

**EVALUATION OF THE INSTITUTE FOR THE  
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERSHIPS,  
EMPLOYMENT SKILLS AND LABOUR ASSESSMENT  
(INDLELA - NATIONAL ARTISAN DEVELOPMENT)**



higher education  
& training

Department:  
Higher Education and Training  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL  
INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI



## Table of Contents

1. Introduction and Background .....	3
2. Evaluation of INDLELA .....	4
3. Approach and Methodology .....	5
4. Key Findings.....	6
5. Key Recommendations.....	7
6. Policy Implications and Direction.....	8
7. Author, acknowledgement and Disclaimer.....	9

## **POLICY BRIEF**

### **EVALUATION OF THE INSTITUTE FOR THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERSHIPS, EMPLOYMENT SKILLS AND LABOUR ASSESSMENTS (NATIONAL ARTISAN DEVELOPMENT)**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

Artisan and apprenticeship development is vital for a country's economic and social growth especially in emerging industries. It creates jobs, generates income, and encourages the production of goods. It also tackles skills shortages in sectors such as engineering, mining, food processing, civil and construction, manufacturing, and general services. Artisan and apprenticeship development is guided by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) policy and legislative framework, including the Skills Development Act (SDA), National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS), White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (WP-PSET), National Development Plan (NDP), and the National Artisan Development Strategy and Implementation Plan. The SDA provides the objectives and functions of skills development in the DHET.

The Institute for the National Development of Learnerships, Employment Skills and Labour Assessments (INDLELA)/National Artisan Development (NAD) Chief Directorate has various functions and includes coordinating apprenticeship and artisan development in the country. Its primary role is to coordinate national artisan development to establish a unified standard across all sectors as outlined in the SDA. In the current socio-economic climate, INDLELA/ NAD is vital due to the high demand for skilled artisans. Urgent priorities include restoring artisan training and revitalising the apprentice pipeline to improve implementation within a highly casualised and informalised industrial sector. The aim is to achieve the SDA's goals of reducing illiteracy and innumeracy levels while empowering and transforming people through required skills.

While INDLELA/NAD had various reflections and internal performance reviews through the Annual Reports, Audits and others, there was a need to assess and evaluate its achievements through a scientific study.

## **2. EVALUATION OF INDLELA**

In 2021, the University of KwaZulu- Natal was commissioned by the DHET and the National Skills Fund (NSF) to evaluate INDLELA/ NAD on training and producing quality artisans, to assess its effectiveness and efficiency.

The evaluation of INDLELA/NAD plays a vital role in assessing its effectiveness and has broader implications for shaping the conceptualisation, implementation, and monitoring of future interventions and initiatives aimed at developing artisans and apprenticeships. The evaluation encompasses both outcomes and impacts achieved by INDLELA/NAD, facilitating a comprehensive assessment of its effectiveness.

## **3. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation process followed the principles of the Theory of Change (TOC) and Logical Framework (LogFrame) approach, which provide a solid foundation for conducting evaluations. Data was collected using a mixed-method approach that included surveys with beneficiaries and key stakeholders, key informant interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), and document and desktop reviews. The literature and document review were conducted in 2022 and data was collected in 2023. The evaluation report was finalised in June 2023. The data analysis has three components: a thematic analysis of the qualitative key informant interviews and FGD responses, an examination of information derived from the INDLELA/NAD beneficiary database provided by officials, and an analysis of the beneficiary survey findings.

The evaluation questions were:

- 3.1. What are the relevant regulations, prescripts and practices impacting the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation strategy of INDLELA/NAD?
- 3.2. Who are the main beneficiaries of INDLELA/NAD programmes/interventions? What are the profiles of the beneficiaries and are they aligned to broader transformation targets?
- 3.3. What has been the impact of INDLELA/NAD programmes/interventions on the beneficiaries?
- 3.4. What are the key successes of INDLELA/NAD and what are the factors contributing to these successes?
- 3.5. What are the main challenges encountered by INDLELA/NAD and what are the factors contributing to these challenges?
- 3.6. Which of the INDLELA/NAD programmes/interventions are viewed as best practices and what can be gleaned to improve implementation and impact in the future?

- 3.7. Are INDLELA/NAD programmes/interventions achieving the goals/objectives (especially being an enabling mechanism for access, redress, mobility, skills development, and the full development of South Africa's artisan's landscape) of INDLELA/NAD generally and each programme/ intervention specifically?
- 3.8. Based on the evaluation insights, how can the implementation of the statutory functions of INDLELA/NAD be improved in relation to regulation amendments and changes, resolution the systemic issues brought about by establishing the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) as a quality council, revising/rethinking programmes/interventions?

