

EVALUATION OF THE LABOUR MARKET INTELLIGENCE PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CIMSP	Credible Institutional Mechanism for Skills Planning
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
LMIP	Labour Market Intelligence Partnership
LMI	Labour Market Intelligence
LMIS	Labour Market Intelligence System
SETA	Sector Training and Education Authority
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
DoL	Department of Labour
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ADRS	Applied Development Research Solutions
WITS	University of the Witwatersrand
DBSA	Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
NSF	National Skills Fund
NSA	National Skills Authority
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
MoA	Memorandum of Agreement
ToR	Terms of Reference
DBE	Department of Basic Education
OiHDL	Occupations in High Demand List
HRDC	Human Resource Development Council
LM-EM	Linked Macro-Education Model
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
REAL	Researching Education and Labour
DDG	Deputy Director General
DG	Director General
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
MTSF	Medium Term Strategic Framework
SPU	Skills Planning Unit
DCC	Departmental Coordination Committee
DPME	Department: Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

1 Executive Summary

This document outlines the results of the evaluation of the Labour Market Intelligence Partnership Project (LMIP). The evaluation was based on data gathered and consultations¹ conducted between May 2017 and October 2017 by Redflank, on behalf of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), hereafter referred to as “the Department”. The evaluation study investigated areas that include the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, emerging impact and sustainability of LMIP and lessons learnt and key recommendations for similar projects in the future.

1.1 Introduction

At its core skills planning requires an understanding of the interaction between the demand and supply of skills and the extent of this match.

According to the LMIP Briefing Note (2015), the skills planning approach in South Africa needs to allow planners to read the signals of demand for skills from the economy, government growth strategies and trade and investment policies. The strategies for skills development (both professional and intermediate) is expected to then be more closely aligned to policies for industrial development and skills biased government growth initiatives. Skills planning must promote an inclusive approach to skills development with a focus on improved levels of education and training for the population and improved workplace training.

Skills planning is important for governments so that they can make more informed decisions about: (i) where and how to invest its education and training resources; (ii) how to allocate work visas; (iii) enrolment planning, the development of new qualifications and programmes and the infrastructure investment needed to make this possible; and (iv) career guidance programmes (LMIP, 2015).

A better understanding of what types of key occupations and accompanying skills are required to support economic growth, trade and investment is expected to allow government, with partners, to ensure alignment between industrial strategies and strategies for skills development (LMIP, 2015).

1.2 Background of the LMIP Project

The 2010 Delivery Agreement signed between the President and Minister of Higher Education and Training, required the DHET to, *inter alia*, lead a process to ‘*establish a credible institutional mechanism for skills planning*’ (CIMSP) (Outcome 5, 2010). The skills planning mechanism was defined in the LMIP Briefing Note (2015) as “the intelligence, institutional structures, processes and agreements for undertaking skills planning ... which influences decisions on how resources are allocated for skills development”. This represents a coherent attempt to develop a more realistic approach to skills planning that encompasses stronger coordination across government ministries, as well as establish links between decision making processes and outputs from a Labour Market Intelligence System, abbreviated as LMIS (LMIP, 2015).

In order to achieve Outcome 5.1.1 (2010): developing standardised frameworks for the assessment of skills supply, shortages, and vacancies in the country, the Department contracted the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) to lead a research consortium with two university partners, the Development Policy Research Unit at the University of Cape Town and the Centre for Researching Education and Labour (REAL Centre) at the University of Witwatersrand (DHET, 2011; DHET, 2012). The Department signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the HSRC and the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) in February 2012 and October 2011, respectively (DHET, 2011; DHET, 2012). The REAL Centre subcontracted the work on the forecasting model to Applied Development Research Services (ADRS) (ADRS, 2011).

LMIP, therefore, is a collaboration between the Department and a national research consortium with the aim of conducting research to contribute to the establishment of a CIMSP in South Africa. As a research project, its outputs include research reports, research papers, research articles, policy briefs, templates, tools and concepts.

¹ Consultations, as used in this report, refers to interviews, workshops, and surveys conducted with LMIP stakeholders.

The six (6) main objectives of LMIP were as follows (DHET, 2011; DHET, 2012):

- **Information and knowledge advancement:** To advance information and knowledge of the post-school education and training system in relation to growth, through good quality scientific research and critical scholarship;
- **Labour market intelligence:** To interpret and analyse information and knowledge in light of policy, sectoral and other education, training and skills issues, and to build models to create labour market intelligence that informs decision making, strategic planning and interventions;
- **Research capacity development:** To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field to ensure more effective impact of research on policy, and to increase the national pool of researchers, especially African and women researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour analysis;
- **Institutional capacity development:** To enhance the capacity of DHET to gather labour information, design a national data architecture and strategic framework, and to interpret labour market intelligence in the light of policy goals and programmes; and
- **Research dissemination:** To create a community of practice by sharing knowledge and research generated from this programme to encourage debates within the research community and policy makers; and
- **Skills Forecasting Capacity:** To build the Department's capacity as well as that of the Sectoral Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) to anticipate trends in the demand for and supply of skills from the education and training sector.

LMIP was divided into six (6) themes of research, each of which was to contribute to the mechanism's development in a unique way (ADRS, 2011; DHET & HSRC, 2012a; DHET & HSRC, 2012b; DHET & HSRC, 2012c; DHET & HSRC, 2014).

The six (6) research themes of the LMIP Project are as follows (DHET, 2016):

- **Theme 1 Establishing a foundation for labour market information systems:** This theme focuses on issues pertaining to data sources, indicators for skills planning and models of skills planning;
- **Theme 2 Skills forecasting:** This theme involves the development of an econometric model to forecast skills needs;
- **Theme 3 Sectoral Analysis:** This theme focuses on national economic analysis and sectoral analysis of the labour market. Its work included a survey of employers, undertaken with the assistance of several SETAs;
- **Theme 4 Reconfiguring the post-school sector:** This theme focuses on skills planning at an institutional level. It has undertaken several case studies, which demonstrate how different institutions have established linkages with industry;
- **Theme 5 Pathways through education and training and into the workplace:** This theme focuses on graduation destination studies (from Universities, TVET Colleges, Community Colleges and SETA Workplace-Based Learning (WBL) Programmes. It has also looked at the profile of matric students who enter Universities, and those who do not, and examines the pathways followed by school students who participated in the TIMSS study; and
- **Theme 6 Understanding changing artisanal milieus and identities:** This theme focuses on understanding the context within which artisanal skills development and practice is taking place. It examines the history of artisanal development, and the impact of changing occupational structures, knowledge and skills bases.

In addition to the above themes, the LMIP also had strong capacity building component, as well as an intensive advocacy and dissemination element.

LMIP was complemented by a number of initiatives being undertaken in the Department, such as the provisioning of career advisory services and the development of an integrated management information system (Outcome 5.1.3, 2010) (DHET, 2016). The LMIP Project is planned to end in March 2018, when the DHET's contract with HSRC comes to an end.

1.3 Methodology

The methodology for this evaluation was guided by the Department of Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation (DPME) Guideline 2.2.12 Implementation Evaluation (DPME, 2014b), DPME Guideline 2.2.11 Design Evaluation (DPME, 2014a) and DPME Guideline 2.2.13 Impact Evaluation (DPME, 2014c) that govern implementation, design and impact evaluations. The evaluation methodology was also informed by the Development Assistance Committee

(DAC) Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance (OECD, 2016) together with the DAC Evaluation Network Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management (OECD, 2002).

A Theory of Change and Logical Model were developed retrospectively for LMIP. The Logical Model² served as a key point of reference for the evaluation. An evaluation matrix guided the evaluation, leveraging questions posed in the terms of reference (ToR) for the evaluation as well as questions posed by the DPME methodology and DAC guidelines. Four (4) parallel data collection approaches were used to inform the evaluation: document reviews, four (4) unique surveys targeting the Department, research partners, SETAs and other government departments, workshops and face-to-face/ telephonic interviews. Forty-nine (49) direct contact sessions comprising of two (2) workshops and forty-seven (47) interviews with key stakeholders were conducted for the evaluation. These contact sessions provided qualitative evidence to substantiate quantitative data derived from thirty-seven (37) survey responses and from LMIP documentation. In addition to the Department, representatives from the HSRC, Wits University, ETDP SETA, CHIETA, merSETA, FASSET, Department of Small Business Development, Department of Trade and Industry and LMIP-contracted critical reviewers were consulted.

The document review component, included desktop review of LMIP Memoranda of Agreement (MoA) (DHET, 2011; DHET, 2012) and addendums (DHET, 2013a; DHET, 2015a; DHET, 2015b), business plans (ADRS, 2011; DHET and HSRC, 2012a, DHET and HSRC, 2012b, DHET and HSRC, 2012c, DHET and HSRC, 2014), products of meetings/ workshops/ seminars, communication between DHET, the University of the Witwatersrand and the Centre for Researching Education and Labour (REAL Centre), progress reports submitted by the HSRC and REAL Centre, analysis of research outputs including literature reviews, review of the LMIP Project online repository and website, analysis of relevant financial documents and review of national policy and strategy documents, including DHET's Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF), the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (the White Paper) and the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III (DHET, 2010; DHET 2013b; DHET, 2014).

Interviews explored respondents' views and perceptions of LMIP-related activities. In addition to interviews, an electronic survey was distributed to stakeholders from government departments and research institutions. The survey requested information on activities relating to LMIP as well as respondent's opinions on various issues relevant to the evaluation.

As per the DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance (OECD, 2016), the evaluation criteria and their respective descriptions for this evaluation are listed in the table below.

Table 1: Evaluation Criteria Description and Evaluation Methods

Evaluation Criteria	Description	Evaluation Method
Relevance	The extent to which the [project] is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, [beneficiaries and project stakeholders].	Assessed based on comparing the degree of alignment of the LMIP objectives as articulated in the MoAs between DHET and HSRC and between DHET and Wits to the LMIP problem statement, NSDS III, DHET's MTSF, the White Paper for Post School Education and Training and stakeholder perceptions

² The Logical Model is included in section 3.3. below, presented by LMIP objective. The full version of the Logical Model and the Theory of Change are included in the appendix to this report








Evaluation Criteria	Description	Evaluation Method
Efficiency	An indication of how efficiently the project was managed, and the relationship between the inputs and outputs/outcomes of the project.	<p>Assessed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the degree to which inputs are converted to outputs, as per the Logical Model - the degree to which stakeholders perceive the efficiency of Activities (as per the Logical Model), determined through surveys <p>General, financial and time-related efficiency of the LMIP Project was evaluated by stakeholders via surveys and interviews and by comparing the costs of activities undertaken to alternative avenues of action or service providers</p>
Effectiveness	A measure of the extent to which [a project] attains its objectives.	<p>Assessed as the extent to which LMIP has delivered against its objectives (including outputs, outcomes, impacts, as per the Logical Model). The extent of this delivery is assessed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - gauging to what extent the LMIP objectives are perceived to have been met; and - assessing the extent to which the outcomes and impacts associated with the LMIP objectives have been produced, compared to the objectives planned in the Logical Model
Emerging Impact	The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main impacts and effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators.	Assessed as the extent of realization of the impact: providing research to support the development of a credible institutional mechanism for skills planning in South Africa
Sustainability	Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after funding has been withdrawn.	To assess the sustainability of outcomes achieved by the LMIP, stakeholders were asked whether they felt the general and a selection of particular outcomes would outlast the end of the LMIP Project

The ToR for the evaluation specified seven (7) overarching key evaluation questions and a total of twenty-two (22) evaluation sub-questions which needed to be answered (DHET, 2016). Key evaluation questions that informed the study are detailed in the Appendix (Research Approach and Methodology: Instrument Development).

1.4 Findings

The table below presents a summary view of the evaluation findings using the DAC evaluation criteria as a point of reference. The extent to which each criterion was met is indicated through a colour rating. The disaggregated results are further outlined below.

Table 2: Summarised Assessment of the Evaluation Areas

Findings of the Evaluation of the LMIP Project ³	
Relevance	
Effectiveness	
Efficiency	
Sustainability	
Key:	  

The section below presents the above summary findings in more detail.

1.4.1 Relevance

Definition: Relevance

The extent to which the [Project] is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, [beneficiaries and Project stakeholders].

Source: DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance, 2016.

Relevance is assessed by comparing each of LMIP's key objectives and sub-objectives (as outlined in the respective MoAs between the Department, the HSRC and Wits), to beneficiary needs and socio-economic priorities (DHET, 2011; DHET, 2012). Beneficiary needs are described in the LMIP problem statement that is defined in the Theory of Change. Socio-economic priorities were described by the goals of the NSDS III, the White Paper and the DHET's MTSF (DHET, 2010; DHET 2013b; DHET, 2014).

LMIP has been evaluated as having a high degree of relevance to its associated problem statement (as articulated in its Theory of Change), the NSDS III (particularly Goal 4.1), the DHET's MTSF, and the main policy objectives outlined in the White Paper (DHET, 2010; DHET, 2013b; DHET 2014). Positive perceptions of relevance from LMIP stakeholders support this.

³ A caveat of the evaluation is that Impact according to the strict DAC definition cannot be fairly assessed at this point in the Project's lifetime. As such, the criterion discussed in this report is 'Emerging Impact' which looks at initial perceptions of impact as opposed to impact that can be definitively measured. This approach is in line with the ToR for the evaluation, which required that the emerging impact be assessed. Impact is thus not assessed in the typical technical sense and is not colour coded in the figure above.

Table 3: LMIP Relevance to National Policies and Strategies

Relevance of the LMIP objectives to the LMIP problem statement and national policies and strategies	
Overall Relevance	●
LMIP Problem Statement	●
NSDS III	●
White Paper for Post-School Education and Training	●
MTSF	●
Stakeholder Perceptions	●
Key:	<div style="display: inline-block; width: 100px; height: 15px; background-color: red; margin-right: 5px;"></div> Not Met <div style="display: inline-block; width: 100px; height: 15px; background-color: yellow; margin-right: 5px; margin-left: 20px;"></div> Partially Met <div style="display: inline-block; width: 100px; height: 15px; background-color: green; margin-left: 20px;"></div> Met

1.4.2 Effectiveness

Definition: Effectiveness

A measure of the extent to which [a project] attains its objectives.

Source: DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance, 2016.

As per the DAC definition above, LMIP’s effectiveness is evaluated as the extent to which LMIP has achieved its objectives. This is measured by determining stakeholder perceptions of the extent to which LMIP has met its objectives, as well as the extent to which the outputs and outcomes⁴ linked to specific objectives have been delivered. Specific objectives, together with associated outputs and outcomes are examined below.

The LMIP Project’s overall objective of contributing towards “*establishing a credible, institutional mechanism for skills planning*” is defined by the six (6) key objectives listed in section 1.2 above. The table that follows outlines the extent to which LMIP delivered against each of these objectives.

⁴An output is defined as a product, capital good or service which results from a development intervention; may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes. An outcome is defined as the likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effect of an intervention’s output/s. A project objective is defined as the intended physical, financial, institutional, social, environmental, or other development result to which a project or program is expected to contribute. (OECD, 2002).

Table 4: Summary Evaluation of Effectiveness

Main Objectives	(A) Extent to which LMIP Objectives have been met, based on Stakeholder Perceptions	(B) Extent of Delivery of Outputs, based on Assessment of Associated Deliverables	(C) Extent of Delivery of Outcomes, based on Stakeholder Perceptions
1.1 Information and knowledge advancement	●	●	●
1.2 Labour market intelligence	●	●	●
1.3 Institutional Capacity Development	●	●	●
1.4 Skills Forecasting Capacity	●	●	●
1.5 Research Capacity Development	●	●	●
1.6 Research Dissemination	●	●	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

With regard to the table above, columns (A) and (C) indicate the extent of delivery against LMIP objectives, assessed based on stakeholder perception. Column (A) assesses the extent to which objectives were perceived to have been achieved, and column (C) indicates the extent to which stakeholders perceived the outcome(s) associated with the objective as having been delivered. Column (B) assesses extent of delivery of outputs associated with the relevant objective, based on an assessment by the evaluation team of relevant evidence for these outputs.

As should be clear from the table above, there is clear alignment between the extent of perceived delivery of the objective, and the extent of delivery of associated outputs and outcomes, for all but two (2) of the LMIP objectives. For objectives 1.4 and 1.5, outputs have been assessed as having met delivery expectations, but the objective itself (column A) and its associated outcomes (column C) have been assessed as having only partially delivered against expectations. With regard to objective 1.4. (Skills Forecasting Capacity), while the forecasting model for skills supply and demand, together with required training, was delivered as planned, the fact that the model is not widely used at the moment would have limited the extent of the resulting outcomes being realized. For objective 1.5 (Research Capacity Development), the support provided for capacity development (e.g. via bursaries) by LMIP will take time to result in enhanced research capacity; and have thus not been reported by stakeholders as observable.










With regard to outputs planned for LMIP, these have generally been assessed as having met delivery expectation. Of the twenty-nine (29) outputs for LMIP as defined in the Logical Model, five (5) outputs, namely skills strategies/ plans/ decisions informed by LMIP research, skills interventions triggered by LMIP research, a national data architecture, a research plan and appropriate research specifications have been assessed as not having been fully delivered.




Overall, despite the perception that the Project was successful in a number of areas, stakeholders felt that the benefits of the Project had not yet been fully realised – either due to a lack of translation into active policies and interventions, or because the long-term nature of such a project implies that a longer time horizon is necessary for benefits to become apparent.

1.4.2.1 Assessment of Programme Management

Programme management activities are naturally integral to the achievement of any project's objectives. The standard activities and outputs associated with programme management have been assessed as part of the assessment of effectiveness. Summary results from this assessment are outlined in the table below.

Table 5: Management and Administration Assessment

Project Management Activities	Project Management Area Performance
Project Governance	
Governance Structures	
Project Management and Administration	
Risk Management	
Stakeholder Communications	
Project Planning	
Progress Reporting	
Quality Assurance	
Document Management	
Human Resource Capacity	
Disbursement of Funds and Verification of Expenditure	

* Where  = met;  = partially met;  = not met

1.4.3 Efficiency

Definition: Efficiency

Efficiency measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term which signifies that the [project] uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted.

Source: DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance, 2016.

Efficiency relates to how economically the LMIP Project inputs were translated into outputs relative to comparable approaches.

The following table summarises efficiency findings for LMIP. These findings are based on stakeholder perceptions (for some items, e.g. efficient use of time allocated), review of relevant outputs (e.g. progress reports) and processes (as outlined in relevant documents and as reported through interviews), as well as comparison of LMIP costs to available benchmarks.

Table 6: Overall Assessment of Efficiency

Findings of the Evaluation related to Efficiency	
Financial Management	●
Project Management	●
Research Reports	●
Tools	●
Dissemination	●
Capacity Building	●
Efficient Use of time allocated	●
Overall Assessment of Efficiency	●
Key:	 Not Met Partially Met Met

In this executive summary, commentary is focused on financial efficiency (including cost efficiency). Financial efficiency is highlighted here given the strong views expressed on this matter by some stakeholders. Other areas assessed for efficiency (as outlined in the table above) are covered in detail in section 3.4 (Efficiency).

Financial efficiency was generally well perceived by stakeholders consulted during the evaluation (Evaluation Interviews, 2017). Surveys have elicited positive views from stakeholder regarding items such as cost effectiveness of LMIP relative to outputs achieved, as well as the extent to which alternative approaches would have yielded similar results at a lower cost. These positive findings were further substantiated by views expressed in interviews.

