Implementation Evaluation of EPWP in the Social Sector: Phase Two (2009/10 - 2013/14)

Final Summary Report

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Economic Policy Research Institute

Contact: Ian Goldman
East Wing, Union Buildings, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa.
Tel: +27 12 312
Email:Ian@po-dpme.org.za
Web: www.thepresidency-dpme.gov.za

This report has been independently prepared by the Economic Policy Research Institute. The Evaluation Steering Committee comprises the Department of Social Development, Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation in the Presidency, The Department of Public Works, Department of Health and Department of Basic Education. The Steering Committee oversaw the operation of the evaluation, commented and approved the reports.

Submitted by:
Dr Michael Samson
Director: Research

Economic Policy Research Institute

3rd Floor, Sanclare Building, 7 Dreyer Street
Claremont, 7708, South Africa

Tel: +27 21 671 3301
Fax: +27 21 671 3157
Email: mailto:info@epri.org.za

Submitted to:
Matodzi Amisi
Director: Evaluation

The Presidency: Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
Private Bag X944
Pretoria, 0001, South Africa

Tel: +27 12 312 0161
Fax: +27 86 686 4455
Email: matodzi@po.dpme.gov.za

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List of Acronyms

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
COIDA	Compensation for Injuries on Duty Act
CWP	Community Work Programme
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DCAS	Department of Culture and Sport
DDG	Deputy Director General
DG	Director General
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoCS	Department of Community Safety (and Liaison)
DOCSL	Department of Community Safety and Liaison
DOH	Department of Health
DORA	Division of Revenue Act
DPME	Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
DPW, NDPW	Department of Public Works, National Department of Public Works
DSAC&R	Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation
DSD SPO	Department for Social Development Special Projects Office
DSD	Department for Social Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
EPWP-SS	Expanded Public Works Programme Social Sector
ESC	Extended National Steering Committee
Evaluation team	The EPRI team that conducted this Implementation Evaluation
FS	Free State
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDS	Growth and Development Summit
GP	Gauteng
HCBC	Home Community Based Care
HDI	Human Development Index
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDT	Independent Development Trust
IRS	Integrated Reporting System
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LP	Limpopo
LSM	Living Standards Measure
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MD	Ministerial Determination
MIS	Management Information System
MOD	Mass participation, Opportunity and access, Development and growth
MP	Mpumalanga
MTSF	Medium Term Strategic Framework
NC	Northern Cape
NDP	National Development Plan
NGP	New Growth Path
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation

NPWP	National Public Works Programme
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSF	National Skills Fund
NSNP	National School Nutrition Programme
NW	North West
OHS	Occupational and Health and Safety
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
PWP	Public Works Programme
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SRSA	Sport and Recreation South Africa
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WC	Western Cape
WCED	Western Cape Education Department
WO	Work Opportunity

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Policy summary

Introduction

The Expanded Public Works Programme Social Sector (EPWP-SS), launched in 2004, aims to draw the unemployed into productive work in public sector social services, enabling them to earn an income; providing them with training and skills; and enabling them to find employment or self-employment. Programmes are implemented by national, provincial and local government. The Sector is coordinated by the Department of Social Development (DSD) while the Department of Public Works (DPW) acts as the overall coordinator of EPWP.

With the National Development Plan (NDP) indicating EPWP-SS as an area for potential expansion, the evaluation assessed implementation in Phase Two (2009/2010-2013/2014) and identified areas for improvement in Phase Three. The evaluation employed a mixed methods approach, drawing on data from interviews; focus groups; programme and committee documentation; and monitoring data, to evaluate the effectiveness of implementation. In light of implementation the evaluation commented on the likelihood of meeting objectives, expansion opportunities, and design considerations.

Findings

During Phase Two the Sector grew from two programmes to over twenty, while coordination and monitoring systems were established and a financial incentive was introduced. This contributed to achieving the Phase Two target of 750,000 work opportunities (WOs) cumulatively over the five year period. The growth of the sector is encouraging as it signals growing buy-in of social sector programmes into the EPWP mandate. Despite this, implementation has been inefficient in a number of areas. The coordination roles of the DSD and DPW overlapped in many areas, slowing down decision making and delivery. From within, the Sector did not have sufficient strategic support from implementing departments and other key partners. Programme institutional setup is inefficient with programme managers and coordinators expected to attend many meetings that have been found ineffective in resolving critical challenges the programme faces. Across nearly all programmes and provinces sampled, there were instances of late payment of stipends, sometimes by as much as several months. Additionally, the Sector faces challenges with monitoring and evaluation (M&E), including lack of a framework that reflects the Sector's unique implementation modalities, poor data collection and storage, and little evidence of the utilisation of M&E data. Most critically, the Sector has been unable to provide accredited training to participants on a consistent basis and national departments do not have a clear sense of the number of participants that meet the minimum required qualifications for their work. There is a risk that the application of EPWP in the Sector might be deskilling care and social welfare, particularly where participants are poorly educated and not accessing quality appropriate training and sufficient on-the-job guidance.

Compliance with the Ministerial Determination (MD) on EPWP has improved, but remains low. By 2013/2014, the National School Nutrition and Early Childhood Development programmes still paid participants less than the MD minimum of R70.59 per day. While most other programmes now comply with the minimum stipend, on other requirements such as contributing to the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) the compliance rate is still estimated at only 50%. Causes of low compliance include a lack of prioritisation; constrained human resources for programme management; and a limited demand for compliance from "above" (senior management and political leadership) and from "below" (programme participants, who are mostly unaware that the work they do is part of EPWP).

The current monitoring systems do not allow for impact assessment and leave us without important data on implementation. However, based on this evaluation's findings, it appears likely that EPWP-SS programmes are improving the skills base of some participants; directing a very small percentage of participants onto career paths; and ensuring that most participant households have enough to eat but still leaving nearly two-thirds unable to afford a basket of basic necessities along with sufficient food.

Recommendations include:

R1: Clarify institutional mandates and delineate roles of the DPW and DSD in the Sector. Review and document roles and integrate them into departments' performance indicators. As sector lead department, the DSD should be accountable for sector-wide performance.

R2: Ensure strategic management engagement with EPWP-SS. Agree on EPWP-SS indicators against which senior managers must enable their departments to perform–these should include indicators on Social Sector specific goals and realities.

R3: Improve monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Develop a Social Sector specific M&E framework, separate from but nested in the overarching EPWP framework. EPWP-SS M&E should be adequately resourced in the DSD and implementing departments.

R4: Ensure adequate human resources are in place to implement and coordinate EPWP-SS. Action: Undertake a functional review, in order to arrive at optimal organisational design. Identify the most essential costs and reduce inefficiencies.

Executive summary

1. Introduction

The Expanded Public Works Programme Social Sector (EPWP-SS) was launched in 2004. It aims to draw significant numbers of the unemployed into productive work in public sector social services and community safety initiatives, with the aim of enabling them to earn an income; providing them with training and skills; and ensuring that they are able to translate the experience and are enabled either to set up their own business/ service, or to become employed. By involving large numbers of participants, EPWP also hopes to expand or improve these services, resulting in better outcomes for communities. Programmes are implemented by national, provincial and local government. The Sector is coordinated by the Department of Social Development (DSD) while the Department of Public Works (DPW) acts as the overall coordinator of EPWP.

Phase Two was a period of growth for the Sector, with new programmes and implementing bodies coming on board. From two programmes in 2009, the Sector grew to over twenty programmes in 2013. Social Sector Work Opportunities increased from 175,769 cumulatively in Phase One to over 750,000 in Phase Two. Phase Two also saw the gazetting of a Ministerial Determination (MD) on EPWP workers; the introduction of a Social Sector Incentive Grant for well-performing implementing bodies, and the establishment of EPWP-SS coordination mechanisms and monitoring systems.

This evaluation is part of the National Evaluation Plan for 2013/2014. It was commissioned by the National Department for Social Development (the Social Sector Lead department) and the Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in the Presidency. The evaluation focused on implementation in Phase Two (2009/2010–2013/2014). The Social Sector's performance in terms of coordination and implementation was evaluated. The likelihood that EPWP-SS will achieve its objectives was also evaluated. Opportunities for expansion; design considerations; and lessons and opportunities for Phase Three were identified.

The evaluation drew on scholarly literature on public works programmes and implementation; a review of programme documents; and a draft Theory of Change developed with the input from sector stakeholders. Interviews and focus groups were conducted nationally and in 5 provinces, with inputs from 186 individuals, 95 of them EPWP-SS programme participants. Five provinces were sampled for data collection: the Western Cape; Gauteng; North West; Limpopo; and KwaZulu-Natal. Five programmes were selected as a sample of Sector: Early Childhood Development (ECD); Home Community Based Care (HCBC); National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP); Mass Participation / Active Nation Programme; and community based crime prevention projects. The evaluation focused on what are considered to be cross-cutting implementation characteristics, acknowledging that the findings and recommendations may apply to different degrees to individual programmes and departments and may leave some components, which are of particular importance for specific stakeholders, addressed in less detail.

2. Findings from the literature review

Design: EPWP-SS is designed to both recruit from, and deliver services to, poor or previously underserved communities. Because of the great need for social services in South Africa, social sector public works represents an exciting sphere of innovation that can provide social protection in more ways than one. The Sector is unlike other EPWP sectors because some Social Sector programmes (e.g. Home Community Based Care, HCBC) effectively offer full-time, near-permanent work. This is potentially more appropriate given the structural nature of unemployment in the country. However, the scale of the intervention is very limited compared to the large proportion of unemployed, able-bodied South African adults who receive no income support from the government.

Implementation: EPWP-SS is implemented by multiple departments (and their partners) in all three spheres of government–national, provincial and local. It seeks to address complex socio-economic challenges and is in itself a complex programme with multiple objectives. For implementation to be successful in light of complexity, the Sector requires effective coordination, characterised by a sharing of information and resources; defined roles; frequent communication; some shared decisions; and the altering of some participating departments' activities in line with the goals of the Sector. Coordination should not be rigid or authoritarian. The work of Jones (2012) argues that in the face of complexity, stakeholders need to (1) work in a collaborative and facilitative mould, facilitating decentralised action; (2) deliver adaptive responses to problems, seeing implementation as a learning process; and (3)

allow for the negotiation between and synthesis of multiple perspectives.

Monitoring: An effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework needs to track indicators across the results chain as may be depicted in a logic model: inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts/ objectives. Indicators must be well selected and the data gathered on each indicator needs to be of high quality. A good M&E framework in an enabling environment will support two crucial functions: accountability and informed decision making.

3. Evaluation Findings

3.1. Implementation Mechanisms

3.1.1. Roles of Overall Coordinating and Sector Lead Coordinator

Both the DSD and DPW did important work to coordinate and support the Sector, but in many areas their roles have overlapped. Written delineation of roles did not provide sufficient guidance in this regard, so that "every time we have got to sit down and say who's going to do what". This has led to slowed decision making and tasks, such as knowledge management, falling through the cracks. The overlap is mainly a result of insufficient resourcing of coordination in the DSD. This department as well as its counterpart departments of social development in provinces have assigned the responsibility for coordination to individuals who also have other responsibilities. Additionally, these departments do not have ring fenced budgets for coordination. In contrast, the DPW has set up permanent purpose-built structures both at national and provincial levels to coordinate EPWP-SS, with dedicated resources. Additionally, EPWP is a key competency of the DPW, as opposed to the DSD where social welfare delivery is the key performance indicator. This offers stronger incentives and resources for the DPW to steer the Sector to achieve the performance targets in its Strategic and Annual Performance Plans. The evaluation found that responsibility lines were often blurred with the DPW frequently stepping in where it perceived a risk of underperformance

3.1.2. Institutional Arrangements

The Social Sector established six national coordination structures with four technical sub-committees and nine provincial steering committees. Not all the national structures functioned. Senior management coordination structures–those intended to involve Director Generals (DGs), Deputy Director Generals (DDGs) and Chief Directors–never got off the ground, leaving the Social Sector with inadequate strategic direction and unable to resolve challenges quickly and efficiently. The structures that functioned were effective as spaces for motivating stakeholders, information sharing and problem solving but not for refining policy and strategy. The National Steering Committee (NSC) was successful as a space for information sharing, updating stakeholders and endorsing processes to support the Sector; however, it was quite focused on implementation and the national implementing departments particularly did not find it satisfactory for strategic discussion. Some of the NSC's sub-committees made important contributions to the Sector's implementation, i.e. the Incentive Grant and Training sub-committees. However, there was little evidence that they were able to resolve the key issues affecting the Sector. The Communication sub-committee was evidently weak, and the M&E sub-committee never met at all, resulting in major gaps in the Sector's efforts in these areas. Overall, findings on the use and outcome of coordination structures do not justify the frequency of meetings. Given resource constraints facing the Sector more effective ways need to be sought to share information and build a community of practice.

3.1.3. Resource Allocation

Human and financial resources were constrained, especially for tasks not directly related to programme service delivery; and coordinating departments are not effectively monitoring resource allocation and use. In terms of finances, provincial departments typically use a combination of sources to fund EPWP-SS programmes and financial reports are not shared with EPWP-SS coordination structures. The DPW's performance management data system, which provides data only on overall budgets and expenditure (excluding management costs), indicates that programmes have consistently reported spending less than half of their overall programme budgets; and that stipends have increased more than threefold as a proportion of overall expenditure. However, interviews with programme managers did not indicate significant underspending or growing concentration of resources on stipends, suggesting this data is unreliable. An expenditure review might be useful to assess allocative

efficiency.

In terms of human resources, the task of managing an EPWP-SS programme has become more demanding in Phase Two as new implementation requirements were introduced. For instance, programme managers must now report on the online performance monitoring system and comply with the Ministerial Determination (MD). Usually these new tasks are simply assigned to the programme manager. Given the way their responsibilities are structured, when provincial programme managers are stretched for capacity, they focus on optimising service delivery at the expense of EPWP-SS goals. The workload associated with coordination has also increased considerably as more programmes and departments have joined the Sector. Coordinators have been tasked with promoting EPWP-SS among municipalities, too. The original EPWP mandate was for departments to create work opportunities with their existing resources, but the Phase Two experience indicates that in practice, the management and coordination of these programmes require careful allocation of existing resources and possibly some additional resources. In implementing departments, constrained human resources and a lack of alignment between departmental performance plans and EPWP-SS objectives perpetuate a tendency for programme managers to focus on service delivery and to view the pursuit and monitoring of other EPWP-SS goals as an "add-on," unless they have direct bearing on the actual line function service delivery priorities of their programme.

3.1.4. Compliance with the Ministerial Determination

Compliance with the MD on EPWP-SS is low, despite the progress made over this period. Most programmes, supported by the efforts of coordinators through the National Steering Committee (NSC), Extended National Steering Committee (ESC) and Provincial Steering Committes (PSCs), aligned their stipends with the minimum level set in the MD. However, the Volunteer Food Handlers in the National School Nutrition Programme are still paid only 60% of the minimum of R70.59 per day; while the stipends of Early Childhood Development practitioners are not controlled by the DSD and therefore vary, with some earning very low amounts. The rate of compliance with Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) was still estimated at only 50%, and even lower for some other stipulations. Non-compliance raises ethical and legal implications and undermines suggestions that EPWP-SS has formalised former volunteers' roles into decent work opportunities. The contributing factors to low MD compliance include a lack of prioritisation; constrained resources for programme management; confusion as to how to comply; a lack of awareness among Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) managers; and limited demand from "above" (senior management and political leadership) and from "below" (programme participants, who are mostly unaware that the work they do is part of EPWP).

3.1.5. Monitoring Frameworks

Monitoring in all EPWP programmes is governed by the overall EPWP monitoring framework, which sets standard indicators across all four sectors and defines monitoring and evaluation time frames. The Social Sector has until now applied this standard monitoring framework but this insufficiently captures the uniqueness of the Social Sector. Reporting to EPWP-SS national coordinators takes two forms. The DPW performance management system collects data through the web based Integrated Reporting System (IRS) and more recently the Management Information System (MIS) and the ESC narrative provincial reports collected by the DSD. These two systems both collect information which is relevant, economic, and monitorable but fall short in terms of the adequacy of the indicators monitored. The systems are designed to serve very specific purposes. The DPW system reports aggregate expenditure to Treasury; and the ESC reports to hold programme managers and coordinators to account for certain EPWP-SS priorities and to identify problems for coordinators to address. These systems do not provide the indicators needed to appraise performance across the whole results chain (from resources, to activities, outputs and outcomes; and to support evaluations that measure impact). Moreover, the two systems are not aligned, and there are challenges with data quality. As a result, EPWP-SS monitoring that took place in Phase Two was insufficient for accountability, learning, and evidence-based decision making; and was characterised by a narrow focus on work opportunities achieved, parallel systems and weak data management. The DPW is currently making improvements to its performance management system and it is an opportune time for the Social Sector, led by the DSD, to develop Social Sector monitoring and evaluation framework, separate from but nested in the overall EPWP framework, and to develop an agreed Theory of Change, with which the new DPW system should align.