#### **4. KEY FINDINGS**

Findings from literature asserts that artisans' development play a vital role in driving economic growth, particularly in the engineering and technology sectors in the country. Globally, it is seen as a mechanism to increase employment, reduce poverty, improve skills development and entrepreneurship, and increase productivity and competitiveness. The South African artisan development landscape is characterised by an oversupply of unskilled workers and a shortage of skilled workers.

It is evident that there were high levels of understanding of the INDLELA/NAD programmes/interventions as well as specific roles and responsibilities. The responses reveal that the Programme has demonstrated several benefits, aligning with existing literature on addressing unemployment, attracting target groups, and promoting skills development in the South African context. Key successes identified include improvements in the National Artisan Moderation Body (NAMB) system, satisfactory pass rates in trade tests, quality assurance processes, recognition of prior learning, centralised certification processes, and the production of high-quality artisans.

However, challenges persist, including limited funding, inadequate industry participation, resource deficiencies, underqualified lecturers, slow certification processes, lack of standardisation, limited practical learning opportunities, and economic impacts.

While the Programme was generally seen to be well-organised, inconsistencies and resource limitations were noted. Improvements in standardisation, simplification, funding, technology integration, international benchmarking, advocacy, career development, industry partnerships, and stakeholder engagement were highlighted for future enhancements of the artisan programme to address skills shortages in South Africa.

It is worth noting that there are also many opportunities and initiatives that aim to address these challenges and support artisan development in the country. For example, the National Artisan Development Strategy (NADS) is a policy framework that guides and supports artisan development in South Africa. It outlines the vision, goals, objectives, principles, roles, responsibilities, and actions for improving the quality and quantity of artisans in the country. The NADS also identifies four key interventions for artisan development: artisan training and assessment; artisan development; World Skills South Africa; and coordinating artisan development in South Africa. These interventions aim to provide access, redress, mobility, skills development, and full development of South Africa's artisan landscape.

## **5. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Below is a summary of key recommendations from the evaluation:

- 5.1. Institutionalise the TOC and LogFrames through designated training programmes. This requires using the TOC LogFrames developed and regular discussions/training among INDLELA/NAD and relevant stakeholders to help clarify roles, address implementation risks, and establish a robust monitoring and evaluation system to assess deliverables and impacts.
- 5.2. INDLELA/NAD needs to focus on targeting specific groups, including women and persons with disabilities; ensure spatial spread in ensuring that rural provinces are included by decentralising training activities/interventions to more rural settings, considering a full cost model to encourage participation; training facilitators on inclusion; having recruitment and hiring practices that promote diversity and social inclusion; improved marketing of programmes, providing career guidance and mentorship programmes; addressing language and cultural barriers; providing more local access points, and developing targeted programmes for specific groups. It is important to address negative stereotypes to encourage artisan careers.
- 5.3. Establish a reliable and valid data management system. This is crucial for accountability and fostering a culture of learning. The current ad hoc and incomplete information systems highlight the need for a centralised and electronic database management system to improve data sourcing, validation, storage, and access. A fully integrated online data management system would track applicants and beneficiaries, allowing for a robust analysis of the impacts and, together with a monitoring and evaluation framework, would provide data to assess current and develop future policies, strategies, and plans for INDLELA/DHET.