Examination of costs with regard to comparable benchmarks have also, typically, indicated that the costs for LMIP are not unreasonable; viewed from a cost-effectiveness perspective. For instance, the cost for research reports (accounting for 40% of the total cost) for LMIP does not appear to be out of sync with that experienced outside the project. However, it must be noted that views on the efficacy of research report production are mixed. Some stakeholders decry what they perceive as expensive reports that do not address the information requirements of skills planners, while others commend the usefulness of the reports (Evaluation Interviews, 2017).

Based on alternate quotations obtained by the Department, it appears that the LMIP skills forecasting model (accounting for 18% of total LMIP costs) developed by ADRS on behalf of Wits, could potentially have been produced at a lower cost than that incurred. This perspective is compounded by licencing issues resulting in the model, at time of writing, not being available for use.

1.4.4 Sustainability

Definition: Sustainability

A measurement of whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after funding has been withdrawn.

Source: DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance, 2016.

LMIP’s sustainability, as per the DAC definition above, was assessed as the extent to which the benefits of LMIP are likely to continue after the end of the project. Given that LMIP is yet to be completed, the extent of continuing benefits was assessed indirectly through:

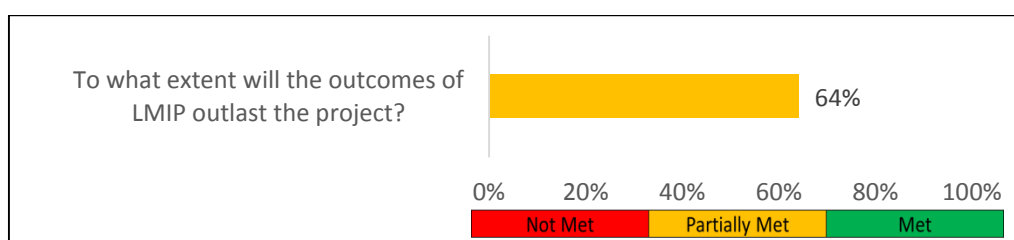
- the identification of particular LMIP outputs that would survive beyond the end of the project; and
- stakeholder perceptions of the longevity of LMIP outcomes.

The following LMIP outputs are expected to survive beyond the end of the project:

- the LMIP research repository, which will be transferred to the DHET, and which contains, among others, reports of pathway studies;
- key indicators for skills planning;
- dictionary of terms related to skills planning;
- the forecasting model on skills supply and demand;
- the methodology for the development of the National Occupations in High Demand List (OiHDL); and
- methodologies for the execution of tracer studies.

Stakeholders were polled on their overall impression of the extent to which LMIP outcomes would outlast the end of the project. They were also asked for their perception of the extent to which particular LMIP outcomes (in particular the intermediate outcomes) would survive beyond the end of the project. As indicated in the figure below, stakeholders were of the view that LMIP outcomes in general will outlast the end of the project to a moderate degree.

Figure 1: General Outcome Sustainability - LMIP



Source: Consolidated LMIP Surveys – To what extent will the outcomes of LMIP outlast the Project? (LMIP Project Team; LMIP Partner)

The overall stakeholder perception of longevity of LMIP outcomes, as per the graph above, is borne out by stakeholder perceptions of the extent to which specific intermediate outcomes would outlast the project (described in the sections that follow this executive summary).

Ultimately, the extent to which the benefits associated with LMIP outputs listed above may be expected to outlive the project, depends heavily on the extent to which the outputs above are actively utilised in the generation and uptake of skills research. The extent to which these outputs are utilised, and the extent to which the behaviours encouraged by LMIP (e.g. a research community of practice) persevere, would be fostered by an ongoing, and potentially enhanced, LMIP-like capability. Such a capability has been proposed by the Department in the form of the Skills Planning Unit (SPU), focused on achieving the following objectives:

- conducting analysis of the labour market;
- undertaking planning for the PSET system; and
- monitoring the performance and funding of the PSET system.

Longevity of the benefits of LMIP may thus be achieved provided that the proposed SPU receives political support and significant budget and is able to employ staff with the requisite skills.

1.4.5 Emerging Impact

Definition: Impact

The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main impacts and effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators.

Source: DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance, 2016.

Given that LMIP has not been completed yet, and as required by the ToR for the evaluation, the evaluation focused on assessing the emerging impact, as opposed to the longer-term impact, of LMIP.

For the LMIP to achieve its intended impact, it should ultimately contribute to the establishment of a CIMSP. The CIMSP itself is intended to reduce occupational shortages in the economy, reduce skills gaps in the workforce and reduce imbalances and mismatches between skills supply and demand. The LMIP contributed to this by establishing an evidence base describing the current and future skills demand and supply levels, and imbalances and mismatches between these. It also developed roadmaps, instruments and methodologies which are thought to enable skills planners to continually read the signal of demand for skills from the economy, government growth strategies and trade and investment policies (Evaluation Interviews, 2017).

The goal of establishing a skills planning mechanism, referring to the intelligence, institutional structures, processes and agreements for undertaking planning as well as the wider context which influences decisions on how resources are allocated for skills development, appears to have been partially addressed by the production of labour market intelligence (LMI) and the development of methodologies to be employed by institutional structures (provisionally envisioned as the proposed skills planning unit, or SPU). In addition, the National Skills Fund (NSF) has reportedly utilised the OiHDL (produced as part of the amended scope of LMIP) to guide resource allocation towards bursaries which supplement identified scarce skills.

The reported progress is in alignment with the progression outlined in the Logical Model, and is attributable to the nature of the LMIP as a research project. The indirect, long term socio-economic changes are expected to be realised only once the SPU (or a similar capability) has been established, active skills planning interventions are incorporated into policies and these are then effectively implemented.

1.5 Key Findings and Recommendations

The following table outlines key findings and recommendations stemming from this evaluation.

Table 7: Key Findings and Recommendations

Key Finding, by LMIP Objective	Recommendations for Relevant Stakeholders		
	Researchers	DHET	Skills Planners ⁵
<p>Information and knowledge advancement regarding the Post-School Education and Training (PSET) system was enabled through good quality, credible scientific research, albeit broad and reportedly overly academic in a significant number of cases.</p>	<p>Based on input from stakeholders consulted during the evaluation, there is a need for researchers to familiarize themselves with the OFO Register – a coded occupational classification system that is a key tool utilized by the DHET for identification, reporting and monitoring of skills demand and supply in the South African labour market.</p>	<p>The proposed SPU to be established within DHET should translate existing skills planning research generated by the LMIP into non-academic language briefs that answer policy questions rather than academic research questions.</p> <p>DHET should articulate specific labour market intelligence requirements to external researchers to avoid an unfocussed and sprawling approach to scoping research outputs.</p> <p>Future research projects involving broad timelines and scope should adopt a more evolutionary approach to planning. The defined research content and approach should be routinely re-evaluated as a means to disaggregate the project. This will contribute to sustained alignment of project outputs to the needs of research consumers.</p>	<p>Critical information necessary to sustainably perform institutional skills planning should be identified and mechanisms should be implemented which ensure that this data continues to be gathered by appropriate organisations and is readily accessible in a usable format.</p>

⁵ In this table Skills Planners refers to those people involved in developing skills plans, skills strategies, and skills policies, outside of DHET head office. This may include skills planners at organisations such as public universities, TVET colleges, community colleges, SETAs, and government departments.

Key Finding, by LMIP Objective	Recommendations for Relevant Stakeholders		
	Researchers	DHET	Skills Planners ⁵
<p><i>The LMIP Project has promoted labour market intelligence in light of policy, sectoral and other education, training and skills issues both through applied research and by highlighting key characteristics of the Research Policy Nexus, required for effective integration between skills research and skills planning.</i></p>	<p>Researchers should ensure that research outcomes are translated and communicated effectively to ensure uptake. It is noted that researchers will need to be supported in this by skills planners articulating their needs more clearly.</p>	<p>The functional roles of the researchers and policymakers at the research policy nexus should be defined and actively managed and coordinated by dedicated project management.</p>	<p>Research outputs should be packaged in a format which explicitly informs career guidance, enhances existing enrolment planning processes for universities and colleges, improves processes that inform allocations for bursaries and scholarships and supports different layers of the skills planning mechanism, namely national, sectoral and organisational.</p>
<p><i>Capacity was notably limited in the Department, affecting the ability of officials in the education and training space to engage with the evidence presented to them, given its volume and complexity, thereby necessitating continued institutional capacity development.</i></p> <p><i>Delivery of the LMIP project was hamstrung by various project management issues (e.g. lack of resource capacity).</i></p>	<p>Contracted researchers should produce evidence which is aligned to the information requirements of institutional skills planners.</p>	<p>Internal technical know-how and expertise within DHET has to improve if research outputs are to be effectively absorbed and utilised for decision making, action and implementation.</p> <p>Dedicated project management roles should be defined, and responsibilities assigned, as indicated by the detailed evaluation findings.</p> <p>Key learnings (as outlined in the Lessons Learnt section of this document) from the project management of LMIP in designing, mobilising and implementing phases should be considered when designing projects of a similar nature.</p>	<p>Based on the view from stakeholders consulted during the evaluation, an expert on skills planning in the South African context is required to advise the envisioned SPU.</p> <p>Internalisation and retention of capacity and capabilities generated during LMIP can be improved by contractually binding future bursary recipients to participate in post study skills planning traineeships/ internships.</p>

Key Finding, by LMIP Objective	Recommendations for Relevant Stakeholders		
	Researchers	DHET	Skills Planners ⁵
<i>The LMIP Project has advanced research dissemination via an increase in collaboration and engagement between PSET stakeholders, allowing dialogue around standardised approaches to skills planning and the existing mechanisms, thereby significantly contributing to addressing key issues that plagued the skills planning landscape prior to its introduction. However, the research itself was undertaken in a siloed manner with limited coordination across the various contributing research institutions.</i>	Research initiatives, both within and outside the skills development sector, are encouraged to emulate successful research practices as established by LMIP (e.g. research communities), but should emphasize cross-institutional/research group collaboration.	Further skills research initiatives pursued by DHET should consider the successful collaborative practices demonstrated by LMIP for inclusion in any skills research capabilities that these initiatives seek to establish.	National, sectoral and organisational skills planners should continually consult the research findings of the LMIP to guide future skills policy/ strategy/ resource allocation decisions.
<i>While the LMIP has delivered a number of successes regarding research dissemination, the progress appears to be poorly understood outside of those stakeholders closely involved in the Project.</i>	Encourage more researchers to serve as ambassadors for LMIP in everyday interactions with relevant stakeholders; engaging stakeholders on the research outcomes produced during LMIP to encourage uptake.	Publicise LMIP's successes, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to encourage take-up of the Projects outputs, e.g. research reports; • to disseminate learnings from this Project; and • to encourage further delivery against LMIP's goals. Investigate avenues to better expose the outputs produced by LMIP. These avenues may include inserts in publications, more workshops with skills planners, segments on radio etc.	Look to replicate effective LMIP practices, as highlighted in this document, to continue its successes. The envisioned SPU should collaborate with multiple branches within the DHET as well as coordinate interactions, collaboration and partnerships with external public and private organisations, particularly education and training institutions.
<i>Research capacity development was advanced through the process of successful delivery against the majority of target research objectives and intended outcomes, and through the allocation of bursaries and internships and through learning sessions.</i>	Interventions should be deployed which increase the supply of research capacity relating to targeted qualifications and programmes as defined by national development strategies. These initiatives may include the development of sector specific skills research capacity, longer term research skills development initiatives.	Institutionalise continuation of critical, evolutionary sub-projects, including sectoral analyses, national OiHDL, tracer studies and use of the forecasting model for skills supply and demand, using methodologies developed over the course of LMIP.	Where necessary, new curricula should be developed to address gaps in the PSET system regarding labour market research to further enhance research capacity development.

Key Finding, by LMIP Objective	Recommendations for Relevant Stakeholders		
	Researchers	DHET	Skills Planners ⁵
<p><i>The LMIP Project built a model to forecast the supply and demand of skills which has, together with complementary training to use the model, enhanced the skills forecasting capacity of skills planners. However, licencing issues have stymied access to the model itself.</i></p>	<p>Utilise outputs from the model to inform other areas of skills research.</p> <p>Explore applicability of the model to different areas of research.</p> <p>Given the sophisticated nature of the model, researchers will need to be trained on its use.</p>	<p>Resolve licencing issues to ensure that the macroeconomic model is available to relevant organisations (e.g. SETAs), capacitate users by hosting training sessions and ensure ongoing model utility and usability.</p>	<p>Work with researchers to optimise use of the model for skills planning; utilise the model to identify gaps that need to be addressed by targeted skills interventions.</p>

2 Introduction

This section introduces LMIP by describing the national policies and strategies which precipitated its inception, the nature of the project and the objectives it attempted to achieve in general as well as a description of each of the six (6) thematic areas constituting LMIP. Document structure and conventions, as used in this report, are also introduced in this section.

2.1 Purpose of this Document

This document outlines the results of the final evaluation study (“Study” or “Evaluation”) conducted on the Labour Market Intelligence Partnership (“LMIP” or “the Project”). The Evaluation was based on data gathered and consultations conducted between May 2017 and October 2017 by Redflank, on behalf of the Department of Higher Education and Training (“DHET” or “the Department”).

The LMIP Project is described in the sub-section that follows. Further details on the Study (areas of focus, scope of the evaluation, methodology and approach etc.) are provided in the Appendix.

2.2 Introduction to the LMIP Project

In 2009, the South African government ordered the development of a CISP to address the country’s lack of information regarding labour market needs. In response to this, the DHET initiated discussions with the HSRC in 2011 to explore how information and insights into skills needs can be obtained. In 2012 the Department entered into a formal agreement with the HSRC and Wits, subsequently launching the LMIP. The Project was funded by an unsolicited grant of R 81 417 128, allocated by the NSF (DHET, 2010). The LMIP Project is underpinned by several key policy commitments such as those set out in the NSDS Strategy III (2011 to 2016) (DHET, 2010) and DHET’s MTSF (2014 - 2019) (DHET, 2014) which commits the Minister to the “*development of a credible mechanism for skills planning*”. Both the NSDS III, as well as the MTSF, acknowledge the absence of “*intelligence*” and insights into the labour market, and the lack of information about South Africa’s skills needs (DHET, 2010; DHET, 2014).

The LMIP is a research project which has conducted a set of research studies designed to contribute to the creation of a more credible and effective institutional mechanism for skills planning in South Africa. The skills planning mechanism refers to “the intelligence, institutional structures, processes and agreements for undertaking the planning as well as the wider political economy which influences decisions on how resources are allocated for skills development” (LMIP, 2015). As a research project, its outputs include research reports, research papers, research articles, policy briefs, templates, tools and concepts. In addition to these outputs, the Project also has a strong capacity building component. The Project is built on six (6) main objectives intended to guide it to better contribute towards the CIMSP, these objectives are:

- **Information and knowledge advancement:** To advance information and knowledge of the post-school education and training system in relation to growth, through good quality scientific research and critical scholarship;
- **Labour market intelligence:** To interpret and analyse information and knowledge in light of policy, sectoral and other education, training and skills issues, and to build models to create labour market intelligence that informs decision making, strategic planning and interventions;
- **Research capacity development:** To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field to ensure more effective impact of research on policy, and to increase the national pool of researchers, especially African and women researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour analysis;
- **Institutional capacity development:** To enhance the capacity of DHET to gather labour information, design a national data architecture and strategic framework, and to interpret labour market intelligence in the light of policy goals and programmes; and
- **Research dissemination:** To create a community of practice by sharing knowledge and research generated from this programme to encourage debates within the research community and policy makers.
- **Skills Forecasting Capacity:** To build the Department’s capacity as well as that of the Sectoral Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) to anticipate trends in the demand for and supply of skills from the education and training sector.

Following the analysis of past South African skills planning and international experiences, it was proposed that the South African skills planning approach emphasise the analysis of skills demand. The signals of demand for skills from the economy, government growth strategies and trade and investment policies needed to be read. The

strategies for skills development (both professional and intermediate) were then more closely aligned to policies for industrial development and skills-biased government growth initiatives. Skills planning must promote an inclusive approach to skills development with a focus on improved levels of education and training for the population and improved workplace training. South Africa will follow this unique approach to reflect the country's needs and historical circumstances. The LMIS-SA includes data on skills supply, skills demand, workplace skills and vacancies, trends in the economy (both private and government growth initiatives), and trade and investment strategies. Government, with partners, will use LMIS-SA to ensure alignment between industrial strategies and strategies for skills development.

Data was collected on: (i) the context in which skills development takes place; (ii) skills supply; (iii) current and future demand for skills; (iv) occupations in high demand; and (v) the education and training outcomes that support the planning process. At the heart of any system producing LMI, there is a central body responsible for coordinating the different processes associated with the collection, collation and analysis of data. Such a body must have political support and a significant budget to perform this function. LMIP recommends the establishment of a Skills Planning Unit (SPU) which, for now, would be located in the DHET. The SPU must employ staff with labour market economics and planning skills. In consolidating the Labour Market Intelligence System (LMIS-SA), the LMIP aimed to determine what data needs to be collected, where the data will come from, and the arrangements that need to be in place to access the data. Secondly, the LMIP aimed to determine how the data will be analysed and the types of LMI that will be produced. LMIS-SA set out to collect data on the context for economic growth, skills supply, skills demand for both current needs and future needs and on education and training outcomes.

Data was collated from existing administrative data, from modifications to surveys to produce the required information, and by setting up new surveys to address data gaps. To access data from other government departments, the SPU will sign Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with these entities for the form and frequency of the information required. The collection and analysis of data on the demand situation is complex, and will involve the SPU working with outside organisations.

No discussion of a skills planning mechanism would be complete without a debate on OiHDL (more commonly known as the scarce skills list). The longer-term success of the skills planning mechanism will be judged by the degree to which there is a match between the supply and demand for skills in South Africa. The analysis of skills shortages guided the production of the list of occupations in high demand and identified skill areas in which resources must be invested – this is at the heart of the skills planning mechanism. LMIP proposed a more coherent methodology to estimate the occupations in high demand and to develop a more formalised response. In this process, occupations in high demand were identified and the scarce skills report recommends responses that need to be implemented over the short, medium and longer term. Each of these timeframes will require different strategies and types of interventions by the DHET and partners. In the short term, emphasis will be on rapid responses to occupations in high demand, with emphasis being given to providers that can instantly increase the supply of skilled graduates in these areas. Where supply cannot be increased over the short term, emphasis will be given to the allocation of visas to areas in which there is an identified high demand. For the medium term, strategies will be necessary to identify what new programmes need to be developed or instructors trained. The precise strategy will be determined by the nature of the occupations in high demand. Finally, longer strategies will also focus upon what new capital developments must take place to support the expansion of certain types of skills, especially those areas that take a long time to develop. We recommend that the responses for each of these time frames must prioritise intermediate level skills. In addition to the technical process of collating, collecting and analysing data to generate the information and intelligence to inform skills planning, there was a need to focus on the coordination and coherence of skills plans and policies across government, organised labour and business. This will ensure: (i) the coherence of skills policy at the national, sectoral and institutional levels; (ii) that the SPU is informed of the key skills biased growth and investment strategies (from both government and the private sector); and (iii) agreement on the direction and types of education and training programmes.