3.1.6. Other implementation aspects

In terms of the number of opportunities provided, EPWP-SS over-performed on its Work Opportunity (WO) target, reporting 866,246 against the 750,000 target. But the Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) target

was not reached. In terms of whether these opportunities reached the intended target group (defined in programme data only as "the poor and unemployed"), available data gives indication that most households participating in EPWP-SS would, in the absence of EPWP-SS, be considered poor as per the poverty means test applied to Child Support Grant applicants. Whether EPWP-SS is effective in reaching the unemployed adults who are most poor and marginalised, a question previous studies have also raised regarding EPWP in general, is less clear from available data.

The Sector provided less training than it intended to, with most provinces reporting less than half of the targeted number of training opportunities. Contributing factors included constrained human resources to plan the training; small equitable share budgets for training coupled with an inability to access the training funded through the National Skills Fund; the low skill levels of participants and the scarcity of accredited trainers in some programmes. Training was generally in line with the skills participants needed for their work, although shorter training opportunities (skills programmes and short courses) were often deemed relevant but insufficient on their own. The training data available at a national level focuses on the number of opportunities provided, potentially masking important implementation failures such as high dropout rates, and not indicating the quality and appropriateness of training. It is concerning that most national departments are unaware of how many EPWP-SS participants in their provincial programmes have the minimum training required for their work.

Throughout Phase Two and across almost all programmes and provinces sampled, there were instances of late payment of stipends, sometimes by as much as several months. Common causes include programme managers' inability to get timely sign-off for stipend expenditure and the misalignment between programme planning cycles and the announcement and disbursement of the Incentive Grant allocations. This can reduce the poverty alleviation potential of the stipend, sometimes even forcing participants into debt. It requires urgent attention.

3.2. Likelihood of EPWP SS achieving its Outcomes and Impacts

The Social Sector has emphasised a broader set of objectives than other sectors. The main objectives are alleviating poverty; reducing unemployment; and providing quality social services. Attempts to measure the achievement of these objectives are complicated by lack of clear and commonly agreed outcomes and impacts, and their respective indicators. Other than the narrow focus on work opportunities and FTEs, there are no agreed measures of success and targets on other outcomes. The findings presented here are therefore indications of the likelihood of achieving objectives, in light of the implementation assessment and any available data, and these findings should be tested with an impact assessment.

3.2.1. Likelihood of reducing unemployment

EPWP-SS is likely to have contributed to enabling a scale-up of programmes and keeping job creation on departmental agendas. It is likely that programmes such as the Crime Prevention and Sports programmes, for example, provide employment to more members of the target group than they would if they were not part of EPWP. It is also claimed that EPWP-SS has shifted the status of former volunteers into that of employees by formalising their work conditions. Compliance with the MD which defines minimum stipends, working hours and leave days is a good measure of the extent to which EPWP-SS is achieving this outcome. Findings from the evaluation suggest that EPWP-SS is indeed formalising most former volunteers' positions with respect to income earned but, it falls short in other stipulations.

The impact on participants employment status is not permanent. Many programmes renew contracts only up to two or three years. Few programmes were found to provide longer term work opportunity by renewing participants' contracts up to as much as 10 years. For these participants EPWP-SS is creating near-permanent employment. This is unusual for public works programmes globally and was not the intention when the MD was introduced.

3.2.2. Likelihood of alleviating poverty through the stipend

Stakeholders identify poverty alleviation through the stipend as an important objective in the programme's Theory of Change. Both the qualitative data collected for this evaluation and a number of preliminary quantitative measurements suggest that at the current minimum stipend level, EPWP-SS programmes are likely to provide poverty relief. Participants indicated that their stipends "put food on the table". The quantitative measurements suggested that the minimum stipend is likely to enable most (approximately 67%–88%) of participant households to afford sufficient food (i.e. being lifted out of "food poverty" as defined by StatsSA in 2015). Those who remain unable to afford all the food

they need despite the stipend are nevertheless likely to be far better able to afford it (the food poverty gap index narrows to approximately 2%–9%). Nearly two-thirds are likely to remain poor according to a broader definition, in that they are unable to afford a basket of basic necessities in addition to sufficient food, despite the minimum stipend.

3.2.3. Likelihood of improving the skills base and enhancing employability

The evaluation found that although the programme could help address individual level barriers to employment, such as a lack of skills; lack of access to information about opportunities; low self-esteem; and no work experience, the programme does not address structural causes of unemployment. The reports of provincial implementing programmes in 2011/12 and 2012/13 suggest participants had a less than 1.9% chance of being "career pathed" (purposely trained and recruited into specific government jobs) through EPWP-SS. This estimate excludes those who were able to find work of their own initiative because of the experience and training gained as EPWP-SS participants; still, it questions the logic that work experience and training necessarily leads to improved employability. It is not clear whether the skills provided through EPWP-SS are the skills the economy needs. Programme managers rarely considered the participants' future employability prospects in their selection of training unless they were aware of career pathing opportunities in their own departments. It was uncommon for programme managers to seek out or be provided with information, by Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), on opportunities elsewhere in the field, and for them to align training and work opportunities with these. This was likely to limit the Sector's success in improving participants' ability to find work outside EPWP-SS.

3.3. Designing EPWP to reach its Outcomes and Outputs

The experience with implementation in Phase Two has shown that although the integration of job creation with service delivery helps to ensure that participants do work that contribute to government's objectives while accessing income support, it is challenging to get different departments to prioritise and internalise cross-cutting goals. Departments still tend to assign lower priority to complying with the MD, communication with participants about EPWP, and planning for improving participants' employability. Service delivery on a line function remains the "core business"; officials faced with resource constraints tended to emphasise that other objectives are an "add-on". This is a challenge inherent in programme design, however, coordination can be strengthened to improve alignment of programmes towards the achievement of the full set of EPWP-SS objectives.

The provision of long-term employment is beneficial in that it provides income support and stability to participants over a longer period; provides more opportunities for training that can improve future employability; and allows programmes to benefit from the skills and work experience that participants gain over time. Providing some form of long-term social protection is appropriate in situations of structural unemployment. However, long-term employment in these programmes creates a situation where participants may earn EPWP minimum wage and work under the MD (which is a reduced version of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act) on an ongoing basis. This was not the initial intention of EPWP's design. Additionally, it further limits the scale of the programme.

EPWP is essentially supply-driven. The scale of the programme is determined by the capacity to supply opportunities rather than the demand for it. EPWP-SS can only absorb a limited number of participants determined by what government departments can usefully and affordably contract into their service. Therefore programmes in the Social Sector and other supply-driven EPWP programmes cannot provide income support to all the unemployed adults who need it. These programmes need to be supplemented by other social protection interventions that can cover poor and unemployed adults at a national scale (there are promising international examples to consider).

3.4. Opportunities for Expansion

The Social Sector has sought to expand its existing programmes as well as to seek out new programmes for inclusion in the Sector. In line with the Terms of Reference TOR, the evaluation methodology focused on the implementation of existing programmes and this is where the opportunities for increased numbers of WOs and FTEs were most clearly highlighted to the evaluation team.

1. Improve performance against training targets.
2. Ensure smooth functioning of the DPW performance management reporting system.

3. Ensure that programmes are up and running from the start of the financial year.

4. Conclusion

The evaluation found growth in the number of participants and programmes in EPWP-SS. This is encouraging as it represents the growing buy-in of social sector programmes into the EPWP mandate. However, a number of implementation issues, which hampered effectiveness across the programme results chain, emerged. Many of the issues have to do with the overarching challenges of ineffective coordination and institutional arrangements; resource constraints and inappropriate allocation of existing resources; the lack of involvement of senior management; weak internal communication; and the need for more effective monitoring and evaluation.

The evaluation did not disprove the validity of the Theory of Change, but demonstrated that the assumption that stakeholders would align to EPWP-SS objectives and would assign the needed resources did not always hold. Recommendations are geared at addressing this.

Recommendations

R1: Clarify institutional mandates and delineate roles of the DPW and DSD in the Sector. The roles of these departments as well as national implementing departments should be reviewed and clearly spelled out in a document that is endorsed by senior managers and then integrated into personnel's accountability structures. As the Sector Lead department, the DSD should be accountable for sector-wide performance.

R2: Ensure strategic management engagement with EPWP-SS. For this to happen, stakeholders must agree on EPWP-SS indicators against which senior managers must enable their departments to perform. Merely focusing on WOs and FTEs is likely to leave many implementation issues unaddressed. Once indicators are defined they can be included in the departments' strategic plans and performance agreements.

R3: Improve monitoring and evaluation. The Sector should develop an M&E framework, including the Theory of Change. It should be separate from, but nested in the overarching EPWP framework, so that it can make provision for the uniqueness of the Social Sector. The Theory of Change, developed as part of the evaluation, may provide a useful starting point for a framework focused on Phase Three, which can then be used to identify the indicators that need to be tracked and inform the revision and integration of existing monitoring systems. An individual level dataset, with baseline data and ongoing monitoring of key implementation and impact indicators, will be required. EPWP-SS's M&E should be adequately resourced in the DSD and implementing departments.

R4: Ensure adequate resources are in place to support the implementation and coordination of EPWP-SS. It is recommended that coordinating departments undertake a functional review[1], incorporating business process analysis, with a view to arrive at an optimal organisational design and resource allocation. A clear understanding of functions and resources is important to identify resource gaps, but given the constrained fiscal environment the Sector needs to think of ways to reduce inefficiencies and do more with little resources. A clearly articulated Theory of Change will help identify the most essential costs.

R5: Prioritise training and skills development. Training should be prioritised in programmes where participants are not meeting the minimum qualifications set by national departments. Furthermore, every implementing department should have a realistic long-term training plan linked to the achievement of service quality objectives and should support this with sufficient human and financial resources. Wherever possible, training plans should reflect an overlap between skills required to improve service delivery and those required in the labour market.

R6: Develop sound strategies for improvement of employability. Coordinators, SETAs, and

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[1] See Maning, N. and Parison, N. (2004), *Determining the structure and functions of government: Program and function reviews.* Moscow: World Bank.
http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/civilservice/ACSRCourse2007/Session%208/DeterminingStructureFuncti ons.pdf (24 April 2015)

national departments–coordinated by the NSC's Training and Capacity Building sub-committee–should work to address the need for general guidance in improving employability, for instance in a guiding document or a revised version of the Social Sector's training manual. Implementing departments in turn will need to commit to this objective and task their programme managers with planning and implementing such strategies. Any work to improve employability should be grounded in sound research.

R7: Identify and address the key implementation inefficiencies. The evaluation identified some fundamental implementation issues that need to be addressed. The two most pressing issues, which need urgent action, are late stipends and the need for communication with NPOs and participants about EPWP-SS. These should enjoy high priority and the effectiveness of efforts should be monitored. Further implementation issues to be addressed include bringing programmes in line with the MD and revising coordination structures.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the intervention

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) is a public employment initiative of the South African government launched in 2004 to address unemployment. This is to be achieved by drawing significant numbers of the unemployed into productive work; enabling them to earn an income by providing them with education and skills; and ensuring that they are able to translate the experience and be enabled either to set up their own business / service, or to become employed[2] (see Figure 1). The Social Sector of the EPWP (EPWP-SS) aims to improve social services by employing participants in social services and community safety initiatives. Programmes are implemented directly by national, provincial or local government, or in partnership with NPOs.

Figure 1. Summary of EPWP-SS key activities and intended impacts

Government and its partners deliver social services in a way that **creates EPWP work opportunities**	Communities benefit from services, (improved human development)
Training, skills and information provided to the EPWP participants	Unemployment reduced
	Poverty reduced
	Participants are more "employable" (overcoming poverty & unemployment for the long term by finding work outside EPWP)
Activities	**Long term objectives**

Phase Two (2009/2010 to 2013/2014) was a period of growth for EPWP-SS, with many new provincial and some local departments coming on board (see Figure 2) and contributing to a near doubling of the number of person-years of work (Full-Time Equivalents) compared to Phase One. Phase Two also saw the gazetting of a Ministerial Determination on EPWP workers; the introduction of a Social Sector Incentive Grant for well-performing implementing bodies, and the establishment of certain EPWP-SS coordination mechanisms and monitoring systems as part of the work of participating implementing bodies.

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[2] DSD, DoE, and DoH (2004), EPWP Social Sector Plan, 7.

Figure 2. EPWP Social Sector Phase 2 Programmes and Departments[3]

Education	Social Development	Health	Sports Recreation S.A	Provincial Community Safety and Liaison
Early Childhood Development (ECD)	Early Childhood Development (ECD)	Home Community Based Care (HCBC)	Mass Sports Programmes	Community Safety & Security Programmes
National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP)	Home Community Based Care (HCBC)	Expansion Programmes (Basic Pharmacy Assistant)		Safety Monitors
Mass Literacy & Numeracy Campaign (Kha Ri Gude National Programme)	Victim Empowerment	Diagnostic Radiographer	Legacy	Bambanani Safer Schools
	Substance Abuse	Enrolled Nursing Assistant		Neighbourhood Watch
Expansion Programmes (School Teaching Aides, Administrative Support etc)	Expansion Programmes (Social Auxiliary Workers: Child Care Workers, Social Security, Emergency food relief)	Nutrition advisors	Siyadlala & School Sports	Volunteer Social Crime Prevention

1.2 Background to the evaluation

This Implementation Evaluation of EPWP in the Social Sector was commissioned by the National Department for Social Development (DSD - the EPWP-SS Sector Lead department) and the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in the Presidency. This evaluation forms part of the National Evaluation Plan for 2014/2015.

Implementation evaluations are focused on informing stakeholders of a programme or policy as to what is happening in practice, how it is happening, and why it is happening. By reviewing the effectiveness of implementation during Phase Two, this evaluation intended to support accountability, learning, and informed decision making and implementation as the Social Sector continues to pursue growing targets in Phase Three.

The evaluation was guided by five main questions which focus on how effective implementation mechanisms have been; the likelihood of achieving outcomes and impacts; the appropriateness of the design; opportunities for expansion; and lessons and opportunities for Phase Three.

1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 Analytical framework and theory of change

To assess EPWP-SS effectiveness it is important to establish what the programme seeks to achieve and how. In order to do so, a Theory of Change workshop was hosted as part of the evaluation in August 2014 and a Theory of Change was drafted. The full Theory of Change is provided as an annexure. It formed part of the basis for the evaluation, with a focus on the inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes. The analytical framework was further informed by

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[3] DSD Special Projects Office (SPO) (2014), *EPWP Phase 3 Draft Social Sector Plan – Draft Version 4*, 7.

the literature that describes the features and underlying factors of successful implementation as are relevant to EPWP-SS and the concepts employed in Social Sector planning documents.

1.3.2 Data collection

The data collection focused on five programmes that were implemented in Phase Two (see Table 1).

Table 1. Focal programmes for data collection

Department	EPWP-SS programme
Social Development	Early Childhood Development (ECD)
Health	Home Community Based Care (HCBC)
Basic Education (National) / Provincial Depts. of Education	National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP)
Sports and Recreation South Africa (National) / relevant Provincial Depts.	Mass Participation Programme (MPP)
Civilian Secretariat for Police (National) / Community Safety and liaison	Community based crime prevention projects

Interviews were conducted with the coordinating departments (DSD and Department of Public Works) and the departments implementing the five programmes listed above, at the national level as well as in five provinces: North West, Gauteng, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape. In each of the five provinces the evaluation team visited two implementation sites, where the team interviewed programme participants in focus groups; their supervisors; and recipients of the services they provide. One NPO per province was also interviewed.

1.3.3 Secondary Data

Social Sector documentation including plans, reports, and meeting documents of the implementing and coordinating structures were reviewed. Monitoring datasets were analysed. An assessment of the likely poverty alleviation impact of the stipend was conducted using household income data provided by focus group participants as well as the National Income Dynamics Survey (NIDS) dataset of 2012.

1.3.4 Informed Consent

All participants in the interviews and focus groups were provided an informed consent form providing information on the study, the types of questions that will be asked, the right not to participate, and the risks and benefits associated with participation. For respondents at site level (participants, their supervisors, and recipients of the service they provide) the consent form was read out in their preferred language. Site level participants received a lunch as a token of appreciation for their time. All respondents were assured that they would not be cited by name in the report.

1.3.5. Limitations

- The evaluation could have benefited from inclusion of more former (exited / career pathed) participants in focus groups. It would also have been beneficial to interview Chief Directors of implementing departments; chairpersons of NSC task teams. There was limited local government participation during Phase Two, therefore the sector was of the view that not including municipalities in the evaluation would not undermine the study.
- The evaluation could have benefited from more comprehensive and complete sets of programme documentation, such as minutes, financial records, and plans. Some of these documents were not available because of poor record keeping; other records are not centrally collected and were not made available. However the findings presented

here have been subject to a validation process and where needed follow-up investigations were made to supplement the lack of data.

