



Western Cape  
Government

Agriculture

BETTER TOGETHER.

# Evaluation of the Impact of Agricultural Learnership in the Western Cape

Main Document

Urban-Econ Development Economists

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## Section 1: Introduction

Urban-Econ was appointed by the Department of Agriculture to conduct an assessment of its Agricultural Learnership Programme in order to determine its impact for the period between 2005 and 2012. The impact assessment was conducted between February 2014 and May 2014 with field visits carried out to five Further Education Training Centres (FET) in the Western Cape namely; Elsenburg, Bredasdorp, Clanwilliam, George and Oudtshoorn as well as primary interviews with past learners, farmers, officials and trainers

The primary objective was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Learnership Programme by identifying success areas and gaps in the programme requiring improvement. Based on the outcomes, recommendations were made for the implementation of strategic changes to further enhance the Learnership Programme. The evaluation framework was conducted with focus on the following:

- Impact of the programme – What are the Learnership objectives and have they been achieved?
- Success areas of the programme- What is the programme doing well?
- Gaps in the programme – What are the shortcomings of the programme?
- Improvement areas – How can the Learnership be improved?
- The function and roll-out of the programme – How has the programme been implemented and what are the challenges faced?
- Recommendations – What strategic changes can be adopted to bolster the success of the Learnership Programme?

The assessment of the above involved a comprehensive analysis of the Learnership Programme based on a formulated evaluation framework. An overview the evaluation framework adopted can be found in **Section 3** of this report.

## Section 2: Agriculture Learnership Programme in Context

### 2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide a brief background to the Agricultural Learnership Programme offered at the five FET Centres. It outlines the objectives of the Programme, its general functions and the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders involved.

### 2.2 Agriculture Learnership Programme Overview

#### 2.2.1 Background and Learnership Programme Objectives

In order to understand the role of Agricultural FETs and learnership programmes it is important to briefly explain what they are and their relevance. "Further Education and Training" refers to all learning and training programmes leading to qualifications at levels 2 to 4 of the National Qualifications Framework (South African Qualifications Authority, 2006). FET levels are above general education but below higher education and recognized by SAQA. The purpose of FET is to provide programme-based vocational and occupational training and in turn meet human resource needs of the country (South African Qualifications Authority, 2006). FET offers an alternative to enrolment in Higher Education training programmes and gives students an opportunity to gain relevant skills and training needed for employment. As a sub-programme of FET courses a Learnership is a vocational education and training programme. It combines theory and

practice which leads to the award of a qualification registered with South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). The Agriculture Learnership Programme was specifically initiated to address the lack of skills within the agricultural sector as well as to provide the unemployed with an opportunity to gain skills to obtain job opportunities. In terms of the stakeholder roles and responsibilities, the Skills Development Act 97 of stipulates that the stakeholders involved in a Learnership Agreement are accountable to the following.

- a. The employer must-
  - i. employ the learner for the period specified in the agreement;
  - ii. provide the learner with the specified practical work experience; and
  - iii. release the learner to attend the education and training specified in the agreement;
- b. The learner must-
  - i. work for the employer; and
  - ii. attend the specified education and training;
- c. The training provider must provide-
  - i. the education and training specified in the agreement; and
  - ii. the learner support as specified in the agreement.

The Learnership Programme evaluation is done for the period between 2005 and 2012; however since 2014 there have been changes in the composition of the programme. **Table 2.1** provides an overview of the main changes within the programme composition.

**TABLE 2.1: LEARNERSHIP PROGRAMME COMPOSITION PRIOR TO 2014 AND THE PILOT IN 2014**

| Programme Composition before 2014  | Programme Composition Pilot 2014   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical's once every two weeks</li> <li>• 70% theory and 30% practical</li> <li>• Practical involved observation rather than direct participation of learners</li> <li>• Course selection based on the number of applications made</li> <li>• Modules offered mostly limited to agriculture</li> <li>• Learnership applications only open to farm workers and employed applicants from farming backgrounds</li> <li>• Limited to no accommodation offered on campus</li> <li>• Limited access to computers</li> <li>• No internal evaluation of the programme</li> <li>• Monthly Stipend offered</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical's twice every week</li> <li>• 30% theory and 70% Practical</li> <li>• Direct participation of learners in practical rather than observation</li> <li>• Course selection based on industry and needs assessment</li> <li>• Non-agricultural modules offered e.g. numeracy, computer literacy, soft skills courses</li> <li>• Learnership open to farm workers and unemployed applicants from urban areas</li> <li>• Accommodation offered on campus</li> <li>• Increased access to computers</li> <li>• Ongoing internal evaluation of the programme</li> <li>• Monthly stipend offered</li> </ul> |

The main reason for the changes made to the 2014 programme was to address the lack of practical training received by the learners. It was noted that practical training was crucial to the success of the programme and therefore more emphases needed to be on the effective practical training of the learners. The proposed changes have been implemented, however throughout the report the effectiveness of the changes are commented on where applicable.

## 2.3 Programme Model and General Functions

The duration of the Learnership programme is between 8 to 11 months. A certificate of competency awarded to successful learners and is accredited by AgriSETA. A range of courses are offered at the different FET institutions; these include and are not limited to:

- National Certificate: Plant Production (NQF Level 1) and (NQF Level 4)
- National Certificate: Animal Production (NQF Level 1). and (NQF Level 4)
- National Certificate in Mixed Farming (Junior Farm Management) NQF Level 1.

It is important to note that the Learnership Programme is structured based on a module basis. Each course provides training in various modules relevant to the course. Training in other skills not directly related to agriculture (also referred to as soft skills) is also taught which includes, but are not limited to: Marketing, Financial Management, Agricultural Management, Entrepreneurship, Communication, Conflict Management, Leadership, Life Orientation, Motivation and Meeting Procedures.

Consultation with FET Officials during the impact assessment indicated that the courses offered have generally been selected using two approaches. The first is commodity-based selection where the courses offered are determined by the commonly farmed commodities in a particular region. For example, Plant Production (with specialisation in Pomology) is offered in Clanwilliam given the predominance of citrus farming in the region.

The second approach adopted, mainly in the Programme pilot phase, is the demand level for a given programme. Courses offered were based on the number of applications made for the specific programme.

|             | Commodity Based Demand           | Demand Level   |   |                                    |                          |
|-------------|----------------------------------|--|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
|             |                                  | 2008   | 2009  | 2010                               | 2011                     |
| Eisenburg   | All commodities                  | Poultry, Vegetables, Farm Management, Pomology & Viticulture | Farming, Viticulture, Pomology & Vegetables | Viticulture, Pomology & Vegetables | Viticulture & Vegetables |
| Clanwilliam | Plant Production: Pomology       | Farm Management & Pomology                                   | Plant Production                            | Pomology                           | Plant Production         |
| Bredasdorp  | Plant Production, Vegetables     | Farm Management & Pomology                                   | Farming & Animal Production                 | Vegetables                         | Vegetables               |
| George      | Animal and Vegetable Production  | Farm Management & Animal Production                          | Vegetables                                  | Vegetables                         | Vegetables               |
| Oudtshoorn  | Mixed Farming, Animal Production | Farm Management  | Pomology                                    | Pomology                           | Pomology                 |

**Table 2.2** provides an overview of the student selection criteria for the Learnership Programme.

**TABLE 2.2: LEARNERSHIP PROGRAMME STUDENT SELECTION CRITERIA**

| Learnership Qualification   | Selection Criteria  |
|---|---|
| <b>1. National Certificate: Plant Production (NQF 1)</b>            | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. School leavers (Grade 12/Matric).</li> <li>2. Youth, women and unemployed from previously disadvantaged communities involved in agricultural projects.</li> </ol>   |
| <b>2. National Certificate: Plant Production (NGF 4)</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners in possession of different levels of practical experience in farming operations, with basic numeracy/literacy and communication competencies equivalent to NQF level 2 (Grade 10).</li> <li>• School leavers (Grade 12/Matric) from agricultural schools.</li> <li>• Youth, women and unemployed from previously disadvantaged communities involved in agricultural projects.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>3. National Certificate: Farming (Junior Farming Management)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farm operators/farm foreman who wish to obtain a formal skills qualification on the level of Junior Farm Manager/Farm Supervisor.</li> <li>• Learners in possession of different levels of practical experience in farming operations, assessed through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), if applicable, with basic numeracy/literacy and communication competencies equivalent to NQF level 2 (Grade 10).</li> <li>• School leavers (Grade 12) from agricultural schools</li> <li>• Youth, women and unemployed from previously disadvantaged communities</li> </ul> |

## 2.4 Conclusion

The Department of Agriculture is accountable for the provision of opportunities for education and training in the industry. Further Education and Training (FET) is an opportunity extended to those interested in working in the Agricultural sector. The Learnership Programme is aimed at equipping learners with knowledge and skills to increase their employability and enhance their overall well-being. It is important to note that although the evaluation of the Learnership Programme is being done for the period 2005-2012, significant changes were implemented during 2014 which will be taken into account. The new structure was implemented in a response to provide learners with better and more effective practical training. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Programme is important in ensuring the successful attainment of its goals.

