approved first before they are deliberated upon. The minutes of consultation for skills development/ gaps identifications have to be provided. Priorities are based on scarce and critical skills and comply with HRD policy to take into account the unemployed learners.</p>
<p>Education (North West)</p>	<p>On annual basis a request is send out to chief directorate with 4 districts and 6 Chief directorates with training needs template. Also Utilize the PMDS review template. Training needs for teachers will be informed by Curriculum development. Not reliable process. Also use DBE National Systemic priority needs which is consulted with the districts. After that the consultation meetings are held with the SDC. 30 members of the SDC in the province.</p>

Source: PSETA survey data

Table 3: Departments that make use of PDPs as part of their WSP consultation processes

<p>Department</p>	<p>Process followed in WSP Consultation</p>
<p>Economic Development Gauteng</p>	<p>PMDS,PDP and Skills Analysis</p>

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Limpopo	There is established training committee at district level consult to inform them about the collection of training needs. HQ HR coordinate the PMDS issue about the importance of PDP's.
Water and sanitation	The department rely on the PDPs in consultation with the skills development committee
Legislature (North West)	As legislature we do PDP's done at the beginning of the year (mid-February). Draw the Training needs analysis. Then compile WSP and training plan. PDP's Informed by your Performance agreement. Group training.
Environment and Agriculture (North West)	PDPs are taken and develop the needs. The draft is developed and presented to the Training committee for approval. Chairperson of TR is the Director of HR. Labour representative included in consultation

Source: PSETA survey data

Both table 2 and 3 presents the responses from departments that apply different methods in outlining consultation processes and examining information for WSP/ATR development. It is critical that training committees must take ownership during development and implementation of WSP's. Some departments that are not mentioned on both tables follow a similar process that is outlined by PSETA training committee administration guide.

Table 4: Comparison between departments that monitor their training budget monthly and those that monitor it quarterly

Departments that monitor their training budget Monthly	Departments that monitor their training budget Quarterly
Department of Telecommunication	Treasury Gauteng
Department of Health Limpopo	Treasury Eastern Cape
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Limpopo	Office of the Premier (Western Cape)
Water and sanitation	Health(Northern Cape)
Health(Mpumalanga)	Premiers Office(Northern Cape)

Legislature (Mpumalanga)	Education (Mpumalanga)
Legislature (Eastern Cape)	Environment and Agriculture (North West)
Economic Development (Eastern Cape)	Legislature (Western Cape)
Legislature (North West)	Economic Development (Gauteng)
Transport (North West)	Environment and Nature Conservation (Northern Cape)
Community Safety (KZN)	Education and Sport (North West)
Office of the Premier (Northern Cape)	Independent Police Investigation Directorate
Office of the Premier (Limpopo)	Economic Development (Limpopo)
	Road and Public Work (Eastern Cape)
	Treasury (KZN)
Total	13 responses
	15 responses

Source: PSETA survey data

The above table 4 demonstrate responses from participants on how regularly do training committees monitor their training budgets. This question was informed by training committee member's especially organised labour representative raising concerns regarding inconsiderate administration of training budget by management. Table 4 clearly illustrate that participants do actually monitor training using monthly financial reports and quarterly financial monthly reports, notably three participants did not complete this question on budget monitoring.

IMPLEMENTATION OF IDENTIFIED PRIORITY SKILLS



Figure 1: Response on whether the respondent's implements identified priority skills

Source: PSETA survey data

The above pie chart figure 1 indicates that 97% of responses actually implement training of identified priority skills according to the authorised WSP/ATR for the 2016/17. It is only 3% that did not implement identified training due to response of audit finding that influence the changes.