- The quantitative analysis of the likely poverty impact of the stipend was conducted without access to data collected for a mid-term review of EPWP that was commissioned by DPW in 2011/2012. This dataset would have been more appropriate than the two datasets employed. Nevertheless the results of this evaluation's quantitative analysis was broadly corroborated by the qualitative findings, providing a satisfactory indication of likely impact for the purposes of this implementation evaluation.

- It should be noted that this evaluation was not intended to study individual programmes. The evaluation focused on what are considered to be cross-cutting implementation issues. The findings and recommendations however apply to different degrees to individual programmes and departments.

These limitations notwithstanding, we are of the view that the data collected and the process followed to complete this evaluation was adequate and robust enough to validly answer the evaluation questions.

2 Findings from the literature review

Unemployment in South Africa is largely structural. Estimated at at least 24%[4], it is driven by sectoral changes in the economy which slowed the demand for unskilled labour[5]; the low skill levels of millions of workers caused by race-based employment discrimination and an enduring legacy of vastly unequal education; and a large number of new work seekers with low skill levels and a lack of experience joining the labour market in the past two decades[6]. In addition spatial distribution of economic centres, and psycho-social factors[7] play a role in perpetuating unemployment. High levels of poverty (54% of South Africans cannot afford adequate nutrition and basic needs[8]) contributes greatly to maintaining high levels of unemployment.

EPWP-SS is designed to both recruit from, and deliver services to, poor or previously underserved communities. Because of the great need for social services – such as education and health – in South Africa, social sector public works represents an exciting sphere of innovation that can provide social protection in more ways than one. The Sector is unlike other EPWP sectors because some Social Sector programmes (e.g. Home Community Based Care, HCBC) have embraced longer-term work opportunities. This is potentially more appropriate given the structural nature of unemployment in the country. However the scale of the intervention is very limited compared to the large proportion of unemployed, able-bodied South African adults who receive no income support from government.

EPWP-SS is implemented by multiple departments (and their partners) in all three spheres of government. It seeks to address complex socio-economic challenges and is in itself a complex programme with multiple objectives. For implementation to be successful in light of complexity, the sector requires effective coordination (see Table 2), characterised by a sharing of information and resources; defined roles; frequent communication; some shared decisions; and some altering of participating departments' activities in line with the goals of the Sector.

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[4] The official employment rate is often referred to as the "narrow" rate, as it excludes a group – discouraged work seekers – that some argue should also be seen as unemployed. If these are included the unemployment rate stood at 36% in the fourth quarter of 2014. See Statistics South Africa (2014*), Quarterly Labour Force Survey: Quarter 4.* http://beta2.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0211/QLFS%20Q4%202014.pdf (29 March 2015).

[5] Banerjee, A. et al. (2007), 54.

[6] One group of economists argue that a attribute a substantial part of this rise to "unintended consequences of more rapid grade promotion and restrictions on over-age learners in schools" within these years. See Burger, R., Van der Berg, S. and Von Fintel, D. (2012), *The unintended consequences of education policies on South African participation and unemployment.* Stellenbosch Economic Working Papers: 11/12. http://www.ekon.sun.ac.za/wpapers/2012/wp112012 (7 February 2015).

[7] Banerjee, A. et al. (2007).

[8] Statistics South Africa (2015), *Methodological report on rebasing of national poverty lines and development of pilot provincial poverty lines,* Report No. 03-10-11, 14. Available at http://beta2.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-10-11/Report-03-10-11.pdf (14 March 2015).

Table 2. Levels of collaboration scale[9]

Networking	Cooperation	Coordination	Coalition	Collaboration
- Aware of organization - Little communication - All decisions are made independently	-Provide information to each other -Somewhat defined roles -Formal communication -All decisions are made independently	-Share information and resources -Defined roles -Frequent communication -Some shared decisions -*Members alter activities*	-Share ideas -Share resources -Frequent and prioritized communication -All members have a vote in decision making -*Members alter activities to achieve a common purpose* -*Some sharing of risks and rewards*	-Members belong to one system -Frequent communication is characterized by mutual trust -Consensus is reached on all decisions -*Members enhance each other's capacity to achieve a common purpose* -*Members share risks, responsibilities and rewards*

However, this coordination should not be rigid or authoritarian. The work of Jones (2012) highlights that in the face of complexity, stakeholders need to (1) work in a collaborative and facilitative mould, facilitating decentralised action and self-organisation; (2) deliver adaptive responses to problems, building space for interventions to be flexible to emerging lessons and seeing implementation as an evolutionary learning process; and (3) allow for the negotiation between and synthesis of multiple perspectives. Coordination will only succeed if there is a facilitating environment, characterised by strong leadership and directives; the needed supportive resources, incentives and supporting structures; and disposition among partners to make mutual adjustments; share values and norms; and their organisational culture.[10]

An effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework needs to track indicators across the results chain as may be depicted in a logic model: inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts/objectives. Indicators must be well selected and the data gathered on each indicator needs to be of high quality. Financial indicators are essential; and human resource allocation must also be tracked to understand how inputs influence outputs. A good M&E framework in an enabling environment will support two crucial functions: accountability, and informed decision making.

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[9] Frey, B. B., Lohmeier, J.H., Lee, S. W., and Tollefson, N. (2006), "Measuring collaboration among grant partners," *American Journal of Evaluation* 27(3), 383-392. We have added to the scale, in italics, another set of factors which were listed by Victoria State Services Authority (2007), cited in Impact Economix (2013).

[10] Mansholt Graduate School of Social Sciences (2008), *Governance structures or mechanisms of governance: What is it and why do we need them?* http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/2009/ActNowBC/section2-partie2-eng.php#t20a (3 February 2015)

3 Evaluation Findings

3.1 Implementation

3.1.1   Roles of Overall Coordinator and Sector Lead Coordinator

In the Social Sector, the roles of overall coordinator and Sector Lead coordinator are assigned to the DPW and the DSD, respectively. While the leadership of both the DPW and DSD is critical for EPWP-SS success, the departments need to lead in a way that is complementary. In some ways they have done well to complement each other. The DSD Special Projects Office (SPO) has strongly promoted the common values and norms that characterise EPWP-SS and also worked to develop effective supporting structures for coordination, such as the Extended National Steering Committee (ESC). The DPW, in turn, has provided broader policy direction and has contributed to an enabling environment for the Sector, including provision of a financial incentive for performance; a framework of rules and directives; and resources for coordination functions.

Despite the two departments' strengths there were also some challenges in coordination. Firstly, the DPW has set up permanent purpose-built structures to coordinate EPWP-SS, with dedicated human and financial resources, nationally and in its regional offices (one per province). In contrast, the DSD manages EPWP-SS coordination through its Chief Directorate for Special Projects and Innovation (Special Projects Office, SPO) nationally and relies on provincial departments of social development to coordinate provincially. In SPO as well as provincial departments of social development the responsibility for coordination is assigned to individuals who also have other responsibilities, and budgets are not ring fenced. Resource allocation for coordination in the DSD is therefore inappropriate and insufficient (Table 3).

Table 3. Resources assigned to EPWP-SS coordination

	DPW	*DSD*[11]
National	EPWP Unit with budget & dedicated personnel. Directorate for Social Sector (1 Director & 3 DDs at Head Office; 9 DDs in regional offices)	Special Projects Office – personnel flexibly assigned to EPWP-SS alongside other priorities No ring fenced budget
Provincial (typical)	National DPW Regional EPWP Unit with budget & dedicated personnel. Includes 1 Social Sector regional coordinator (DD) per province Some involvement of provincial Depts. of Public Works	Provincial DSD designates an official to act as regional coordinator for EPWP-SS but EPWP coordination is almost never this person's only responsibility.[12]

Secondly, there is a high degree of overlap between the responsibilities of the DPW and DSD. Instead of relying on commonly agreed, written and delineated responsibilities, the DSD and DPW have discussed and made arrangements to share responsibilities as the need arises. In all the Social Sector coordinating structures they share, or closely cooperate in, the leadership role is negotiated and in most cases decisions and processes require sign-off from both departments. Partly this is as a result of the DPW being directly accountable for EPWP performance (including the Social Sector's) against measurable targets while the DSD does not have a strong system of accountability for the performance of programmes in

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[11] In Gauteng the provincial sector lead department is the Department of Health, not Social Development. Where this section refers to the DSD as sector lead in provinces, the same can be considered to apply to the Department of Health as sector lead in Gauteng.
[12] Exception: Northern Cape's regional coordinator is solely focused on EPWP-SS coordination.
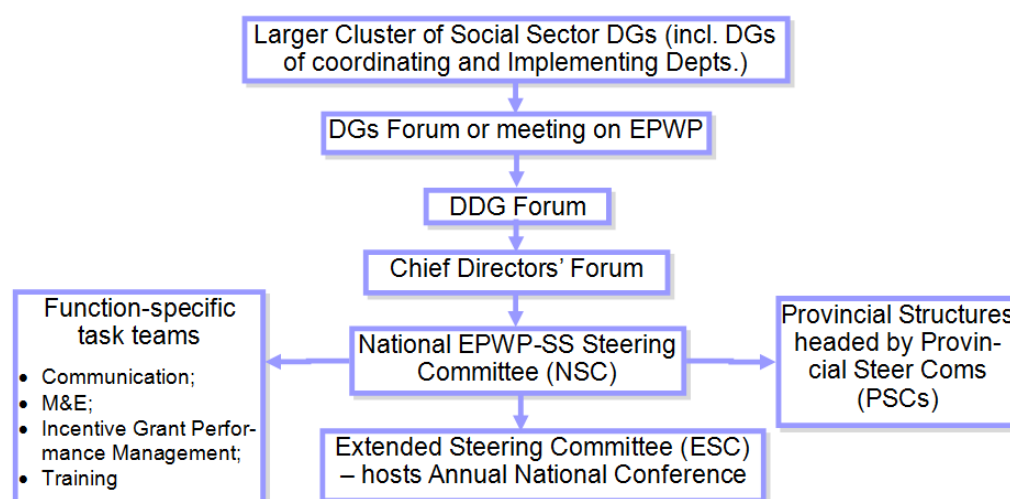
the Sector. For instance, no coordination-related performance indicators are included in National DSD's Annual Performance Plans. Additionally, the DPW has more dedicated resources for EPWP. DPW therefore has a strong incentive to step in. A DPW regional coordinator explained that "when she [the DSD provincial coordinator for EPWP-SS] is up to here with her work… I know I have to take over whatever needs to be done in EPWP and I… do that". However, the overlap has significantly slowed down decision-making; inhibited the functioning of committees; and allowed some functions, such as knowledge management and the development of a system that would assess performance against all the Social Sector's unique objectives, to fall through the cracks.

The DSD has therefore played a reduced role as a Sector Lead department. Responsibility for coordinating the Social Sector needs to be more clearly delineated, but this will only be possible if the DSD, both nationally and provincially, have dedicated and sufficient resources to play a stronger role in coordinating implementation.

3.1.2   Institutional Arrangements

The envisioned institutional arrangements in EPWP-SS consisted of six national and nine provincial structures to coordinate sector activities (Figure 3). If all EPWP-SS structures were operational, on average the Sector would have over 40 national meetings annually: at least 16 meetings of the four sub-committees, 12 for the NSC, four for the ESC and potentially four each for the DDG and Chief Directors' forums. An additional 108 provincial forum meetings would be convened annually. Thus, on average there will be a meeting a week at a national and provincial level. The large number of structures and frequency of meetings was intended to ensure alignment and integration of the different tasks required to achieve EPWP-SS goals. The evaluation found that the frequency of meetings places inordinate burden on already constrained human resources. Additionally, the structures often duplicated the responsibilities of coordinating departments which further blurred the lines of accountability. For instance, both the communication sub-committee and the DSD as sector lead were responsible for implementing communication activities.

Figure 3. Envisioned coordination mechanisms

The **Extended National Steering Committee (ESC)** performed well against its mandate, as did most of the **Provincial Steering Committees (PSCs).** These were spaces for sharing information and monitoring reports, best practices, mutual encouragement, and problem solving. However, the ESC was unable to resolve all the issues tabled either in the forum or through referral to other structures. This is partly attributed to the non-functioning of some of the other structures. There also appeared to be an over-reliance on ESC meetings as a marketing or communication platform, with written communications significantly weaker so that newly participating programme managers felt "lost" as to what is expected of them until they had attended several ESC meetings. Programme managers were enthusiastic about

PSCs, saying it had "created camaraderie", motivated officials, and supported teamwork and accountability.

The National Steering Committee (NSC) was successful as a space for information sharing, updating stakeholders and endorsing processes to support the Sector. However, it was quite focused on implementation, for instance devoting significant amounts of time to discussing implementation of the Incentive Grant or issues with the online performance monitoring system. The national implementing departments particularly did not find it satisfactory as an effective space for strategic discussion.

NSC task teams

The EPWP-SS task teams have the potential to be catalysts for excellence in each of their focal areas. Their membership is inclusive, their terms of reference are generally clear and focused, and they have been selected to focus on issues that are of key interest to many sector stakeholders. However, accountability for non-performing sub-committees is not clear enough. The assigning of both the DSD as well as the DPW to leading roles in each task team seems to be hindering their effectiveness.

- Incentive Grant Performance Management Task Team (IPMT) served as a valuable forum for deliberation about the Incentive Grant and for ensuring the challenges are thoroughly discussed and understood. Many of the challenges were unresolved by the end of Phase Two, but two processes had been launched to address them: a review of the Social Sector Incentive Grant Model and an intervention plan for non-performing provincial departments. IPMT and the NSC are still working on these issues and so it remains to be seen whether the review and the plan will be effective and beneficial to the overall programme. The processes will benefit from the support of senior managers.

- The Training and Capacity Building Sub-committee is regarded by a number of the DPW respondents as the best functioning of the four sub-committees. Among other activities, it oversaw a national training needs gap assessment and supported the development of provincial training plans. Evidence suggests that these and other activities are indeed promoting understanding of, emphasis on, and access to, training in the Sector. However, in Phase Two there were some important aspects of effective training support that were not in place, for instance the procurement processes for training service providers was extremely slow if procured through the Department of Higher Education and Training (with funding from the National Skills Fund); there was no tracking of participants' pass rates in the training provided; and implementing bodies received limited guidance on how to plan for improved employability. There needs to be further strategic thinking around what would constitute successful training and how the sub-committee can best support this. Until this is addressed there are parts of its mandate that the sub-committee is not achieving.

- The Communications Sub-committee was framed, in the draft Phase Two plan, as the key mechanism for improving on weaknesses in the Sector's communication that were identified in Phase One. The Communications Sub-committee developed a detailed plan for one aspect of its mandate–external communications–but there is limited evidence that it was carried out. Additionally, the Sub-committee does not seem to have addressed the other components of its mandate including internal communications, which the evaluation found to be weak, for instance in ensuring participating NPOs understand EPWP-SS. The Terms of Reference did not make accountability for the performance of the committee clear: it indicated that the committee was "chaired by DSD and co-chaired by DPW" and that the committee as a whole should "market the EPWP Social Sector". NSC meeting minutes suggest the Communications sub-committee struggled with participation.

- The M&E Sub-committee never met during Phase Two. No terms of reference or any documentation regarding this committee is available. The lack of stakeholder

deliberation and ownership around M&E left a major gap that must urgently be addressed.

Chief Directors' Forum, DDG Forum and DG Forum

The intended Chief Directors' Forum, DDG Forum and DG Forum were never established. In the absence of these structures, senior managers were not always closely involved with EPWP-SS and it has sometimes taken lower priority in their departments. This has hampered the EPWP Social Sector's performance: there are insufficient resources for coordination functions; implementing departments have not yet integrated EPWP-SS objectives into departmental planning and personnel performance management systems. This hampers delivery and effective resolution of implementation challenges such as late payment of participants

Part of the reason for the failure of these structures is that EPWP-SS seems to be working well when observed narrowly. The success of EPWP is predominantly measured by the number of WOs and FTEs created. Based on these indicators, the Social Sector appears to be performing relatively well. However, these numbers mask underperformance of the Sector on other accounts, including the legal requirements of the MD. If EPWP-SS success is measured more comprehensively and outcomes, such as improved employability and poverty alleviation, are clearly articulated; there is a clear need for increased senior management involvement.

The weaknesses in these coordinating structures have implications for the assumptions underlying the Theory of Change. Because stakeholders are not coordinated as effectively as they could be, their implementation may remain almost entirely focused on service delivery with very limited focus on the other priorities depicted in the Theory of Change, as highlighted in the following sections.

3.1.3   Resource Allocation

Financial resource allocation

Provincial departments typically use a combination of sources to fund EPWP-SS programmes. The overall financial resources allocated and used by these programmes are not comprehensively monitored, except through three indicators in the DPW performance management database: overall budget, overall expenditure and daily wage (stipend) rate. The overall budget and expenditure indicators represent all costs except management costs. Further, details on what was budgeted for and spent on are not made available[13].