The LMIP Project was divided into six (6) thematic areas of research, each of which was to contribute to the achievement of the Project's goals in a unique way. The thematic areas were complemented by two (2) additional business plans, one of which developed the plan for capacity building, the other focussed on advocacy and dissemination of the LMIP deliverables. While the overall management of the LMIP Project is the responsibility of Branch P of the DHET and the Research Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation (RCME) Directorate, each theme was assigned its own Theme Leader responsible for managing it. The project themes were as follows:

- **Theme 1 Establishing a foundation for labour market information systems:** This theme focuses on issues pertaining to data sources, indicators for skills planning and models of skills planning;
- **Theme 2 Skills forecasting:** This theme involves the development of an econometric model to forecast skills needs;
- **Theme 3 Sectoral Analysis:** This theme focuses on national economic analysis and sectoral analysis of the labour market. Its work included a survey of employers, undertaken with the assistance of several SETAs;
- **Theme 4 Reconfiguring the post-school sector:** This theme focuses on skills planning at an institutional level. It has undertaken several case studies, which demonstrate how different institutions have established linkages with industry;
- **Theme 5 Pathways through education and training and into the workplace:** This theme focuses on graduation destination studies (from Universities, TVET Colleges, Community Colleges and SETA Workplace-Based Learning (WBL) Programmes. It has also looked at the profile of matric students who enter Universities, and those who do not, and examines the pathways followed by school students who participated in the TIMSS study; and
- **Theme 6 Understanding changing artisanal milieus and identities:** This theme focuses on understanding the context within which artisanal skills development and practice is taking place. It examines the history of artisanal development, and the impact of changing occupational structures, knowledge and skills bases.

In addition, the Project aimed to advance two (2) areas, namely capacity building and advocacy and dissemination, as outlined below.

- **Capacity building**

This area focuses on building capacity to undertake labour market research by means of the following:

- Researcher development;
- Bursary programme (2013 -2016);
- Research internship programme;
- Institutional capacity building; and
- Structured learning sessions;

- **Advocacy and Dissemination**

This area aimed to:

- Facilitate the uptake of evidenced-based research by policy-makers to effect policy making and change;
- Build a community of practice through the generation and dissemination of new knowledge within academic and practitioner communities;
- Problematize and contribute to understandings of the research policy-nexus in South Africa through the case of the LMIP;
- Stimulate and contribute to public discourse on labour market information and intelligence, skills planning, un/employment in South Africa;
- Advocate the need for labour market information systems in terms of skills planning and development

The LMIP Project is further complemented by other projects in the Department such as the career development system, the development of the Higher Education and Training Management Information System (HETMIS), the skills dimension of the Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs) and the skills implications of Phakisa Ocean Economy, all of which will contribute towards the establishment of a CIMSP. The LMIP Project is planned to end in March 2018, when the DHET's contract with HSRC comes to an end.

2.3 Document Conventions

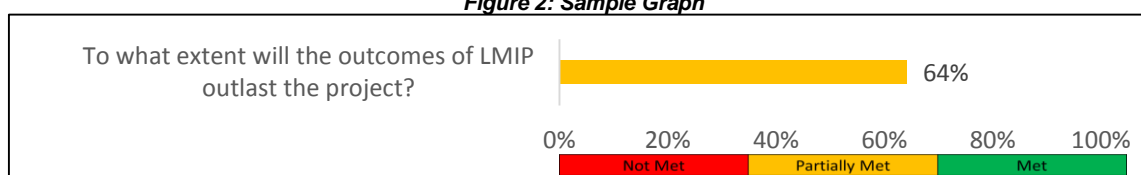
The Study was conducted through an assessment of LMIP according to the DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, emerging impact and sustainability.

2.3.1 Typical Conventions used in Depicting Graphs

Graphs used in this document are depicted according to the following convention (see the sample graph below):

- Graph figures are obtained from surveys conducted with the DHET, SETAs, other government departments, and researcher partners
- Sources are references to where the relevant data was gathered from
- Questions in bold writing below graphs indicate the relevant question posed to the survey participant

Figure 2: Sample Graph



2.3.2 Conventions used in assessing Logical Model Elements

The rating scale below is used in conjunction with the colour ratings provided.

0% – 20%	21% – 40%	41% – 60%	61% – 80%	81% – 100%
Not at All	Minimal	Significantly	Substantially	Extensively
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
0% – 33%		34% – 66%		67% – 100%
Not Met		Partially Met		Met

The percentage in the scale above indicates the weighted average of all responses.

Respondents were asked to rate each question according to a 5-point Likert Scale. The Likert Scale used was the following:

- 1 – Not at all / Strongly Disagree
- 2 – Minimal / Disagree
- 3 – Significantly / Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 4 – Substantially / Agree
- 5 – Extensively / Strongly Agree

Areas highlighted in Green have been assessed as 'Met', areas highlighted in Amber have been assessed as 'Partially Met' and areas highlighted in Red have been assessed as 'Not Met'.

2.3.3 Conventions for Text Boxes

Text boxes used in this document are depicted to mean the following:

- Text boxes with shades of green indicate quotations that do not form part of anecdotal evidence.

"The LMIP research project marks an important step in contributing towards the creation of a credible labour market intelligence framework - the establishment of a functional interface that will ensure better information gathering, analysis and overall systems synergy in pursuit of a skills development agenda that is developmental, forward-looking and embedded in empirical analysis."

- Source: Minister of Higher Education and Training, Blade Nzimande, speaking at the launch of the Labour Market Intelligence Partnership in 2012

- Text boxes with shades of blue indicate anecdotal evidence gathered from interviews and surveys, depicting their reflections of the Project.

"One of the big benefits was that people came around and had meeting and workshops – there was a common understanding of quantitative skills planning according to a rigorous academic process around an intellectually stimulating model."

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

- Text boxes with a white background provide an outline of the ensuing section.

Effectiveness implies the extent to which the LMIP Project achieved the LMIP objectives. This is assessed using the core and sub-objectives derived from the MoAs to expand upon the activities, outputs and outcomes effectiveness according to the Logical Model.

- Grey text boxes provide definitions for the DAC Criterion assessed within the specific section.

Definition: Efficiency

Efficiency measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term which signifies that the aid uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted.

Source: DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance, 2016.

3 Findings





The previous section provided an introduction to the LMIP Project, its objectives, the thematic focus areas for the research conducted and an explanation of the conventions used to present findings and insights.

This section begins with a tabulation of the findings from the assessment of the LMIP against the DAC Evaluation Criteria; relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, emerging impact and sustainability. The sub-sections that follow provide the details of the assessment against each evaluation criterion.

3.1 Overall Assessment

The table below indicates to what extent the LMIP met each of the DAC evaluation criteria. The extent to which each criterion has been met is indicated through a colour rating. Each of these components of the evaluation is detailed in the sections that follow.

Table 8: Outcome Assessment Evaluation

Findings for the Evaluation of LMIP ⁶	
Relevance	
Effectiveness	
Efficiency	
Sustainability	
Key:	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="background-color: red; width: 100px; height: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></div> Not Met <div style="background-color: yellow; width: 100px; height: 15px; margin-right: 5px; margin-left: 20px;"></div> Partially Met <div style="background-color: green; width: 100px; height: 15px;"></div> Met </div>

3.2 Relevance

Definition: Relevance

The extent to which the [Project] is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, [beneficiaries and Project stakeholders].

Source: DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance, 2016.

This section evaluates the relevance of the LMIP Project, using the definition above.

Relevance is evaluated by assessing the extent to which the objectives of the LMIP are suited to:

- the priorities of the intended beneficiaries (as articulated in the problem statement of the Theory of Change); and
- associated national policy, viz. Goal 4.1 of the NSDS III, which deals with the need for a ‘credible institutional mechanism for skills planning’, Outcome 5 of DHET’s Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) (2014-2019) and the main policy objectives outlined in the White Paper.

⁶ A caveat of the evaluation is that Impact according to the strict DAC definition cannot be fairly assessed at this point in the Project’s lifetime. As such, the criterion discussed in this report is ‘Emerging Impact’ which looks at initial perceptions of impact as opposed to impact that can be definitively measured. This approach is in line with the ToR for the evaluation, which required that the emerging impact be assessed. Impact is thus not assessed in the typical technical sense and is not colour coded in the figure above.

3.2.1 Background to the PSET System and Policy Imperatives addressed by LMIP

3.2.1.1 The PSET system in South Africa

Post-School Education and Training (PSET) dramatically increases the employment opportunities available to South Africans and contributes to economic growth and development. The skills-biased nature of employment opportunities and high unemployment rates in South Africa, along with the country's history of educational exclusion based on race, highlights the importance of a well-functioning PSET system. The PSET system aims to improve upon these socio-economic issues by achieving its primary goal of increased access to higher education and skills training. The PSET system comprises universities, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, skills training of workers and new entrants into the labour market, and community colleges providing adult basic education and training. Universities and colleges are funded through the fiscus, student fees and income from research and donors; skills training is funded largely through the skills development levy that is channels to SETAs and the NSF (GTAC, 2016).

3.2.1.2 Policy Imperatives for the establishment of LMIP

Skills planning is necessary to align the supply of skills leaving PSET institutions to the evolving needs of the labour market – skills demand. The LMIP aims to support the Department, and hence the PSET system, to be more efficient and effective in its skills planning. It is necessary to have reliable information on the availability of and need for skills in the country in order to ensure effective and efficient planning for an inclusive growth path.

At present, no integrated system exists to produce the necessary information to align skills supply and demand. A standardised framework for skills forecasting and the integration of this information through LMIP will assist the Department in establishing a CIMSP. This rationale is supported by key strategic and policy documents as outlined below:

3.2.1.2.1 The National Skills Development Strategy III, 2011-2016 (NSDS III) as extended

The NSDS III identifies the need for a 'standardised framework for determining skills supply, shortages and vacancies.' The strategy identifies the need for credible, integrated information on skills supply and demand to inform an institutional mechanism for skills planning across government (DHET, 2010). Essentially the information gathered, and analysis thereof, is intended to efficiently and effectively guide investment to meet the skills needs of the country.

The core objective of Goal of 4.1 of the NSDS III to "establish a credible institutional mechanism for skills planning" includes establishing capacity in the DHET to co-ordinate research and skills planning (Output 4.1.1.1); developing sector skills plans that provide a sound analysis of the sector (Output 4.1.1.2); commissioning research and analysing data, as well as validating and capturing data in an integrated database that is accessible to stakeholders (Output 4.1.1.2) (DHET, 2010).

3.2.1.2.2 The Medium Term Strategic Framework (2014-2019):

The MTSF aligns to the NSDS III in that it highlights the need for information and analysis to signal and guide the provision of education and training (DHET, 2014). The LMIP relates to "Outcome 5: A skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path" and further aligns to "Sub-Outcome 1: A credible institutional mechanism for labour market and skills planning" (DHET, 2014).

3.2.1.2.3 The White Paper on Post School Education and Training ('the White Paper'):

The White Paper identifies that neither the quality of the information produced by the PSET system, nor the quality of education and skills provision, has met the measures designed to improve skills planning. It further describes that a lack of economic, labour market and industry expertise, research capacity, data management and planning expertise limits the credibility and impact of the current sector skills planning system (DHET, 2013b).

The White Paper outlines five (5) objectives to be informed by skills planning (DHET, 2013b):

- a post-school system that can assist in building a fair, equitable, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa;
- a single, coordinated post-school education and training system;
- expanded access, improved quality and increased diversity of provision;

- a stronger and more cooperative relationship between education and training institutions and the workplace; and
- a post-school education and training system that is responsive to the needs of individual citizens and of employers in both public and private sectors, as well as broader societal and developmental objectives.

The LMIP has contributed to these objectives to some degree, with a central focus on working towards a 'central unit for skills planning' as part of the vision of 'building an expanded, effective and integrated post-school system' for the country.

3.2.2 Approach for the Evaluation of Relevance

The LMIP's six (6) key objectives are as articulated in the MoAs between DHET and HSRC and Wits (DHET, 2011; DHET, 2012). The evaluation of relevance was undertaken through four (4) avenues:

- an assessment of whether each of the LMIP objectives either directly or indirectly addresses the problem statement for LMIP and the objectives of NSDS III (Goal 4.1), the DHET's MTSF (Outcome 5) and the main policy objectives of the White Paper Training;
- an assessment of the extent to which the LMIP problem statement and the objectives of NSDS III, DHET's MTSF and the White Paper are addressed by the objectives of the LMIP Project;
- sourcing of the views of LMIP stakeholders; and
- relevance per Theme.

3.2.3 Summary Evaluation of Relevance

The LMIP Project has been evaluated as having a high degree of relevance to its associated problem statement (as articulated in its Theory of Change), the NSDS III (particularly Goal 4.1), the DHET's MTSF, and the main policy objectives outlined in the White Paper (DHET, 2010; DHET, 2013b; DHET 2014). Positive perceptions of relevance from LMIP stakeholders support this.

Table 9: Summary Relevance of the LMIP

Relevance of the LMIP to the LMIP problem statement and national policies and strategies	
Overall Relevance	●
LMIP Problem Statement	●
NSDS III	●
White Paper for Post-School Education and Training	●
MTSF	●
Stakeholder Perceptions	●
Key:	<div style="display: inline-block; width: 100px; height: 15px; background-color: red; margin-right: 5px;"></div> Not Met <div style="display: inline-block; width: 100px; height: 15px; background-color: yellow; margin-right: 5px; margin-left: 10px;"></div> Partially Met <div style="display: inline-block; width: 100px; height: 15px; background-color: green; margin-left: 10px;"></div> Met

Ways in which LMIP could have been more relevant relate to the following:

- the limited extent to which LMIP addressed the typically 'limited' nature of skills research undertaken;
- the limited extent to which LMIP addressed the need to establish capacity within DHET to coordinate research and skills planning (as per NSDS III, Outcome 4.1.1.1);
- the limited extent to which LMIP enabled the DHET to translate research outcomes into skills initiatives; and

- the limited extent to which LMIP addressed the need to expand access, improve quality and increase diversity of provision (as per the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training, Section 2, Objective 2.3).

The LMIP operates within the specific context of a research project. As a result, the LMIP primarily aimed to establish labour market information and intelligence systems that support the development of policies and intervention projects that would enhance the responsiveness of the PSET system. However, such interventions may take time to materialise. As the research partnership is coming to an end, the DHET is under pressure to show that its investments have led to effective policy-mediated interventions and a related decrease in the skills demand and supply mismatch in the labour market through greater responsiveness of the PSET system.

The LMIP has demonstrated an ability to contribute towards generating reliable data for better planning by an envisaged unit under one department that will interface, co-ordinate and integrate the supply and demand side data. Integration of data implies the existence of baseline data and mechanisms of collaboration between a number of key delivery partners; an objective that the LMIP is perceived to have contributed towards. It remains to be seen whether proposed, well-informed interventions can be realised within the five-year timeframe allocated to the LMIP. As a result, the objectives of DHET and the LMIP may appear to be misaligned; the differing time horizons of the Project versus the organisation may be a key contributing factor to this disjuncture. Stakeholders have indicated that despite the value and relevance of research outputs to the general labour market landscape, a research project may not be the most appropriate means of achieving the DHET’s objective of establishing a responsive PSET system within a relatively short period.

These observations relate directly to the need for an entity within DHET to coordinate research (including ensuring that research is appropriately focused, and thus not ‘limited’) and skills planning; additionally, ensuring the translation of research outcomes into skills interventions.

3.2.4 Assessment of the Extent to Which LMIP Addresses its Problem Statement



As should be clear from the table below, each of the contracted objectives for LMIP address some aspect of the problem statement for the Project, either directly or indirectly. All but one of the contracted LMIP objectives address at least one LMIP problem statement output indirectly, and similarly for those that address them directly. This indicates a high degree of relevance for the LMIP Project relative to the issues it sought to address.

However, it should be noted that none of the objectives of LMIP directly addresses the ‘limited’ nature of the skills research typically undertaken.

Table 10: Relevance of LMIP to its Problem Statement

LMIP Objectives			Problem Statement					
			Weak capacity to identify skills needs	Skills research				
As contracted with HSRC & Wits University	As per the Logical Model	Limited		Typically, short-duration	Technically weak	Fragmented	Uncoordinated	
Information and knowledge advancement	“To advance information and knowledge of the post school education and training system in relation to inclusive growth, through good quality research and critical scholarship”	To undertake good quality research and critical scholarship to advance information and knowledge of the PSET system in relation to inclusive growth						
Labour market intelligence	“To interpret and analyse information and knowledge in the light of policy, sectoral needs and other education, training and skills issues and to build models to create labour market	To interpret and analyse information and knowledge for policy, sectoral needs and other education, training and skills issues						

LMIP Objectives		Problem Statement						
		Weak capacity to identify skills needs	Skills research					Un-responsive PSET system
As contracted with HSRC & Wits University	As per the Logical Model		Limited	Typically, short-duration	Technically weak	Fragmented	Uncoordinated	
	intelligence to inform decision making, strategic planning and interventions”	To build models to create LMI, with supporting evidence						
Research capacity development	“To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field to ensure more effective impact of research on policy and increase the national pool of researchers, especially African and woman researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour market analysis”	To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field (to ensure more effective impact of research on policy)						
		To increase the national pool of researchers, especially African & woman researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour market analysis						
Institutional capacity development	“To enhance the capacity of the Department of Higher Education and Training and SETAs to gather labour market intelligence, design a national data architecture and strategic framework, and to enhance the capacity of the DHET & SETAs to interpret labour market intelligence in the light of policy goals and programmes”	To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to gather LMI						
		To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to interpret LMI for policy goals and Projects						
		To design a national data architecture and strategic framework						
Research Dissemination	“Knowledge and intelligence generated from this research programme will be shared and debated within the research community and with policy makers”	To share and debate knowledge and intelligence generated from LMIP within the research community and with policy makers						
Support strategic thinking and policymaking at the DHET	“To support strategic thinking and policymaking at the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)”	[To undertake skills] decision making, strategic planning and interventions						

LMIP Objectives		Problem Statement						
		Weak capacity to identify skills needs	Skills research					Un-responsive PSET system
As contracted with HSRC & Wits University	As per the Logical Model		Limited	Typically, short-duration	Technically weak	Fragmented	Uncoordinated	
Build the Department's and the SETA's capacity	"To build the Department's capacity as well as that of the Sectoral and Training Authorities (SETAs) to anticipate trends in the demand for and supply of skills from the education and training sector"	To build the DHET's and SETAs' capacity to anticipate trends in the demand and supply of skills (from the education and training sector)						

*  = directly addresses;  = indirectly addresses


3.2.5 Assessment of the Extent to Which LMIP Addresses the NSDS III (Goal 4.1)








As indicated by the table below, all of the contracted objectives for LMIP address one (1) or more of the projected outputs of Goal 4.1 of NSDS III, either directly or indirectly. All but one (1) of the contracted LMIP objectives address at least one (1) NSDS III output indirectly, and three (3) address them directly. This indicates a significant degree of relevance for the LMIP Project relative to the goals of NSDS III, specifically Goal 4.1.





However, it should be noted that none of the objectives of LMIP directly addresses Output 4.1.1.1 of NSDS III, viz. the establishment of capacity within DHET to coordinate research and skills planning.

This shortcoming is addressed in the recommendations stemming from this Study, as outlined in Section 8 below.