## Section 3: Evaluation Framework

### 3.1 Introduction

This section sheds light on the steps involved in formulating the evaluation framework for the impact assessment. It provides a summary of the key findings of the Literature Review on Monitoring

Evaluation practices in and outside of South Africa (See **Annexure A** for a comprehensive copy of the Literature Review).The section also includes an outline of the project cycle, data collection process and limitations.

### 3.2 Literature Review

An in depth literature review was conducted as part of this study (Refer to **Annexure A**). The main findings from the literature review highlighted that there is a growing trend towards the practice of monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation is an intertwined concept and important part of every project or programme design. Monitoring entails a systematic and logical process of collecting information. It provides a platform to learn from experiences and improve activities in future and promotes internal and external accountability of resources. In totality, monitoring is checking progress against plans. The data acquired through monitoring is used for evaluation. Evaluation systematically and objectively assesses a completed project or programme (or a phase of an on-going project that has been completed). It helps to draw conclusions about the sustainability, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the project. Thus M&E is an intertwined concept and integral part of every project or programme design.

The case studies identified all followed the Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System (GWMES) which are filtered to a provincial level as well (Provincial-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System). This is a clear indication of alignment amongst the three spheres of government which are concerned with learnership programmes, skills development and the likes.

However, when compared to the international trends regarding monitoring and evaluation, there are some gaps and opportunities for improvement. The *first gap* is that the monitoring and evaluation seldom occurs at the various stages of the project cycle. It is still occurring at the end of the project. This does not allow for early detection of possible obstacles. The *second gap* is that the design and implementation stages do not consider the inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts that guide the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework. The actual framework that assesses the programme are not emphasised upon. This does not inform the stakeholders of the success of the implementation. *Thirdly*, very little consideration is given to the administrative culture. Issues such as transparency, accountability, conflict of interests and ethics are partially highlighted. It is important to consider this aspect so as to avoid the impediments they encumber. *Fourthly*, little consideration is given to data collection methods, analysing and evaluation. It has to be clear before the implementation so that stakeholders are aware and concur with the methodologies being used. Lastly, there is poor linkages between projects/activities assigned, timeframe and the budget as well as the M&E framework. It is very important to have those linkages. They provide a better flow and understanding of the activities that need to be completed and the results thereof. This will also encourage a more results-based approach to monitoring and evaluation.

The identified gaps are all an opportunity to develop a holistic and results-based M&E framework. The likelihood of encountering obstacles reduces, monitoring occurs at every stage of the project cycle and the implementation is likely to be more successful.

From the above case studies it is evident that the main focus of the M&E is to evaluation the effectiveness of the programmes and the content, however one of the main short comings is that the overall process and the impact of the programmes are not evaluated.

As part of this Agri-Learnership Programme Evaluation the aim is to evaluate the overall process, which includes the input, output, impacts and outcomes of the programme.

The case examples of Learnerships which have been evaluated provide useful lessons regarding the challenges faced in the implementation of such programmes. These include:

- 1) Lack of support for the provision of practical's - training providers assert that funds are generally sufficient for training and material, but do not support the provision and monitoring of the practical training. This is especially the case for smaller training providers which are constrained in terms of the extent to which they can monitor workplace experience (HSRC, 2012)
- 2) Limited realisation and response to respond differential needs across different regions- 'SETA is not in sync with what is needed in a specific market or community and if they are further not responsive to these differentiated applications it is difficult to train people in those areas because you cannot access funding' (HSRC, p. 28, 2012)
- 3) Lack of appropriate and relevant skills training meeting specific Sector needs - The structure of the learnership should be such that it meets the needs of the Sector. Moreover, the learnership should model the work place and thus equip learners with the relevant experience, skills and knowledge for employment.
- 4) Focus areas needing training are evident but implementation and mentoring is lacking
- 5) One approach to the allocation of funding for learnerships - A lack of a differentiated approach has in some areas, led to exclusion for instance, of people in the rural areas, and these are the people that need these opportunities the most.

Proposed recommendations to address the aforementioned challenges included

- Establishing the need for the skills
- Identifying a well communicated career pathway
- Clear identification of responsible, intermediary bodies amongst stakeholders
- Increase responsiveness to the Learners
- Commitment from employers and training providers to skills development
- Ensuring access to appropriate workplace experience and theoretical training
- Well-functioning structures to manage the tri-partite relationship
- Link to scarce and critical skills - The needs in specific communities might be different to nationally identified scarce and critical skills, and hence, funding for appropriate qualifications should be made available against more regional and community level needs.
- Yardsticks to decide on which learners to award funding to, should not be applied uniformly. Moreover, there is exclusion in some cases of people in the rural areas, and these are the people that need Learnership opportunities the most.

The proposed solutions are important to consider for the improvement of most Learnership Programmes regardless of Sector.

M&E also needs to be addressed as an element of a project cycle; from the beginning to the end. Fewer detriments will be experienced at various stages of project implementation. A good M&E framework is one that suits the purpose and context for which it is used. For implementation the framework should ideally be practical, easy to implement, within budget and comprehensive.

### 3.3 Evaluation Framework

The evaluation framework employed for the impact assessment was formulated based on the Learnership Programme objectives. The following sub-section provides an overview of the objectives, performance indicators, rating and weighting of the indicators as well as the data collection methods. **Annexure B** of this report provides more detail on the Evaluation Framework.

#### 3.3.1 Objectives and Key Performance Indicators

**Table 3.2** outlines ten objectives which were identified and the corresponding key performance indicators used to measure the attainment of each objective. The weighting and ranking of objectives and indicators were done as follows:

1. Weighting of Objectives: 10 Objectives were identified as part of the Learnership Programme. Each of these objectives was weighted according to their importance in the evaluation of the Learnership Programme. The weighting determined out of a score of 100%. The more important the objective the higher the score.
2. Ranking of Indicators: For each of the objectives identified, a number of indicators were listed in order to measure the objective. Each objectives indicators were ranked based on a score of 100% (i.e. Objectives 1: the ranking scores of each indicator within objective 1 adds up to 100%)

**TABLE 3.2: LEARNERSHIP PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES AND INDICATORS**

| Objectives  | Key Performance Indicators   | Ranking | Weighting |
|---|--|---------|-----------|
| 1. Align training programme with needs of the agricultural sector                   | 1.1 Needs assessment studies conducted: Identify any needs assessment studies that have been carried out to determine agricultural sector needs (at beginning of Learnership)                                    | 20%     | 10%       |
|   | 1.2 Needs assessment audit: Identify needs assessment studies conducted (during the Learnership)   | 10%     |           |
|   | 1.3 Knowledge of agricultural sector skills shortages: Records of identified agricultural areas with skills shortages  | 30%     |           |
|   | 1.4 Alignment of Learnership programme goals/objectives with National and Provincial Objectives: Identify similarities and differences between Learnership objectives and those of the Department of Agriculture | 40%     |           |
| 2. Ensure programme design, curriculum and implementation lead to intended outcomes | 2.1 Number of learners registered for the Learnership  | 5%      | 10%       |
|   | 2.2 Number of learners that dropped out of the Learnership   | 20%     |           |
|   | 2.3 Number of learners that failed the Learnership   | 10%     |           |
|   | 2.4 Number of learners advancing up the different NQF levels   | 25%     |           |
|   | 2.5 Number of learners able to get employment after completing Learnership   | 25%     |           |
|   | 2.6 Increased knowledge about the agricultural industry: get feedback from learners about what they have learned about the agricultural sector through the   | 15%     |           |

| Objectives  | Key Performance Indicators  | Ranking | Weighting |
|---|---|---------|-----------|
|   | Learnership   |         |           |
| 3. Align training programme needs with those of the agricultural industry (meet needs of the agricultural industry) | 3.1 Farmers perception of increased skills of learners  | 50%     | 5%        |
|   | 3.2. Alignment with sector needs  | 10%     |           |
|   | 3.3. Up-skilling previously unemployed learners   | 40%     |           |
| 4. Increase skills base in the agricultural sector in Western Cape  | 4.1 Number of learners that passed Learnership  | 60%     | 15%       |
|   | 4.2 Completed NQF skills levels of learners   | 40%     |           |
| 5. Increase employability of Learnership participants   | 5.1 Number of Learnership graduates employed since completing the course  | 20%     | 15%       |
|   | 5.2 Employers (farmers) perceptions about the employability of learners after the course                            | 50%     |           |
|   | 5.3 Employers perception of workers performance after completing the course   | 30%     |           |
| 6. Improve quality of life of Learnership participants and farmers/workers in the agricultural sector               | 6.1 Increased Household income  | 50%     | 5%        |
|   | 6.2 Learners perceptions about the impact of the Learnership on their livelihoods                                   | 30%     |           |
|   | 6.3 Perceptions about the Learnership' s impact on personal development (what non-academic skills have they gained) | 20%     |           |
| 7. Make economic impact on agricultural industry  | 7.1 Increased agricultural productivity   | 100%    | 15%       |
| 8. Ensure that objectives lead to intended outcomes   | 8.1 Number of Learnership graduates   | 100%    | 5%        |
| 9. Ensure successful roll out of the programme  | 9.1 Perceptions about the undertaking of the Learnership programme  | 100%    | 10%       |
| 10. Run efficient and cost-effective Learnership programme  | 10.1 Allocated budget vs. spend   | 40%     | 10%       |
|   | 10.2 Satisfaction levels of Learnership programme participants  | 60%     |           |

### 3.3.2 Data Collection

Primary data was gathered from various sources, including questionnaires completed with learners, interviews with officials, farmers and other agricultural related stakeholders, observations both during focus groups with learners and interviews, and existing records received from the Department of Agriculture.