Allocated budget for unemployed

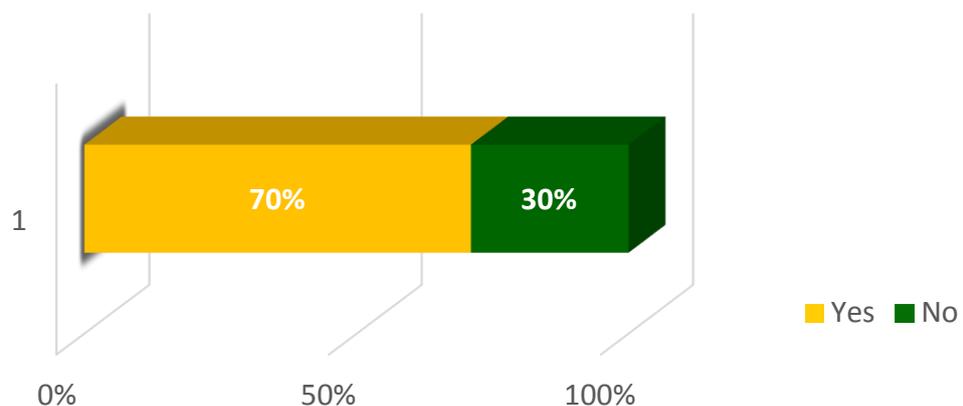


Figure 2: Response on whether the respondents allocates budget for the unemployed learners

Source: PSETA survey data

The above figure 2 is a display of the responses received when the respondents were asked if they do allocate 20% of their training budget for the unemployed learners. As shown by figure 2, 70% (21) of the respondents noted that they do allocate budget for unemployed

learners. Whilst 30% of the respondents noted that they did not allocate budget for the unemployed learners.

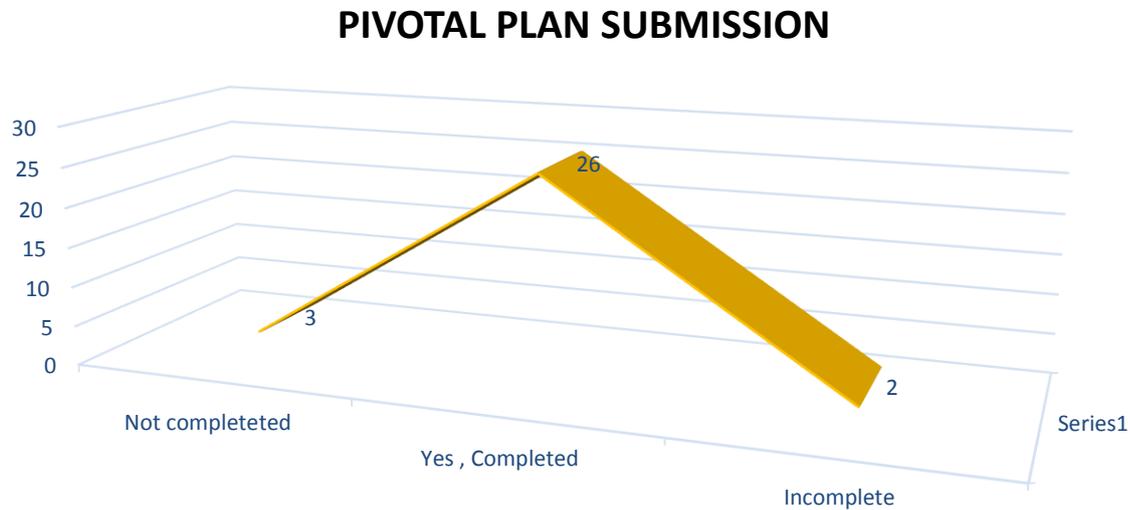


Figure 3: PIVOTAL Plans submission status for respondents

Source: PSETA survey data

The respondents were first asked what is their understanding of the PIVOTAL programmes, generally, the responses received from most respondents clearly revealed that respondents understands the meaning and background of PIVOTAL programmes. This was to establish if the respondents have an understanding of the PIVOTAL plans that they are required to submit.

Further the respondents were asked if they have completed their submissions of PIVOTAL plans to PSETA. Figure 3 above demonstrates submission status of PIVOTAL plan for the 2016/17 by each participant. It is clear that 26 of participants did submit their PIVOTAL plans for the 2016/17 financial year. This analysis highlights that 3 of the participants did not complete and submit their PIVOTAL plans. It was unfortunate that 2 of participants did not complete this question.

Question 9. Did your organisation implement training for current employees including disabled employees?