Table 11: Relevance of LMIP to the NSDS III

LMIP Objectives		NSDS III		
		Goal 4.1: Establishing a credible institutional mechanism for skills planning		
As contracted with HSRC & Wits University	As per the Logical Model and Theory of Change	Output 4.1.1.1: Capacity is established within the DHET to coordinate research and skills planning	Output 4.1.1.2: Sector skills plans are professionally researched, provide a sound analysis of the sector and articulate an agreed sector strategy to address skills needs	Output 4.1.1.3: Sector and nationally commissioned research and data is analysed, validated and captured in an integrated database that is accessible to stakeholders
Information and knowledge advancement	"To advance information and knowledge of the post school education and training system in relation to inclusive growth, through good quality research and critical scholarship"	To undertake good quality research and critical scholarship to advance information and knowledge of the PSET system in relation to inclusive growth		

LMIP Objectives		NSDS III			
		Goal 4.1: Establishing a credible institutional mechanism for skills planning			
As contracted with HSRC & Wits University		As per the Logical Model and Theory of Change	Output 4.1.1.1: Capacity is established within the DHET to coordinate research and skills planning	Output 4.1.1.2: Sector skills plans are professionally researched, provide a sound analysis of the sector and articulate an agreed sector strategy to address skills needs	Output 4.1.1.3: Sector and nationally commissioned research and data is analysed, validated and captured in an integrated database that is accessible to stakeholders
Labour market intelligence	"To interpret and analyse information and knowledge in the light of policy, sectoral needs and other education, training and skills issues and to build models to create labour market intelligence to inform decision making, strategic planning and interventions"	To interpret and analyse information and knowledge for policy, sectoral needs and other education, training and skills issues			
		To build models to create LMI, with supporting evidence			
Research capacity development	"To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field to ensure more effective impact of research on policy and increase the national pool of researchers, especially African and woman researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour market analysis"	To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field (to ensure more effective impact of research on policy)			
		To increase the national pool of researchers, especially African & woman researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour market analysis			
Institutional capacity development	"To enhance the capacity of the Department of Higher Education and Training and SETAs to gather labour market intelligence, design a national data architecture and strategic framework, and to enhance the capacity of the DHET & SETAs to interpret labour market intelligence in the light of policy goals and programmes"	To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to gather LMI			
		To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to interpret LMI for policy goals and Projects			


LMIP Objectives			NSDS III		
			Goal 4.1: Establishing a credible institutional mechanism for skills planning		
As contracted with HSRC & Wits University	As per the Logical Model and Theory of Change		Output 4.1.1.1: Capacity is established within the DHET to coordinate research and skills planning	Output 4.1.1.2: Sector skills plans are professionally researched, provide a sound analysis of the sector and articulate an agreed sector strategy to address skills needs	Output 4.1.1.3: Sector and nationally commissioned research and data is analysed, validated and captured in an integrated database that is accessible to stakeholders
		To design a national data architecture and strategic framework			
Support strategic thinking and policymaking at the DHET	“To support strategic thinking and policymaking at the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)”	[To undertake skills] decision making, strategic planning and interventions			
Build the Department's and the SETA's capacity	“To build the Department's capacity as well as that of the Sectoral and Training Authorities (SETAs) to anticipate trends in the demand for and supply of skills from the education and training sector”	To build the DHET's and SETAs' capacity to anticipate trends in the demand and supply of skills (from the education and training sector)			










*  = directly addresses;  = indirectly addresses

3.2.6 Assessment of the Extent to Which LMIP Addresses the DHET's MTSF (Outcome 5)

As indicated by the table below, all of the contracted objectives for LMIP address Outcome 5 of the DHET's MTSF (2014-2019), either directly or indirectly. Five (5) of the contracted LMIP objectives address the MTSF outcome indirectly, and four (4) address them directly. This indicates a significant degree of relevance for the LMIP Project relative to the outcomes of the DHET's MTSF, specifically Outcome 5.

Table 12: Relevance of LMIP to MTSF (2014-2019)

LMIP Objectives			MTSF (2014 – 2019)
			Outcome 5: A skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path
As contracted with HSRC & Wits University	As per the Logical Model and Theory of Change		Sub-Outcome 1: A credible institutional mechanism for labour market and skills planning:
Information and knowledge advancement	“To advance information and knowledge of the post school education and training system in relation to inclusive growth, through good quality research and critical scholarship”	To undertake good quality research and critical scholarship to advance information and knowledge of the PSET system in relation to inclusive growth	

LMIP Objectives			MTSF (2014 – 2019)
			Outcome 5: A skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path
As contracted with HSRC & Wits University		As per the Logical Model and Theory of Change	Sub-Outcome 1: A credible institutional mechanism for labour market and skills planning:
Labour market intelligence	"To interpret and analyse information and knowledge in the light of policy, sectoral needs and other education, training and skills issues and to build models to create labour market intelligence to inform decision making, strategic planning and interventions"	To interpret and analyse information and knowledge for policy, sectoral needs and other education, training and skills issues	
		To build models to create LMI, with supporting evidence	
Research capacity development	"To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field to ensure more effective impact of research on policy and increase the national pool of researchers, especially African and woman researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour market analysis"	To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field (to ensure more effective impact of research on policy)	
		To increase the national pool of researchers, especially African & woman researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour market analysis	
Institutional capacity development	"To enhance the capacity of the Department of Higher Education and Training and SETAs to gather labour market intelligence, design a national data architecture and strategic framework, and to enhance the capacity of the DHET & SETAs to interpret labour market intelligence in the light of policy goals and programmes"	To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to gather LMI	
		To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to interpret LMI for policy goals and Projects	
		To design a national data architecture and strategic framework	
Research Dissemination	"Knowledge and intelligence generated from this research programme will be shared and debated within the research community and with policy makers"	To share and debate knowledge and intelligence generated from LMIP within the research community and with policy makers	
Support strategic thinking and policymaking at the DHET	"To support strategic thinking and policymaking at the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)"	[To undertake skills] decision making, strategic planning and interventions	
Build the Department's and the SETA's capacity	"To build the Department's capacity as well as that of the Sectoral and Training Authorities (SETAs) to anticipate trends in the demand for and supply of skills from the education and training sector"	To build the DHET's and SETAs' capacity to anticipate trends in the demand and supply of skills (from the education and training sector)	

*  = directly addresses;  = indirectly addresses

3.2.7 Assessment of the Extent to Which LMIP Addresses the Main Policy Objectives of the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training

As indicated by the table below, all of the contracted objectives for LMIP address one (1) or more of the main policy objectives of Section 2 of the White Paper, either directly or indirectly. All of the contracted LMIP objectives address at least one White Paper policy objective indirectly, and four (4) address them directly. This indicates a significant degree of relevance for the LMIP Project relative to the policy objectives of the White Paper for Post-School Education

and Training. However, it should be noted that none of the objectives of LMIP directly addresses objective 2.3, viz. to expand access, improve quality and increase diversity of provision.

Table 13: Relevance of LMIP to White Paper for Post-School Education and Training

LMIP Objectives			White Paper for Post-School Education and Training				
			Section 2: To improve the capacity of the post-school education and training system to meet the needs of the country				
As contracted with HSRC & Wits University		As per the Logical Model and Theory of Change	2.1. To establish a socially just PSET system	2.2. To establish a single, co-ordinated PSET system	2.3. To expand access, improve quality and increase diversity of provision	2.4 To strengthen the relationship between education and the workplace	2.5. To establish a responsive PSET system
Information and knowledge advancement	“To advance information and knowledge of the post school education and training system in relation to inclusive growth, through good quality research and critical scholarship”	To undertake good quality research and critical scholarship to advance information and knowledge of the PSET system in relation to inclusive growth			●		●
Labour market intelligence	“To interpret and analyse information and knowledge in the light of policy, sectoral needs and other education, training and skills issues and to build models to create labour market intelligence to inform decision making, strategic planning and interventions”	To interpret and analyse information and knowledge for policy, sectoral needs and other education, training and skills issues			●	●	●
		To build models to create LMI, with supporting evidence		●			●
Research capacity development	“To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field to ensure more effective impact of research on policy and increase the national pool of researchers, especially African and woman researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour market analysis”	To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field (to ensure more effective impact of research on policy)			●	●	●
		To increase the national pool of researchers, especially African & woman researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour market analysis	●	●			
Institutional capacity development	“To enhance the capacity of the Department of Higher Education and Training and SETAs to gather labour market	To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to gather LMI		●			●

LMIP Objectives		White Paper for Post-School Education and Training					
		Section 2: To improve the capacity of the post-school education and training system to meet the needs of the country					
As contracted with HSRC & Wits University		As per the Logical Model and Theory of Change	2.1. To establish a socially just PSET system	2.2. To establish a single, co-ordinated PSET system	2.3. To expand access, improve quality and increase diversity of provision	2.4 To strengthen the relationship between education and the workplace	2.5. To establish a responsive PSET system
	intelligence, design a national data architecture and strategic framework, and to enhance the capacity of the DHET & SETAs to interpret labour market intelligence in the light of policy goals and programmes”	To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to interpret LMI for policy goals and Projects		●			●
		To design a national data architecture and strategic framework		●			
Research Dissemination	“Knowledge and intelligence generated from this research programme will be shared and debated within the research community and with policy makers”	To share and debate knowledge and intelligence generated from LMIP within the research community and with policy makers		●			●
Support strategic thinking and policymaking at the DHET	“To support strategic thinking and policymaking at the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)”	[To undertake skills] decision making, strategic planning and interventions		●			●
Build the Department's and the SETA's capacity	“To build the Department's capacity as well as that of the Sectoral and Training Authorities (SETAs) to anticipate trends in the demand for and supply of skills from the education and training sector”	To build the DHET's and SETAs' capacity to anticipate trends in the demand and supply of skills (from the education and training sector)		●		●	●

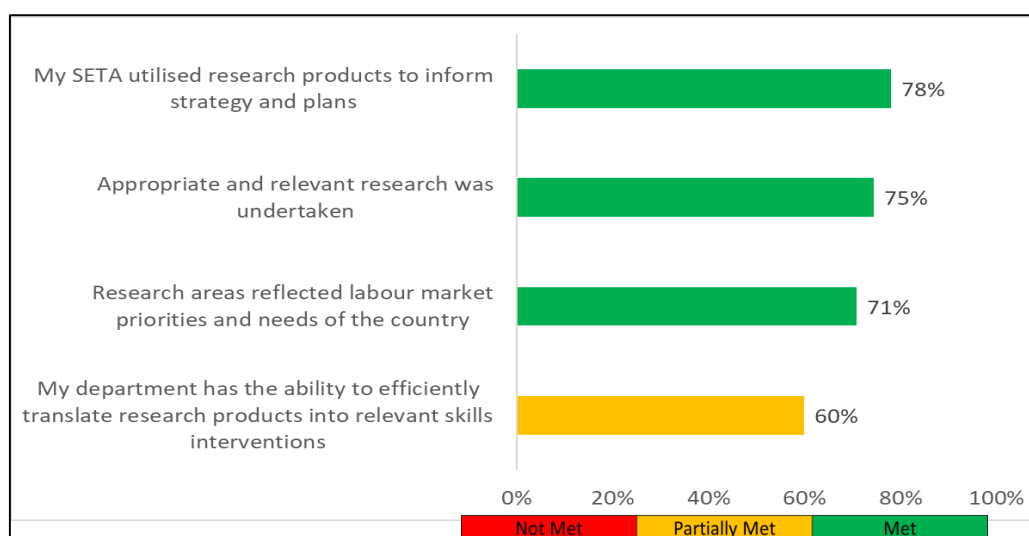
* ● = directly addresses; ● = indirectly addresses

3.2.8 Stakeholder Perceptions of the Relevance of LMIP

LMIP stakeholders were consulted on the relevance of LMIP to their research and planning context, through four (4) specific questions. Survey respondents agreed that the LMIP was relevant to the needs of SETAs, research requirements and national labour market needs and priorities. Further, the SETAs polled indicated that they were able to leverage research outcomes to inform their strategies and plans. However, the result was less profound in terms of DHET's ability to translate the research products into relevant skills interventions.

Overall, relevance of the LMIP's outcomes was deemed high and attained an average score of 71%. Detailed results of the consultations are outlined in the figure below and the sub-sections that follow.

Figure 3: Relevance of LMIP's contribution



Source: Consolidated LMIP Surveys – To what extent do you agree with the following:

a) My SETA utilised research products to inform strategy and plans

SETAs reported a high degree of usability of the research products, mentioning specifically that they “have been using the work on apprenticeships” (Research Partner, 2017) and that they “found a lot of value in the skills forecasting supply and demand model” (SETA, 2017). Regarding prospective use of research outputs by the SETAs, it was reported that, “in time, perhaps more of the LMIP outputs can be used” (Research Partner, 2017).

b) Appropriate and relevant research was undertaken

Respondents deemed the research undertaken to possess a high degree of relevance. The research performed by the HSRC, who describe themselves as “an ally of government”, was intended to address the particular information requirements of the DHET in accordance with their mandate “to be more applied and useful to government” in generating “applied research” (Research Partner, 2017). A stakeholder within DHET commented that “most research reports are quite relevant to what we are doing at a national level” (DHET, 2017). This view is supported by the comment from a research partner that “the LMIP did create very good working relationships and orient and tailor the work much more to DHET’s immediate requirements” (Research Partner, 2017).

Survey comments raised by the DHET suggested that a key challenge to delivering appropriate research was the “lack of understanding by researchers of how the DHET outcomes should be met” (DHET, 2017). From the research partner’s perspective, this was attributed to the DHET’s inability to articulate what they wanted from the research consortium when the Project was launched. A research partner commented that “we consequently spent the first year getting a clear understanding of where we were and what the boundaries were regarding the role of the researchers and the role of the DHET” (Research Partner, 2017). Likewise, a DHET staff member acknowledged that “I’m sure the researchers weren’t given proper guidance. I’m quite sure they were given mixed messages throughout the Project. That is why the outputs are so broad and unfocussed” (DHET, 2017). As the project progressed, participants perceived an improvement in project communications from Departmental project coordinators, contributing to an improved alignment of research outputs to the needs of the DHET.

“When I joined the Department in September 2012 and began working on the LMIP, a number of Departmental staff expressed unhappiness with the direction that LMIP was taking. Many felt that the HSRC was not hearing them. Subsequently, the relationship between the DHET and HSRC began to improve slowly, and the DHET was able to identify and articulate its research needs better. Consequently, the current LMIP Occupations in High Demand Project came about as a result of DHET requests and as a result of DHET requesting movement of funds between projects in LMIP.”

- Source: DHET, Survey (2017)

c) Research areas reflected labour market priorities and needs of the country

As communicated by stakeholders consulted, the LMIP was considered highly relevant to the national priorities and needs, having been conceptually guided by national Delivery Agreement 5 which outlined the need for the development of a 'strategic intelligence capability' towards the establishment of a 'credible institutional mechanism for skills planning'. National priorities addressed by the LMIP Project include the lack of "a centralised database and understanding that everyone subscribed to, a guide which highlighted priorities to which money should be allocated" as well as "the shortage of highly skilled workers, scarce skills, mismatches between labour demand and supply, unemployment of young people and poor labour market absorption resulting in high levels of poverty and inequality" (Research Partner, 2017).

"The project is relevant to national priorities. If you look across the different thematic foci and the background papers that are in there you will see that, whether it's on the knowledge side, scarce skills list side or artisanal focus, it's an attempt to filter into the various layers of policy that is part of the DHET's work program."

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

d) My department has the ability to efficiently translate research products into relevant skills interventions

Confidence in the ability of the DHET to efficiently translate research products into relevant skills interventions was comparatively lower than confidence in the relevance of the research, indicating that internal capacity for research translation in the DHET is a greater concern than whether the research products were appropriate for informing skills interventions. This can be ascribed to a lack of capacity within the DHET.

"As a department we don't have the capacity to translate all the information from the LMIP."

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

3.2.9 Relevance by Theme

Table 14: Relevance by Theme

Theme	LMIP Problem Statement: Weak capacity to identify skills needs (limited, typically short duration, technically weak, fragmented and uncoordinated skills research) resulting, in part, in an unresponsive PSET system.	NSDS III (Goal 4.1): Establishing a credible institutional mechanism for skills planning	DHET's Medium Term Strategic Framework (2014-2019): A skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path	White Paper on Post School Education and Training: To improve the capacity of the post-school education and training system to meet the needs of the country
Theme 1: Establishing a foundation for labour market systems in South Africa	●	●	●	●
Theme 2: Skills forecasting: the supply and demand model	●	●	●	●
Theme 3: Studies of selected priority sector	●	●	●	●
Theme 4: Reconfiguring the post-schooling sector	●		●	●
Theme 5: Pathways through education and training and into the workplace	●	●	●	●
Theme 6: Understanding changing artisanal occupational milieus and identities			●	

From the results depicted in the table above, it is apparent that the perceived relevance of research reports to the LMIP problem statement and policy questions vary between thematic areas. Themes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 each address at least the LMIP problem statement or a national policy goal directly. Theme 2 and 3 were perceived to demonstrate comparatively high usability and policy-oriented research outputs and are expected to guide future decision-making processes undertaken by PSET-affiliated stakeholders. Theme 6, produced research reports which do not directly address any LMIP or national priorities and only indirectly addresses DHET's MTSF. Theme 6 and, to a lesser extent, Theme 1 performed poorly in each category assessing perceived research report relevance, suggesting that the content of associated research reports was poorly aligned with the requirements of national skills planners and that the likelihood of future consultation with this generated material is low.

3.3 Effectiveness

Definition: Effectiveness

A measure of the extent to which [a project] attains its objectives.

Source: DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance, 2016.

As per the DAC definition above, LMIP effectiveness is evaluated as the extent to which LMIP has achieved its objectives. This is measured by determining stakeholder perceptions of the extent to which LMIP has met its objectives, as well as the extent to which outputs and outcomes⁷ (linked to specific objectives) have been delivered. Specific objectives, together with associated outputs and outcomes are examined in detail below.

3.3.1 Summary Evaluation of Effectiveness

The LMIP Project’s overall objective of contributing towards “*establishing a credible, institutional mechanism for skills planning*” is defined by the six (6) key objectives listed in section 1.2 above. The table that follows outlines the extent to which LMIP delivered against each of these objectives.

Table 15: Summary Evaluation of Effectiveness

LMIP Objectives	Objectives Assessed on Perceptions	Output Assessment	Outcomes Assessed on Perceptions
1.1 Information and knowledge advancement	●	●	●
1.2 Labour market intelligence	●	●	●
1.3 Institutional Capacity Development	●	●	●
1.4 Skills Forecasting Capacity	●	●	●
1.5 Research Capacity Development	●	●	●
1.6 Research Dissemination	●	●	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

When considering the achievement of the six (6) objectives of the LMIP Project, as assessed by stakeholder perceptions, LMIP only partially met the expected objectives. This assessment is derived from the survey responses of various stakeholder groups (DHET, Research Partners, SETAs and Other Government Departments). Respondents reported that only two (2) of the LMIP objectives, namely, Information and Knowledge Advancement and Research Dissemination were achieved effectively, while the balance of the four (4) objectives were partially achieved by LMIP.










The outputs that were linked to each of the Project objectives were assessed as ‘Met’. The extent to which outputs were delivered was determined through analysing documents describing planned and delivered outputs. Overall,

⁷An output is defined as a product, capital good or service which results from a development intervention; may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes. An outcome is defined as the likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effect of an intervention’s output/s. A project objective is defined as the intended physical, financial, institutional, social, environmental, or other development result to which a project or program is expected to contribute. (OECD, 2002).

despite the perception that the Project was successful in a number of areas, stakeholders felt that the benefits of the Project had not yet been fully realised – either due to a lack of translation into active policies and interventions, or because the long-term nature of such a Project implies that a longer time horizon is necessary for benefits to become apparent.

Programme management activities are naturally integral to the achievement of any project’s objectives. The standard activities and outputs associated with programme management have therefore been assessed as part of this evaluation; under the effectiveness section. Summary results from this assessment are outlined in the table below.