A total of 61 learner surveys were completed resulting in a sample of 52%<sup>1</sup> of the learners on the database, who have contactable details, being surveyed. A major challenge was the lack of access to potential respondents due to the following:

- Student records with few or no contact details of previously registered learners
- Contact numbers unreachable: voicemail/wrong number/number does not exist
- Lack of interest in participating the survey
- Unknown contact details of farmers and other stakeholders who employ students completing the Learnership programme

**TABLE 3.3: DATA COLLECTION SUMMARY**

|             | Learner Focus Group | Centre Manager | Lecturers | Officials | Farmers and other stakeholders | Learner Surveys |
|-------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Elsenburg   | 0 <sup>2</sup>      | 1              | 4         | 4         | 0                              | 13              |
| Bredasdorp  | 1                   | 1              |           | 4         | 5                              | 21              |
| Clanwilliam | 1                   | 1              |           | 1         | 1                              | 11              |
| George      | 1                   | 1              |           | 1         | 1                              | 10              |
| Oudtshoorn  | 1                   | 1              |           | 1         | 1                              | 6               |
| Total       | 4                   | 5              | 4         | 11        | 8                              | 61              |

## Section 4: Data Analysis

### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide the main findings of each of the indicators identified for the various objectives. The findings are discussed for each objective. The detailed inputs from the Learner Surveys are discussed in **Annexure C** of this report.

### 4.2 Analysis of Objectives

| <b>Objective 1: Align Training Programmes with the Needs of the Agricultural Sector</b>   |
|---|
| Indicators 1.1: Have any needs assessment studies been conducted at the commencement of the Learnership programme to determine agricultural sector needs <sup>3</sup>   |
| There was no formal needs assessment conducted when the Learnership Programme was first initiated. However, based on feedback from the Officials, there were steps taken to facilitate the identification of areas requiring skills training. These included  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assessing the various regions to identify the commonly farmed commodities. For example, Plant Production (with specialisation in Pomology) is offered in Clanwilliam given the predominance of citrus farming in the region.</li> <li>2. During the pilot phase learners made applications for selected courses. The courses with the highest number of applications were then offered for the skills training (e.g. If the Bredasdorp Centre could only offer one programme, the programme with the highest number of applications was selected).</li> </ol> |
| Indicator 1.2: Needs assessment audit: Identify needs assessment studies conducted (during the  |

<sup>1</sup> Only 116 learners of 459 learners on the database have contactable details.

<sup>2</sup> After two attempts

<sup>3</sup> Needs assessment can be defined in various ways. For the purposes of this impact assessment the term is understood as follows: It is a procedure in which gaps and shortages in skills training are identified within the Agriculture Sector. This includes specific skills for example farming/quality control as well as gaps in terms of the personnel, resources and facilities needed for the implementation of the Learnership Programme

| <b>Objective 1: Align Training Programmes with the Needs of the Agricultural Sector</b>   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| Learnership)  |                          |
| No needs assessments have been conducted since the commencement of the Learnership Programme. The procedure as described above (based on commodities within the various areas as well as the programmes selected by learners) is followed.  |                          |
| Indicator 1.3: Knowledge of agricultural sector skills shortages: Records of identified agricultural areas with skills shortages  |                          |
| Any knowledge on skills shortages within the Agriculture sector has been based on the Officials' assessment of the agriculture market and industry. This is mainly done based on research within the Department of Agriculture. During the various interviews/surveys the following skills training gaps were identified:   |                          |
| Increased numeracy and literacy training particularly for learners that have not Matriculated   | Computer literacy skills |
| Entrepreneurship in agriculture   | Farm management          |
| Livestock production  | Engineering              |
| GIS and general map reading   | Irrigation installation  |
| The farmers and agriculture role players indicated that skills shortages are not being addressed due to the lack of effective practical training during the Learnership programme <sup>4</sup> .  |                          |
| Indicator 1.4: Alignment of Learnership programme goals/objectives with National and Provincial Objectives: Identify similarities and differences between Learnership objectives and those of the Department of Agriculture   |                          |
| The Officials have a shared understanding of the Learnership Programme objectives. Their interpretation of the programme is that:   |                          |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is a skills development programme</li> <li>2. It is aimed at addressing the skills training gap between those that attend Tertiary/Higher Education and those who do not</li> <li>3. It is targeted mainly at unemployed youth and individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds</li> <li>4. It includes a series of modules</li> <li>5. It constitutes 30% theory and 70% practical. Although not always implemented in this way. In reality it is 70% theory and 30% practical. Although the significant changes implemented in 2014 have started to address this issue.</li> </ol> |                          |
| The common understanding amongst farmers and role players is that   |                          |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Learnership Programme is a skills training programme.</li> <li>2. The Learnership Programme is aimed at disadvantaged and unemployed youth.</li> <li>3. There is general uncertainty regarding the specific structure and objectives of the Learnership Programme.</li> </ol>   |                          |
| Based on the interviews it is evident that the Learnership Programme does align with National and Provincial objectives to provide access to employment opportunities through skills development.   |                          |
| <b>Interesting Observations</b>   |                          |
| A noteworthy observation is that the stakeholders have a different interpretation of the Learnership Programme. While it is agreed that the Learnership Programme is a skills training programme;   |                          |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Officials interpret the Learnership programme in terms of its overall purpose (addressing unemployment)</li> <li>2. The learners interpret the Programmes in terms of its content (courses offered).</li> </ol>   |                          |
| Respondents also indicated that there is limited financial support and incentive for small business farmers or those looking to start agricultural businesses.  |                          |
| <b>Issues and Recommendations</b>   |                          |

<sup>4</sup> This has been addressed with the pilot programme update in 2014

**Objective 1: Align Training Programmes with the Needs of the Agricultural Sector**

The lack of an official needs assessment affects the extent to which the Learnership Programme objectives can be achieved.

An official needs assessment should be conducted. Among the steps involved are

1. Developing a needs assessment plan which outlines the purpose and intended outcomes of the assessment.
2. The needs assessment should include an overview of the Learnership Programme, its purpose and objectives.
3. With regards to the interpretation of Learnership Programme purpose it is important for all of the stakeholders involved in the Programme to be briefed on its objectives and structure. Common understanding of its purpose can facilitate the meeting of stakeholders' expectations of the programme.
4. Input should be gathered from key role players in the agriculture industry; famers, farm association members, agricultural organisations such as Agri, LandCare, FSD and the Sentraal-Suid Koöperasie (SSK). Additional input from prospective students, the Department of Higher Education and Training as well as the FET Centres is equally important.
5. The needs assessment can be conducted through workshops or meetings with all key stakeholders.
6. Site visits to the regions in which the Learnership Programme is offered are necessary in order to identify the needs in terms of the personnel, resources and facilities needed for successful execution of the Programme.
7. Ongoing progress reports and evaluations of the Learnership Programme (specifically through interviews with the learners) could provide valuable insight into the delivery of the programme and the needs of the learners. These evaluations should be done throughout the programme year to ensure that issues are dealt with.

**Objective 2: Ensure Programme Design, Curriculum and Implementation Lead to Intended Outcomes****Indicator 2.1: Number of learners registered for the Learnership**

A total of 868 learners have registered for the Learnership programme between 2005 and 2012. The following provides a breakdown of the various academic years and training centres.

| Academic Year | Registered | Elsenburg | Clanwilliam | Bredasdorp | George | Oudtshoorn |
|---------------|------------|-----------|-------------|------------|--------|------------|
| 2005          | 50         | 100%      | 0%          | 0%         | 0%     | 0%         |
| 2006          | 55         | 93%       | 0%          | 0%         | 5%     | 2%         |
| 2007          | 103        | 79%       | 13%         | 0%         | 8%     | 1%         |
| 2008          | 198        | 54%       | 18%         | 19%        | 0%     | 9%         |
| 2009          | 166        | 37%       | 9%          | 28%        | 16%    | 9%         |
| 2010          | 105        | 50%       | 15%         | 19%        | 9%     | 7%         |
| 2011          | 100        | 47%       | 12%         | 23%        | 7%     | 10%        |
| 2012          | 91         | 50%       | 7%          | 16%        | 19%    | 9%         |

Based on the above it is evident that the Elsenburg Training Centre received the largest percentage of learners, followed by Bredasdorp, Clanwilliam, George and the training centre with the smallest percentage of students is Oudtshoorn. On average there is an annual growth of 18% in learners. Based on the above it is evident that the target of 70 learners per annum has been achieved since 2007.