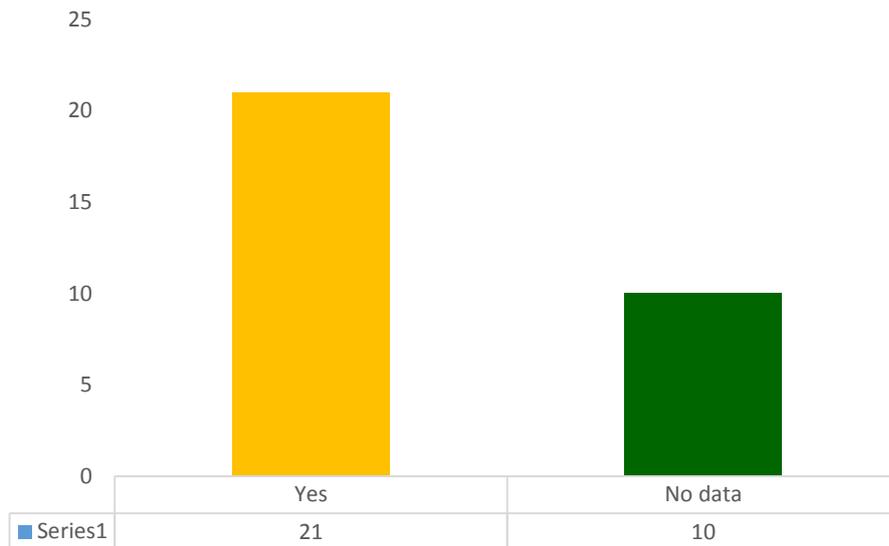


Figure 4: Response count of the respondents on whether they included disabled employees as part of staff trained

Source: PSETA Survey Data

It is critical to include employees with disability on training as it is important to express efforts to address the NSDS III transformational imperatives. Participants expressed major concerns regarding employees declaring disability in the workplace, which presents departments with difficulties in placing disabled employees in training opportunities. Figure 4 above displays that 21 of the respondents raised that they do include disabled employees when sending staff for training. The 10 respondents did not provide data for this question.

OFFICIALLY APPOINTED SDF's

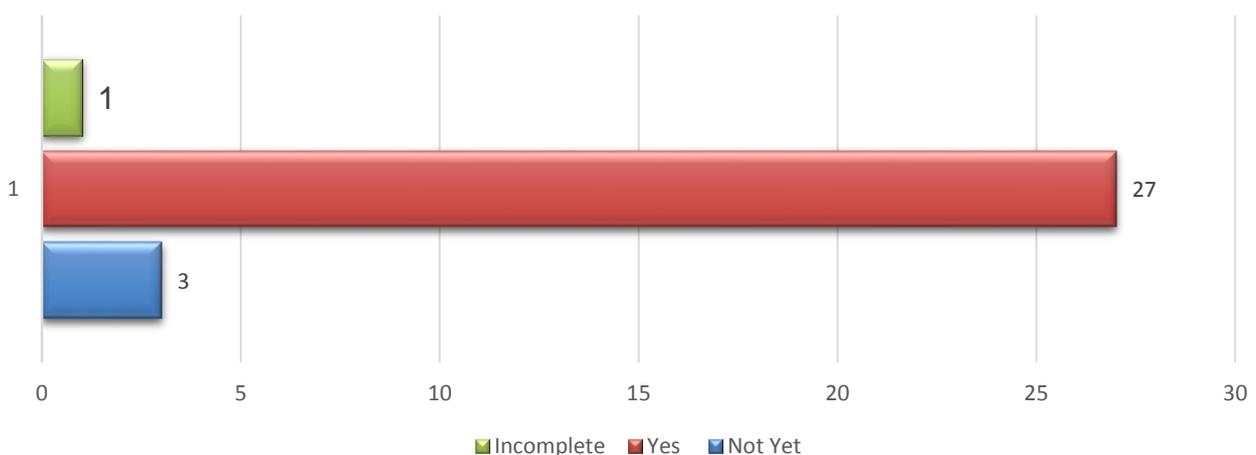


Figure 5: Number of respondents that officially appointed SDFs

Source: PSETA survey data

The above bar chart figure 1.4 illustrates stakeholder's commitment to formalise the roles and responsibility of Skills Development Facilitators (SDFs) through recruitment and selection process or nomination. Skills Development Facilitators play critical roles as leading officials with the SETA as required by Skills Development Act. This chart demonstrate that 27 participants have officially appointed a Skills Development Facilitators and only 3 participant have not yet appointed SDFs due to turnover rate with department, position not within the organisational structure. It was noticed during data collection and analysis that 1 participant did not complete the question on officially appointing Skills Development Facilitator.