Table 16: Management and Administration Assessment

Project Management Activities	Project Management Area Performance
Project Governance	
Governance Structures	
Project Management and Administration	
Risk Management	
Stakeholder Communications	
Project Planning	
Progress Reporting	
Quality Assurance	
Document Management	
Human Resource Capacity	
Disbursement of Funds and Verification of Expenditure	

* Where  = met;  = partially met;  = not met

3.3.1.1 LMIP Outputs Delivered and Outstanding

On the 22nd of May 2017, a Briefing Report was prepared for the DDG of Planning, Policy and Strategy. This report contains lists of the outputs that had been delivered by the LMIP Project, as well as outputs that were still outstanding at that time. As per the Briefing Report, the following outputs have been delivered by LMIP (LMIP, 2017):

Table 17: LMIP Outputs Delivered

Outputs		
Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 Research Reports • 41 Research Papers • 18 Journal Articles • 5 Books (draft) • 14 Policy Briefs • 3 Guides • 23 LMIP Briefings, which showcase cutting edge research emanating from LMIP • 3 LMIP Updates (Newsletters about LMIP) • 1 Occupations in High Demand List 	Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forecasting Model • Research Repository • LMIP Dictionary on Skills Supply and Demand • Compendium of Indicators for Skills Planning 	Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 74 Presentations made at a large variety of events • 8 Policy Round Tables • 2 Ministerial Briefings • 1 Research Colloquium • 19 Seminars

Key deliverables and activities that were listed as outstanding as per the briefing report are as follows:




- A Manual of selected Key Indicators for Skills Planning
- Data from the Private Sector
- Two Learning Sessions, a Tracer Study (Scheduled for delivery in September 2017) and a WSP/ATR Review (Scheduled for delivery in November 2017)
- The Close Out Report to be presented to the Minister in a meeting in November 2017
- Presentation of the LMIP findings to the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC)

It should be noted that some of the outstanding deliverables were nearing completion or may have already been completed at the time of writing this report; however, this was not supported by documentary evidence. It has been confirmed by LMIP programme management that these and the relevant Project close out reports, will be produced and delivered to the DHET.

3.3.2 Information and Knowledge Advancement

This section covers an assessment of the effectiveness of LMIP in meeting its objective of information and knowledge advancement. The table below illustrates how this are achieved against its components in the Logical Model.

Table 18: Information and Knowledge Advancement Assessment

Sub-Objective	Objectives Assessed on Perceptions	Output Assessment	Outcomes Assessed on Perceptions
1.1.1 To undertake good quality research and critical scholarship to advance information and knowledge of the PSET system in relation to inclusive growth			

* Where  = met;  = partially met;  = not met

3.3.2.1 Logical Model as Point of Reference

The table below illustrates an extract from the Logical Model that relates directly to the objective of the Information and Knowledge Advancement objective and the components that follow it.

Table 19: Logical Model Extract – Information and Knowledge Advancement

Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
1. Information and Knowledge Advancement			
1.1.1 To undertake good quality research and critical scholarship to advance information and knowledge of the PSET system in relation to inclusive growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake initial literature Reviews Prepare concept notes - Identify researchers Prepare Business Plans - Prepare Research Proposals and ToRs - Conduct research - Monitor progress on research - Quality assure research outputs - Publish research outputs (reports, policy briefs etc.) - Undertake research dissemination - Identify interventions to address findings - Communicate recommended interventions 	(a) Research reports	Improved (more accurate, integrated, time sensitive) understanding of skills needs for education and training

3.3.2.2 Objectives Assessed on Perceptions

The objective of ‘Information and Knowledge Advancement’ was perceived to have been “Met” by stakeholders.

3.3.2.2.1 To undertake good quality research and critical scholarship to advance information and knowledge of the PSET system in relation to inclusive growth

This objective is considered ‘Met’ and achieved a score of 73% from stakeholders who took part in the survey. Respondents and interviewees believed that the work produced by LMIP was of a high standard and that the calibre of researchers with whom the Project engaged and received input from was considered high.


3.3.2.3 Assessment of the Achievement of the Objective

This section assesses the extent to which the objective was achieved, based on the extent to which its associated outputs and outcomes were delivered. This section further assesses the effectiveness of the processes/ activities that were intended to produce the outputs associated with this objective.

3.3.2.3.1 Output Assessment

The research reports were valued by some stakeholders who were able to use them for their skills planning. The quality of the reports was commended due to the academic rigour of the documents. The outputs for this objective is rated as having been ‘Met’, a result of the research reports being produced and delivered. Regarding the effectiveness of the outputs produced, a number of representatives from government agencies noted that the reports alone were not an effective output for policy guidance and would need to be refined into usable policy briefs. The most recent briefing note to the DDG noted that twenty-five (25) research reports had been produced since by May 2017 (LMIP, 2017). However, at time of writing, the evaluation team had been provided with a list of thirty-two (32) research reports that had been produced.

Table 20: Information and knowledge advancement – Output delivery for sub-objective 1.1.1

Outputs	Indicators	Delivery
1.1.1 To undertake good quality research and critical scholarship to advance information and knowledge of the PSET system in relation to inclusive growth		
Research reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of research reports = 32 • Quality rating for research reports 	

* Where  = met;  = partially met;  = not met

The following table shows the average ratings provided by stakeholders for the research reports produced by each theme. The reports were rated according to how useful they are perceived to be, to what extent they are believed to respond to key policy questions on skills planning and to what extent they are user friendly and easy to understand.

Table 21: Ratings of Research Reports per Theme

Theme	Usefulness of Reports	Reports respond to key policy questions pertaining to skills planning	Extent to which the reports are reader friendly and easy to understand
Theme 1 Establishing a foundation for labour market systems in South Africa	●	●	●
Theme 2 Skills forecasting: supply and demand model	●	●	●
Theme 3 Studies of selected priority sectors	●	●	●
Theme 4 Reconfiguring the post-schooling sector	●	●	●
Theme 5 Pathways through education and training into the workplace	●	●	●
Theme 6 Understanding changing artisanal occupational milieus and identities	●	●	●
Project Average	●	●	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

From the results depicted in the table above, it is apparent that the perceived usefulness, relevance to policy questions and readability of produced research reports vary between thematic areas. Research reports for themes 2, 3 and 5 were perceived to demonstrate comparatively high usability and policy-oriented research outputs and are expected to guide future decision-making processes undertaken by PSET-affiliated stakeholders. However, these themes, together with Theme 6, produced research reports with notably poor readability. This is cause for concern since research reports, despite aligned and relevant content, are not likely to be consulted by under-capacitated skills planners if they are overly voluminous and academically orientated literature. Theme 6 and, to a lesser extent, Theme 1 performed poorly in each category assessing perceived research report quality, suggesting that the content of associated research reports was poorly aligned with the requirements of national skills planners and that the likelihood of future consultation with this material is low.

3.3.2.3.2 Outcomes Assessed on Perceptions

This outcome relates to the extent to LMIP contributed to an “improved (more accurate, integrated, time sensitive) understanding of skills needs for education and training.” This outcome was perceived by stakeholders as having been “Met.”

Table 22: Information and knowledge advancement – Outcome delivery for sub-objective 1.1.1

Outcomes	Delivery
1.1.1 To undertake good quality research and critical scholarship to advance information and knowledge of the PSET system in relation to inclusive growth	
Improved (more accurate, integrated, time sensitive) understanding of skills needs for education and training	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

3.3.2.3.2.1 Improved (more accurate, integrated, time sensitive) understanding of skills needs for education and training

Respondents perceived an improved understanding of skills needs for education and training to have been 'Met'. To make the changes in the labour and education department worthwhile, stakeholders need to understand all the parts and functions of the PSET system as they relate to labour market requirements. Stakeholders articulated that they had deepened their level of understanding of requirements of the PSET system to meet the needs of labour market demand, "LMIP assisted to identify what skills were needed. We produced a report that took several years. Methodology for determining how you would identify skills demanded was developed" (DHET, 2017).

Some stakeholders that accessed and utilised the research reports and empirical evidence produced by LMIP found the research outputs useful from an academic perspective.

"The Skills Supply and Demand Report produced by the LMIP was a very good report which tells us about the mismatch of skills in the country, i.e. engineering (31%) and sciences (40%) graduates are working in the financial services sector because of knowledge of Maths and Sciences."

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

3.3.3 Labour Market Intelligence

This section covers an assessment of the effectiveness of LMIP in meeting its objective of labour market intelligence. The table below illustrates how this was achieved against its components in the Logical Model.

Table 23: Labour Market Intelligence Assessment

Sub-Objective	Objectives Assessed on Perceptions	Output Assessment	Outcomes Assessed on Perceptions
1.2.1 To interpret and analyse information and knowledge for policy, sectoral needs and other education, training and skills issues	●	●	●
1.2.2 [To undertake skills] decision making, strategic planning and interventions [based on LMI]	●	●	●
1.2.3 To build models to create LMI, with supporting evidence	●	●	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

3.3.3.1 Logical Model as Point of Reference

The table below illustrates an extract from the Logical Model that relates directly to the Labour Market Intelligence objective and the components that follow it.

Table 24: Logical Model Extract - Labour Market Intelligence

Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
1.2 Labour Market Intelligence			
1.2.1 To interpret and analyse information and knowledge for policy, sectoral needs and other education, training and skills issues	Interpret and analyse skills data and information	(a) Policy/ research briefs (b) Documented skills needs	Increased utilization of skills research products to inform skills planning
1.2.2 [To undertake skills] decision making, strategic planning and interventions [based on LMI]	Undertake decision making, strategic planning and interventions	(a) Skills strategies/ plans/ decisions informed by LMIP skills research (b) Skills interventions triggered by LMIP skills research	
1.2.3 To build models to create LMI, with supporting evidence	Build models to create LMI	(a) Forecasting Model (Theme 2)	Improved understanding of methodologies to identify skills needs
	Create a methodology to produce OiHDL	(a) Methodology to produce OiHDL	
	Create a methodology and templates for conducting labour market surveys	(a) Methodology and templates for conducting labour market surveys	

3.3.3.2 Objectives Assessed on Perceptions

The objective of ‘Labour Market Intelligence’ was perceived to have been ‘Partially Met’ by stakeholders. The main objective comprises three sub-objectives as assessed below.

3.3.3.2.1 To interpret and analyse information and knowledge for policy, sectoral needs and other education, training and skills issues

This objective was considered to have been ‘Partially Met’ by survey respondents with a score of 66%. A number of interviewees felt that, although the outputs were academically valuable, the translation of academic papers to usable policy inputs could be improved.

3.3.3.2.2 [To undertake skills] decision making, strategic planning and interventions [based on LMI]

Survey respondents felt that this objective had only been ‘Partially Met’ and as such, it achieved a score of 51%. The general perception from stakeholders was that the LMIP has contributed to the skills planning milieu; however, the actions – and associated benefits – that should accrue from a project of this magnitude have not yet materialised to the degree that stakeholders anticipated.

3.3.3.2.3 To build models to create LMI, with supporting evidence

Survey respondents believe that the LMIP “Met” this objective by 67%. The most apparent example of this objective’s perceived success is the labour market econometric model output produced by Theme 2. This model built on existing macroeconomic work to create intelligence for the Department regarding the South African Labour Market.

“The LMEM was a major contribution, no one had taken all the statistical data from the labour force and reserve bank; before this project there was no rigorous and statistical way to integrate the data.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

3.3.3.3 Assessment of the Achievement of the Objective

This section assesses the extent to which the objective was achieved, based on the extent to which its associated outputs and outcomes were delivered. This section further assesses the effectiveness of the processes/ activities that were intended to produce the outputs associated with this objective.

3.3.3.3.1 Output Assessment

Table 25: Labour Market Intelligence – Output delivery for sub-objective 1.2.1

Outputs	Indicators	Delivery
1.2.1 To interpret and analyse information and knowledge for policy, sectoral needs and other education, training and skills issues		
Policy/ research briefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of policy briefs Quality rating for policy briefs Value for money/ time for policy briefs 	●
Documented skills needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of documents covering skills needs 	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

The outputs of this objective have been produced and delivered and is rated as ‘Met’. Policy and research briefs were considered valuable to policymakers in that they articulated the content of the academic reports in a user-friendly manner for those in government agencies. The LMIP Project produced numerous documents that covered skills needs in South Africa as the majority of publications were targeted at this information gap; the May 2017 Briefing Report to the DDG indicated that 133 publications had been produced directly by the LMIP, while the repository into which the LMIP research and other related research had been submitted holds approximately five (5) times as many publications.

Table 26: Labour Market Intelligence – Output delivery for sub-objective 1.2.2

Outputs	Indicators	Delivery
1.2.2 [To undertake skills] decision making, strategic planning and interventions [based on LMI]		
Skills strategies/ plans/ decisions informed by LMIP skills research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of skills strategies/ plans/ decisions 	●
Skills interventions triggered by LMIP skills research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of skills interventions 	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

There is limited evidence of the outputs produced for sub-objective 1.2.2. The research reports and policy briefs that were produced have not yet fully manifested as targeted policy changes and skills interventions. While stakeholders have reported LMIP research outcomes having informed their skills strategies, these instances were isolated (Evaluation Interviews, 2017).

Table 27: Labour Market Intelligence – output delivery for sub-objective 1.2.3

Outputs	Indicators	Delivery
1.2.3 To build models to create LMI, with supporting evidence		
Forecasting Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of guides 	●
Methodology to produce OiHDL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of methodology to produce OiHDL 	●

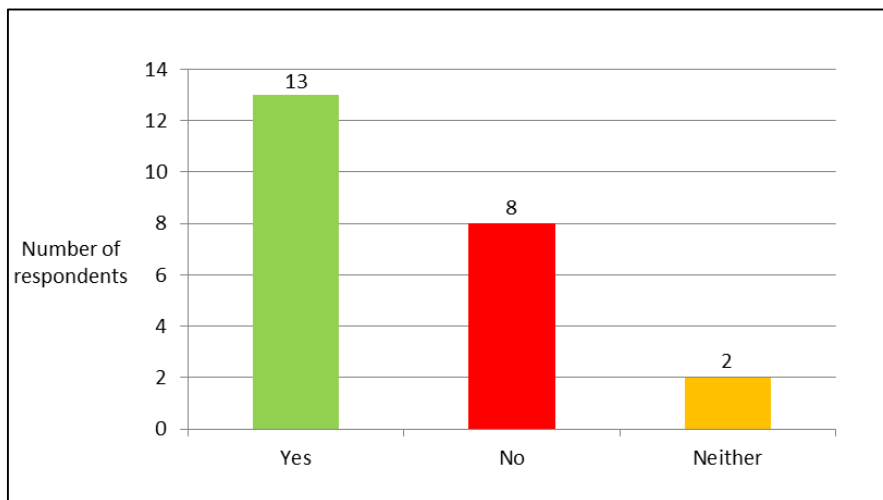
Outputs	Indicators	Delivery
Methodology and templates for conducting labour market surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Methodology and templates for conducting labour market surveys 	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

These outputs were assessed as having been ‘Met’ as a result of these outputs having been produced. The OiHDL⁸ was commended by a number of stakeholders; however, this did impact the outputs of other themes. The OiHDL was published by the Department in 2014, followed by an updated version in 2015 (DHET, 2015c). This list provides insights into the current skills needs of the economy. This output was prioritized in response to the expressed need for this guiding tool by the DHET to support its planning processes, particularly in relation to enrolment planning, resource allocations, career advice and qualifications development. Besides the usefulness of this tool to the Department, it is also expected to guide the decision-making processes of education and training providers, employer bodies, professional bodies and trade unions. The NSF has reportedly consulted the OiHDL to guide resource allocation towards bursaries which supplement scarce skills. The publicising of the OiHDL contributes to developing a post-school education and training system which can respond to the needs of individual citizens, communities and the economy (DHET, 2015c) as it relates to a range of national socio-economic objectives.

In 2015 the Department conducted a survey with the purpose of assessing the usefulness of the OiHDL. 78% of the survey respondents indicated that they were aware of the list and more than half of the respondents confirmed that their organisation makes use of the report in one way or another, as depicted in the figure below.

Figure 4: Use of the list of Occupations in High Demand



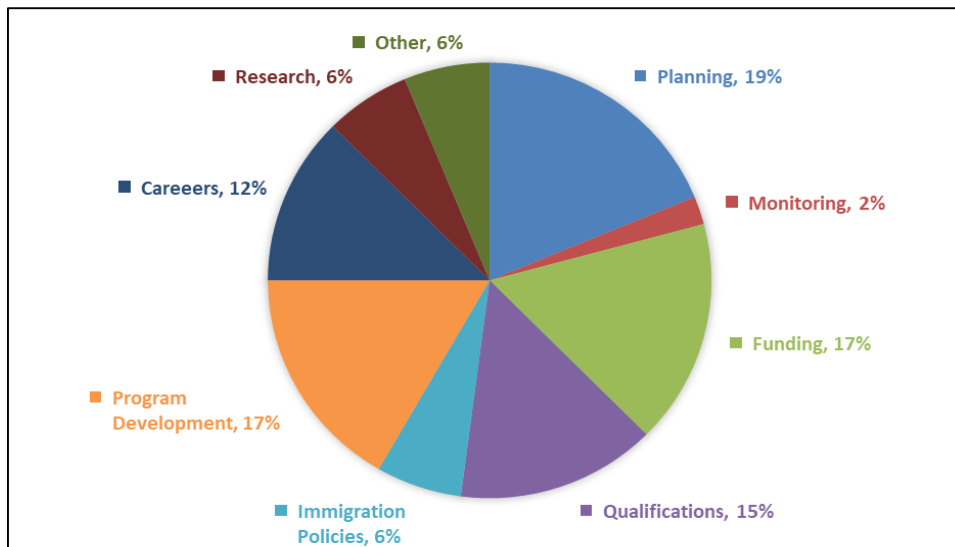
Source: List of Occupations in High Demand Survey, 2015

Respondents who reported no use of the list attributed this to a lack of confidence in the list’s accuracy. Some respondents were of the view that the list did not incorporate sufficient input from employers and recruiters and thus did not reflect the real needs of the South African labour market and wider economy.

The following figure depicts the intended purposes of the OiHDL and the extent to which it has reportedly been used for these purposes, as indicated by the survey respondents.

⁸ Occupations in high demand are defined as occupations that show relatively strong employment growth, or are experiencing shortages in the labour market (DHET, 2015c).

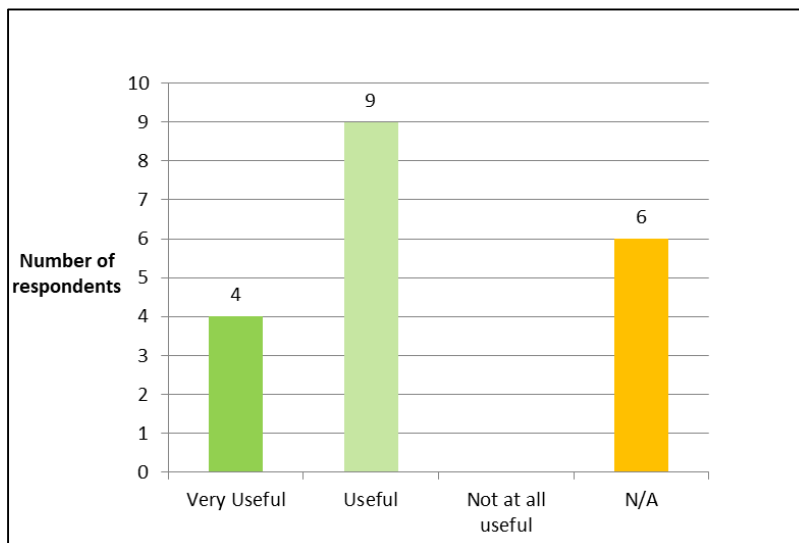
Figure 5: Purposes for which the list of Occupations in High Demand was used



Source: List of Occupations in High Demand Survey, 2015

The largest portion of respondents indicated that their organisations used the list for planning (19%) and development of programs (17%) for education and training. A further 17% indicated that they made use of the list to guide allocation of funding resources for education and training activities. The figure below indicates that 47% of respondents deemed the OiHDL useful for their work, while 21% indicated that it was highly useful. There were no responses suggesting that the list was not useful at all; however, 32% of the respondents did indicate that the list was not necessarily applicable to their area of work.