**Indicator 2.2: Number of learners that dropped out of the Learnership**

| Academic Year | Registered | Competent (Completed Course) | Drop Out | Drop Out Percentage |
|---------------|------------|------------------------------|----------|---------------------|
| 2005          | 50         | 44                           | 6        | 12%                 |
| 2006          | 55         | 45                           | 10       | 18%                 |
| 2007          | 103        | 77                           | 26       | 25%                 |
| 2008          | 198        | 136                          | 62       | 31%                 |

**Objective 2: Ensure Programme Design, Curriculum and Implementation Lead to Intended Outcomes**

|      |     |     |    |     |
|------|-----|-----|----|-----|
| 2009 | 166 | 112 | 54 | 33% |
| 2010 | 105 | 81  | 24 | 23% |
| 2011 | 100 | 79  | 21 | 21% |
| 2012 | 91  | 79  | 12 | 13% |

Based on the Drop Out Register received from the Department of Agriculture, the drop out number includes both learners that have failed the course as well as learners that have decided to drop out of the course for various reasons. Detailed information regarding the reason for drop out is only available for the period 2010 to 2012 and based on this information the main reason for dropping out is due to other reasons (80%), including, but not limited to, personal reasons, finding work, accepted for other programme, financial constraints, learners did not return to the programme after a weekend/holiday/registration, and the remaining 20% is due to failing the course. On average the dropout rate is 22% per annum. Based on the above it is evident that the target of 70% pass rate (leaving 30% for dropout rate) learners per annum has been achieved for the majority of the assessment years, however 2008 and 2009 saw higher dropout rates which meant that the target of 30% was exceeded.

Indicator 2.3: Number of learners that failed the Learnership

Refer to **Indicator 2.2**: Number of learners that dropped out of the Learnership above.

Indicator 2.4: Number of learners advancing up the different NQF levels

The current databases do not provide information on learners advancing between the various NQF levels; however the databases provide an indication of learners articulating to tertiary education.

| Academic Year | Registered | Articulated | Articulated Percentage |
|---------------|------------|-------------|------------------------|
| 2005          | 50         |             |                        |
| 2006          | 55         | 11          | 20%                    |
| 2007          | 103        | 15          | 15%                    |
| 2008          | 198        | 10          | 5%                     |
| 2009          | 166        | 9           | 5%                     |
| 2010          | 105        | 7           | 7%                     |
| 2011          | 100        | 16          | 16%                    |
| 2012          | 91         |             |                        |

Based on the above approximately 11% of learners articulate to tertiary courses on an annual basis. There were case examples of previously registered learners who have gone onto study at Tertiary Level.

- 1.1. Masters in Agriculture and Rural Development at the University of Pretoria
- 1.2. Masters in Development studies at University of the Free State
- 1.3. B. Agric / B.Tech in Agriculture/Diploma in Extension/Higher Certificate in Agriculture at Elsenburg
- 1.4. Diploma in Farm Management at Boland College
- 1.5. Diploma in Agricultural Management at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
- 1.6. Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy at the University of Cape Town
- 1.7. Other Learnerships - Construction and Teaching
- 1.8. Short course- Nature Guide, Marketing, Public Administration, Entrepreneurship and Computers

The annual target for articulation is 8-9 learners (which results in 11%). The average is meeting the provincial target; however 2008, 2009, and 2010 achieved lower percentages than the anticipated target. This indicates a positive outcome for the Learnership Programme and although the percentage is perceived as low it is actually a great achievement specifically regarding the types of tertiary courses being followed. Some learners are advancing to Masters levels, which previously would have seemed impossible for these learners. This indicates that there is an opportunity for the learners to advance and highly educate themselves in order to obtain potentially higher paying job opportunities.

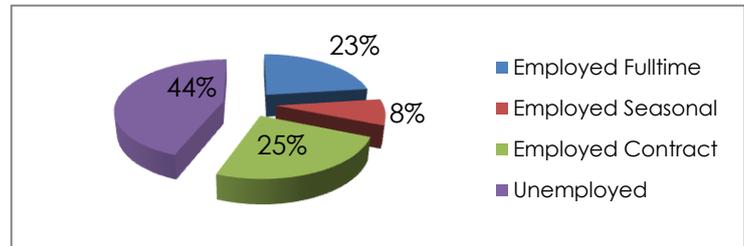
## Objective 2: Ensure Programme Design, Curriculum and Implementation Lead to Intended Outcomes

Based on the learner surveys that were conducted it is evident that 20% of the learners indicated that they have advanced between the various NQF levels. The Officials indicated that the lack of funding limits the potential of learners to study further and advance up the NQF Levels

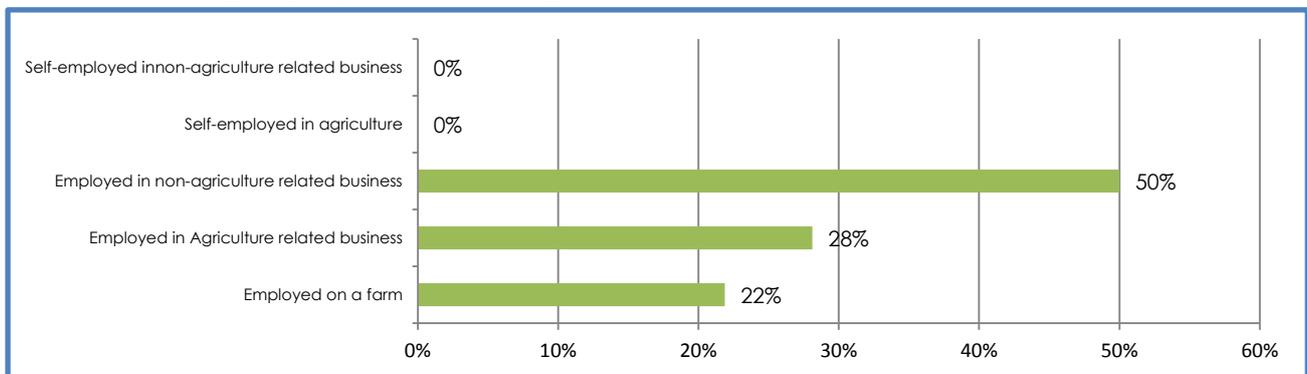
### Indicator 2.5: Number of learners able to get employment after completing Learnership

1. The following statistics summarise the employment status of the 61 respondents who participated in the Learner Survey

- 1.1. Employed Fulltime: 23%
- 1.2. Employed Seasonal: 8%
- 1.3. Employed Contract: 25%
- 1.4. Currently Unemployed: 44%



2. The employment status was broken down into industry to in order to establish whether learners have are being employed within the Agriculture Sector



3. Although there were no respondents who were self-employed, there were learners who stated that they are interested in starting an agriculture related project or business e.g. poultry or pig farming. However, the limitations faced include lack of funding and information on how to start or manage an agricultural business.

4. Case examples of employment detail and employer companies /organisations(Agriculture related)

- 4.1 Glen Fruin Farm - Quality Control
- 4.2 Perishable Products Export Control Board (PPECB) - Contract worker
- 4.3 Higher Education and Training at Elsenburg/Oudtshoorn – Lecturer, Administration assistant, FET official
- 4.4 Mouton Citrus
- 4.5 Aquafarm Development Hermanus
- 4.6 Farm general worker

5. Case examples of employment detail and companies /organisations(Non-agriculture related)

- 5.1 Automotive company Cape Town Airport – Driver
- 5.2 Department of Correctional Services – general worker
- 5.3 Department of Public works - general worker
- 5.4 LoveLife NGO – teacher
- 5.5 Edgars – retail assistant
- 5.6 Hotel in Arabella Estate – general worker

### Indicator 2.6: Increased knowledge about the agricultural industry: get feedback from learners about what they have learned about the agricultural sector through the Learnership

1. All of the learners agree that they have increased knowledge and understanding of the agricultural industry. However, much of the knowledge gained is theoretical rather than practical – a point raised by all of the stakeholders who were interviewed

2. Despite increased knowledge and understanding of the industry, language barrier proves to be

**Objective 2: Ensure Programme Design, Curriculum and Implementation Lead to Intended Outcomes**

an impediment to the students learning experience. Language affects the extent to which learners are able to grasp the content

3. Another impediment is the difference between learners who have Matriculated versus those who have not
4. The officials and learners noted that grasping of content was slightly difficult for learners without Matric compared to those with the qualification

**Interesting Observations**

A concern raised by the farmers is that some learners from the farms are less motivated to learn and improve their situations (there is a lack of motivation to gain further skills and education training)

In general it was stated that a large number of learners are only attending the Learnership Programme because they were accepted into the programme, and not because they have a passion or interest in the agricultural sector. The impact of the above is that some learners are not willing to give the needed commitment required within the agricultural sector (working from 5am to 9pm whether it rains or the sun shines) and therefore are looking for specific employment opportunities (specifically office jobs) which are very scarce or do not exist.