NOMINATION OF TRAINING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

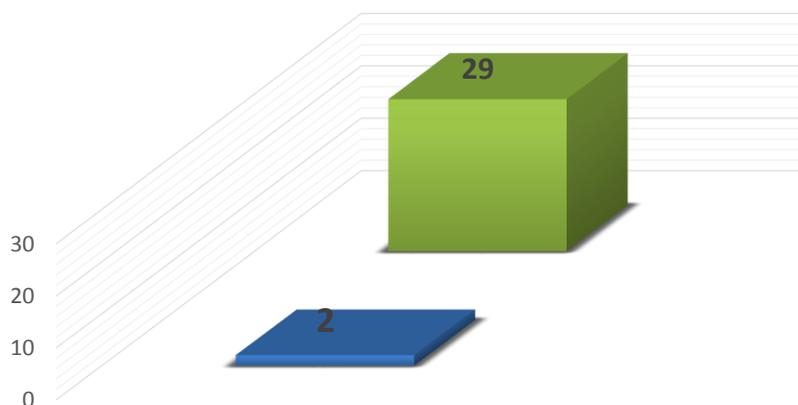


Figure 6: Respondent's answers on whether they nominated training committee

Source: PSETA survey data

The above bar chart demonstrate stakeholders commitment to have an inclusive training committees that represent all levels of employment not only management. Out of the 31 responses 29 participants confirm that nomination of training members did take place and only 2 participants do have nomination so in a nutshell training committee does not exist.