Figure 6: Usefulness to your area of work



Source: List of Occupations in High Demand Survey, 2015

Three (3) guides were produced that relate to sub-objective 1.2.3, while the methodology for OiHDL was produced and this sub-project is to be completed in March 2018.

3.3.3.3.2 Outcomes Assessed on Perceptions

On average, the outcome delivery for Labour Market Intelligence was considered “Partially Met.” This area can be further delineated into the outcome delivery for the three sub-objectives supporting this area.

Two (2) of the sub-objectives share the outcome of “Increased utilisation of skills research products to inform skills planning.” A discussion of the delivery of this outcome can be found below their assessment tables.

Table 28: Labour Market Intelligence – outcome delivery for sub-objective 1.2.1 & 1.2.2

Outcomes	Delivery
1.2.1 To interpret and analyse information and knowledge for policy, sectoral needs and other education, training and skills issues	
Increased utilisation of skills research products to inform skills planning	●
1.2.2 [To undertake skills] decision making, strategic planning and interventions [based on LMI]	
Increased utilisation of skills research products to inform skills planning	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

3.3.3.2.1 Increased utilisation of skills research products to inform skills planning

Respondents believe that the LMIP was only partially effective in increasing the utilisation of skills research products to inform skills planning. In some cases, stakeholders felt that the LMIP had not impacted skills planning “I haven’t seen any instances where the research has been used to inform skills planning” (DHET, 2017).

The general perception has been that while some of the research outputs have been useful, the translation of academic research into actionable interventions and policy has not yet occurred. This could be partially attributed to a lack of conceptual understanding of skills planning and how to utilise the outputs produced.

“I don’t really know how they are going to do skills planning given these inputs. The practical implementation does not seem possible. They had all the elements of skills planning, but it’s all about how you bring together those elements. You can have both qualitative and quantitative data, but it needs to be used correctly.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

The way forward for skills planning is a concern for some stakeholders who feel that, although the foundation for labour market research and skills planning has been established, skills planning has not yet been institutionalised within the department “LMIP has provided us with a whole new range of information and data to use, and even new methodologies. Whatever the LMIP might have produced, I don’t think those methodologies and information have been institutionalised” (DHET, 2017).

Table 29: Labour Market Intelligence – Outcome delivery for sub-objective 1.2.3

Outcomes	Delivery
1.2.3 To build models to create LMI, with supporting evidence	
Improved understanding of methodologies to identify skills needs	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

3.3.3.3.2 Improved understanding of methodologies to identify skills needs

The LMIP was considered effective in producing this immediate outcome. Stakeholders believe that the LMIP provided useful methodologies for conceptualising and implementing processes that could contribute to identifying the skills needs in the economy.

“A major contribution was an academic research approach to skills planning which was both qualitative and quantitative – you need to have a qualitative approach included since it involved people placing. Whether skills planning is actually possible is very contested – what LMIP did was to open the conversation. Before the LMIP we had looked at what other countries did, but we have to remember we are not a developed country.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

From a SETA perspective, LMIP was viewed as having “strengthened the quality of the processes, the methodologies and provided guidance through SSP forums and especially in the quality of SSP submissions methodologies for the SSP process” (SETA Interview, 2017). However, concern over the institutionalisation and further development of these methodologies remained for some LMIP stakeholders.

3.3.4 Institutional Capacity Development

This section covers the assessment of the effectiveness of LMIP in meeting the broad objective of institutional capacity development. The table below illustrates how this are achieved against its components in the Logical Model.

Table 30: Institutional Capacity Assessment

Sub-Objective	Objectives Assessed on Perceptions	Output Assessment	Outcomes Assessed on Perceptions
1.3.1 To design a national data architecture and strategic framework	●	●	●
1.3.2 To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to gather LMI	●	●	●
1.3.3 To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to interpret LMI for policy goals and programmes	●	●	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

3.3.4.1 Logical Model as Point of Reference

The table below illustrates an extract from the Logical model that relates directly to the objective of the Institutional Capacity Development objective and the components that follow it.

Table 31: Logical Model Extract - Institutional Capacity Development

Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
1.3 Institutional Capacity Development			
1.3.1 To design a national data architecture and strategic framework	Design a national data architecture and strategic framework	(a) National data architecture	Improved knowledge of data requirements and data sources for research on skills planning
	Conduct data audit	(a) Audited data sets	
	Create a dictionary on skills supply and demand	(a) Skills supply and demand dictionary	
	Determine labour market indicators	(a) Compendium of indicators for skills planning	
1.3.2 To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to gather LMI	Conduct learning sessions to train DHET and SETAs to gather and interpret LMI	(a) Learning sessions	Increased capacity to undertake labour market research
1.3.3 To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to interpret LMI for policy goals and programmes			

3.3.4.2 Objectives Assessed on Perceptions

The objective of ‘Institutional Capacity Development’ was perceived to have been ‘Partially Met’ by stakeholders. The main objective comprises three sub-objectives as assessed below.

3.3.4.2.1 To design a national data architecture and strategic framework

Survey respondents felt that this objective had been ‘Partially Met’, awarding it a score of 56%. Interviewees noted that a complete data architecture had not yet been achieved, and that the strategic framework may require further development with the implementation of the intended SPU.

“We asked...provide us with a plan/architecture of what a skills planning mechanism is...did not have the technical expertise to engage with this project.”

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

3.3.4.2.2 To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to gather LMI

Although some SETA interviewees indicated that LMIP had significantly improved their research methodologies and data-gathering processes, this area received a score of 54% from survey respondents and is therefore rated as ‘Partially Met’. A number of stakeholders indicated that collecting credible data from the labour market was still a challenge for planning purposes.

3.3.4.2.3 To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to interpret LMI for policy goals and programmes

51% Of respondents believed that this objective had been achieved by LMIP; the objective is categorised as ‘Partially Met.’ One example of why this objective may not have been fully met stems from a SETA interviewee who remarked that *“from the skills planning perspective, the skills categorisation was something that was a key thing. If you’re going to be centralising skills training, you need to be thinking on the same basis when you set your occupations. This wasn’t achieved fully”* (SETA Interview, 2017).

3.3.4.3 Assessment of the Achievement of the Objective

This section assesses the extent to which the objective was achieved, based on the extent to which its associated outputs and outcomes were delivered. This section further assesses the effectiveness of the processes/ activities that were intended to produce the outputs associated with this objective.

3.3.4.3.1 Output Assessment

This area of outputs was considered as ‘Met’ by the assessment. The training and learning sessions that were conducted as part of this objective were well attended; however, it was reported that there should be “*more consistency*” in the actual attendees of the training for individuals to gain the full benefit of the education (Research Partner, 2017). A key stakeholder group for this area, the SETAs, found the products of this area stream valuable. In addition, the engagements and learning sessions have been commended by all of the SETAs that were interviewed during the Evaluation.

“The project has been very successful in achieving dialogue, bringing stakeholders together to discuss their findings. They’ve been quite successful in publicising their findings.”

- Source: SETA, Interview (2017)

A concern that was stated in the business plan spoke to the transition of interns and junior researchers within the field of labour market research.

“Ensure that the junior researchers or interns are retained at SETAs with the right and effective mix of incentives, for example, be remunerated at a competitive level. Without the incentives there are high probabilities that the junior researchers will migrate out of the sector and seek work elsewhere.”

- Source: Briefing report for the DDG: Planning, policy and strategy, 7: 2017

Stakeholders felt that this aim was not fully achieved as “*LMIP did not create greater capacity for research in the DHET*” (DHET, 2017). It was reported that there wasn’t sufficient capacity within the Department at the beginning at the Project, and the interventions such as the internships and learning sessions did not substantially mitigate this issue.

“DHET doesn’t have a buoyant supply of expertise. They have not managed to build capacity with regard to formal qualifications within the skills planning arena.”

- Source: SETA, Interview (2017)

Two (2) learning sessions were still to be conducted at the time of the Evaluation. The learning sessions received positive feedback from attendees in terms of their content and relevance. In addition, participants in the LMIP felt that their own ability to engage with the labour market environment had improved through the Project.

“LMIP was important for building capacity – that was part of the reason why I was put in. So I could be part of the capacity-building. I didn’t have the experience that the other theme leaders had.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

Despite a number of successes of the capacity-building, especially for individuals involved directly in LMIP, the scale of the internal capacity-building was perceived as being insufficient for the needs of the DHET. A critical success factor for the sustainability of the capacity that has been created within the Project rests on the ability of those involved in the Project to transfer the knowledge and skills generated to the Department itself.

Table 32: Institutional Capacity Development – Output delivery for sub-objective 1.3.1

Outputs	Indicators	Delivery
1.3.1 To design a national data architecture and strategic framework		
National data architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of national data architecture Satisfaction levels for national data architecture 	●
Audited data sets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of audited data sets 	●

Outputs	Indicators	Delivery
Skills supply and demand dictionary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of skills supply and demand dictionary Satisfaction levels for dictionary 	●
Compendium of indicators for skills planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of compendium of indicators Satisfaction levels for compendium 	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

The outputs for this objective are considered to have been largely 'Met' as a result of these outputs having been produced. It must be noted, however, that although stakeholders have indicated that at least portions of the National Data Architecture were produced, the evaluation team was unable to confirm its existence – this output has therefore been rated as "Partially Met".

One of the key outputs for this objective was a dictionary of terms relating to DHET, and more specifically, to the skills planning context. While a number of stakeholders such as SETA representatives found the dictionary useful, other stakeholders found that the dictionary produced was "*not sufficient for all the definitions required*" (Research Partner Interview, 2017). The output required a number of revisions due to the poor quality of some terms that were more suited to a financial sector or other industries within South Africa. The dictionary should be regularly updated to remain useful to policy makers.

Evidence of the audited data sets exists, as well as the compendium of indicators for skills planning exists.

The following table covers the capacitation of SETAs and the Department. Both output areas scored a ranking of having 'Met' the effectiveness criteria.

Table 33: Institutional Capacity Development – Output delivery for sub-objective 1.3.2 & 1.3.3

Outputs	Indicators	Delivery
1.3.2 To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to gather LMI		
Learning sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of learning sessions Level of attendance at sessions Satisfaction levels of participants 	●
1.3.3 To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to interpret LMI for policy goals and programmes		
Learning sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of learning sessions Level of attendance at sessions Satisfaction levels of participants 	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

LMIP envisaged that the SETAs and the Department would be capacitated through internal learning sessions. Learning sessions were hosted by the HSRC; SETAs participated in workshops and learning sessions held by LMIP.

3.3.4.3.2 Outcomes Assessed on Perceptions

Table 34: Institutional Capacity Development – outcome delivery for sub-objective 1.3.1

Outcomes	Delivery
1.3.1 To design a national data architecture and strategic framework	
Improved knowledge of data requirements and data sources for research on skills planning	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

3.3.4.3.2.1 Improved knowledge of data requirements and data sources for research on skills planning

Perceptions indicate a partial increase in knowledge of data requirements and data sources for research on skills planning. While the data collected by the LMIP Project has been regarded as being useful to its various stakeholders, the perception from skills planners and other policy makers, as well as a number of individual researchers, was that the data collected was not sufficient to establish an institutionalised skills planning system.

“The National priority was to get a centralised database and understanding that everyone subscribed to – a guide which highlighted priorities to which money should be allocated.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

The LMIP Project has however assisted in contextualising the future data requirements necessary for this system and spurred more intensive and credible data collection foundations for entities under its direct influence in the PSET system.

Table 35: Institutional Capacity Development – outcome delivery for sub-objective 1.3.2 and 1.3.3

Outcomes	Delivery
1.3.2 To enhance the capacity of DHET & SETAs to gather LMI	
Increased capacity to undertake labour market research	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

3.3.4.3.2.2 Increased capacity to undertake labour market research

Respondents perceived a partial increase in capacity to undertake labour market research within the DHET. One concern was the apparent lack of resources within the Department. Stakeholders felt that the LMIP did not effectively contribute to capacity development within the DHET, with one individual stating that *“LMIP did not create greater capacity for research in the DHET”* (DHET, 2017). One of the concerns expressed was the lack of labour market, econometric and skills planning specialists within the Department and how that may affect the retention of the LMIP benefits going forward.

“It’s been an enormous project and partnership, providing significant insights. It has been a very successful partnership. DHET simply does not have the resources at the moment – it’s a very new department. We could not have done this without the partnerships like the LMIP did.”

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

The development of new resources into the PSET system has been regarded as being insufficient for the requirements of the sector; a key area of consideration for some stakeholders.

“There’s a very small number of researchers in South Africa that really have the skills to work in this area. So, the main focus going forward really needs to be supporting the development of graduates who can do the research and understand the dynamics of this area.”

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

3.3.5 Skills Forecasting Capacity

This section covers an assessment of the effectiveness of LMIP in meeting the broad objective of skills forecasting capacity. The table below illustrates how this is achieved against its components in the Logical Model

Table 36: Skills Forecasting Capacity Assessment

Sub-Objective	Objectives Assessed on Perceptions	Output Assessment	Outcomes Assessed on Perceptions
1.4.1 To build the DHET’s and SETAs’ capacity to anticipate trends in the demand and supply of skills (from the education and training sector)	●	●	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

3.3.5.1 Logical Model as Point of Reference

The table below illustrates an extract from the Logical model that relates directly to the objective of the Skills Forecasting Capacity objective and the components that follow it.

Table 37: Logical Model Extract - Skills Forecasting Capacity

Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
1.4 Skills Forecasting Capacity			
1.4.1 To build the DHET’s and SETAs’ capacity to anticipate trends in the demand and supply of skills (from the education and training sector)	Build a model to forecast supply and demand for skills	(a) Linked Macro-Economic Model	Improved (more accurate, integrated, time sensitive) understanding of skills needs for education and training
	Train DHET and SETAs use the forecasting model	(a) Training sessions with DHET and SETAs on the forecasting model	

3.3.5.2 Objective Assessed on Perceptions

The objective of ‘Skills Forecasting Capacity’ was perceived to have been ‘Partially Met’ by stakeholders.

3.3.5.2.1 To build the DHET’s and SETAs’ capacity to anticipate trends in the demand and supply of skills (from the education and training sector)

A number of interviewees felt that the original concept of the LMIP as a predictor of occupations was optimistic. This opinion was most strongly expressed by the research partners who articulated that the disconnect between the capacity of the Project and the desired outcomes of the Department and associated stakeholders was not specific to South Africa; internationally labour-market forecasting is a challenging objective. Respondents rated this objective as ‘Partially Met’ with a score of 56%.

3.3.5.3 Assessment of the Achievement of the Objective

This section assesses the extent to which the objective was achieved, based on the extent to which its associated outputs and outcomes were delivered. This section further assesses the effectiveness of the processes/ activities that were intended to produce the outputs associated with this objective.

3.3.5.3.1 Output Assessment

The outputs for this objective have been assessed as having been delivered. The labour market econometric model was produced and training sessions with DHET and the SETAs were conducted on the use and application of the model. However, the inaccessibility of the model arising from the inability of DHET to take ownership negatively impacted the ability of the DHET to forecast skills needs. The majority of stakeholders that have been interviewed expressed that they had very positive sentiments towards the potential contribution of Theme 2 as they felt the model would be able to play an instrumental role in skills planning in South Africa. The key issue of Theme 2 has been the contracting surrounding the ownership of the model, with a stakeholder commenting that *“in hindsight, we did not have a conversation on, when the project is finished, how the updates and maintenance of the model will be financed”* (Research Partner Interview, 2017).

“These models need to be kept up to date and ready to be used. This was addressed in the proposal, but not how it was to be done, funded, etc. If it had been brought into the financial planning at the beginning, it would have been helpful so as to not create a break between completing the model and the modality of the model.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

Stakeholders who were not involved in the development of the model have expressed concerns regarding the cost of Theme 2, if it remains inaccessible to the Department and its affiliates; the model is considered an important output for various stakeholders for a variety of skills planning inputs – *“The model itself that was produced is one of the first I have seen. DHET should take it seriously and integrate it into the PSET”* (SETA Interview, 2017).

“The skills forecasting system developed by REAL must be available free of charge to users, and must drill down to six (6) digit SIC codes.”

- Source: SETA, Survey (2017)

The assessment of Theme 2 would be substantially improved upon the transferral of ownership of the model to DHET - complimented by a means of sustainably maintaining and updating the system.

Table 38: Skills Forecasting Capacity – Output delivery for sub-objective 1.4.1

Outputs	Indicators	Delivery
1.4.1 To build the DHET’s and SETAs’ capacity to anticipate trends in the demand and supply of skills (from the education and training sector)		
Linked Macro-Economic Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of the Linked Macro-Economic Model Number of people actively using the Model Satisfaction levels for the Model 	●
Training sessions with DHET and SETAs on the forecasting model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of training sessions Level of attendance at sessions Satisfaction levels of participants 	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

3.3.5.3.2 Outcomes Assessed on Perceptions

Table 39: Skills Forecasting Capacity – Outcome Delivery

Outcomes	Delivery
1.4.1 To build the DHET’s and SETAs’ capacity to anticipate trends in the demand and supply of skills (from the education and training sector)	
Improved (more accurate, integrated, time sensitive) understanding of skills needs for education and training	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

Improved (more accurate, integrated, time sensitive) understanding of skills needs for education and training

Respondents perceived an improved understanding of skills needs for education and training to have been met. To make the changes in the labour and education department worthwhile, stakeholders need to understand all the parts and functions of the PSET system as they relate to labour market requirements. Stakeholders articulated that they had deepened their level of understanding of requirements of the PSET system to meet the needs of labour market demand, “LMIP assisted to identify what skills were needed. We produced a report that took several years. Methodology for determining how you would identify skills demanded was developed” (DHET, 2017). Some stakeholders that accessed and utilised the research reports and empirical evidence produced by LMIP found the research outputs useful from an academic perspective.

“The Skills Supply and Demand Report produced by the LMIP was a very good report which tells us about the mismatch of skills in the country, i.e. engineering (31%) and sciences (40%) graduates are working in the financial services sector because of knowledge of Maths and Sciences.”

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

3.3.6 Research Capacity Development

This section covers an assessment of the effectiveness of LMIP in meeting the broad objective of research capacity development. The table below illustrates how this was achieved against its components in the Logical Model.

Table 40: Research Capacity Development Assessment

Sub-Objective	Objectives Assessed on Perceptions	Output Assessment	Outcomes Assessed on Perceptions
1.5.1 To increase the national pool of researchers, especially African & woman researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour market analysis	●	●	●
1.5.2. To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field (to ensure more effective impact of research on policy)	●	●	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

3.3.6.1 Logical Model as Point of Reference

The table below illustrates an extract from the Logical model that relates directly to the objective of the Research Capacity Development objective and the components that follow it.