**Issues and Recommendations**

1. An assessment of the employment status of previously registered learners shows that there is a high number of students who end up unemployed upon completing the Learnership Programme.
2. Among the reasons for this are; lack of information on employment opportunities, few actual employment opportunities available, limited or no assistance from the Department of Agriculture or FET in job searching and the lack of initiative by learners to actively seek employment. Given the demand for higher skills training qualifications by employers; the Learnership Programme Certificate particularly NQF1 (NQF1 only provides basic training within the agricultural sector – same training as grade 10) is an additional reason for the lack of employment amongst previously registered learners. To address these challenges the DoA and FET Centres could:
  - 2.1 Consider changing learnership application process, with assistance of the DoA and FET (a prospective student has to secure internship/job shadow) at farm or agriculture related business upon applying for the Learnership Programme
  - 2.2 DoA or FET could liaise with potential employers (farmers, Agricultural retail companies, businesses or organisations) and provide learners with information on employment opportunities e.g. internships, part-time work, job shadowing
  - 2.3 The Learnership Programme could target applicants who are have a higher chance ending up in agriculture e.g. farm workers/farm workers children
  - 2.4 Inform learners from onset of the Programme that whilst the DoA and FET are willing to assist with job searching, the responsibility also lies on the learners to actively seek employment
3. To increase learners understanding of the agriculture industry:
  - 3.1 Employ bilingual lecturers where possible Afrikaans, English and Xhosa speaking
  - 3.2 Consider separating Matric and non-Matric students or provide additional training for learners without Matric (Non-Matriculant to start at NQF1 and Matriculant to start at NQF4). In general it is noticed that Learners that have matriculated grasp the information much quicker than learners that have not completed matric.

**Objective 3: Align Training Programme Needs with those of the Agricultural Industry****Indicator 3.1: Farmers perception of increased skills of learners**

The Officials state that the learners gain valuable skills from the Learnership programme e.g. soft skills and life skills. However, it was pointed out that the duration of the Programme is short which in turn limits the time in which learners can fully grasp the content or apply the knowledge and skills they have gained.

The farmers and other industry role players specifically indicated that the learners lack the practical skills required to work on a farm. Although they might show insight into the theoretical background of

**Objective 3: Align Training Programme Needs with those of the Agricultural Industry**

farming, it is very clear that the learners do not have the practical experience. However, farmers that sent their existing farm workers to attend one of the Learnership Programmes indicated that the skills gained from the course provide a more rounded worker (i.e. learners understood the business aspects of farming and therefore provided more input in terms of productivity). One of the issues in this regard is that if farmers send their existing workers for further training on the Learnership Programme, it is not guaranteed that the workers will be accepted for the programme relevant to the farm (i.e. fruit farming learners that are accepted for vegetable production programmes due to the lack of interest in other programmes at the specified centre).

**Indicator 3.2: Alignment with sector needs**

Although the programmes provided at the various training centres are informed by the need of the region as well as the interest of the learners, it is evident that the skills taught as part of the courses do not address the needs of the agricultural sector. Specifically the practical skills. Farmers and other industry role players require workers that are able to do the work (not only know how it should be done).

**Indicator 3.3: Up-skilling previously unemployed learners**

Farmers and industry role players assert that those already working on farms benefit more from the skills training because they have the opportunity to apply the skills and knowledge given that they are already familiar with the farm and agriculture environment.

**Interesting Observations**

An interesting statement made by one of the farmers was that a learner applied for a job opportunity and when asked to perform a simple task was not able to do it (the learner had to catch an ostrich and was unable to complete the task). The farmer's conclusion was that the learner did not get any practical training and therefore would not be an asset to him on the farm.

**Issues and Recommendations**

1. The proposal that the Learnership Programme duration be extended may require an overall assessment of the Programme current challenges
2. In conducting this assessment it will be necessary to consider
  - 2.1. Whether the current shortcomings of the programme can be addressed without having to extend the programme. For example, increasing the number of practical per week rather than extending the overall time needed for the Learnership Programme is a viable solution
  - 2.2. Consult with the relevant stakeholders (DoA, FET Officials, farmers) whether there is sufficient funding, personnel and resources should the Programme duration be extended

**Objective 4: Increase Skills Base in the Agricultural Sector in Western Cape****Indicator 4.1: Number of learners that passed Learnership**

| Academic Year | Registered | Competent<br>(Completed Course) | Competent<br>Percentage |
|---------------|------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2005          | 50         | 44                              | 88%                     |
| 2006          | 55         | 45                              | 82%                     |
| 2007          | 103        | 77                              | 75%                     |
| 2008          | 198        | 136                             | 69%                     |
| 2009          | 166        | 112                             | 67%                     |
| 2010          | 105        | 81                              | 77%                     |
| 2011          | 100        | 79                              | 79%                     |
| 2012          | 91         | 79                              | 87%                     |

The above shows that the pass rate of the Learnership programme is very high with an average pass rate of 80% per annum.

**Indicator 4.2: Completed NQF skills levels of learners**

Based on the database provided by the Department of Agriculture it is evident that the majority of the learners are registered for NQF level 1 programmes (the most popular being plant production, including the various sub courses within plant production). NQF level 1 is equivalent to Grade 9/10 education, which does not lead to up-skilled individuals unless they advance to the NQF 4 levels.

## Objective 5: Increase Employability of Learnership Participants

### Indicator 5.1: Number of Learnership graduates employed since completing the course

Refer to **Indicator 2.5**: Number of learners able to get employment after completing Learnership for statistics.

A common concern amongst the learners is that there is limited or no assistance from the DoA or FET Centres with the search for employment or internship opportunities. There is limited information provided to students on how and where to get assistance if one intends on starting their own agricultural project.

There is no official system in place to follow up on or keep record of previously registered learners. It is difficult for FET Centres to keep track of or follow up on previously registered due to relocation of learners or change in their contact details. Currently there is no formal procedure to actively try and keep up with previous learners. The FET Officials inform learners that employment is not a guarantee upon completion of the Learnership Programme. However, the learners receive assistance from the FET Centres with typing CVs and internet access. In addition the learners are encouraged to study further or to go through articulation at Elsenburg.

### Indicator 5.2: Employers (farmers) perceptions about the employability of learners after the course

The majority of the farmers interviewed only appointed the learner once the Learnership Programme was completed and therefore was unable to indicate if the learner's employability increased due to the Learnership. The employment opportunities available within the agricultural sector are not necessarily for farm managers. There is a greater demand for general workers and therefore learners could apply for the general employment opportunities or wait for higher employment opportunities (i.e. earn an income, although lower than expected, or earn no income). The farmers also indicated that due to the lack of practical experience of the learners very few will gain the opportunity to be employed in higher positions than general workers. The main reason that was stated was that farm managers required more intensive practical experience of farm activities, which was not the case for the learners. The implication is that learners are not able to manage or train other staff members (because they do not know how to do the tasks themselves) and therefore are not employed in the higher positions.

Based on the learners perception the following is evident:

1. 75% of the learners agreed that the Learnership Programme increases their employability
2. According to the learners putting the Learnership qualification on their CV increases their chances of being employed
3. The Learnership Programme gives them leverage over individuals who have not done any training at all.
4. However, there is uncertainty regarding the extent to which the Learnership Programme increases their employability. For example: 15% of the learners gave a neutral response indicating that the Learnership Programme does not necessarily increase or limit their chances of being employed.
5. These learners felt that the fact that they are still unemployed indicates that the Programme has not increased their employability.
6. They also indicated that one has to study further or gain practical experience to be more employable
7. Some learners stated that they had applied for jobs but did not get any responses from prospective employers or were told that they were not qualified enough
8. Generally, the learners felt that the Learnership Programme is to a great extent a waste of time and money if it leads to one not being employed

The above is based on the perceptions of the learners; however it is important to note that the Learnership Programme does not have an influence on the labour market. The current high unemployment within the sector as a whole is also contributing to Learners not being employed. Factors such as the labour law, economic conditions, etc. have an impact on the labour market which