There are major concerns with the quality of the financial data available. The data collected through the DPW system on overall budgets, expenditure and stipend levels from all funding streams indicated (1) significant underspending, with the Sector's reported expenditure consistently amounting to less than 50% of reported budgets (Table 4); and (2) stipends have increased more than threefold as a proportion of overall expenditure, up to 58% by 2013/2014. However, these findings were not corroborated by qualitative data. Programme managers reported to have underspent disputed this, indicating that these findings are likely driven by under-reporting of expenditure in this data set. Similarly the interviews with programme managers did not support the notion that spending has been increasingly concentrated on stipends. Instead there was evidence to suggest that programme managers and coordinators were simply reporting stipends more consistently than other expenses.

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[13] The DPW receives detailed information on Incentive Grant expenditure because it administers this grant. This grant is always only one smaller component of a department's EPWP-SS expenditure and cannot provide a complete picture. It is discussed in more detail below.

Given these and other indications of serious problems with this data's reliability, accuracy and quality, it is impossible to draw conclusions about resource allocation based solely on this data. More detailed and disaggregated data is required to understand expenditure trends and the total cost of EPWP-SS to the state.

Table 4. Reported EPWP-SS Phase Two annual budgets and expenditure excluding management costs

Year	Budget	Expenditure
2009/2010	6,010,098,326	2,217,090,264
2010/2011	6,017,208,684	2,588,050,113
2011/2012	78,484,206,574	1,850,074,807
2012/2013	5,357,552,718	1,888,513,804
2013/2014	4,090,260,493	1,930,000,000

Although there were no further sources of comprehensive financial data, other data sources provided insights into the use of the Incentive Grant (IG); and the resourcing of coordination. The IG was monitored more closely since it is administered by the DPW. This grant was welcomed and has been used effectively as a subsidy to increase the number of participants in programmes or to start new complementary programmes. There is a caveat. The IG might be incentivising departments to shift the responsibility of funding EPWP from existing programme budgets to the IG. This is a departure from the underlying logic of public works programmes being embedded within existing programmes and their budgets. There also remains some implementation inefficiencies in how IG is implemented. The IG is out of sync with normal government planning cycles at national and provincial levels. These concerns are being taken into account with a review of the IG model.

The evaluation indicates that the DSD is not allocating adequate financial resources to support its coordination role. The DSD, both at national and provincial levels, does not dedicate financial resources to EPWP coordination in the annual performance plan. This suggests that costs associated with this work are absorbed into the budget of whichever unit or directorate is tasked with it. This in in line with EPWP design logic but could undermine the department's ability to effectively coordinate and lead the Sector.
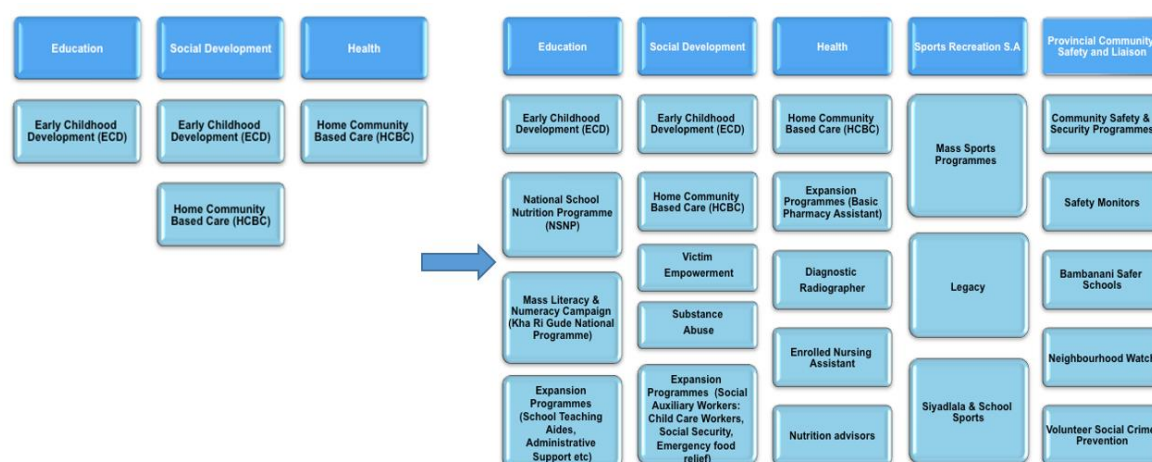
Overall the evaluation found poor monitoring of financial resources (inputs to EPWP-SS). Without this data the Sector does not know with certainty how much EPWP-SS costs the state. Improving the monitoring of financial resource allocation will help support a cost-benefit analysis of EPWP. It will also help coordinators to identify blockages more rapidly and will lay the foundation for assessing resource allocation to specific activities and functions with some degree of confidence in a future implementation evaluation.

Human Resources

Phase Two has been a period of impressive growth for EPWP-SS. The period also saw the consolidation of regulations and supporting mechanisms for participating programmes, which has resulted in the following additional responsibilities for programme implementers:
- Reporting on the DPW online performance management information system.
- Management of the IG, an additional funding source with its own application and reporting requirements.
- Compliance with the MD.
- Greater emphasis on planning for and managing the provision of accredited training.

The workload associated with coordination has also increased considerably. Up until 2008/2009 the Social Sector consisted of two programmes (Home Community Based Care, HCBC, and Early Childhood Development, ECD) implemented by three departments at a national level, with the same three departments in every province. By the end of Phase Two, the Sector has grown to over twenty programmes implemented by up to five departments provincially and nationally (Figure 4), with additional municipalities.

Figure 4. Comparison of the number of departments and programmes in Phases 1 and 2

(note that municipal programmes were also added)

The human resources allocated to implementation and coordination has not always kept up with these increasing demands. In implementing departments the limited human resources are generally allocated to ensuring service delivery as a top priority while pursuit of other EPWP-SS priorities is only a minor component of programme managers' annual performance indicators. Most implementing departments have assigned only one person−typically a provincial programme manager−to liaise with the rest of the Social Sector and fulfil all EPWP-related responsibilities on top of the work of managing the actual service delivered by participants in the programme. Such work is then seen as an "add-on". A coordinator explained: "In the implementing bodies you'll find that there is someone who is responsible as a programme manager for [for instance] ECD. They are not about EPWP. They are about service delivery." Illustrating this, a NSNP provincial programme manager described his choice between providing accredited or unaccredited training: "The challenge with [accredited training]… there's sort of a long red tape there−complicated things, we need to be given that form… and remember it's not our core business!.. When I received that document on training [applying for NSF-funded accredited training], I found that I won't really have time for this… otherwise [if I take the time to apply for accredited training] I will get a boot; I will be fired because I won't be doing what I am employed to do. It [my time spent at work] will be only on this [EPWP]." What is becoming clear to coordinators and participating departments is that developing a programme in line with EPWP-SS priorities and contributing to sector activities requires more resources than simply implementing it in a way that delivers the relevant service. And the resource constraints and inefficiencies in other support systems, such as the NSF interplay in a manner that makes EPWP implementation less effective.

The original EPWP mandate was for departments to create work opportunities with their existing resources, but the findings reported here suggest that in practice, the management and coordination of these programmes require some additional resources. The reasons for inadequate human resource allocation include a lack of understanding or awareness of what is required of departments with regard to EPWP−especially among the senior managers who assign resources−as well as low prioritisation, demonstrated in the way EPWP is mentioned in departmental Annual Performance Plans. This underscores the need to improve senior management's involvement with EPWP-SS.
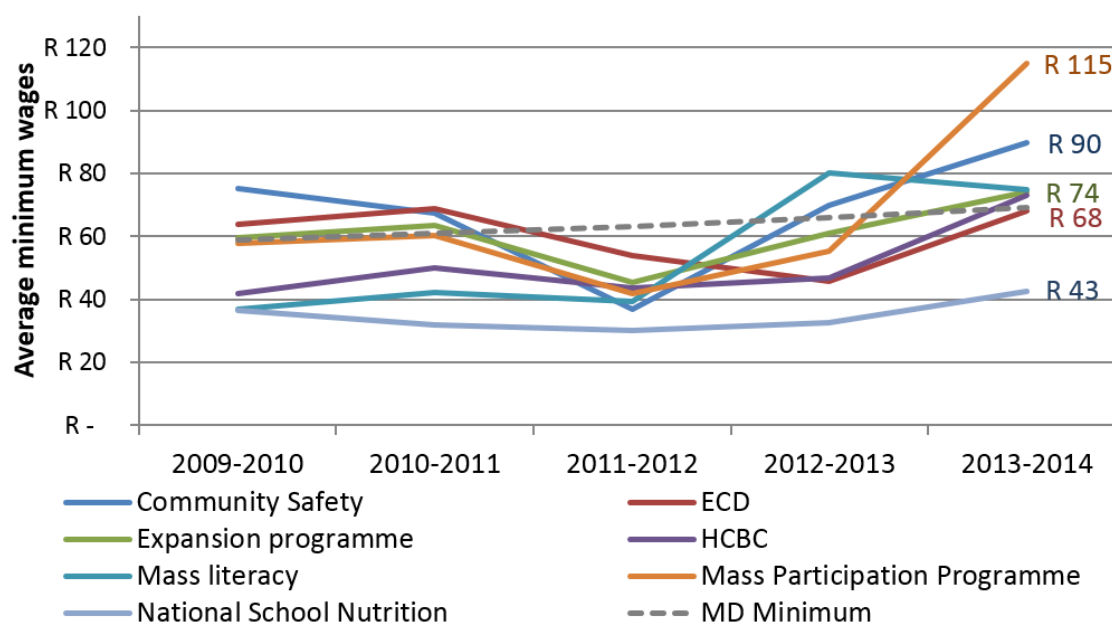
3.1.4   Ministerial Determination

The introduction of the Ministerial Determination (MD) on EPWP in 2010 reflects EPWP's alignment to the government's commitment to providing decent work. The MD stipulates the standard terms and conditions for EPWP workers. It excludes a number of principle provisions of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, including overtime rate; severance

pay and notice of termination. However, it includes stipulations that can be seen as contributing to the quality of employment, and therefore the social protection value of EPWP-SS such as: a formal contract; maximum work week; a minimum stipend and contributions to the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF).

Over the course of Phase Two the coordinating departments, through the NSC, ESC and PSCs, have played an important role in making the MD well known across the Sector and garnering support for it. They have also coordinated the reporting of programmes' progress in complying with the various stipulations encompassed therein. Where there have been technical challenges the coordinators of PSCs have organised support and guidance.

The minimum stipend at the end of Phase Two was R70.59 per day or R1517.69 per month. By 2013/2014 most programmes were compliant with these features of the MD, as demonstrated by the average minimum wages reported in each programme (see Figure 5)[14]. This represents important progress in providing income support to participants, many of whom were volunteers before the introduction of EPWP-SS. Programmes are also free to pay more than the minimum if this is deemed appropriate within the context. In an extreme example, the Western Cape's Mass participation, Opportunity and access, Development and growth (MOD) programme pays participants over R3 000 per month[15].

Figure 5. Average reported minimum wage in selected EPWP-SS programmes

The DSD Early Childhood Development (ECD) and National School Nutrition Programmes (NSNP) remained non-compliant on stipends by 2014. The DSD ECD practitioners' stipends vary widely, with some practitioners receiving less than R500 per month while others earn stipends well above the EPWP minimum stipend, because provincial DSDs do not stipulate how much ECD centres should pay practitioners. Their stipend levels (and other conditions) are determined by the centre management. Most NSNP Volunteer Food Handlers were paid R39 per day or R840 per month in the fourth quarter of 2013/2014, which was less than 60%

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[14] Note that the minimum stipend changes on 1 November every year, hence two minimum stipend values are given for each year. The table is based on the DPW performance management data.
[15] The Western Cape MOD programme not only pays these high rates but participants have benefits comparable to other contract workers of the department. In this programme as in the DSD's ECD programme, it becomes evident that the definition of an EPWP-SS opportunity is not strictly defined.

of the minimum. The National Department of Basic Education, which funds these positions through a Conditional Grant, has not increased its allowance for stipends sufficiently to comply with the MD.

Overall compliance is still much lower on the rest of the stipulations; yet some programmes are doing well. Annexure A of this report lists the programmes that comply with at least four of the five selected stipulations on which data was available: complies with Minimum Stipend; registered for UIF; registered for Compensation for Injuries on Duty Act (COIDA); complies with the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act and some form of training provided. A large portion (24%) of programmes complied with only one of these stipulations, or none at all (see Figure 6). About half (31 out of 61) of the programmes reportedly contributed to UIF and 33 provided some kind of training. Compliance was lower on OHS (17 out of 61) and COIDA (18 out of 61). Further investigation of the enabling factors for compliance in these programmes can assist those trying to promote compliance or improve the compliance of the programme that they manage.

Figure 6. Provincial programme compliance with 5 selected Ministerial Determination stipulations, March 2014[16]

There are various reasons for non-compliance with the MD, and non-compliance should not be read as unwillingness to comply. Impediments to compliance include a lack of awareness, particularly among NPOs, of the MD or its material contents. In some cases the evaluation found a level of confusion on responsibilities to ensure compliance. Some officials were unclear about who should be considered "the employer" and who should pay the COIDA contributions in a situation where a department signs a transfer agreement with an implementing NPO. In some provinces, such as the Western Cape and Limpopo, engagements with provincial Departments of Labour led to clarity and helped departments devise workable solutions; whereas other provinces remained uncertain and did not get the needed guidance provincially or from national coordinators. There were also isolated cases of resistance to some regulations, such as deducting UIF contributions from already low stipends. However, the main obstacle to compliance–and the reason why it enjoyed low priority–is the burden of compliance to programme managers. They have not been able to commit the time, effort and financial resources needed to put the systems and processes in

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[16] As indicated in the provincial quarterly reports presented at the March 2014 Annual Social Sector conference. This excludes Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal. Because the data is drawn from the ESC provincial reports it should be interpreted bearing in mind the data quality issues discussed in section 3.1.5.

place to encourage compliance. Another reason for slow progress in compliance is that there is limited demand for compliance "from below" and "from above". Few EPWP participants are aware that they are EPWP participants[17] and the implications of this. This could explain limited demand for compliance "from below" at site level. The demand "from above" by senior managers or the political leadership is also limited. Above the level of the NSC there is no accountability for, or systematic reporting of compliance on any stipulation other than the minimum stipend.

Non-compliance has serious legal and ethical implications for government. Compliance is especially important in EPWP-SS programmes that incorporate existing volunteers. These programmes' success is not measured by new work opportunities created but by the ability to formalise former volunteers' roles into predictable work opportunities with some protection against exploitation. With this in mind the progress in complying is unacceptably slow. Even if coordinators are reluctant to insist on compliance in the short-term, as this may disincentivise participation, they can ensure that the issue is kept firmly on the agenda by ensuring clear and reliable compliance monitoring data is compiled and regularly made available to senior managers who can drive accountability "from above". An indicator such as "the percentage of MD-compliant vs. non-MD-compliant WOs created" per annum, per programme or department, can put a clear focus on this issue.

3.1.5 Monitoring Frameworks

Along with the introduction of EPWP in 2004/2005 a M&E framework was developed. It identified the key objectives of the programme and identified the indicators to be monitored. It also set out a plan for evaluations, surveys and impact analyses to be conducted for EPWP as a whole. The Social Sector used the broader EPWP M&E Framework. This was found to inadequately represent the uniqueness of the sector such as the prevalence of NPOs, the emphasis on training and career pathing and improved human development outcomes. The absence of a sector specific M&E framework that clearly defines and maps out the sector's results chain and recognise linkages with the broader EPWP eroded the adequacy and usefulness of monitoring data collected.

Two national EPWP-SS monitoring systems were established in Phase Two: the EPWP performance management information system, administered by the DPW and EPWP-SS provincial reports, presented at quarterly ESC meetings. The indicators tracked in the DPW performance management system include WOs and FTEs; minimum stipend levels; total budget and expenditure; and the number of training days provided. These indicators are all relevant, economic (measurable at a low cost), and monitorable (objectively verifiable and amenable to independent evaluation). The quality of the data collected has been poor, as evidenced by the discussion on financial resource allocation, despite some attempts to build checks into the reporting process. The DPW is aware of data quality concerns and has been working to address them. The biggest concern however, is with the adequacy of the choice of indicators. They were chosen mostly with the aim of reporting aggregate expenditure to the Treasury (and giving a sense of EPWP's scope and geographic spread) but not to assess progress towards EPWP objectives (see the Theory of Change).