Table 41: Logical Model Extract - Research Capacity Development

Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
1.5 Research Capacity Development			
1.5.1 To increase the national pool of researchers, especially African & woman researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour market analysis	Conduct learning sessions to train DHET and SETAs to gather and interpret LMI	(a) Learning sessions	Increased capacity to undertake labour market research
	Grant bursaries to post graduate students working on higher education, training, and labour market analysis	(a) Bursaries	
	Place interns in labour market research institutions (viz. HSRC)	(a) Internships	
1.5.2 To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field (to ensure	Produce research plan	(a) Research plan	Increased collaboration amongst researchers on labour market research
	Specification of research components that are coherent and complementary	(a) Appropriate research specifications	

Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
more effective impact of research on policy)	Conduct research colloquiums	(a) Research Colloquiums	
	Conduct policy roundtables	(a) Policy roundtables	

3.3.6.2 Objectives Assessed on Perceptions

The objective of ‘Research Capacity Development’ was perceived to have been ‘Partially Met’ by stakeholders. The main objective comprises two sub-objectives as assessed below.

3.3.6.2.1 To increase the national pool of researchers, especially African & woman researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour market analysis

This objective was assessed as ‘Partially Met’ as it achieved a score of 56% from survey respondents. Capacity building was a key objective of the Department; through the HSRC, the DHET awarded 21 bursaries for post-graduate students in Labour Market studies. In addition, 4 learning sessions were held, and 11 intern junior researchers were taken on over the course of the Project.

3.3.6.2.2 To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field (to ensure more effective impact of research on policy)

The facilitation of coherence and complementarity in the research field is related to the prior objective in terms of providing the impetus for research to be implemented into policy. This objective was considered partially met by stakeholders who took part in the survey and achieved a rating of 59%.

3.3.6.3 Assessment of the Achievement of the Objective

This section assesses the extent to which the objective was achieved, based on the extent to which its associated outputs and outcomes were delivered. This section further assesses the effectiveness of the processes/ activities that were intended to produce the outputs associated with this objective.

3.3.6.3.1 Output Assessment

Output delivery for sub-objective 1.5.1: To increase the national pool of researchers, especially African & woman researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour market analysis

The outputs of this area were assessed as ‘Met.’ Two key components of this area pertain to the internship placement programme, and the student bursary programme. Eleven (11) interns and junior researchers were recorded as having been employed through LMIP; ten (10) names of interns were recorded as having been employed in the 2017 DDG Briefing Report (Briefing report for the DDG: Planning, policy and strategy, 13: 2017).

Table 42: Research Capacity Development – Output delivery for sub-objective 1.5.1

Outputs	Indicators	Delivery
1.5.1 To increase the national pool of researchers, especially African & woman researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour market analysis		
Learning sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of learning sessions Level of attendance at sessions Satisfaction levels of participants 	●
Bursaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of bursaries Proportion of bursaries at Masters and PhD level Proportion of bursars that continued on to roles in skills research 	●
Internships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of interns Proportion of interns that continued to roles in skills research 	●

Outputs	Indicators	Delivery
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of interns offered permanent positions post internship Number of organisations in which interns are placed 	

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

LMIP addressed this area partly through its student bursary programme that, through the efforts of the HSRC and funding from the NRF, sought to finance the post-graduate education of students in the field of Labour Market Analysis. This direct intervention provided twenty-six (26) Masters and sixteen (16) Honours bursaries over the course of four (4) years. The vision was for these students to feed into the research agencies and institutions that support DHET to support policy planning. The following targets were proposed for student bursaries:

Table 43: LMIP Student Bursary Targets

	Funding per student	2012	2013	2014	Total
Honours	R60 000	4 students	10 students	13 students	27
Masters	R100 000	8 students	12 students	4 students	12
Total students per annum		12	22	17	39 degrees

Source: Briefing report for the DDG: Planning, policy and strategy, 5: 2017

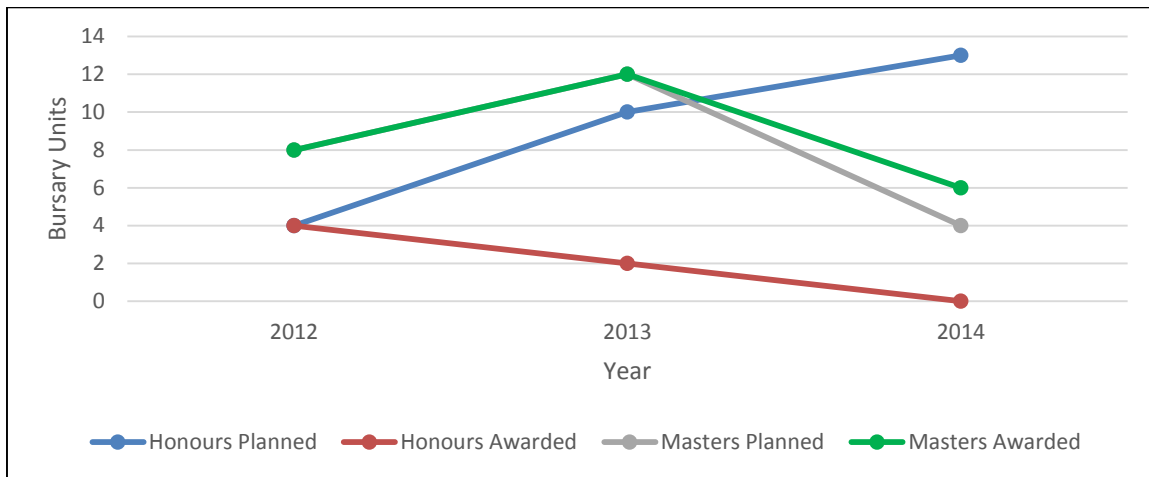
The Project assisted thirty-three (33) students to complete their Honours and master's degrees from 2012 to 2016. The total number of degrees that were enabled by the LMIP falls short of the targeted amount that was outlined in the business plan by approximately 15%. The table below outlines the bursary disbursements per annum. This is represented as the number of bursaries of either R60 000 (Honours) or R100 000 (Masters) disbursed; a bursary 'unit' entails the receipt of a year's worth of either Masters or Honours funding by a student.

Table 44: Bursary Units Awarded per Annum

	Funding per student	2012 Bursary units awarded	2013 Bursary units awarded	2014 Bursary units awarded	2015 Bursary units awarded	2016 Bursary units awarded	Total Bursary units awarded
Honours	R60 000	4	2	0	6	4	16
Masters	R100 000	8	12	6	0	0	26
Total Bursary units awarded per annum		12	14	6	6	4	42 bursary units

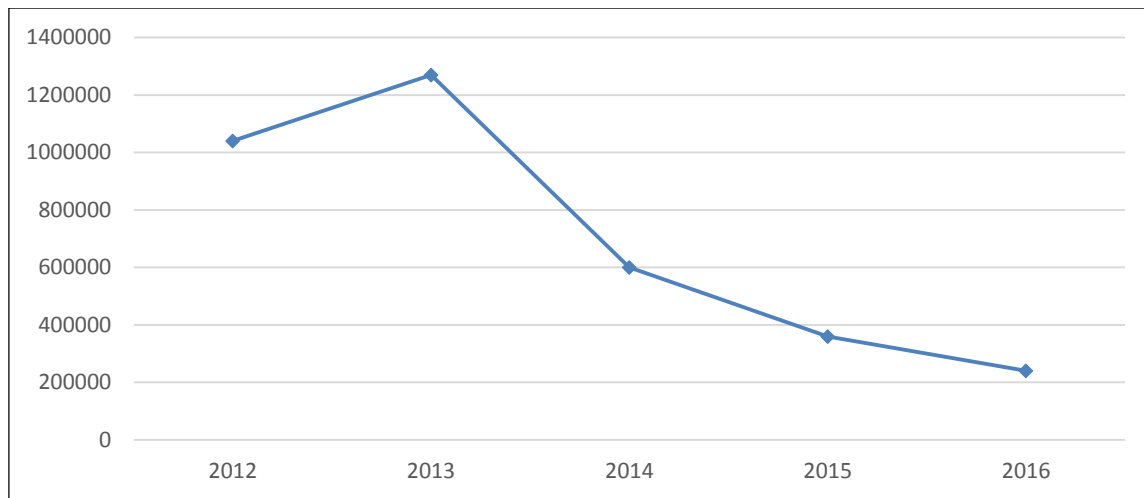
The figure below shows the planned number of bursaries which were to be awarded over the lifetime of the Project compared to the actual number of bursaries awarded.

Figure 7: Bursaries Planned vs. Awarded



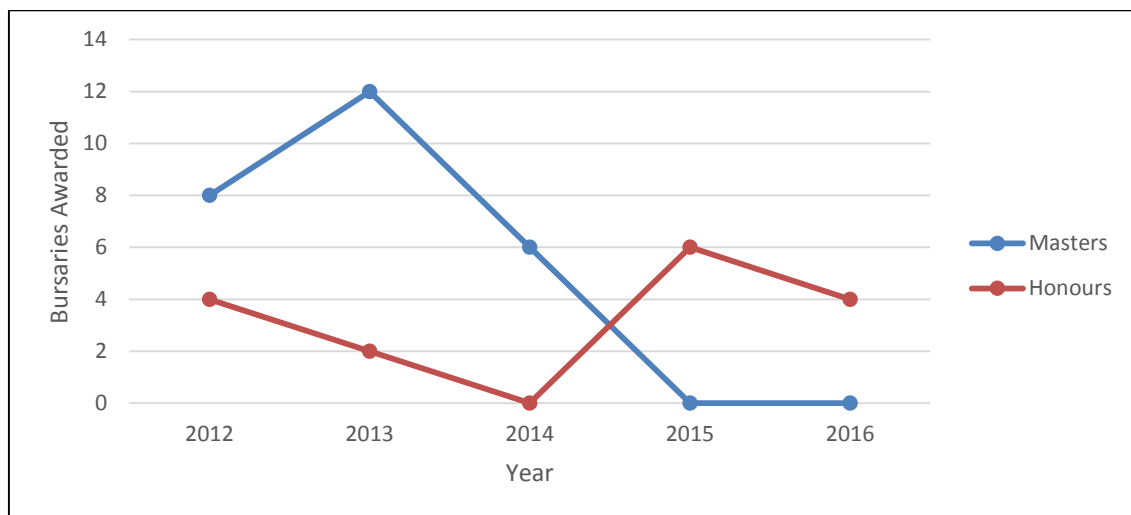
As can be seen from the figure above, the number of Masters bursaries awarded in 2012 and 2013 was enough to meet the planned target. In 2014, there were two (2) more Masters bursaries awarded than was originally planned. The targets for Honours bursaries however was only met in 2012. In 2013, only two (2) bursaries were awarded to Honours students, eight (8) less than what was planned. In 2014, no Honours bursaries were awarded, even though thirteen (13) bursaries had been planned for. Representing bursaries awarded from a different perspective, the table below shows the number of new bursaries awarded to recipients over the course of the LMIP. The following figure outlines the change in the total bursary spend over time. 2013 saw the largest disbursement of funds for the bursary programme. This peak steadily declined over time.

Figure 8: Total Amount Spent on Bursaries (R)



The reason for this spike could be illustrated in the figure below. A relatively large number of Masters bursary units were awarded in 2013; the cost of a Masters bursary unit is 67% more than that of an annual Honours bursary.

Figure 9: Bursary Units Awarded per Degree Type



The table below describes the total number of new bursaries that were awarded to a single student over the course of the LMIP Project.

Table 45: New Bursaries Awarded

	Funding per student	2012 new bursaries	2013 new bursaries	2014 new bursaries	2015 new bursaries	2016 new bursaries	Total new bursaries
Honours	R60 000	4	2	0	6	4	16
Masters	R100 000	8	11	0	0	0	19
Total new bursaries per annum		12	13	0	6	4	35 new bursaries

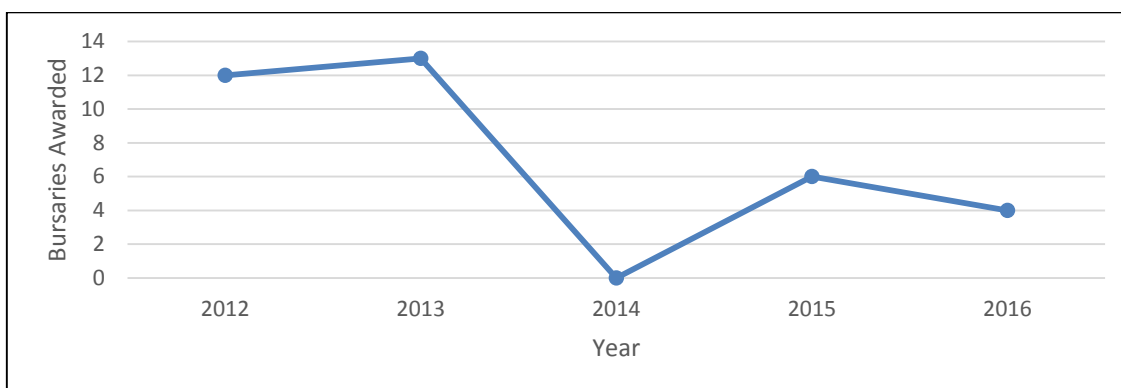
The number of Masters bursary units awarded exceeds that of the Honours cohort. This contradicts the statement made in the capacity building business plan that describes Masters degrees as less relevant for the direct needs of the Project

“At a Master’s level, comparatively, students are expected to apply their basic skills in their research thesis and sometimes no coursework is provided. In this sense the Master’s degree training is often more specialized than what is critically needed at the moment.”

- Source: Business Plan, Capacity Building: Student Bursaries and Institutions, 5:2012

The figure below, in conjunction with the table above, indicates that the total number of bursaries awarded declined over time. The timeframe for bursaries awarded extended from the original plan of three (3) years to cover an additional two (2) periods. This could be attributed to the fact that this sub-project did not meet its targeted number of allocations in the first three (3) years.

Figure 10: Total new bursaries awarded



2014 saw the least number of new bursaries allocated; zero (0) new Honours or Masters bursaries were awarded. The LMIP awarded four (4) Honours bursaries with the last available tranche of funding. Researchers within the labour market environment felt that, overall, the impact of the bursary programme was not sufficient for current research needs.

“I’m sure that it made some difference, but it is a long-term type of thing ... building capacity. ... I think that if we really want to build our abilities, as nation we need to improve our skills system. I’m sure it made some difference but not nearly enough.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

The student bursary programme was intended to increase the capacity of post-graduate scholars to undertake labour market research. It was envisioned that these students would become part of a larger research pool that would have the necessary skills in manipulating large datasets, analysing data and writing reports to aid research institutions and agencies of the DHET such as SETAs. It was argued that the financial and academic assistance of the programme would induce more students to undertake full-time studies and hence contribute towards building human capacity in “the sector of skills, education and labour markets analyses – especially among African and women researchers” (Business Plan, Capacity Building: Student Bursaries and Institutions, 3:2012). Following the completion of students’ studies, the Department intended for the LMIP to ensure their “placement for sound mentorship at relevant research institutions including the DHET and its agencies, for example SETAs” (Business Plan, Capacity Building: Student Bursaries and Institutions, 4:2012).

Apart from measuring the quantity of bursaries granted, the quality of the outcome can be inferred by the bursary programmes success in channelling bursary recipients into DHET and its research affiliates through the internship programme, and directly without the internship intervention. Partial success can also be granted for the employment of students in the education and labour-market research sectors, or continued scholarship as post-graduate students. The Evaluation interviewed 11 bursary recipients to determine whether they had transitioned into the above areas. Of those interviewed, none of the students had been placed through the internship programme, only one was employed with one of the research affiliates of the LMIP, and a number were in sectors that did not align to the goals of the bursary programme. In addition, three students interviewed were still completing their Masters, and one was still completing their Honours degree over a number of years. The bursary programme therefore does not align to the intention of the Capacity Building business plan and success of the intervention is not clearly demonstrated; however, the bursaries have contributed to increasing the pool of researchers in South Africa.

Table 46: Bursary Recipients’ Areas of Employment

Degree	Faculty	Current Industry
Masters	Humanities	Academia/Higher education
Masters	Economics	Scholar: Masters, economics
Masters	Economics	Education

Degree	Faculty	Current Industry
Masters	Economics	Academia/Higher education
Honours/BTech Assistantships	Economics	Banking: SARB
Honours	Economics	Management consulting
Honours	Economics	Banking
Honours	Economics and business	Scholar: Masters
Honours	Business and economic sciences	Scholar: Honours
Honours	Business and economic sciences	Professional services: Recruiting
Honours	Business and economic sciences	Scholar: Masters

The bursary programme of the LMIP is evaluated as being 'Met.' Due to the above evidence, it can be recommended that greater focus and be adopted on ensuring retention of bursary recipients within the skills sector to ensure a greater degree of effectiveness and sustainability of this objective.

Output delivery for sub-objective 1.5.2 : To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field (to ensure more effective impact of research on policy)

Table 47: Research Capacity Development – Output delivery for sub-objective 1.5.2

Outputs	Indicators	Delivery
1.5.2 To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field (to ensure more effective impact of research on policy)		
Research plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of research plan Quality rating for research plan 	●
Appropriate research specifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which research scope specifications met skills planners needs Level of coherence of research scope specifications Level of coherence of research scope specifications 	●
Research Colloquiums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of research colloquiums Level of attendance at sessions Satisfaction levels of participants 	●
Policy roundtables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of policy roundtables Level of attendance at sessions Satisfaction levels of participants 	●

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

As indicated in the table above, research plans and specifications were assessed as falling short of the minimum requirement to meet the objective associated with these outputs. Research plans were either absent or not clearly and simply articulated, with stakeholders thus not having a common view of project scope and planning. A widely held view by stakeholders was that research specifications were not always appropriate.

3.3.6.3.2 Outcomes Assessed on Perceptions

3.3.6.3.2.1 Increased capacity to undertake labour market research

Table 48: Research Capacity Development – Outcome delivery for sub-objective 1.5.1


Outcomes	Delivery
1.5.1 To increase the national pool of researchers, especially African & woman researchers, working in the area of higher education, training, skills development and labour market analysis	
Increased capacity to undertake labour market research	

* Where  = met;  = partially met;  = not met

This objective was assessed as ‘Met’. Capacity building was a key objective of the Department; through the HSRC, the DHET awarded 21 bursaries for post-graduate students in Labour Market studies. In addition, 4 learning sessions were held, and 11 intern junior researchers were taken on over the course of the Project.

3.3.6.3.2.2 Increased collaboration amongst researchers on labour market research

Table 49: Research Capacity Development – Outcome delivery for sub-objective 1.5.2

Outcomes	Delivery
1.5.2 To facilitate coherence and complementarity in the research field (to ensure more effective impact of research on policy)	
Increased collaboration amongst researchers on labour market research	

* Where  = met;  = partially met;  = not met

Survey respondents perceived the LMIP to have been effective in this outcome. Research partners such as Wits, the HSRC and consultants felt that the LMIP provided a valuable platform where labour market issues could be brought to the fore. The research colloquium established a body of researchers and industry experts within the area of labour market research in South Africa, while the LMIP attempted to maintain this contact through workshops and meetings where researchers could engage on labour market issues.

“One of the big benefits was that people came around and had meetings and workshops – there was a common understanding of quantitative skills planning according to a rigorous academic process around an intellectually stimulating model.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

3.3.7 Research Dissemination

This section covers the assessment of the effectiveness of LMIP in meeting the broad objective of research dissemination. The table below illustrates how this are achieved against its components in the Logical Model.