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| <b>Objective 5: Increase Employability of Learnership Participants</b>  |
| in essences drives the supply of employment opportunities.  |
| Indicator 5.3: Employers perception of workers performance after completing the course  |
| An important point they raised is that the learners lack practical experience despite having theoretical knowledge of the agriculture industry. For example, some of the learners are unable to the practical work on farms e.g. milking cows. Managerial or senior positions require higher qualification not just Learnership.  |
| Farmers indicated that in some cases the Learnership did allow the worker to be more productive on the farm; however unsatisfactory investment in practical skills training is evident as a problem in the programme.   |
| <b>Interesting Observations</b>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There are previously registered learners who are now employed by the FET and Department of Agriculture. These learners work as both farmers and administrative officials. Although they have gone on to study further (Diploma, Higher Certificate and B. Agric) the Learnership Programme is a stepping stone which to an extent increased their employability and aptitude to study further.</li> <li>2. One learner stated that "If people change their attitudes towards learnerships it would be better. People feel that it is not good enough or 'just a Government programme' which does not provide adequate training. They feel that you do not gain much knowledge from a learnership compared to those that have no training, but experience, so it's hard to find jobs when you come from an Agricultural FET College or any FET in general".</li> </ol>   |
| <b>Issues and Recommendations</b>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Given the requisition for higher qualified persons for certain posts within the agriculture industry, the DoA should make provisions for learners who are willing to study further for higher qualifications <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Extend funding for further study</li> <li>1.2 Provide learners with information on alternative sources of funding e.g. funding from Universities or Colleges, fundraising, prospective employers or farmers associations</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. There are learners who have been awarded bursaries for further study from the Department. However, given that the award of bursaries for students based on academic performance, it remains a challenge for learners who may not be academically eligible but have the drive and potential to be productive within the industry</li> <li>3. In such cases the DoA may consider providing internship opportunities</li> <li>4. At the end of practicals farmers/employers could provide progress reports detailing the performance of learners</li> <li>5. With regards to employability, it is essential for the DoA and FET Centre to investigate what type of knowledge, skills and qualifications are on demand from prospective employers. This will ensure that the learners receive appropriate training to increase their chances of being employed.</li> </ol> |

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| <b>Objective 6: Improve Quality of Life of Learnership Participants and Farmers/Workers in the Agricultural Sector</b>   |
| Indicator 6.1: Increased Household income  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 53% of the learners highlighted that the monthly stipend which was allocated was sufficient. Much of the money was spent on toiletries and transport.</li> <li>2. Because most of the learners (44%) who were interviewed have not been employed since completing the Learnership Programme, there were limited responses to directly address the question of household income increase</li> <li>3. However, the learners gave their perceptions on whether the Learnership Programme would result in a higher paying job and overall household income and 52% of the learners agree that the Learnership Programme increases the chances of getting a higher paying job</li> <li>4. Already employed students indicated that a qualification higher than the Learnership certificate would be needed for a higher paying job</li> </ol> |
| Indicator 6.2: Learners perceptions about the impact of the Learnership on their livelihoods   |
| 93% of the learners highlighted that the Learnership Programme has had an impact on their life in some way. The 3% that disagreed stated that it was due to the fact that they were still unemployed that the Learnership Programme has had no impact on their lives. Some of the reasons for their positive   |

**Objective 6: Improve Quality of Life of Learnership Participants and Farmers/Workers in the Agricultural Sector**

assessment included:

1. Academic knowledge was gained
2. The programme led to obtaining job opportunities
3. The programme led to increase in confidence specifically with regards to knowledge within the agricultural sector, but also in general being able get a certificate in training (having achieved something in life).

Indicator 6.3: Perceptions about the Learnership' impact on personal development (what non-academic skills have they gained)

Apart from academic skills, the learners gained soft skills such as time management, budget management, teamwork, communication and networking skills, computer literacy, project management and networking. However, learners do feel that training in these skills were very limited and could be improved.

Learners also indicated that the soft skills gained have had a positive impact on their lives. Based on the Surveys the learners indicated the following soft skills were gained:

|                                  | <b>Very limited</b> | <b>Limited</b> | <b>Neutral</b> | <b>Extensive</b> | <b>Very Extensive</b> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Time management</b>           | 0%                  | 7%             | 19%            | 61%              | 14%                   |
| <b>Computer literacy</b>         | 9%                  | 19%            | 8%             | 53%              | 11%                   |
| <b>Finance/budget management</b> | 0%                  | 17%            | 29%            | 46%              | 8%                    |
| <b>Project management</b>        | 0%                  | 25%            | 40%            | 32%              | 4%                    |
| <b>Teamwork</b>                  | 0%                  | 8%             | 22%            | 46%              | 24%                   |
| <b>Communication</b>             | 5%                  | 22%            | 44%            | 27%              | 2%                    |
| <b>Writing</b>                   | 5%                  | 22%            | 43%            | 27%              | 3%                    |
| <b>Networking</b>                | 0%                  | 28%            | 40%            | 28%              | 4%                    |

**Other skills**

- Agricultural business management
- Being open minded and thinking outside of the box
- Business management
- Conflict Management
- Health and Safety
- Human relations
- Leadership
- Marketing (limited)
- Math's, life skills and interpreting information

**Issues and Recommendations**

1. There is need for the Learnership Programme to increase training for skills such as networking, project management and computer literacy
2. The DoA may need to consider providing a transport allowance for the learners who have to travel long distances to get to the FET Centres

**Objective 7: Make Economic Impact on Agricultural Industry**

Indicator 7.1: Increased agricultural productivity

In general the observation from the various stakeholders was that the Learnership Programme did not lead to significantly increased productivity in the agricultural industry. The main reason being that learners are not receiving effective or sufficient practical training. The other reason also being that the learners selected for the programme do not realise the commitment of working within the agricultural

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| <b>Objective 7: Make Economic Impact on Agricultural Industry</b>   |
| industry and therefore are not able to perform the tasks required on a farm.  |
| <b>Issues and Recommendations</b>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learners receive inadequate practical training, therefore the practical training of the programme should be improved through better partnerships with farmers and other industry role players.</li> <li>2. Learners selected for the programme are not necessarily committed to or do not necessarily have a passion for the agricultural industry. The recommendation made was that the selection criteria should be revised to ensure that learners have an interest in the agricultural industry. This could be done through providing preference to learners already within the industry (living on a farm, helping on a farm, etc.) and learners that have secured an internship on one of the farms.</li> </ol> |

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| <b>Objective 8: Ensure that Objectives Lead to Intended Outcomes</b>   |
| Indicator 8.1: Number of Learnership graduates   |
| Refer to <b>Indicator 4.1</b> : Number of learners that passed Learnership for analysis.   |
| The majority of the learners indicated that they were satisfied with the delivery of the Learnership Programme and that the content provided was understandable and they were able to apply the skills gained. |

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| <b>Objective 9: Ensure Successful Roll Out of the Programme</b>  |
| Indicator 9.1: Perceptions about the undertaking of the Learnership programme  |
| Overall 95% of the learners felt that the Learnership Programme content was useful and easy to understand<br>However, the Programme did not meet the learners' expectations regarding the 30% theory and 70% practical ratio. The lack of direct involvement during practical was a major cause for concern for the learners. Despite this it was noted that the Learnership Programme offers a good foundation for agricultural knowledge   |
| Concerns specifically raised by officials directly and indirectly involved in the Learnership programme:   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Learnership Programme is not structured to synchronise with the different farming seasons</li> <li>2. As a result it is difficult to offer a comprehensive practical experience - various plants grow during different seasons</li> <li>3. Because the FET Centres are understaffed it is difficult for the lecturers to cater for all of learners in terms of language</li> <li>4. Most of the lectures speak either English and Xhosa or English and Afrikaans</li> </ol>  |
| Very limited advertising is being done with regards to the Learnership Programme. The majority of the learners (62%) found out about the Learnership Programme through word of mouth. The next common sources were the Newspaper (13%) and the Department of Agriculture website (10%)   |
| <b>Interesting Observations</b>  |
| Learners indicated that practical training was mainly based on observation and very little actually doing the tasks. Therefore tasks such as pruning, installation of irrigation systems, planting, etc. is very difficult to comprehend.  |
| <b>Issues and Recommendations</b>  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Learnership Programme could be structured in such a way that it is synchronised with the various seasons.</li> <li>2. An alternative is to offer theoretical training first and then conduct practical work during each specific season</li> <li>3. The Learnership Programme needs to be marketed and promoted in different regions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 Conduct information sessions at schools and explain the Learnership Programme purpose and advantages</li> <li>3.2 Provide pamphlets with details of the Learnership Programme to the general public</li> <li>3.3 Circulate information pamphlets amongst farmers and farmers associations, agricultural</li> </ol> </li> </ol> |

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| <b>Objective 9: Ensure Successful Roll Out of the Programme</b>             |
| businesses and companies  |
| 3.4 Use more than one source in advertising the Learnership Programme       |
| 4. Other sources to consider are radio, posters on community notice boards. |

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| <b>Objective 10: Run Efficient and Cost-Effective Learnership Programme</b>   |
| Indicator 10.1: Allocated budget vs. spend  |
| Based on the annual reports of the Learnership Programme it is evident that the Learnership Programme stays within the budget allocated and based on the interviews with the officials it was evident that the general feeling is that the allocated budget is sufficient to address the tasks at hand.   |
| The Officials suggested that more funding should be allocated to practical activities. Another concern which was raised is that there were delays with the allocation of stipends. Given that some of the learners are motivated by the stipend and not genuinely interested in agriculture; some officials felt that this resulted in wastage of resources as training is provided to individuals who have no intention of working in agriculture. |
| Indicator 10.2: Satisfaction levels of Learnership programme participants   |
| The Learnership Programme is generally perceived as well organised and enjoyable. However, there was overall dissatisfaction with the lack of practical training during the programme. The Learnership Programme is an important skills programme which would be beneficial particularly for farm workers or anyone interested in agriculture. However, it was emphasised that the Programme needs to be marketed more to farmers.                  |
| <b>Issues and Recommendations</b>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For better undertaking of the Learnership Programme it is necessary for each FET Centre to have its own training facilities (computer laboratory and library)</li> <li>2. For FET Centres which are not located on research farms, funding is needed for transport to attend practical learning activities</li> </ol>   |

## Section 5: Impact assessment

The purpose of the following section is to provide the results of the Evaluation Framework Assessment (**Table 5.1**). The completed evaluation framework is provided as **Annexure D** to this document. The evaluation framework is based on an assessment (informed by the score of the objectives and indicator). The framework also provides for a motivation for the assessment provided. The assessment is based on the following:

1. Very Poor: the indicator score is 0%. This means that the indicator has not been addressed/achieved
2. Poor: the indicator score is between 1% and 25%. This means that the indicator has not been addressed although some attempts were made in attempting to address the indicator
3. Acceptable: the indicator score is between 26% and 50%. This means that attempts are made to achieve the indicator and although some of the aspects are being met there is major room for improvement.
4. Good: the indicator score is between 51% and 75%. This means that the indicator is being addressed; however with some minor changes the impact could be much higher.
5. Very Good: the indicator score is between 76% and 100%. This means that the indicator is being addressed and the impact of the indicators is high.