The ESC provincial reports, sometimes called narrative reports, are presented in a Microsoft PowerPoint format and have scope for both qualitative and quantitative reporting. The quantitative indicators reported in these presentations distinguish between the funding source–IG and Equitable Share (ES)–for WOs, FTEs, budgets and expenditure. More information is provided on training, stipends, and MD compliance as well as potential new projects. These indicators are also clear, relevant, and economic. In terms of adequacy, they

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[17] Confirmed in the data collection for this evaluation; and previously reported in Camissa Institute for Human Performance (2012), *Cross Sectional Study of the Expanded Public Works Programme Phase Two 2009/2010: Final Report*. Unpublished draft provided by the Outcome Facilitator for Outcome 4: Economy and Employment.

still do not provide sufficient data from across the results chain to assess effectiveness; however, they do supplement the picture sketched by the DPW system. The key concern of the ESC reports is data quality. There is no evidence that data precision and integrity is checked before the reports are presented. As a result there are some omissions and inconsistencies. The quantitative data in the provincial ESC reports is not compiled into one sector-wide report. The ESC reports also provide a valuable space for qualitative reporting, relating experiences around events (including coordination related events); challenges and successes in a more open-ended format; facilitating reflections of individual provinces' and programmes' experiences; and peer learning. DSD has not been deliberate in using the reports in performing its leadership role.

Other monitoring systems include the regular financial reporting systems in place for the monitoring of expenditure trends, such as regular internal departmental accounting and reports to national departments disbursing Conditional Grants, which are not submitted to coordinators. Some national departments monitor programme implementation in various other ways, which holds relevance for EPWP objectives. The DPW has also developed a master database of trained beneficiaries, but it only records NSF-funded training opportunities–see section 3.2.2.

The existing monitoring frameworks were not developed with the intention to provide a comprehensive overview of EPWP-SS performance and progress. They do not cover the entire results chain and do not reflect the uniqueness of the Social Sector. To understand whether a programme is proving effective or ineffective and why, one needs data on indicators that are currently not tracked–other human and financial inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts.[18] The frameworks are also not aligned and there are challenges with data quality. The effect is that they provide an inadequate basis for accountability, learning and evidence-based decision making.

Programme implementers and EPWP-SS coordinators currently do not make extensive use of the national-level monitoring systems. This is concerning, but it is not surprising, given the limitations and quality concerns of the current monitoring systems. Instead, stakeholders are piloting their own systems – some focused on programme-specific indicators, but some with clear relevance to EPWP-SS' overarching aims. For instance, the Western Cape Department of Transport and Public Works has developed an exit interview template to supplement its understanding of EPWP participant experiences and is beginning to analyse the first data from these interviews. It also keeps a database of career pathing success. This shows that there is a M&E appetite and expertise that can be drawn on to develop a M&E framework that stakeholders agree on and want to use.

Despite the clear appetite for monitoring among some stakeholders, there is still limited use of available data. The DSD in particular has not extensively utilised the different forms of data that the sector collects. As part of the institutionalisation of EPWP-SS coordination within the DSD, it makes sense to assign specialised and dedicated capacity to this important function and to grant the DSD full access to all Social Sector monitoring data, including that collected by the DPW. The DPW is currently designing a new performance management system and it is an opportune time for the Social Sector, led by the DSD, to develop a comprehensive monitoring framework, based on an agreed Theory of Change, with which the new DPW system should align.

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[18] Monitoring systems can rarely provide all the data needed to do an impact evaluation, but they provide supporting data. When integrated with an M&E plan that defines the programme's objectives and sets out a plan for their evaluation, monitoring systems can help to anticipate and interpret the evaluation's results.
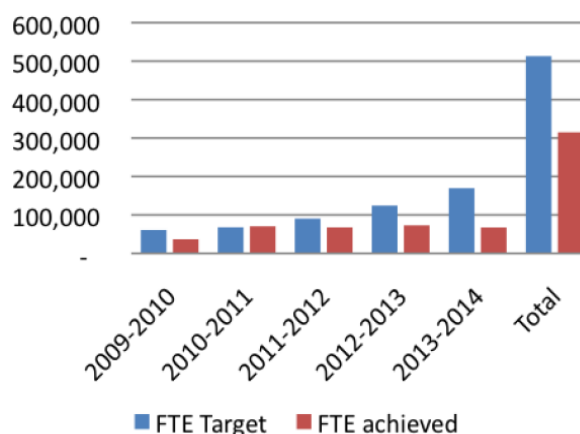
3.1.6   Other Implementation aspects

3.1.6.1. Performance against WO and FTE targets

The performance of EPWP-SS is often described with reference to the number of FTEs and WOs created[19]. The Social Sector reported 175,769 WOs cumulatively over the five years of Phase One.[20] This figure quadrupled to over 866,246 over the five years of Phase Two. The Sector therefore achieved and over-performed on its Phase Two WO target of 750,000. The FTE target of 513,043 was not met–the sector reported about 61% of this (314,943). Qualitative interviews suggest that there is under-reporting in this data set, meaning the real figures are probably higher (and achievements greater) than shown here (see Table 5 and Table 6).

Table 5. Phase Two performance against WO targets[21]

■ Work opportunities target ■ WO Achieved

Table 6. Phase Two performance against FTE targets

■ FTE Target ■ FTE achieved

These figures cannot be taken as the number of jobs created as a result of the introduction of EPWP-SS,[22] but they do show clearly that a growing number of programmes are participating and reporting EPWP-SS opportunities. This is testament to the work of the coordinating departments in promoting EPWP-SS. Some stakeholders see this in itself as a success as it represents the growing buy-in into the EPWP mandate and Social Sector Theory of Change: programmes reporting WOs and FTEs are those that are, in principle, pursuing EPWP-SS objectives and can continue to improve their alignment with these objectives.

3.1.6.2. Targeting of EPWP-SS opportunities to the target group

To be effective in alleviating poverty, public works programmes need to target people living in poverty. At a programme level targeting is supported by the size of the EPWP minimum stipend. The minimum stipend from 1 November 2013 to 31 October 2014 was R70.59 per day, which translates to approximately R1518 per month.[23] This strategy aims to set the stipend low enough only to be attractive to the poor, ("self-targeting") yet high enough to be

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[19] See for instance the New Growth Path document and the National Development Plan.

[20] National Department of Public Works (2009), *Expanded Public Works Programme Five-Year Report: 2004/05 – 2008/09.* Pretoria: National Department of Public Works, 54.

[21] Source: DPW Quarterly Reports

[22] An impact evaluation would be required to test this hypothesis, checking whether EPWP jobs have replaced any other jobs, as part of establishing the impact of EPWP.

[23] Not all participants in focus groups received this stipend – NSNP participants, were receiving R900 each. Participants from the Western Cape sports programme focus group were paid R2958 or more. There were also participants who had been working for up to eight months and were still awaiting their first payments (see section on late payments). All others reported earning between R1200 and R2000 per month.

adequate income support for participants.[24] However, the EPWP-SS target group has not been clearly defined. Programme documents simply refer to "the poor and unemployed." There is also no set criterion for selecting participants. As a result different provinces have defined the target group differently and used different approaches to maximise this group's participation in the programme. There are also some programmes where participants have worked for NPOs for several years so there is not much new recruitment taking place.

Broadly three strategies, in addition to "self-targeting" through the stipend, were used to target the poor. The first strategy was to use some form of poverty measurement (usually implemented province-wide, such as the Operation Sukuma Sakhe programme in KwaZulu-Natal) and recruit from among those individuals or households identified as poor. A second and related strategy was to prioritise poorer geographic areas for recruitment of new participants. Various data sources were used to identify these, including GIS mapping of census unemployment data in some provinces. The introduction of this methodology was enlightening for managers of pre-existing programmes; for instance a provincial Home Community Based Care (HCBC) programme manager noted: "When EPWP came on board they opened our eyes–this is job creation… so we realised we need to look for the 'dry areas' [with high unemployment and poverty] so that we know where is the poverty and recruit there for EPWP."

The third targeting strategy was directed at groups believed to be more marginalised, such as women, youth and people with disabilities. As demonstrated in Figure 7 and Figure 8[25], the Sector has performed well against its targets for the participation of youth and women, mostly because the programmes are by nature inclusive of these groups. The Sector underachieved on its target for the inclusion of people with disabilities except in the last financial year, when the percentage of EPWP-SS participants with disabilities jumped to 2.14% (Figure 9). The reason for this jump is not clear and there is nothing to indicate that this figure has permanently improved. Interviews with programme managers and NPO managers suggest there has been no emphasis on the issue and programme documentation also does not provide evidence of any deliberate efforts to address this track record in Phase Two. One year into Phase Three, the March 2015 summit made people with disabilities one of its focal topics. This is a promising starting point but far more needs to be done if the Sector is to improve on its Phase Two track record. Coordinating departments can play a role in raising awareness, highlighting monitoring data, and supporting and encouraging programmes to be more deliberate in their recruitment of people with disabilities. They can also connect implementing departments with key stakeholders, such as the DSD Directorate: Services to people with disabilities (and provincial equivalents) and Disabled People South Africa. National departments can take a programme-specific approach, developing guides and identifying good practice in the programmes they oversee, and disseminating this across provinces and municipalities.

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[24] Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) (2011), *Social Safety Nets. An Evaluation of World Bank Support, 2000-*2010, 28. http://ieg.worldbank.org/Data/reports/ssn_full_evaluation.pdf
[25] The large jumps in the percentages requires further investigation but may be owing to the addition of new programmes with different demographics over these five years.

Figure 7. Proportions of EPWP-SS participants who are women[26]

Figure 8. Proportions of EPWP-SS participants who are youth

Figure 9. Proportions of EPWP-SS participants who are people with disabilities (axis reduced to 20%)

However, in the absence of an agreed concrete definition of the "poor," it is difficult to conclusively measure the rate of inclusion and exclusion error in the EPWP-SS. This is compounded by lack of data on participants' socio-economic conditions at the time of recruitment to EPWP-SS. However, findings from a DPW-commissioned cross-sectional study[27] of the entire EPWP participants in mid-Phase Two (2011/2012) indicated that most of the households participating in EPWP-SS would in the absence of EPWP-SS be considered poor if one applied the poverty means test used in allocating the Child Support Grant. These findings were supported by this evaluation's focus group findings. This suggests that the programmes' many varied strategies are overall successful in avoiding the recruitment of excessively well-off participants. What is less clear is whether the poorest are adequately targeted.

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[26] Compiled from Department of Public Works EPWP 4th Quarter Reports (annexure A) for the financial years 2009/2010, 2010/2011, 2011/2012, 2012/2013, and 2013/2014. All available at www.epwp.gov.za except the report for financial year 2012/2013 which was provided by the DPW on request.
[27] Camissa Institute for Human Performance (2012), 43.

3.1.6.3. Payment of stipends

With regard to stipend payments, the evaluation established that late payment of stipends was a common occurrence in Phase Two. This has continued into the beginning of Phase Three. Delays were especially common at the start of the financial year. In North West, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, participants reported that at least in the past few years they waited three or more months for payments. Interviews with officials confirmed that stipend delays were widespread, especially at the beginning of the financial year. This problem arose in programmes where NPOs paid participants from funds disbursed by implementing departments, as well as those in which departments pay participants directly.

One reason for late payments is the cumbersome internal financial checks and balances in place in implementing departments. This is made worse in some departments by the fact that the EPWP-SS programmes do not enjoy high priority. This was summarised by a programme manager as, "signatures… signatures. It's internal". Another commonly cited reason is the late notification of IG funds, as discussed above. There were also instances where, according to the programme manager, the department transferred the funds on time but the delay was on the NPO's side.

Over time some programme managers have developed more reliable stipend payment arrangements. In cases where NPOs caused delays it was resolved either by taking the issue up with the specific NPOs, for instance the Western Cape HCBC or by the department opting rather to pay all participants directly, such as the North West and KwaZulu-Natal HCBC. Among programmes paying participants directly, a number of programmes have recently opted to start registering and paying participants through Persal (the Government's personnel salary system), which usually eliminates delays.

The lack of a systematic monitoring of payment timeliness leaves national coordinators unaware of the extent of the challenge and unable to respond timeously to support all programme managers in removing payment blockages. NPOs were also not given sufficient notice about the renewal of transfer agreements with departments and hence, operated in a perpetual state of uncertainty about future funding.

3.1.6.4. Training implementation

Appropriateness of training for quality service delivery

EPWP-SS programmes recruit unemployed, often low-skilled participants and involve them in care and social welfare work. NPOs have sometimes operated on this model[28] but in terms of public works South Africa is unique in this regard. While this service delivery model has the potential to greatly increase communities' access to social services it also poses the risk of deskilling the Social Sector and providing sub-standard services. Recognising this risk, EPWP-SS' policy-documents emphasise the importance of appropriate training. The Social Sector Training framework recommends that a programme manager start his or her training planning by assessing the current skill levels of participants by conducting a "skills audit" and comparing these to the competencies they require to perform their tasks at work.[29] Training that allows participants to meet the required competencies may then be identified. In addition to the recommendation that programme managers undertake such a process independently, a national Training Needs Assessment (commissioned by the NDPW) was conducted, which involved interviews with provincial programme managers and participants.

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[28] For instance, the Red Cross in Zimbabwe. See McCord, A. (2005), *Public Works in the Context of HIV/Aids.* http://www.saldru.uct.ac.za/documentation/public-works-and-social-protection-1/124-public-works-in-the-context-of-hivaids/file (6 June 2015)
[29] Social Sector Training Manual, 36-38.

Through the Training Framework and consultations with training support officials in DPW, provincial programme managers were also advised on the preferred type of training that they should provide. Firstly, programmes need to ensure that participants are able to deliver services in line with official norms and standards- for this, some national departments have set a minimum required level of training. Secondly and more generally, the Sector emphasised accredited training (learnerships leading to full NQF qualifications, or skills programmes which cover only some modules of an NQF qualification) as preferable to unaccredited training (short courses not linked to NQF qualifications).

However, the evaluation cannot conclusively determine to what extent the training provided was sufficient for service delivery. In interviews, programme managers displayed a familiarity with the training levels of their participants; however, programme managers do not share data on this with EPWP-SS coordinators in a systematic way, so that overall training and qualification levels can be compared to training figures. National departments also do not have comprehensive figures on qualifications, even if they know what training has taken place. For instance the National Department of Health has detailed information on the introductory training it has provided, but does not keep a record of the training levels of those not yet trained. The Department estimates that there are 70,000 EPWP health workers (all categories) in South Africa, of whom 12,000 have received a basic introductory training known as "Phase 1." Among the remainder, some have undergone other healthcare training while some (an unknown number) have no training at all.

Even when training is theoretically appropriate, it can only be deemed effective if participants who pass their training courses are actually enabled to do their work as well as they should. Provincial programme managers were generally confident that trained participants were better able to deliver quality services. This view was shared by participants and supervisors. There was strong agreement at site level that the training that has been provided, whether accredited or not, is contributing to the skills participants' need to perform their work duties. Participants and their supervisors were nearly unanimous in their agreement that the training they had received so far was relevant and applicable, and improved their ability to deliver high quality services. For instance, an ECD practitioner in Limpopo said:

> "The training was really helpful to us because we were just teaching without education, but today when I talk about life skills, literacy and numeracy I know what I am talking about. It is because of the training."

Similarly, 97% of staff at Siyadlala (Mass Participation programme) hubs in KwaZulu-Natal agreed that the training and workshops provided by the Department of Sports and Recreation helped to improve the performance of their work at the hubs.[30] However, participants who had received shorter training courses sometimes expressed concern that the training covered only a part of the training that they believed they need. Thus according to participants receiving shorter training courses, the courses were deemed relevant and appropriate but not always sufficient. However these findings are anecdotal, as there has not been a systematic assessment of training effectiveness. Access to training is reported in terms of the number of opportunities created uncorrelated to a participant. This makes it difficult to measure the adequacy of the training. The evaluation could not establish the number of participants who attended training, the kinds of training they accessed, pass rates and qualifications obtained.

Appropriateness of training for improving employability

In terms of improving employability, the Social Sector documentation repeatedly mentions that the training provided to participants should enhance career pathing and or should be in

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[30] Urban-Econ Development Economists (2013), *Impact Study of Siyadlala.* Presentation prepared for

line with opportunities in the labour market.[31] However, no formal guidance was provided to supervisors and programme managers as to how such training should be identified. Furthermore, as stated before, programme managers' incentive structures are strongly focused on service delivery and rarely reflect the other objectives of EPWP-SS, such as improved employability. In practice therefore, programme managers appear to have only considered the career pathing opportunities of which they are aware—typically those in their own government department. There appears to be a disconnect between programme managers who plan and implement EPWP-SS programmes and the relevant Sector Training and Education Authorities (SETAs), which should have information on opportunities in the broader labour market.