ORGANISED LABOUR INVOLVEMENT ON TRAINING ISSUES

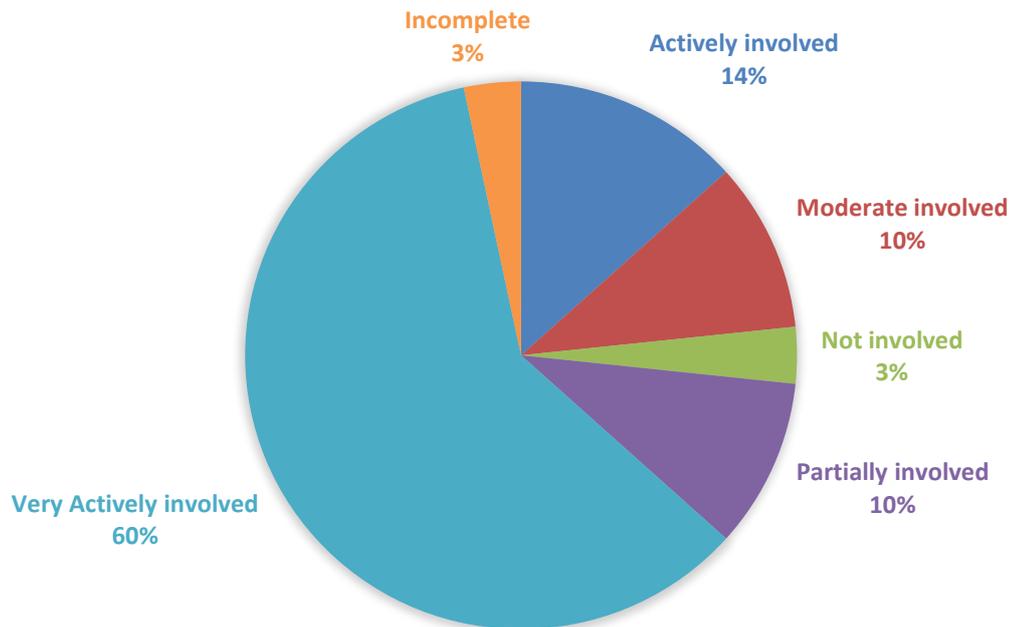


Figure 7: Respondent's response on the involvement of the organised labour

Source: PSETA survey data

The above pie chart figure 1.6 exhibit the involvement level of recognised organised labour on issues of training and development of staff which is critical for a SETA during Workplace Skills Plan and ATR evaluation process. The emphasis of involvement of organised labour is regulated by SETA Grant Regulation on Section 5 under subsection 2 (f) that say “***in case the employer has a written agreement with recognised trade union or union in place, there must be evidence provided that the WSP and ATR have been subject to consultation with the recognised trade union and must be signed off by the appointed trade union representative unless explanation is provided***”. This chart clearly highlights that 60% of participant have a very actively involved union on skills development issues while 10% have a moderate involvement. It further demonstrates that 10% partially involved union while 14% have actively involved union 3% the union is not involve at all and 3% did not complete the question union involvement.

Stakeholder responses on impact related question 13, 14 and 15 elaboration contribution of training and development to increase productivity and performance.

This question aimed at deepening the understanding of the impact of training to the employees of the organisations that have trained their employees. The question aimed to

measure the impact of training by asking whether there been a reduction of turnover and absenteeism in the organisation as a result of training. Following that question was a question which aimed to understand whether there have been an increase in productivity as a results of the training.

When the respondents were asked if there has been a reduction in turnover or absenteeism as a result of training, most of the respondents have cited that the increase or decrease in turnover and absenteeism rates in their organisation is difficult to solely link it to training as there are many factors which are at play in the turnover or absenteeism of the employees.

The respondents were asked to link training to the performance and productivity of the employees, one thing that came out is that the organisations are making use of the staff PMDs to measure whether there has been any change of performance in the employees which may be linked to training. Most organisations have indicated that training had positively contribution to increase output of the organisation. One particular organisation have mentioned that training in their organisation positively contributes to staff morale, particularly at entry level positions.

When the researchers were asking the questions of the impact of training in the organisations, one thing that came out is that most of the organisations do not measure the impact of training after staff have underwent training and they have no tools which they use to measure the impact. All this makes it difficult to evaluate the impact of training in the organisations as the impact-related data is not kept by the organisations, so the responses in relation to the impact were more subjective than objective.

4. CONCLUSION

The report shows that the vast majority of PSETA stakeholders still find the WSP useful in planning for training however the challenges remains with the implementation of training and development due to a number of reasons stipulated in the report. It also reflects that training committees or skills development committees lack basic understanding of skills development issues and process that make it very difficult for Skills Development Facilitators (SDFs) process with implementation. This requires PSETA to continue to capacitate stakeholders on training and development process.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations made here are based on the findings discussed in the report. The intervention of PSETA at a strategic level remains key and critical in ensuring that departments understand their legislative mandate pertaining to skills planning and development in sector. Therefore strong collaboration and coordination with all Offices of the Premiers in all 9 provinces is important to ensure clear communication and consistency and accuracy in information sharing.

The Department of Public Service Administration's (DPSA) role remains critical as the policy maker on training directives issued which impacts directly on the implementation of training therefore constant coordination of HR issues between DPSA and PSETA remains critical to ensure the success of implementation of WSPs in line with the HR plans submitted to DPSA.

National Treasury directives on budget cut impacts on implementation of training. There is a need to collaborate and look into cost effective ways of delivering accredited training utilising broader mechanisms going forward.

PSETA needs to assist the departments that are struggling with skills audits which also serve as an important instrument in guiding the training needs identified which ultimately feeds into compilation of WSPs.

Linkage of PMDS and training units within the departments needs to be addressed in order to link training to the performance and productivity of the employees which is key in improving organizational performance as a whole.

Ongoing capacitating on demand of training committees and labour representatives in particular would improve the content and quality of the WSPs.

At first PSETA must establish a strong collaboration with Office the Premiers and Legislators to ensure that proper and clear communication to promote accurate information is shared. The PSETA to assist stakeholder to develop tracking tool to monitor training and development implementation and training budget expenditure.

Secondly, to facilitate and guide stakeholders in identifying scares and critical skills in the workplace through capacitating the SDFs and training committee members. This exercise would improve the quality of WSP/ATR information.

Thirdly, PSETA to capacitate stakeholders on matters relating to PIVOTAL plan and PIVOTAL report as the study indicated misunderstanding from majority of the sampled stakeholders.