**TABLE 5.1: EVALUATION FRAMEWORK ASSESSMENT**

| Objective  | Indicator  | Assessment | Objective Score   | Assessment Motivation  |
|--|--|------------|---|--|
| <b>1. Align training programme with needs of the agricultural sector</b>                   | 1.1 Needs assessment studies conducted: Identify any needs assessment studies that have been carried out to determine agricultural sector needs (at beginning of Learnership)                                    | Poor       | Overall score for objective is 6.0% (this is based on the weighted score of 10% - i.e. 6% of 10%) | No official needs assessment as done to determine the need within the agricultural sector  |
|  | 1.2 Needs assessment audit: Identify needs assessment studies conducted (during the Learnership)   | Very Poor  |   | No needs assessment was done since the commencement of the Learnership Programme   |
|  | 1.3 Knowledge of agricultural sector skills shortages: Records of identified agricultural areas with skills shortages  | Good       |   | From the interviews it is evident that there is a knowledge regarding the skills shortages within the agricultural sector, however these were obtained through other processes and programmes. |
|  | 1.4 Alignment of Learnership programme goals/objectives with National and Provincial Objectives: Identify similarities and differences between Learnership objectives and those of the Department of Agriculture | Good       |   | The Learnership Programme does aim to address unemployment and skills development which is high priorities for both National and Provincial strategic policies.                                |
| <b>2. Ensure programme design, curriculum and implementation lead to intended outcomes</b> | 2.1 Number of learners registered for the Learnership  | Very Good  | Overall score for objective is 8% (this is based on the weighted score of 10% - i.e. 8% of 10%)   | There is a large number of students that register for the Learnership Programme within an average increase of 18% per annum.   |
|  | 2.2 Number of learners that dropped out of the Learnership   | Very Good  |   | The Learnership has a low average dropout rate of 22% per annum.   |

| Objective  | Indicator  | Assessment | Objective Score   | Assessment Motivation  |
|--|--|------------|---|--|
|  | 2.3 Number of learners that failed the Learnership   | Good       |   | The Learnership Programme has approximately 25% to 33% of students failing per annum.  |
|  | 2.4 Number of learners advancing up the different NQF levels   | Good       |   | Only 20% of the learners advance to higher NQF levels, however approximately 11% of learners articulate to higher education courses per annum.             |
|  | 2.5 Number of learners able to get employment after completing Learnership   | Good       |   | Approximately half of the annually registered learners receive employment opportunities; however these range between full time, seasonal and contact work. |
|  | 2.6 Increased knowledge about the agricultural industry: get feedback from learners about what they have learned about the agricultural sector through the Learnership | Acceptable |   | The theoretical knowledge ins increased, however the practical knowledge of the learners is not sufficient.  |
| <b>3. Align training programme needs with those of the agricultural industry (meet needs of the agricultural industry)</b> | 3.1 Farmers perception of increased skills of learners   | Acceptable | Overall score for objective is 2% (this is based on the weighted score of 5% - i.e. 2% of 5%) | Learners do show knowledge of theoretical principles, however are unable to apply these skills practically.  |
|  | 3.2. Alignment with sector needs   | Poor       |   | The agricultural industry requires practical skills and therefore the skills gained does not address the needs of the industry.                            |
|  | 3.3. Up-skilling previously unemployed learners  | Poor       |   | Majority of previously unemployed learners come from urban areas and due to the lack of practical training they are not able to perform tasks on farms.    |
| <b>4. Increase skills base in the agricultural sector in Western Cape</b>  | 4.1 Number of learners that passed Learnership   | Very Good  | Overall score for objective is 9% (this is  | The Learnership Programme has an average pass rate of 80% per annum.   |

| Objective  | Indicator   | Assessment | Objective Score   | Assessment Motivation  |
|--|---|------------|---|--|
|  | 4.2 Completed NQF skills levels of learners   | Very Poor  | based on the weighted score of 15% - i.e. 9% of 15%)  | The majority of courses are completed at NQF level 1 which is equivalent to Grade 9/8 schooling and therefore does not lead to improved skills levels of learners. |
| <b>5. Increase employability of Learnership participants</b>   | 5.1 Number of Learnership graduates employed since completing the course  | Good       | Overall score for objective is 6% (this is based on the weighted score of 15% - i.e. 6% of 15%) | Approximately half of the annually registered learners receive employment opportunities; however these range between full time, seasonal and contact work.         |
|  | 5.2 Employers (farmers) perceptions about the employability of learners after the course                          | Poor       |   | Learners lack the practical experience needed to work on the farms.  |
|  | 5.3 Employers perception of workers performance after completing the course                                       | Acceptable |   | Learners presented theoretical knowledge, however practical knowledge was lacking.   |
| <b>6. Improve quality of life of Learnership participants and farmers/workers in the agricultural sector</b> | 6.1 Increased Household income  | Acceptable | Overall score for objective is 3% (this is based on the weighted score of 5% - i.e. 3% of 5%)   | Approximately half of the learners are able to find jobs after completing the Learnership Programme.   |
|  | 6.2 Learners perceptions about the impact of the Learnership on their livelihoods                                 | Good       |   | The Learnership Programme did have a number of positive impacts on the learner's lives.  |
|  | 6.3 Perceptions about the Learnership' impact on personal development (what non-academic skills have they gained) | Good       |   | Learners gained knowledge in various other skills not directly related to Agriculture.   |
| <b>7. Make economic impact on agricultural industry</b>  | 7.1 Increased agricultural productivity   | Poor       | Overall score for objective is 4% (this is based on the weighted score of 15% - i.e. 4% of 15%) | Learners are not able to add value to the farm due to the lack of practical training gained through the Learnership Programme.                                     |

| Objective   | Indicator  | Assessment | Objective Score   | Assessment Motivation  |
|---|--|------------|---|--|
| <b>8. Ensure that objectives lead to intended outcomes</b>        | 8.1 Number of Learnership graduates                                | Very Good  | Overall score for objective is 5% (this is based on the weighted score of 5% - i.e. 5% of 5%)   | The Learnership Programme has an average pass rate of 80% per annum.   |
| <b>9. Ensure successful roll out of the programme</b>             | 9.1 Perceptions about the undertaking of the Learnership programme | Acceptable | Overall score for objective is 5% (this is based on the weighted score of 10% - i.e. 5% of 10%) | In general the Learners are satisfied with the content and delivery of the Learnership Programme. However, there is a lack of practical training during the course which is crucial to the agricultural industry.  |
| <b>10. Run efficient and cost-effective Learnership programme</b> | 10.1 Allocated budget vs. spend                                    | Very Good  | Overall score for objective is 7% (this is based on the weighted score of 10% - i.e. 7% of 10%) | The budget allocated to the Learnership Programme is sufficient and officials are able to keep within the allocated budget.  |
|   | 10.2 Satisfaction levels of Learnership programme participants     | Acceptable |   | In general the Learners are satisfied with the content and delivery of the Learnership Programme. However, there is a lack of practical training during the course which is crucial to the agricultural industry . |

The following table provides an overview of the performance according to the project cycle (Table 5.2).