The evaluation also found that some programme managers are facing a tension between improving service delivery and improving participants' employability. This has been a particular concern in the ECD programme, where participants are trained in ECD levels 1, 4 and 5. Passing level 5 qualifies a person to be a Grade R teacher, which is a formal job opportunity with a salary and benefits. ECD participants aspire to this and will often find employment as Grade R teachers soon after qualifying. This is an excellent outcome for both the teacher and for South Africa's efforts to improve the quality and accessibility of Grade R; however, ECD programme managers explained that in their view, a central aim of ECD training is to improve service delivery to children pre-Grade R. Thus, the loss of participants as soon as they become qualified is understandably viewed as something of a loss to this aim. While this issue has arisen specifically in the ECD, it is possible that other programmes where participants are employed for a longer term, as in the HCBC, may also encounter this. To address the problem of attrition, some health programmes have resorted to paying better qualified participants slightly more in an effort to keep them for a longer time period. There is a need for further strategizing around this matter. This reflects tension between EPWP design (short-term unskilled labour) and the nature of services provided in the Social Sector. There is a greater benefit to the recipient of the service when participants are better trained and more experienced. However, this contradicts the notion of the PWPs as distributing income protection more widely.

Training implementation

In terms of implementation, the EPWP-SS coordinators also provided some guidance and support in Phase Two. Among others, there was a number of initiatives to ensure that NSF and SETA funding is available for Social Sector programmes to implement training. The DPW regional offices have training managers who are tasked with liaising with programme managers and visiting training venues to ensure training occurs and runs smoothly. However, they do not submit quantitative data on implementation issues. The data sources available with regard to training all focus on the number of training opportunities or the number of training participants. The data does not indicate the throughput of participants from selection for training; to attendance and dropout rates; passing and failing assessments; and graduating or receiving certificates. Simply focusing on the number of training opportunities may mask some major implementation failures (like high dropout rates) and successes (like near-100% pass rates among HCBC carers who are afforded the opportunity to study nursing).

Participants were generally satisfied with how training is implemented. Their feedback suggested implementation was effective in ensuring participants knew what is expected in order to pass; presenting material at a level they can follow; and the relevant logistics such as meals and transport. Participants were overwhelmingly positive about training. One
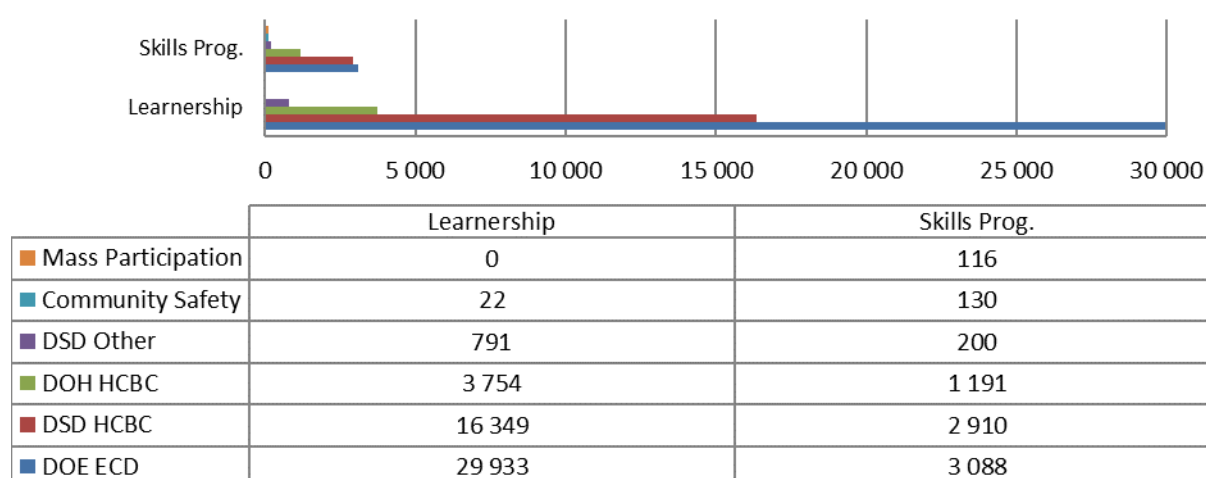
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[31] See for example, DSD, Department of Education (DoE), and DOH (2004), Expanded Public Works Programme Social Sector Plan 2004/5 – 2008/9, 7; Kagiso Trust (2011), 16; Social Sector Draft Annual Action Plan 2012/13, 3.

common concern was around certificates. Focus groups revealed several instances where training was provided and participants were promised certificates but have not received them. Another concern was with communication: numerous participants claimed they had been promised training, or there had been mention of training, and that they were "still waiting" several months or a year later.

The available data suggested that the Social Sector has struggled to meet its training targets. The quantity of training provided over the last three years of Phase Two was significantly less than was intended. The Social Sector set training targets for the latter three years of Phase Two, which amounted to 144,569 opportunities (including accredited and non-accredited opportunities). The ESC reports (though they should be interpreted with caution) suggest that the target was met at about 60% and most provinces managed to provide less than half of their targeted number of training opportunities. Accredited training was most common in the ECD and HCBC programmes, with no accredited training provided to NSNP participants and a small number of opportunities to Mass Participation and Community Safety participants (see Figure 10).

Figure 10. Accredited training provided in EPWP-SS programmes, 2011/2012 to 2013/2014

	Learnership	Skills Prog.
■ Mass Participation	0	116
■ Community Safety	22	130
■ DSD Other	791	200
■ DOH HCBC	3 754	1 191
■ DSD HCBC	16 349	2 910
■ DOE ECD	29 933	3 088

Number of opportunities

In terms of whether the training provided was sufficient for service delivery, the data on the number of participants who do not meet the minimum training requirements is not available centrally for comparison with training figures. For instance, the National Department of Health estimates that there are 70,000 health workers (all categories) in South Africa, of whom 12,000 have received Phase 1 training. Among the remainder some have undergone other healthcare training while some (an unknown number) have no training at all. Provincial departments appear to have a clearer sense of these figures (since they work with the NPOs employing these participants) but the data is not centrally available to coordinators or to the national departments. The DSD estimates that "between a quarter and a half of all existing ECD centre managers and even larger numbers of ECD practitioners are unqualified," [32] (most of them do not have the required NQF level 4 qualification)[33].

A number of factors help explain the low training numbers observed in Phase Two:

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[32] Department of Social Development (2015), *Draft Early Childhood Development policy of the Republic of South Africa.* Circulated for public comment. Government Gazette No. 38558, 13 March.
[33] Ibid., 124.

- The **ability to plan and implement training is strongly linked to human resource capacity**. A programme manager facing competing priorities may decide not to pursue training, or to implement unaccredited instead of accredited training. In contrast, programmes with sufficient human resources are better able to train participants. As a Limpopo programme manager put it, the reason why her department was providing several training opportunities to participants was because "we are focusing… With other programmes you find that it's not that they don't want [to provide training], but it's because they are doing other things… they are apologising, saying 'bear in mind that this is not the only thing we are doing.'"

- Where there are **nationally defined minimum competencies**, programmes are more likely to prioritise training in order to meet these competencies. The DSD has set NQF level 4 ECD training as the minimum training requirement for ECD practitioners. In line with this, ECD programme managers pointed out that there is a growing emphasis nationally on ensuring that ECD practitioners have the required qualifications, and that this drives the prioritisation of accredited training in their departments.

- **Funding** for training continued to be a limiting factor in many programmes. Most departments set aside some of their own (equitable share) funds for training, but typically only provide a limited number of opportunities. Most departments attempt to source further training funding from the NSF and SETA funds. Despite efforts to make these funds available, some programme managers indicated that they had not been able to access it. There are indications that these challenges are being reviewed but it remains essential for implementing bodies to have their own training budgets.

- Programme managers and supervisors point out that many participants do not meet the **entry requirements**, completion of Grade 11 or 12, for accredited training. EPWP-SS is in fact aimed at providing individuals with lower levels of education with work opportunities, and programmes need to devise ways to provide training to then and enhancing their employability. Some programme managers and supervisors encourage participants to register for Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET).

- A number of programmes have struggled with the **availability of accredited training service providers** that can provide the type of training their participants need. There is an ongoing effort, working with SETAs to improve this situation but, it was still common in Phase Two.

A number of the obstacles to training implementation were known and were being addressed by the end of Phase Two. This may contribute to improved training implementation in Phase Three. However, human and financial resources for training planning and management are likely to remain a key constraint, unless implementing departments act to address it. Furthermore, there was limited evidence that the Social Sector is actively working to improve M&E in this crucial area. Of particular concern is that the Sector does not have clear data on the adequacy of participants' current training levels in those programmes where minimum qualifications have been set by national departments.

3.2 Achieving EPWP Outcomes and Impacts

As described in the Theory of Change (see Appendix), EPWP-SS aims to achieve two objectives directly through the provision of WOs: (1) the reduction of unemployment and (2) the reduction or alleviation of poverty. The Sector also aims to improve the skills base of participants and improve their long-term employability. This evaluation was primarily focused on implementation, and hence this section will avoid reporting on a rigorous impact assessment. Rather it discusses the likelihood of achieving these objectives in light of the implementation assessment and any available data .

3.2.1 Likelihood of reducing unemployment

There is no quantitative data on the impact of EPWP-SS work opportunities on

unemployment. However, if one considers the history of each programme in turn; it is possible to assert whether unemployment would be higher in its absence.

Firstly, EPWP-SS is likely to have shifted the status of many volunteers into that of employees. The absorption of individuals who had been volunteering under unregulated working conditions into EPWP-SS can be considered an increase in employment. Compliance with the Ministerial Determination that sets the minimum standards of a formal EPWP-SS opportunity can be used as a proxy to measure quality of employment opportunities and therefore the extent to which EPWP is shifting the employment status of volunteers. Evidence suggests that MD compliance is nascent; however, fewer programmes are complying with the full set of MD stipulations. Nonetheless, most programmes are complying with the minimum stipend requirement, which is the key determinant of the impact of EPWP as an income protection measure. Two programmes were considered most likely to fall short of shifting volunteers into decent work opportunities. The first is that of Volunteer Food Handlers in the NSNP, who are still explicitly referred to as Volunteers and earn less than 60% of the minimum stipend. The second is the DSD ECD programme. The DSD's subsidy to registered centres may contribute to centre coffers, but the practitioner's contract is with the ECD centre management with no regulation of stipend levels or other conditions. These individuals therefore remain without basic labour protection while they provide a service that plays a determining role in children's development.[34]

Secondly, EPWP-SS is likely to have created new job opportunities. There are indications that some programmes have been scaled up using Incentive Grant funding. This was observed in HCBC, Crime Prevention, Sports and the NSNP. There are also indications that some programmes' involvement in EPWP-SS served to keep or promote job creation on their departmental agendas so that programmes remain, expand or are created. It seems likely that unemployment among these programmes' participants would have been higher in the absence of these programmes.

An important determining factor in the ability of EPWP-SS to address unemployment is the length of the employment opportunity. The evaluation found varying employment periods throughout the Social Sector programmes. Some programmes terminate contracts after one or two years, while many programmes in the Social Sector effectively employ long-term participants by renewing their contracts annually (or funding the NPOs for which they have worked for several years). Contract renewal is common in programmes implemented by NPOs, for instance most HCBC programmes and the DSD ECD programmes. In these programmes no limit of a maximum number of renewals is imposed, meaning that some participants, as in HCBC, have had their contracts renewed annually for more than ten years. This creates continuity for the recipients of the services that the participants provide. For participants, for as long as they remain unable to find permanent employment elsewhere, long-term EPWP-SS work means the continued hope or chance (though not guaranteed) of receiving training that can help them find a better job; the benefit of a formalised EPWP-SS position (to the extent that the position is indeed formalised); and in the meantime earning an EPWP-SS stipend which is lower than the minimum in any other sector and yet, likely to make a big difference for their households' ability to afford food (see below). Whether it is acceptable for a government programme to employ poor individuals for the long-term on such terms remains open for debate. It is important to note that in several EPWP-SS programmes this is the reality and that it is effectively providing long-term social protection, which scholars have argued is most appropriate when individuals are structurally unemployed.

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[34] Please note the distinction between DSD's ECD and ECD practitioners that are selected for accredited ECD training organised by provincial departments of education (the "Education ECD" programme). The latter receive stipends in line with the Ministerial Determination for the duration of the training opportunity.

3.2.2   Likelihood of addressing poverty

When asked about the effect of the stipend, most focus group participants indicated that their stipend "puts food on the table."[35] They discussed spending all their stipend money on food and immediate needs such as soap, electricity, water, and clothes. The stipend allowed them to cover their most immediate needs but did not lift them out of poverty. There are indications that being able to meet basic needs created a sense of dignity, confidence and self-worth as a result of being less dependent on family and being able to dress well. In a limited number of cases participants were also able to make some improvements to their homes.

In addition to qualitative experiences of poverty relief the evaluation attempted to provide a quantitative estimate of the likely impact of the stipend on poverty. To do so, we compared what households would have earned if they had no stipend with what they would earn if they received the minimum stipend. We conducted this assessment using the data provided by focus group participants. Because this was a very small sample of households (N=47), we also selected a sample of households from the National Income Dynamics Survey (NIDS), 2012 that could hypothetically participate in EPWP-SS (poor households[36] with unemployed adults) and simulated the effect of providing the minimum stipend to them. These findings were compared to Statistics SA's poverty lines.[37] The data sets used are not ideal, but the findings are presented here to corroborate the qualitative findings with the available quantitative findings in order to comment on the likely impact, and to demonstrate the type of methodology that stakeholders can consider to assess poverty impact.

Table 7. Poverty lines for South Africa (StatsSA 2015)

Line	2011 Amount per person p.m.	2012 Amount per person p.m.	Explanation
Lower poverty line	R335	R375	Households that survive by sacrificing basic food needs
Food Poverty Line	R501	R529	Cost of basic nutritional requirements
Higher poverty line	R779	R823	Typical expenditure of households whose food expenditure equals the food poverty line

As demonstrated in Figure 11, about half (between 48% and 55%) of the households in our data sets would be food-poor (unable to afford their basic food needs) without the stipend. When the minimum stipend[38] is added to their incomes, 87% of them are lifted out of food poverty while the rest (13%, with a confidence interval of 12% to 33%) remain food-poor. A simulation (not shown here) of the poverty gap impact of the minimum stipend suggested that these households, that remain food-poor would be much closer to being able to afford adequate nutrition (poverty gap index of between 1% and 9%).

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[35] Some needs remained unmet. In peri-urban KwaZulu-Natal, the participants' supervisor indicated that members of her team still go hungry for parts of the month. This group reported large household sizes (7 to 13 members per household) and the stipend made up half or more of each of their reported household incomes.
[36] "Poor" households were selected based on the annual household income categories of households "before EPWP" in the Mid-Term Review, p. 62.
[37] Statistics South Africa (2015), *Methodological report on rebasing of national poverty lines and development of pilot provincial poverty lines,* Report No. 03-10-11, 14. Available at http://beta2.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-10-11/Report-03-10-11.pdf (14 March 2015).
[38] For the NIDS survey (with data from 2012) we used a minimum stipend of R1358.37 and for the EPRI focus groups (with data from 2014) we used a minimum stipend of R1517.69.

**Figure 11. EPWP-SS participant households below the
food poverty line with and without the minimum stipend**

	Non-EPWP income only	With all stipends compliant to the minimum
High estimate (focus groups)	55%	33%
NIDS Expenditure-based measurement	48%	12%
▲ NIDS Income-based measurement	53%	13%

We repeated the comparison to assess the impact of the minimum stipend on "upper bound poverty"[39] and results (Figure 12) suggested that the minimum stipend would lift some better-off participants out of poverty, but almost two-thirds of participants and their households remain unable to afford their basic needs in addition to sufficient food (if basic needs are defined as per the StatsSA methodology).

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[39] "Upper bound poverty" is the amount of money households need to afford their basic nutritional requirements and a basket of further basic essentials.

Figure 12. EPWP-SS participant households below the upper bound poverty line with and without the minimum stipend

	Non-EPWP income only	With all stipends compliant to the minimum
High estimate (focus groups)	82%	57%
NIDS Expenditure-based measurement	83%	63%
▲ NIDS Income-based measurement	88%	65%

In summary, both the qualitative and the quantitative findings suggest that at current levels, the stipend is likely to be ensuring that beneficiaries and their households do not go hungry. Those who do still struggle to afford food are still likely to be, on average, much better able to afford it. Most of them are likely to remain poor (falling under the upper bound poverty line) but the severity of poverty is reduced.

Since there are differing views among stakeholders on how much poverty alleviation EPWP-SS is intended to achieve, there are also divergent opinions on whether this impact of the stipend is sufficient and whether the programme may be considered to be "successful" in achieving its direct poverty alleviation aim through the stipend. EPWP-SS stakeholders will need to deliberate on what it is the Sector aims to achieve before a rigorous impact assessment can be conducted. Moreover, the Sector needs to address non-compliance with this minimum level, and the administrative and implementation inefficiencies that have the potential of eroding gains from stipends. Late payments in particular can significantly reduce the poverty alleviation effect of EPWP-SS and leave participants unable to financially plan. Focus groups provided evidence that in some cases participants are unable to overcome the income shock of late stipends without going into debt or otherwise compromising their material well-being.