- 5.4. A key mechanism to address the employment of graduates is to have a stakeholder forum that includes key industry players and employer representatives. Prospective employers can be involved in the design of specific programmes and initiatives. Employers should take the lead in developing curriculum standards, aligning them with industry requirements, and ensuring ongoing reviews. To address the lack of experience, strengthening the apprenticeship programmes will be key to providing opportunities and exposure to employers.
- 5.5. Boosting artisans' entrepreneurship/business prospects is critical. Training should include the necessary skills, knowledge, and support to start and run a successful business. Furthermore, the programme should provide artisans with access to capital, mentorship, and advice from experienced entrepreneurs.
- 5.6. Earmarked funding should be provided for improving INDLELA/NAD human resources and other services. Funding should be clearly budgeted and allocated to INDLELA/NAD for five- year periods to ensure that the Chief Directorate can operate efficiently and effectively. Hiring permanent employees should be considered to ensure that the organisation can maintain continuity in its operations. Moreover, direct funding should be provided to the Directorates to enhance their capacity to deliver on their respective mandates.
- 5.7. Effective stakeholder engagement is central INDLELA/NAD to effectively deliver on its mandate. The National Artisan Development Advisory Board (NADAB) together with stakeholder forums will be important vehicles. The most effective way to improve communication is to create a platform where all stakeholders can easily share information, ask questions, and provide feedback. This could be in the form of a shared online platform, such as an email list or a social media group. INDLELA should also consider introducing a feedback system for stakeholders. It may be necessary to consider establishing a dedicated unit with industry engagement as its mandate to significantly enhance stakeholder engagement. This unit would serve as a focal point for building and maintaining strong relationships and avenues for participation with industry stakeholders.
- 5.8. Digitalise the trade test certification process (replacing paper-based and manual processes) will improve efficiencies (including significant time savings) and monitoring. It will make the trade test certification and application process more transparent and secure. The digitisation process is underway but needs to be fast-tracked.
- 5.9. To enhance the effectiveness of apprenticeship programmes, it is essential for the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) to establish agreed-upon numerical targets for completed apprenticeships. This should be specifically implemented in industries such as construction, mining, manufacturing, and emerging

sectors like the green economy. To ensure accountability and progress tracking, robust systems should be established to monitor the achievement of these targets.

- 5.10. To ensure alignment between current and future labour market needs and education and training systems, it is crucial to conduct research, such as Tracer studies. These studies assess whether the skills demanded by the economy are adequately funded and incorporated into artisan programs. Additionally, the studies evaluate the extent to which these programmes lead to employment opportunities for students, emphasising the importance of developing the right skills that are in demand.
- 5.11. Increasing support for artisan development requires making the sector attractive to learners and promoting the viability of artisanal trades as a career choice. It is crucial to elevate the status of artisans in the public perception through various initiatives such as marketing campaigns, providing bursaries, recognising prior learning, participation in trade shows, and increased interactions. World Skills South Africa should play a pivotal role in career development within artisan development, benchmarking its performance against international peers.

## **6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND DIRECTION**

The policy regulations and prescripts are comprehensive and articulate the aspirations and goals of INDLELA/NAD. There needs to be a pivot to improved implementation in the next phase of INDLELA/NAD's existence. This requires policymakers and practitioners to have a shared and common understanding of the key policies and guidelines to align activities to meet the broader goals of the programme.

The main policy implications are around improving the overall operation efficiency and effectiveness of the INDLELA/NAD. The other policy implications are the establishment of monitoring and evaluation mechanism to support programme delivery, strategy for increasing access to trades, inclusion of entrepreneurship component in the training framework, and strategy for increasing reach and effectiveness of artisan career development.

The need for a policy and improved guidelines on Artisan Recognition of Prior Learning (ARPL). Improved guidelines regarding the implementation of ARPL are required that includes focusing on the standardisation of processes and criteria across INDLELA/NAD and partners (including the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges and SETAs). The absence of clear guidelines on how to assess and evaluate prior learning often leads to inconsistency and subjectivity in the recognition process. A comprehensive policy framework

would address the need for standardisation, providing clear guidelines for assessing and recognising prior learning. Improving awareness of ARPL and accessibility is also important.

A comprehensive policy on RPL would provide guidelines on aligning RPL outcomes with qualifications frameworks, ensuring that individuals receive appropriate recognition and credit for their prior learning. Another crucial aspect of an ARPL policy is the establishment of quality assurance mechanisms to maintain the integrity and credibility of the recognition process.

A comprehensive scan of the current and emerging technologies that have the potential to disrupt or transform the artisan landscape and impact on the policies and procedures identified should be undertaken. Policies and procedures should also be reviewed to assess how rapid technological advancements are likely to change the artisan landscape.

To cement INDLELA/NAD in the artisan landscape, it is crucial to amend the SDA to give a leadership role to the DHET. This legislation would outline the responsibilities and authority of INDLELA/NAD, while also establishing mechanisms for accountability and transparency. By designating INDLELA/NAD as a key entity within the artisan ecosystem, the legislation would establish its position as a central coordinating body for various stakeholders.

## **AUTHOR**

Ms Angel Mathebula

Deputy Director: Policy and Evaluation Directorate, DHET

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Mr Matheko Mpe

Deputy Director: Artisan Development Research, DHET

## **DISCLAIMER**

The policy brief is drawn from the evaluation findings and recommendations expressed by the evaluators and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the DHET or the NSF.



# higher education & training

---

Department:  
Higher Education and Training  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**