**TABLE 5.2: PROJECT CYCLE ASSESSMENT**

| Project Cycle | Description   | Assessment   |
|---------------|---|--|
| <b>Inputs</b> | The funds, personnel, materials, etc. which are required for a project to produce the intended output; Specific tasks performed using resources and methods | The inputs are mainly assessed through Objective 1, 2 and 3.<br><br>The main issues identified:<br>1. Lack of adequate assessment of the current needs within the Agricultural Sector and Industry as a whole<br>2. Lack of adequate staff to monitor learners |

| Project Cycle   | Description   | Assessment   |
|-----------------|---|--|
|                 | in order to achieve the intended outputs.   | <p>progress in terms of skills gained</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Lack of updated databases to determine progress and follow up with learners (i.e. registered learners, dropout register, contact details of learners, courses passed, commencement of learners through NQF levels, etc.)</li> <li>4. Lack of adequate programme module that equips learners with sufficient practical training experience as required by the agricultural industry and a Learnership Programme</li> </ol>  |
| <b>Outputs</b>  | The results that can be guaranteed by the project as a consequence of its activities; Products and services produced or competences and capacities established directly as a result of project activities | <p>The output is mainly monitored through objective 2 and 4.</p> <p>The Learnership Programme has a very good registration and pass rate. However when assessing the level of skills of the learners it is evident that the programmes mainly registered for is NQF level 1, which only provides basic training and due to the identified lack of practical training it is evident that the level of skills is not adequate for what the industry is requiring. There is also a need for easier articulation processes to higher education programmes.</p>   |
| <b>Outcomes</b> | Intended situation at the end of or soon after the project's lifespan in terms of gains in performance (as a result of changes in knowledge and behaviour).   | <p>The outcome is mainly assessed through objectives 2,4,5,8 and 9.</p> <p>The main objective of the Learnership Programme is to provide unemployed individuals with an opportunity to gain skills in order to gain a job opportunity. The main issues identified are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The selection criteria of learners need to be revised to ensure that learners passionate about the agricultural sector are favoured above other students. Learners generally find it difficult to find a job opportunity after completing the Learnership Programme: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Learners are either not willing to accept what is available</li> <li>b. Employers feel that learners do not have adequate practical skills</li> <li>c. Learners do not know how to look for job opportunities</li> </ol> </li> </ol> |

| Project Cycle  | Description  | Assessment   |
|----------------|--|--|
|                |  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Skills gained are mainly theoretical and learners are not able to apply these skills practically</li> <li>3. The Learnership Programme provides very little access to the available job opportunities for learners due to the lack of partnership with farmers and other industry role players.</li> </ol>   |
| <b>Impacts</b> | <p>Improvements of a situation in terms of social and economic benefits which respond to identified development needs of the target population under a long-term vision.</p> | <p>The impacts are mainly assessed through objectives 6 and 7.</p> <p>The intended impacts are to add value to the productivity of the agricultural industry as well as to have an impact on the learners quality of life (include income, employment opportunities, and skills gained). The Learnership Programme has resulted in a significant number of students that have graduated to higher and tertiary education institutions, which add great value to the agricultural industry as well as the quality of life of the learners.</p> <p>The main issues that were identified:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Learnership Programme currently is perceived to have limited impact on the agricultural industry and the improvement of productivity. The main reason being that learners do not have the practical training and in general have a misconception of the commitment within the industry (it is not an 8 to 5 job).</li> <li>2. In terms of skills: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Learners are gaining basic skills equivalent to Grade 9/10 school level, which is not sufficient</li> <li>b. There is a lack of practical training.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Due to the skills problems learners are finding it difficult to obtain employment opportunities and therefore the do not receive incomes.</li> <li>4. Learners have gained soft skills which are not directly related to the agricultural sector. In general these skills have added value to the lives of the Learners.</li> </ol> |

## Section 6: Recommendations

The above report has provided an assessment of the Agricultural Learnership Programme as provided by the Western Cape Department of Agriculture. The information utilised to assess the Learnership Programme was collected through the following collection methods:

1. Interviews with officials directly and indirectly involved in the Learnership Programme
2. Interviews with employers, farmers and other industry role players within the agricultural sector
3. Focus Group session with learners
4. Structured surveys/interviews with learners

From the assessment the following are identified as the main findings from the Learnership Programme:

1. There is inadequate information regarding the needs of the agricultural sector/industry as a whole.
2. Lack of adequate administrative procedures (including information on learners and observation of student skills).
3. The roll out of the programme needs to better align with the seasonal requirements within the agricultural sector.
4. Student selection needs to be reassessed.
5. Marketing of the Learnership Programme to potential learners needs to be improved.
6. Marketing of the Learnership Programme to employers/farmers and other industry role players needs to be expanded.
7. Practical training of learners is not sufficient.
8. Learners are transitioning from FET to HET and further support is required

The following recommendations are made regarding the identified concerns/issues:

#### **Agriculture Sector/Industry Needs Assessment**

1. Input should be gathered from key role players in the agriculture industry; famers, farm association members, agricultural organisations such as Agri, LandCare, FSD and the Sentraal-Suid Koöperasie (SSK). Additional input from prospective students, the Department of Higher Education and Training as well as the FET Centres is equally important.
2. The needs assessment can be conducted through workshops or meetings with all key stakeholders.
3. Site visits to the regions in which the Learnership Programme is offered are necessary in order to identify the needs in terms of the personnel, resources and facilities needed for successful execution of the Programme.

#### **Learner information databases**

1. One of the main limitations to the study was the lack of access to student information namely, contact details, courses, drop out register, etc. This is mainly due to all the information being on one computer and when the computer crashed most of the information was lost.
2. The recommendation is therefore to have a central database between all the training centres where data can be captured and maintained. From the interviews it is evident that the Department of Agriculture is currently installing a new data management system, however the following is important:
3. Ensure that data is captured correctly – this can be done by giving learners printouts to ensure data is captured correctly
4. Ensure that data is updated – this can be done by providing learners with printouts to update data on a quarterly basis while busy with the programme. Learners should also provide contact details of alternative contacts (i.e. mother, father, and brother, sister) to

ensure that learners could potentially be contacted in the future to follow up on status of employment.

### **Alignment of course work with seasonal requirements within the agricultural sector**

The main reason for this is when learners are provided with practical learning opportunities they have either forgotten what they have learnt or still need to learn how to do the tasks. This is a difficult task, it was stated that even the higher education courses are not on par with the seasonal requirements, however if better alignment is provided it will provide the learners with a better opportunity to learn.

### **Student selection criteria needs to be reassessed**

The current criteria allows for learners that do not really have an interest or passion for the agricultural sector to apply and get awarded space which has a number of issues. It is recommended that the selection criteria provide preference to learners already active in the agricultural sector (education, research, training, current working environment, assistance in the community, etc.) as well as learners that can provide proof of internships with employers within the agricultural sector.

### **Marketing of the Learnership Programme to potential learners**

1. The Learnership Programme needs to be marketed and promoted in different regions. There is need to:
2. Conduct information sessions at schools and explain the Learnership Programme purpose and advantages
3. Provide pamphlets with details of the Learnership Programme to the general public
4. Circulate information pamphlets amongst farmers and farmers associations, agricultural businesses and companies
5. Use more than one source in advertising the Learnership Programme
6. The majority of the learners (62%) found out about the Learnership Programme through word of mouth
7. The next common sources were the Newspaper (13%) and the Department of Agriculture website (10%)
8. Other sources to consider are radio, posters on community notice boards

### **Marketing of the Learnership Programme to employers/farmers and other industry role players**

1. In general farmers/employers and other industry role players are not aware of the Learnership Programme. The impact is that they are not sending potential learners to attend the courses and they might have vacancies that could be filled. It is recommended that this be addressed through partnerships with the farmers and other industry role players to ensure that they are aware of the programme as well as the learners graduating from the programme. This also has other benefits such as:
2. Stakeholders are able to provide inputs into programmes (providing information for needs assessments)
3. Stakeholders could potentially provide opportunities for practical training for learners
4. Learners have access to employment opportunities once completing the Learnership programme.

### **Improve Practical training of learners**

1. This is a major issue within the assessment period (2005 – 2012). However it is acknowledged that this is being addressed with the pilot programme currently being implemented where better practical training is offered to the learners. The following is important to take note of:
2. Practical training is currently being improved through allowing the learners to work on the research farms with the Higher Education learners, however the HET learners and lecturers do not have the capacity to observe and monitor the learners and therefore it is recommended that the learners are provide with more adequate supervision (potentially the FET lecturers).
3. Partnerships with farmers and other industry role players could also provide learners with intern opportunities that will increase the practical training that they receive
4. Learners need to be able to do the tasks themselves and not only be shown how to do the tasks. Therefore the programme needs to allow adequate time for learners to practice tasks.
5. Learners should take part in everyday farming activities (i.e. not only rely on theoretical and practical training during classes, but also be encouraged to take part in activities before and after classes – e.g. provide access to a small piece of land that needs to be farmed and maintained).

### **Learners are transitioning from FET to HET and further support is required**

1. The Learnership Programme results in approximately 11% of learners gaining opportunities to graduate to higher education courses, most of these within the agricultural sector. It is important to note that this is a great achievement for the Learnership Programme and should be maintained and increased in future. The following provide some recommendations in this regards:
2. Develop case studies of these students to better understand the characteristics of the learners. Valuable insights are to be learned in terms of selection criteria in the future.
3. Provide opportunities for these Learners to provide motivation to the Learners in the Learnership Programme. In most cases these learners do not realise the potential of the Learnership Programme and the opportunities linked to it and the learners that have transitioned (or are in the process) could provide some guidance and motivation to these learners.