3.2.3   Likelihood of improving the skills base and enhancing employability

As stated in the introductory sections, the South African labour market is characterised by an oversupply of unskilled workers, many of them with limited work experience, and a higher demand for skilled labour. If the definition of "employable" is "able to find formal work or self-employment," then a public works programme with a focus on providing appropriate work experience and training can potentially improve participants' "employability."

Given the challenges in procuring sufficient training to ensure service delivery, it is perhaps unsurprising that programme managers appear preoccupied with the immediate need to deliver services, failing to consider how participants' employability beyond the programme can be improved. However, there were exceptions. In the HCBC programmes for instance,

some successful trainees–in pharmacy assistance or ancillary nursing–were assisted in finding employment opportunities in government or going on to study full-time, while some found employment in the private healthcare industry. In 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 combined, there were 1,268 individuals who were "career pathed", according to ESC provincial reports. Unfortunately, at national level the Social Sector does not keep any record of what happened to participants whose opportunity with EPWP-SS ended without accessing such a career path, or who left the programme. Therefore, this evaluation cannot draw firm conclusions about the overall impact of work experience and training on participants' employability beyond the programme. What is presented below is based on what is known about the labour market and the impressions of Social Sector stakeholders who were interviewed.

There was evidence that EPWP-SS work experience was in itself somewhat beneficial in improving participants' employability, participation in the programme tended to improve access to information, giving participants experience in a structured work environment while building both their technical capabilities and interpersonal skills. Most participants indicated that they were seeing changes in personal attributes that may have held them back from finding employment, such as their confidence levels. However, access to information and even improved self-confidence can only do so much in improving an unskilled worker's ability to compete for opportunities in a labour market with an oversupply of unskilled workers. There was a strong sense among coordinators, implementing programme managers and participants themselves that the right type of training is an important factor in determining their future employability outside EPWP. This implementation evaluation did not have sufficient data to confirm this conclusively. In some focus groups where no accredited training is provided, participants stated outright that their predecessors in these positions are "back home", "doing nothing", and or that they expect the same. Therefore work experience, though a positive element of EPWP is deemed unlikely to be sufficient in the context of structural unemployment to provide the bridge to employment.

There were fewer known cases of improved employability in programmes that provide only two or three years of work instead of renewing contracts continually. There are notable exceptions, for example some Mass Participation programmes have recognised the need to support participants' employability outside the programme and therefore supplement sporting code-specific training with accredited training in more generic fields like events management. In other words, there are ways to make even shorter-term opportunities valuable for improved employability, with sufficient planning and adjustment of the programme.

In conclusion, the programmes appear to have some beneficial impacts on personal attributes that affect employability, while stakeholders strongly correlate accredited training in line with a defined career path as an important factor in improving a participant's employment. Programme managers can be better supported and incentivised to plan for the alignment of participants' skills with the labour market. Furthermore, though it is not the mandate of EPWP to address structural issues such as the spatial distribution of jobs, understanding how these factors contribute to unemployment for a given group of participants can help ensure that the opportunity is optimised in line with their needs.

3.3 Designing EPWP to reach its Outcomes and Outputs

Alignment of service delivery and employment creation objectives

A key strength of the EPWP Social Sector's design has been the alignment of work creation and service delivery priorities in many departments. The experience with implementation in Phase Two has also shown that this helps to ensure that participants do work that is of value to communities while accessing income support. At the same time however, it has proven challenging to get departments to prioritise cross-cutting EPWP-SS objectives such as complying with the MD; communication with participants about EPWP; and planning for improving participants' employability. This is a challenge inherent in programme design. Improvements in coordination (including alignment of intra-departmental incentive structures), institutional arrangements, monitoring, and communication can maximise the

likelihood of the Sector working together towards the achievement of its full set of objectives.

Implications of the de facto longer-term employment in EPWP conditions

The EPWP-SS has not held strictly to the broader EPWP design in terms of providing only short-term work opportunities. The provision of longer-term employment is beneficial in that it provides income support and stability to participants over a longer period; provides more opportunities for training that can improve future employability; and allows programmes to benefit from the skills and work experience that participants gain over time. Providing some form of long-term social protection is appropriate in situations of structural unemployment. However, longer-term employment in these programmes creates a situation where participants may earn the EPWP minimum wage and work under the MD (reduced version of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act) on an ongoing basis, which was not the intention when EPWP was designed. It also further limits the scale of the programme (see below). These implications are important to acknowledge, among policymakers and also to participants, and unpack.

Scale of the programme is supply-driven

A further reality of the programme's design is that it can only absorb a limited number of participants. This number is determined by what is useful and affordable to government departments. In other words, the scale of the programme is "supply-driven"[40]. The number of participants who benefit from it is further constrained by the need to provide longer-term work opportunities in the Social Sector. Government needs to acknowledge that given its current design, even if the Social Sector and other supply-driven EPWP programmes can expand in creative ways, they cannot provide income support to all the unemployed adults who need it. If government is aiming to provide social protection to all unemployed adults, these programmes will need to be supplemented by programmes with a different design. An employment guarantee scheme such as the one implemented in India, or a universal cash transfer, are some of the options that may have the potential to fill in the gaps left by supply-driven PWPs.

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[40] "Supply-driven" is used here in reference to the government's ability to supply work opportunities, not participants' ability to supply labour. See for instance Subbarao, K. (2012), 58; McCord, A. (2012), 55.

3.4 Opportunities for Expansion

The evaluation methodology focused on the implementation dynamics of existing programmes, and this is where the opportunities for increased numbers of WOs and FTEs were most clearly highlighted to the evaluation team. Three opportunities for expansion are listed here.

1. Improve performance against training targets. If training targets are reached in existing programmes, the reported number of FTEs will increase.
2. Ensure smooth functioning of the DPW performance management reporting system. Programmes whose performance data is consistently and accurately reported on the system will have an improved chance to qualify for IG funding. This will enable them to expand their programmes and or start additional programmes.
3. Ensure that programmes are up and running from the start of the financial year. Addressing this implementation challenge will increase the number of days per year that participants work, which will reflect in more FTEs.

In terms of new programmes, or programmes particularly suited to scale-up, the following were identified by programme managers. These were not investigated in depth as part of this evaluation.

Health
- There is the potential to fund performing arts groups that raise awareness on health issues
- Coordinators for Traditional Medical Male Circumcision

General
- Monitors of the services being provided by others, similar to the school-based monitors employed in the NSNP expansion programmes

Social Development
- Replication of the War Room on Poverty programme in other provinces

Education
- Appoint people to beautify schools
- Assistants to help schools to capture data on the Education Management Information System (EMIS) on behalf of schools
- Assistants for schools for children with special needs

Community Safety and Liaison
- The Western Cape has independent prison monitors who could be absorbed into an EPWP-SS programme
- Replicate the Chrysalis programme in other provinces

4 Conclusion

This evaluation found that EPWP-SS has shown growth in terms of the number of programmes and opportunities reported. The increasing numbers of reported participants is encouraging as it represents the growing buy-in of social sector programmes into the EPWP mandate.

The Theory of Change is that EPWP-SS can contribute to improved human development for communities; can in the short term reduce participants' poverty and unemployment; and can render participants more "employable" outside the programme. It indicates that these objectives can be achieved by delivering social services in a way that creates EPWP work opportunities; providing training, skills and information to participants; and planning for their improved employability. This evaluation did not rigorously assess impact, but in reviewing Phase Two implementation did not disprove the programme logic. The defined activities can lead to the intended objectives if effectively implemented. However it rests heavily on assumptions around departments' alignment and commitment to these objectives (influenced by the extent to which they are effectively coordinated and incentivised) and capacity to implement.

The logic underlying the short term poverty and unemployment alleviation objectives of the Theory of Change appears to hold, based on the implementation experience. This evaluation has found it likely that Social Sector programmes will alleviate poverty and unemployment in the target groups. It estimated that 67%-87% of participants and their households are likely to be lifted out of food poverty by the minimum stipend. In terms of unemployment reduction, the evaluation pointed out that WO and FTE indicators cannot be equated with reducing unemployment. Instead it distinguished between "new jobs" and "formalised volunteer positions", arguing that both are relevant for reducing unemployment among the target groups, and that there are indications of increases in both. The Social Sector will need to refine these definitions if meaningful claims of impact are to be made.

The Theory of Change depicted improved employability as a key objective. It received strong emphasis programme managers and coordinators in interviews. It is perhaps a popular objective because it expresses hope for a better future for participants. However, in practice this objective and its associated activities enjoyed comparatively little time, planning, monitoring, and accountability. This limited the evaluation's ability to assess the validity of this pathway, at least in terms of what has emerged from implementation so far, and it seems too soon to dismiss this objective as entirely unattainable. It appears unlikely that the Sector can ensure the employability of all its participants, but by improving coordination and ironing out implementation problems the Sector may be able to improve its effectiveness. Monitoring data or periodic impact assessments will be required to compare the Sector's track record over time. The Sector also needs to be come to grips with the fact that long-term EPWP work is reality for many participants, and that this has benefits as well as disadvantages that must be carefully considered. This is not currently captured as a long term objective in the Theory of Change, and is still a point of contention among Sector stakeholders.

Significant weaknesses were found in the coordination of the sector, characterised by overlap in responsibilities between DSD and DPW and their provincial counterparts and ineffective coordinating structures. This was partly driven by a resource imbalance; under-resourcing and a lack of dedicated resources in DSD in particular, and a more direct system of accountability for EPWP performance in DPW. It resulted in DSD playing a reduced role as sector lead and neither department taking up certain coordination functions, like knowledge management and the development of a comprehensive monitoring system for the sector.

Challenges within and between the coordinating departments contributed to the ineffective functioning of coordination structures. The ESC and PSCs were still relatively effective as spaces for sharing information and best practices, mutual encouragement, and problem

solving. There was an over-reliance on meetings, rather than effective communication, to ensure alignment in the sector. This put pressure on already constrained human resources and resulted in low attendance. National implementing departments did not participate in coordinating structures as expected and questioned the role they were expected to play. Moreover, the envisioned senior management coordination structures never functioned. This appears to have been driven in part by the limited way in which EPWP-SS success was measured. Low levels of senior management involvement in coordination structures had a knock-on effect for the effectiveness of other structures in resolving strategic and policy issues.

Although the sector exceeded its Work Opportunity target and achieved 61% of its FTE target, compliance with the Ministerial Determination improved unacceptably slowly. Training, which is crucial in a sector that delivers specialised services to poor and vulnerable communities, was supported by a number of initiatives, but programmes still faced significant challenges in the provision of appropriate and sufficient training to participants. Stipends, although potentially valuable for poverty alleviation, were often delivered months late. Progress and successful implementation need to be defined in ways that include these considerations. Monitoring systems fell short of this. The monitoring systems operated in parallel and were designed to serve the interests of different stakeholders, leaving important objectives undefined and variables unmeasured. Neither of the two national systems yielded reliable data.

The original mandate was to create EPWP work opportunities with existing resources, but the Phase Two experience indicated that there is a need to resource the coordination and management of these activities. Because senior managers did not regularly engage the EPWP-SS objectives and the sector's progress and challenges in achieving them, they were also less likely to assign the needed resources and adjust their staff's incentives to support the achievement of these objectives.

The evaluation concludes that though the logic of the programme is sound, the underlying assumptions are not holding. The assumption that programmes would commit to EPWP-SS objectives; would align their programmes accordingly; and would allocate the required resources to these programmes did not always hold. EPWP-SS is also not receiving the support needed from other stakeholders such as SETAs, the Department of Labour, etc. Many of the challenges faced in implementing EPWP-SS have to do with the overarching challenges of ineffective coordination and institutional arrangements; resource constraints and inappropriate allocation of existing resources; the lack of involvement of senior management; weak internal communication; and the need for more effective monitoring and evaluation. The recommendations therefore focus on these factors.

5 Recommendations

R1: Clarify institutional mandates and delineate roles of the DPW and DSD in the sector. The roles of these departments as well as national implementing departments should be reviewed in line with the experience in Phase Two and clearly spelled out in a Social Sector-specific responsibility matrix or similar document that is endorsed by senior managers and then integrated into departmental APPs and management performance contracts. Coordination of the Social Sector should be normalised within DSD through the establishment of a dedicated unit with appropriate resources, responsibility and accountability. As sector lead department DSD should be accountable for sector-wide performance and this should be integrated into DSD APPs and management performance contracts.

R2: Ensure strategic management engagement with EPWP-SS. For this to happen, stakeholders must agree on the EPWP-SS indicators against which senior managers must enable their departments to perform. Merely focusing on WOs and FTEs is likely to leave many implementation issues unaddressed. Once indicators are defined they can be included in departments' strategic plans and performance agreements.

R3: Improve monitoring and evaluation. EPWP-SS differs from the other EPWP sectors. Its programmes directly deal with vulnerable and poor people, and can have lasting effect in communities where they are implemented. The overarching EPWP monitoring and evaluation framework does not adequately cover or reflect all the EPWP-SS specificities. Therefore the sector can benefit from a separate but nested Theory of Change and M&E framework. A Theory of Change has been developed as part of the evaluation. Though this focused on Phase Two, it may offer useful learnings and a basis for formulating the Social Sector's Phase Three problem statement, the logic of the intervention, assumptions made, outcomes sought and indicators of both performance and results in people's lives. It is important that stakeholders reach agreement on these, clearing out the lingering differences as to the purpose and intent of EPWP with regards to social protection, skills development, service delivery, and the potential tensions between these. Once the framework is agreed it must be clearly communicated to all stakeholders so that it can be understood and pursued at all levels. It should then be used to identify the indicators that need to be tracked, including informing the improvements currently being made to the DPW performance management system. Indicators tracked by this system and any others relevant to the EPWP-SS framework should be measured in a way that is aligned or compatible with it, and should be fully accessible to the DSD. Resources in DSD and participating departments should be assigned to this important function, including ensuring data quality and analysing trends to inform continuous learning and improvement.

R4: Ensure adequate resources are in place to support the implementation and coordination of EPWP-SS. The evaluation identified resource constraints and inappropriate resource allocation in coordinating as well as implementing departments. It is recommended that coordinating departments undertake a functional review[41], incorporating business process analysis, with a view to arrive at an optimal organisational design and resource allocations. In doing so it is important to note that increasing resources is not the only solution to implementation challenges related in this evaluation. Given the constrained fiscal environment the sector needs to think of ways to reduce inefficiencies and do more with little

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[41] See Maning, N. and Parison, N. (2004), *Determining the structure and functions of government: Program and function reviews.* Moscow: World Bank.
http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/civilservice/ACSRCourse2007/Session%208/DeterminingStructureFunctions.pdf (24 April 2015)

resources. The sector needs to also find ways of reducing unnecessary and unproductive expenditure and costs, including opportunity costs. Meetings and conferences can be streamlined to reduce the demand on human and financial resources but in doing so the sector should seek creative ways to maintain the sense of community of practice that it has built up over time. A clearly articulated Theory of Change can also provide implementer guidance on which activities are absolutely essential and which can be eliminated without undermining performance and likelihood of achieving results.

R5: Prioritise training and skills development. Training should be prioritised in programmes where participants are not meeting the minimum qualifications set by national departments. Furthermore every implementing department should have a realistic long term training plan linked to the achievement of service quality objectives and sufficient human and financial resources. Training plans should wherever possible reflect the overlap between skills required in the programme and those required in the labour market.

R6: Develop sound strategies for improvement of employability. Coordinators, SETAs, and national departments should work to address the need for general guidance in improving employability, for instance in a guiding document or a revised version of the Social Sector training manual. It falls within the mandate of the Training and Capacity Building subcommittee of the NSC and its counterpart subcommittees in provinces to coordinate such guidance. Implementing departments in turn will need to commit to this objective and task their programme managers with planning and implementing such strategies. Any work to improve employability should be grounded in sound research on the national as well as local/regional labour market and the characteristics of participants.

R7: Identify and address the key implementation inefficiencies. The Sector has performed weakly on a number of fundamental aspects of implementation. The two most pressing concerns are timely stipend payments and communication with NPO managers and participants. The causes of problems leading to late stipends should be urgently identified and addressed. DSD should take the lead in monitoring this issue and holding implementing bodies to account; and all coordinating bodies should focus on ironing out common problems. The sector must make a concerted effort to communicate with NPO managers about topics including EPWP-SS; the MD and their responsibilities in this regard; training of participants; the expected mentoring and in-house training to be provided by the NPO; and how NPOs should support strategies for improved employability. All new participants should be formally inducted into EPWP-SS and existing participants should attend an information session. Participants should receive effective verbal and written communication on the goals of EPWP-SS and their specific programme, as well as the Ministerial Determination. Other implementation issues to be addressed include bringing programmes in line with the MD and revising coordination structures.

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Appendix A: Programmes complying with at least 4 out of 5 selected MD stipulations

ESC report date	Prov.	Dept.	Programme name	Stipend Min	Stipend Max	UIF	OHS	COIDA	Training
201403	NW	DSD	HCBC	R 1 500	R 1 500	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
201403	NW	DSD	National Youth Service	R 1 500	R 1 500	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
201403	NC	Health	Not Indicated	R 1 500	R 3 000	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
201403	WC	WCED	ECD & Phakamisa 3&4	R 1 535	R 1 535	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
201403	WC	Health	HCBC	R 2 150	R 2 150	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
201403	WC	Health	Data Capturers	R 2 150	R 2 150	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
201403	WC	Health	Emergency Care Officer	R 2 150	R 2 150	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
201406	NW	DSAC	Mass Participation	R 2 200	R 2 200	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
201406	NW	DSD	HCBC	R 1 700	R 2 200	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
201406	NW	DOH	HCBC	R 1 500	R 1 500	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
201406	FS	DSD	Social Auxiliary Support Workers	R 1 412	R 1 500	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
201406	FS	DOE	Teacher Assistant	R 1 412	R 1 500	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
201406	FS	DOH	Community Health Workers	R 1 412	R 1 500	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
201406	FS	DSAC&R	Sports Assistants	R 1 412	R 1 500	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
201406	WC	DSD	ECD Assistants	R 1 588	R 1 588	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
201406	WC	DSD	Family in Focus	R 1 527	R 4 653	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
201406	WC	DSD	Playgroup Facilitators	R 1 518	R 1 518	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
201406	WC	WCED	ECD & Phakamisa 3&4	R 1 535	R 1 535	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
201406	WC	Health	HCBC	R 2 150	R 2 150	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
201406	WC	Health	Data Capturers	R 2 150	R 2 150	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
201406	WC	Health	Emergency Care Officer	R 2 150	R 2 150	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
201406	WC	DoCS	School Safety	R 1 518	R 1 518	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
201406	WC	DoCS	Youth Work Programme	R 1 828	R 1 828	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Data reported here was collated from the provincial quarterly reports presented at the March 2014 Annual Social Sector conference (excludes Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal) and the June 2014 ESC meeting (excludes KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Cape).

Theory of Change

Need / Challenge

Unemployment
For complex reasons including low skill levels, among women, youth and historically marginalized groups

Poverty,
social and economic vulnerability among the unemployed at the household level

Low human development (education, health, and livelihoods) and insufficient or inadequate services

A lack of inclusive growth

Activities

Plans to improve employability of participants are developed where possible

Training, skills and information provided to the EPWP beneficiaries

Government and its partners in the Social Sector deliver social services in a way that **creates EPWP work opportunities**

Assumptions
- Public bodies commit to and assign resources to manage training and career pathing
- Appropriate curriculum and trainers are available
- Work activities can be aligned to career pathing strategies
- Public bodies have sufficient information on career opportunities
- Sufficient institutional and technical capacity in and across departments

Risks
- Minimum stipend may attract criticism

Outputs

Participants gain training & experience for specific opportunities outside EPWP

Beneficiaries acquire training, skills and experience in line with their EPWP work

EPWP target group work in EPWP Social Sector

Assumptions
- Participants from target group meet training entry requirements
- Participants are interested in and take up training

Outcomes

Participants are ready and qualified for specific opportunities outside

Participants are better skilled, more confident, experienced & qualified

Communities receive more & improved services

While participating in EPWP, more members of target groups are employed

During EPWP-SS participation, participant household's predictable regular income increases

Assumptions
- Work experience and accredited training is sufficient for quality service
- Training is effective in equipping successful participants for work and career pathing
- Participants remain in the programme long enough to translate training benefit into quality services
- Stipend exceeds opportunity costs

Risks
- High turnover of participants

Objectives / Impacts

Participants find employment or become self-employed outside EPWP.

Better human development in previously underserved communities

Unemployment is reduced in the target group

Household **poverty is alleviated** and vulnerability reduced

More inclusive growth

Longterm / Longterm

Short term

Short term

Assumptions
- Participants overcome other barriers to employment
- Participants are willing to pursue career paths
- Services effective in promoting human development

Risks
- Changing labour market conditions
- Changing departmental budgets & priorities for recruitment
- Changing face of human development

A Theory of Change provides an overview of the programme logic. This section presents the EPWP-SS Theory of change, drawing on what has been discussed above regarding the challenges the programme seeks to address, and points to the links between the sector's activities, outputs, outcomes and objectives. Assumptions and risks are highlighted.

Challenges

South Africa's high levels of unemployment persist for a number of reasons. A major driver of unemployment is that a large part of the labour force is unskilled (characterised by poor education outcomes) and has limited work experience, while the formal economy increasingly favours skilled labour. Unemployment, coupled with low skill levels and a lack of experience, is especially acute among women, youth, historically marginalised groups including black Africans, and especially in former homelands[42] and rural areas in general. High levels of unemployment are compounded by a small informal sector.

As described earlier, not only is poverty a policy challenge in itself, but poverty also contribute to unemployment and its persistence. The "social and economic vulnerability" among the poor refers to the lack of a broad-based social protection mechanism that can help unemployed adults mitigate against short-term livelihoods shocks or long-term, chronic poverty.

The high levels of unemployment and poverty are recognised to be compounded by a lack of inclusive growth. As described in the previous section, South Africa has struggled to reduce unemployment and poverty partly because of the low labour absorption rate. The country's economy is growing, but without absorbing sufficient labour to significantly reduce unemployment. Because of social, political and economic factors including the segmentation of the labour market across various dimensions, certain sections of the population in particular face barriers to economic inclusion. These include women, youth and historically marginalised populations.

Human development is used here broadly as a term that refers to the range of issues that the Social Sector participating departments are dedicated to addressing, such as health, safety and security, education, and livelihoods.[43] The design of EPWP-SS is centred on addressing low levels of human development wherever it is possible to do so through the involvement of the EPWP-SS target group in social service delivery. As such it is part of government strategy to achieve several of the priority Outcomes as articulated in the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) of 2009-2014, including quality basic education, a long and healthy life for all South Africans, and promoting all people in South Africa's safety. In the MTSF 2014-2019, these same Outcomes remained relevant, and the addition of the outcome of a comprehensive, responsive and sustainable social protection system underscored the importance of initiatives related to building the capabilities of individuals of individuals, households and communities and reducing their vulnerability.

Activities

EPWP in the Social Sector aims to develop plans to improve the employability of its participants. The Phase Two plan identified two strategies that the Sector would focus on: 1)

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[42] Noble, M., Zembe, W. and Wright, G. (2014), *Poverty may have declined, but deprivation and poverty are still worst in the former homelands.* http://www.econ3x3.org/sites/default/files/articles/Noble%20et%20al%202014%20Former%20homelands%20FINAL.pdf (1 May 2015)

[43] DSD SPO (2014), 16.

departments will promote EPWP-SS in their departments, creating opportunities for participants to be placed in employment in these departments after their EPWP-SS contracts; and 2) the EPWP-SS programmes will provide some of the accredited training unit standards in line with a career path during the EPWP-SS contract period, and then support further study towards the full qualification. This is mentioned in line with the importance of tapping into the broader job market (not only the public sector). Additionally, there remains in the Social Sector a recognition of the original EPWP mandate which included a possibility for participants to set up their own business or service (in other words, to engage in an entrepreneurial activity). Planning for improved employability may also include this activity.

The emphasis is on career pathing[44] for opportunities in the same field. Planning for career pathing entails identifying the entry requirements for specific occupations (particularly those involving scarce skills) and then developing strategies for aligning participants' work experience and accredited training programmes with these requirements. Because of the long-term nature of employment opportunities in many EPWP-SS programmes, it is deemed possible to incorporate skill development strategies that may unfold over several years.

The phrase "where possible" was added to this element in the Theory of Change, because the Phase Two plan expressed a degree of doubt as to whether implementing agents should be expected to take responsibility for securing employment for participants after their involvement with EPWP-SS ends. It is implied that this activity and its associated impact pathways may not be pursued across the sector – at least not always to the point of actually organising employment for participants.

The second set of activities through which EPWP-SS seeks to achieve its objectives is through the provision of <u>training.</u> Training needs to feed into two objectives: career pathing (described above) and quality service delivery (and improved human development) for the recipients of the services that EPWP-SS participants provide. The latter objective is important in itself, separate from career pathing, as participants often have low skill levels and need to do deliver quality social services.

The format of training should ideally be a learnership or a skills programme. Learnerships and skills programme are training opportunities in line with a National Qualifications Framework qualification and related to an occupation. Learnerships are longer in duration (12 to 18 month) and lead to a complete qualification; while skills programmes lead to at least one unit standard in line with a qualification. Short courses are not necessarily accredited and are expected to contribute less to career pathing; implementing bodies are not encouraged to focus on these.[45] The training must skills, information, and work experience gained as part of EPWP-SS work must also contribute to the development of participants in line with their responsibilities.

Of course, the Social Sector undertakes the above activities through <u>creating EPWP Work Opportunities in the Social Sector.</u> The Social Sector, like all EPWP sectors, is mandated to "utilise public sector budgets to increase the number of unemployed people who enter productive work where they can earn an income".[46] Implementing departments must create work opportunities that contribute to their fulfilment of their departmental mandate. These

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[44] Kagiso Trust (2011), 16-17.
[45] Department of Public Works (2011), *Training Guidelines for the Social Sector.* Pretoria: Department of Public Works, 18-20.
[46] DSD et al. (2004), 7.

Department of Social Development / Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

Work Opportunities must be created in line with the Ministerial Determination (discussed earlier), including compliance with the EPWP minimum wage.

Assumptions associated with activities

In order for the above activities to be undertaken, it is assumed that:

Public bodies <u>commit to the activities</u> (for instance, the activities feature in their planning and approach to executing their mandates). This has to do with the prioritisation of EPWP-SS.

Public bodies <u>assign the required human *and* financial resources</u> to implement the activities. Because of the realisation that this assumption, at least with regard to financial resources, did not always hold true in Phase One, Phase Two saw the introduction of the EPWP Incentive Grant, disbursed under the Division of Revenue Act by the National Department of Public Works. In terms of training, the Sector has sought out partnerships with Sector Training and Education Authorities (SETAs) and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) through which National Skills Fund (NSF) funds can be sourced.

It is assumed that there is sufficient <u>institutional and technical capacity</u> for implementation, which relates to human resources as well as the supporting and coordinating mechanisms in place across departments.

To implement the training activities, it is assumed that appropriate (accredited) <u>curriculum and service providers are available</u>. This assumption proved only partially true and Phase Two saw an effort to support the development and identification of these.

The improved employability planning activity is expected to take place in a way that supports the work that participants undertake while in the programme, and as such it is assumed that <u>work activities can be aligned to employability</u> strategies.

It is furthermore assumed that public bodies have sufficient <u>information on labour market opportunities</u> to be able to plan for them.

Risks associated with activities

In Phase Two, implementers of EPWP (all sectors) identified the risk that the Ministerial Determination <u>minimum stipend</u> may attract criticism in the context of demands for higher minimum wages in other sectors.

Outputs

It is expected that the <u>EPWP-SS target group will take up the Work Opportunities</u> created in EPWP-SS. In Phase Two, the number of work opportunities and full-time equivalents reported gave an indication of the extent to which this output was achieved. Ensuring that it is the target group that takes up this employment is dependent on effective targeting and recruitment. The target group is broadly defined as the "poor and unemployed", and furthermore there are inclusion targets for women, youth and people with disabilities.

If training plans are implemented effectively, participants should <u>acquire skills and experience in line with their work</u> in EPWP-SS. Additionally, or where possible, concurrently, participants should <u>gain training and experience in line with opportunities</u> outside EPWP. Two monitoring indicators related to these outputs were measured in Phase Two: the number of training days provided per programme, and in a separate monitoring system, the number of training opportunities. Targets for the latter indicator were set per annum for the last three years of Phase Two.

Assumptions associated with the Outputs

It is assumed that participants from the <u>target group will be able to meet the entry requirements</u> for accredited training.

It is also assumed that these participants will be <u>interested in, and take up, the training</u> opportunities.

Furthermore it is assumed that <u>work opportunities can accommodate</u> training requirements.

It is also assumed that there will be <u>sufficient resources (financial and human) available</u> for training.

Outcomes

If the outputs described above are produced, then the following outcomes are likely:

All participants, by virtue of training and work experience, <u>will be better skilled, more confident, experienced and qualified.</u>

If they have received the relevant training and experience required for the opportunities identified during the planning stage, then it is expected that <u>EPWP-SS participants are ready</u> and qualified for specific opportunities outside EPWP.

<u>Communities receive more and improved services</u>, in line with the mandate and norms and standards of the implementing department, provided to them by participants who are gaining the needed training and work experience. The involvement of the EPWP-SS participants is expected to improve the quality of the service or expand its reach.[47]

Inherent in the EPWP-SS Theory of Change is the assumption that involving the target group in EPWP-SS programmes will resulting a situation where <u>more members of the target group are employed.</u> This is possible if the work opportunities created in the sector are either *new* opportunities (expanding the public sector payroll) or formal positions for previously unemployed individuals who were volunteering.

Participants working in EPWP-SS programmes must receive a stipend at least in line with the Ministerial Determination minimum. Even if there are some costs and opportunity costs associated with taking up EPWP-SS work (as discussed in 2.2.) the stipend is expected to <u>increase participants' incomes</u> and thereby the income of their households.

Assumptions associated with Outcomes
In order for communities to receive more and improved services, it is assumed that the <u>work experience and training provided to participants is sufficient</u> for them to deliver quality service.

It is further assumed that the <u>training and work experience is sufficient</u> to prepare participants for opportunities outside EPWP (i.e. personal and other barriers to employment are overcome through these activities or other interventions supplementing the EPWP programme).

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[47] Kagiso Trust (2011), 17.

It is assumed that the EPWP-SS stipend exceeds opportunity costs of participation.

Risks associated with Outcomes

If there is <u>high turnover of participants</u>, the ability to provide improved services to communities maybe impacted.

Impacts

1. <u>Participants are able to "translate the experience"</u>

If planning has taken place for improving employability in line with the identified opportunities, and participants receive training and work experience, and if these inputs are effective in readying them to take up opportunities outside the sector, then it is anticipated that they will ultimately find employment or pursue entrepreneurial activities outside of EPWP.

There is also an anticipation that the experience of working and receiving training in an EPWP-SS programme may in itself improve participants' chances of taking up an opportunity outside of the EPWP-SS. In other words, this impact may be achieved even though the participants were not formally readied for a specific opportunity outside EPWP.

This impact is not monitored in EPWP-SS and there is no written indication of how the Sector intends to evaluate it.

2. <u>Improved human development outcomes</u>

The programmes in EPWP-SS are each designed to address some aspect of human development. If participants take up the work opportunities in this sector and if they manage to expand the reach or improve the quality of social services provided by government, then the expectation is that South Africa's previously underserved communities will benefit in terms of the associated human development outcomes: health, education, safety, and so on.

Attributing these impacts to EPWP-SS will require carefully managed research. These impacts may to an extent be measured by the relevant implementing departments, but it is not clear from the available documentation that this is reported to the Social Sector. There is no written indication of how the Sector intends to evaluate it.

3. <u>Unemployment is reduced (short-term and long-term)</u>

If EPWP-SS can succeed in creating a larger number of opportunities and/or formalising previous volunteer positions, and if the target group takes up these opportunities, then this is expected to have an immediate and direct impact on the overall unemployment levels of the target group, for the duration of their employment.

Additionally, if the EPWP-SS – through the planning for improved employability, training, and work experience that it provides – succeeds in enabling participants to take up opportunities for better employment or entrepreneurial activities outside of EPWP, then the overall unemployment level in the target group is reduced for long term.

This impact is not monitored in EPWP-SS and there is no written indication of how the Sector intends to evaluate it.

4. Poverty is alleviated (Short-term and long-term)

By the same logic as above, EPWP-SS is expected to alleviate poverty, in the short term (through the wage), and in the longer term by enabling them to take up opportunities elsewhere.

This impact is not monitored in EPWP-SS and there is no written indication of how the Sector intends to evaluate it.

Assumptions associated with impacts

For participants to find employment outside EPWP, participants must overcome other barriers to employment. The barriers that target groups face include not only skills and experience (which can be addressed through training and experience), but also poverty, psycho-social factors, and discrimination (as discussed earlier). For the entrepreneurial route to career pathing, they will also need to cover start-up costs.

It is further assumed that with the appropriate training and experience, participants will be willing to pursue the opportunities newly available to them – in other words, that they will not prefer to remain in EPWP-SS indefinitely.

It is assumed that human development can be positively impacted through EPWP-SS service provision.

Risks

Changing labour market conditions may change what opportunities are available to participants outside EPWP, so that the planning to improve their employability may be ineffective.

Where career pathing is into public sector bodies, there is a risk associated with changing departmental budgets and recruitment priorities.

There are risks associated with the changing face of human development: for instance, services may become obsolete as health and security challenges change.