Table 50: Research Dissemination Assessment

Sub-Objective	Objectives Assessed on Perceptions	Output Assessment	Outcomes Assessed on Perceptions
1.6.1 To share and debate knowledge and intelligence generated from LMIP			

Sub-Objective	Objectives Assessed on Perceptions	Output Assessment	Outcomes Assessed on Perceptions
within the research community and with policy makers			

* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

3.3.7.1 Logical Model as Point of Reference

The table below illustrates an extract from the Logical model that relates directly to the objective of the Research Dissemination objective and the components that follow it.

Table 51: Logical Model Extract - Research Dissemination

Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
1.6 Research Dissemination			
1.6.1 To share and debate knowledge and intelligence generated from LMIP within the research community and with policy makers	Conduct seminars	(a) Seminars	Increased collaboration between skills researchers and skills planners
	Conduct presentations	(a) Presentations	
	Conduct ministerial briefings	(a) Ministerial Briefings	
	Conduct research colloquiums	(a) Research Colloquiums	
	Conduct policy roundtables	(a) policy roundtables	
	Produce research papers and journal articles, based on research undertaken	(a) Research papers (b) Journal articles	
	Create a research repository Establish LMIP website	(a) Research repository (a) LMIP website	

3.3.7.2 Objective Assessed on Perceptions

The objective of ‘Research Dissemination’ was perceived to have been ‘Met’ by stakeholders. The main objective comprises two sub-objectives as assessed below.

3.3.7.2.1 To share and debate knowledge and intelligence generated from LMIP within the research community and with policy makers

Survey respondents felt that the LMIP Project was well-aligned to this objective. Stakeholders considered the degree of focus of the Project on the LMIP objective to be ‘Met’ with a score of 79%. Research outputs were uploaded onto the LMIP research repository and are widely accessible through the LMIP website. In addition, the Project actively engaged with researchers and policymakers through policy roundtables, workshops and other engagements over the course of LMIP.

“HSRC was the main manager and they seemed to host all the round tables while DHET hosted the bigger learning sessions. They managed to bring in a lot of expertise which was great.”

- Source: SETA, Interview (2017)

3.3.7.3 Assessment of the Achievement of the Objective

This section assesses the extent to which the objective was achieved, based on the extent to which its associated outputs and outcomes were delivered. This section further assesses the effectiveness of the processes/ activities that were intended to produce the outputs associated with this objective.

3.3.7.3.1 Output Assessment

Output dissemination has been successful amongst the stakeholders who were directly involved in the LMIP and who were able to attend the policy roundtables, workshops and other engagements. The presentation of key information was valued by those within and outside of the Department who felt that, at times, the research reports were “*too long and academic*” to be easily used in policy making (DHET, 2017).

“The project has been very successful in achieving dialogue; bringing stakeholders together to discuss their findings. They’ve been quite successful in publicising their findings.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

This points to a concern over the translation of the raw data and reports into usable inputs for policy. Dissemination should relate to the accessibility and usability of key information. A research partner expressed that “*the DHET should take all the outputs, papers, templates etc. and do a thorough analysis on what can and can’t be used and in which areas*” (Research Partner Interview, 2017). Conducting this exercise would allow for more efficient dissemination of the LMIP outputs.

“We haven’t even begun to mine the knowledge and data. It would be worth investing in some kind of process to mine some of the policy knowledge that could be gained. This may need to be done in a themed way. Summary reports need to be created. Creating a lot of knowledge and simply letting it sit in a repository won’t help.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

Beyond this, the DHET should ensure that the outputs remain accessible and updated for stakeholders.

Table 52: Research Dissemination – Output delivery for sub-objective 1.6.1

Outputs	Indicators	Delivery
1.6.1 To share and debate knowledge and intelligence generated from LMIP within the research community and with policy makers		
Seminars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of seminars • Level of attendance at sessions • Satisfaction levels of participants 	●
Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of presentations • Level of attendance at sessions • Satisfaction levels of participants 	●
Ministerial briefings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of ministerial briefings • Level of satisfaction expressed by the Minister with the briefing 	●
Research colloquium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of research colloquiums • Level of attendance at sessions • Satisfaction levels of participants 	●
Policy roundtables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of policy roundtables • Level of attendance at sessions • Satisfaction levels of participants 	●
Research papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of research papers published • Number of citations for research papers published 	●
Journal articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of journal articles published • Number of citations for journal articles published 	●
Research repository	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of documents in the research repository • Usability rating for the research repository 	●
LMIP website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of the LMIP website • Usability rating for the LMIP website • SEO rating for the LMIP website 	●

* Where  = met;  = partially met;  = not met

The outputs for research dissemination have been assessed as ‘Met’, as a result of these having been produced. One of the key outputs of this area was the creation of an online research repository in which the key academic outputs and products of the workshops and learning sessions were to be stored. Stakeholders’ opinions of the value of the repository varied widely. The design of the research repository was suitable; however, the usability and functionality can be enhanced by improving the filtering and searching function. One stakeholder from DHET described the repository as “*very helpful*” as it empowered him with the necessary information to negotiate with NEDLAC and was a useful input into his work in the Department (DHET Interview, 2017); however, the same interviewee rated the usefulness of the repository as 40% for other stakeholders. This opinion was founded on the “*overwhelming*” nature of the repository. A large number of outputs are stored in the repository, but the platform itself is not user-friendly; “*it needs to be mined and summarised and translated for people*” (DHET Interview, 2017).

A similar sentiment was expressed by another DHET stakeholder.

“I am aware that it [the research repository] is sitting somewhere but I haven’t had the chance to look at any of the reports. I don’t see how some of that information flows into the planning that we do. It may be sitting somewhere waiting for the right person to take all that information and use it.”


- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

The various engagements such as the policy roundtables and presentations were rated highly by attendees who commented on the collaborative atmosphere of the events and their usefulness as a standardisation tool across different government agencies. The Briefing Report outlines the numbers of events held as follows:

- 74 presentations
- 8 policy roundtables
- 2 ministerial briefings
- 1 research colloquium
- 19 seminars

3.3.7.3.2 Outcomes Assessed on Perceptions

Table 53: Research Dissemination – Outcome delivery for sub-objective 1.6.1

Outcomes	Delivery
1.6.1 To share and debate knowledge and intelligence generated from LMIP within the research community and with policy makers	
Increased collaboration between skills researchers and skills planners	

* Where  = met;  = partially met;  = not met

3.3.7.3.2.1 Increased collaboration between skills researchers and skills planners

Respondents perceived a partial increase in collaboration between skills researchers and skills planners.

“When I presented this (the model) at the training for the executives (DDG etc.) and they got access to the website they were very excited when they saw exactly what the model was about. The enthusiasm from the department’s side helped to contribute towards the successes. It energised us.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

Research partners articulated that positive buy-in from the Department, especially at senior levels, would be essential to draw out the full benefits of the LMIP through advocacy of the Project. The feedback regarding collaboration between researchers and policy makers was generally encouraging; however, the need for more personal contact

and engagements was expressed by a number of stakeholders; “When issues came up the only way of communication was writing or talking. It’s better when you communicate face to face” (DHET, 2017). Collaboration between skills planners and researchers, to provide labour-market data and to analyse and translate this information respectively, is a key success factor to creating usable inputs for skills planning.

3.3.8 To what extent was the Project effectively administered, managed and governed?

The administration, governance and management of the Project contributes to the delivery of the Project objectives and ensured the functioning of the Project.

3.3.8.1 Delivery of General Project Outputs

The following outputs, presented in Table 52 below, were produced and are associated with the overarching Project plans and the thematic plans that were necessary prior to the Project’s establishment, as well as the progress reports that were issued over the course of the LMIP.

Table 54: Output Delivery

Outputs	Delivery
Business Plans	●
Memoranda of Agreement	●
Project Plans	●
Progress Reports	●








* Where ● = met; ● = partially met; ● = not met

The Business Plans produced in the early stages of the LMIP were amended multiple times which resulted in a lack of clarity in the design and proposed activities of a number of the themes. Although the Business Plans described links between the different facets of their workstreams, they were not well integrated nor were they standardised sufficiently to provide an overall view of the various themes within the Project. The Memoranda of Agreement were better structured and provided the necessary information required from a document of this type. Progress reports were deemed helpful by stakeholders and were consolidated into update reports that were consistently published.

3.3.8.2 Effectiveness of Administration, Management and Governance Processes/ Activities

Table 55: Management and Administration Assessment

Project Management Activities	Component Description	Project Management Area Performance
Project Governance		
Governance Structures	Governance structures should provide the framework for effective functions and processes to be undertaken. Governance structures should facilitate decision-making and provide oversight to the Project.	●
Project Management and Administration		
Risk Management	Risk management pertains to the forecasting and evaluation of risks that may arise during the course of a Project. The formulation of risk-mitigating strategies is a crucial area within risk management.	●

Project Management Activities	Component Description	Project Management Area Performance
Stakeholder Communications	This area is assessed on the extent to which communications between stakeholders were effective, transparent and relevant.	
Project Planning	Project planning pertains to the implementation and use of a formal, approved document to guide project execution and control. The project plan should document planning assumptions and decisions, responsibilities, as well as the approved scope, cost, and schedule baselines for the project.	
Progress Reporting	Frequent and substantial documentation of the performance of goals, resource expenditure, problems encountered what problems have been encountered, and whether the project or process is expected to be completed on time and within budget.	
Quality Assurance	Quality assurance relates to an assessment of the activities that are used to evaluate whether LMIP outputs meet the standards expected, and the specified requirements of the project.	
Document Management	Document management relates to the control of processes and practices enforced for the creation, review, modification, approval, issuance, distribution and accessibility of documents.	
Human Resource Management	Efficient and effective utilisation of an organisation's, and relevant external, human skills, time and knowledge will result in a high rating for human resource management.	
Disbursement of funds and verification of expenditure	The disbursement of funds and verification of expenditure relates to the management of costs for the LMIP and the authentication process of outputs produced.	

* Where  = met;  = partially met;  = not met

3.3.8.2.1 Governance Structures

The DHET issued a ToR for governance structures and mechanisms that outlined the key functions, specifications and responsibilities of LMIP committees. It was envisaged that the committees would provide a platform at which strategic decision-making and leadership would occur. The Advisory Committee and Steering Committee were the two key engagement points at which risks could be discussed and addressed and decisions made. The objectives of the platforms are outlined below:

- **The Advisory Committee** was envisaged to provide visionary leadership and strategic direction on the Project with particular reference to reviewing the quality, relevance and value of the research in light of the Project's objectives. This structure is constituted by senior government officials, labour market experts and economists from the private sector, universities, labour organisations, etc.
- **The Steering Committee** was established to ensure the overall success of the LMIP by ensuring the timely realisation of project outcomes and outputs, as well as to mediate and work towards the resolution of problems in the implementation of the Project. It comprises the HSRC, REAL Centre and DHET representatives.

The LMIP therefore had governance structures in place for the various requirements of the Project. Despite this, it should be noted that interviews with various LMIP stakeholders revealed that there was limited awareness of committee meetings and that meetings were generally poorly attended.

"There were some high-profile people who could not be available for many engagements. The people who attended in their absence were not the experts."

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

The appropriateness and functioning of the various committees varied across the LMIP. Some stakeholders noted that the committees were not always sufficient for active governance of the Project.

"The Advisory Committee concept was not adequate in providing sufficient guidance to the project."

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

3.3.8.2.2 Risk Management

There was no risk management at overall project or theme level for the LMIP. No formal risk register for themes or project existed against which potential shortcomings of the Project could be assessed and pre-emptively addressed. The committees in place applied a reactive method to dealing with project issues through the assessment of memoranda submitted to them by internal Project stakeholders. Issues that arose were discussed with stakeholders at the Steering Committee meetings. Items noted on the minutes from the previous meeting were addressed in the subsequent Steering Committee meeting.

"We weren't given any training. Risk management was the major red flag that we had not previously picked up."

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

A risk management dashboard would have been useful to assess timelines and to prioritise areas of high risk to direct resources effectively and efficiently. For example, one of the key risks mentioned by various stakeholders was the accessibility of the output of Theme 2. The miscommunication that has resulted from clauses within the contracts have presented a risk to the attainment of key deliverables of the LMIP. Had the issue regarding the contracting and ownership of the model been proactively managed, the risk could have been accurately assessed and pre-emptively mitigated.

"The contract and all legal-related matters should have been dealt with initially. This is delaying use and decreasing value [of Theme 2 outputs]."

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

3.3.8.2.3 Stakeholder Communications

DHET communicated internally and with external project stakeholders on a number of platforms. In addition to meetings and formal engagements, DHET was in constant communication with researchers on the Project. Research theme leaders and consultants external to DHET commended the Department on their willingness to openly communicate.

“The was a willingness to negotiate with partners and stakeholders in order to get the final result that everyone wanted.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

Theme leaders within DHET reportedly discussed deliverables, research challenges and progress with their corresponding theme leaders within the research institutions. The HSRC and Wits University were responsible for submitting proof of deliverables to DHET prior to the disbursement of funds for work completed and engaging in discussions regarding the deliverables with the project coordination team.

Communications were made available to external stakeholders through the online repository of LMIP documents. The repository holds journal articles, reports, research presentations and other academic material falling within the spectrum of skills planning. The repository sits within the LMIP website that is openly accessible on the internet.

Despite the frequency of communications between DHET and contracted research organisations, miscommunications still occurred.

“It was difficult to try to ‘manage an academic.’ There was a lot of conflict due to differences in understanding of the scope and differences in perspective.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

The full extent of research produced, and the usefulness of such outputs was not made apparent to outside stakeholders. Communications with stakeholders external to the LMIP has been notably lacking.

“The HSRC and universities have done their own advocacy, our department is particularly bad with advertisement.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

“What has been implemented? What has been accepted? How far are the processes? Have the processes and the Project now closed? This would be important to know to be able to engage with the benefits. For me that would be a first step - I think if people understand those benefits, you’re in a better position to implement those benefits to ensure sustainability.”

- Source: SETA, Interview (2017)

3.3.8.2.4 Project Planning

The LMIP was divided into six (6) thematic areas, each governed by a separate business plan. A seventh business plan, ‘Capacity Building: Student Bursaries and Institutions’, was formulated to outline the allocation of bursaries to students and the implementation of institutional capacity-building from 2012 to the end of 2014. The final business plan, ‘Research Communication Strategy’, provided an advocacy and dissemination strategy to utilise the outputs of the LMIP. In addition, work plans and Memoranda of Agreement (MoA), as well as amendments to the business plans and governance structure reports, were produced as part of the general LMIP project plan.

There was no overarching project plan at the inception of the LMIP. Stakeholders described the scope as “loose and sprawling” and felt that there was little cohesion between different facets of the Project. A source of this disjuncture stems from the change in project leadership that occurred in the early stages of the Project; handover between project conceptualisers, and those who went on to implement the Project, was not formally documented in a project plan.

“Those present at the conceptualisation were never there and it took a lot of time to resolve the scope - more than was needed.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

Interpretation of deliverables and expectations was not clearly set out at the beginning of the Project and this led to debates around interpretations and some conflict during the Project.

“When Dr Metcalfe left at the beginning of the Project there was no ToR outlining the agreement. When we meet with HSRC or anyone else, we need to be able to agree clearly on what is needed for everyone to understand what is needed from both sides and a document outlining this would have been useful.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

Handover between different theme leaders was not scripted - no formally documented outline of the role and obligations of individual theme leaders was utilised. New theme leaders were informally briefed by the project coordinating team. This briefing is necessary, but not sufficient for an effectual handover and that may have influenced the continuity of the projects.

“There was no formal briefing to say that this is where we are and this is where we need to go. I was already involved in the subject, but had no structured handover.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

The business plans saw multiple amendments over the LMIP's lifetime. Since 2011-2012, several amendments have been made to the original MoAs signed with Wits University and the HSRC, respectively (DHET, 2011; DHET, 2012). While some stakeholders expressed the need for flexibility within the work streams, interviewees noted that the constant changes within the business plans were often destabilising and may have deteriorated the clarity of the objectives of the business plans. On such a comprehensive, long term project, a framework – with sufficient flexibility – is required to allow for changing circumstances and priorities. This was not catered for in the initial proposal.

“There were a lot of adjustments. Other things can pop up that are more urgent. We need to be flexible.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

Due to the lack of a clear project plan and scope for the LMIP, a disjuncture occurred between the expectations of researchers and government officials over what the Project would produce. DHET, Wits University and the HSRC did not clearly communicate their objectives over the lifetime of the Project which has led to multiple conflicts within the LMIP.

“Expected policy, got research reports. Reports are not policies.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

3.3.8.2.5 Progress Reporting

Progress reporting was applied strictly within the Department and between the DHET and its contractual stakeholders. The HSRC and Wits University provide biannual progress reports to the Department, in line with the MoA (DHET, 2011; DHET, 2012). These reports are used, together with biannual activity forecasts, to assess drawdown requests. The HSRC and Wits University also provided a monthly report to the Minister that included key developments that occurred within the last month; reports were submitted via the Development Support Unit in the CFO's office. In addition, a financial report is provided to the NSF by HSRC and Wits University on a quarterly basis. Progress reporting was conducted in a methodical manner; however, a need for more frequent reports of the full LMIP Project exists. Stakeholders expressed the desire for a mid-term progress assessment and evaluation to be conducted in future projects of this nature.

“There should have been a midterm evaluation rather than waiting for the end.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

3.3.8.2.6 Quality Assurance

Quality assurance was a shared responsibility between the Research Partners and the DHET. Initially a ‘critical reviewer’ function was proposed in the governance ToR and the role was filled by two individuals with experience in the PSET sector. Critical readers were employed by DHET to review and comment on the quality of research reports produced by LMIP. Comments made on reports were submitted to the Department to be disseminated independently from the reviewers to the relevant parties within the LMIP. The critical reviewer role was removed after concerns that the individuals selected were too closely associated with the Department. Following this, the deliverables produced by the HSRC were scrutinised by peer reviewers appointed by the Research Partner.

Deliverables submitted by researchers were to be reviewed by the relevant DHET theme leader and submitted to the project coordination team for an additional review prior to disbursement of funds to the researchers. An additional quality assurance measure was implemented at workshops to assess the value derived by attendees. The Research Coordination Monitoring and Evaluation (RCME) Directorate developed a feedback questionnaire to elicit both quantitative and qualitative responses regarding the programme content, logistics and general feedback on the workshop. The Reference Group comprised of theme leaders, the DDG, the Technical Team and select additional DHET staff to provide advice, review and provide technical inputs into the Project. Feedback on research reports was requested from SETAs and other governmental organisations; however, these stakeholders expressed concerns that there was no indication of whether their feedback had been incorporated or what the eventual outcome of the feedback was. At present, LMIP stakeholders external to DHET and research organisations perceive a lack of communication regarding the outcomes of the LMIP and the way forward for skills planning within the Department.

“I gave very detailed input and feedback and criticism into what some of the findings were. They [the findings] were not factual. I sent that through over maybe a year ago and somebody indicated that they would get back to me and they have never gotten back to me.”

“I’d be very interested to know whether that report was finalised as is, or whether some of the comments and feedback that I provided were incorporated. For me, that feedback was something that was lacking with regard to the whole input and the whole process.”

- Source: SETA, Interview (2017)

Theme leaders expressed that they were not initially equipped to accurately assess the quality and relevance of academic work produced by researchers; however, their ability to evaluate deliverables improved over time.

“My ability to check the appropriateness of a deliverable grew over time; at the onset deliverables were accepted on submission.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

The academic nature of work produced warrants more intensive use of independent peer reviewers as a quality assurance measure. Resource constraints within the Department lowered the integrity of the quality review process; the length of the review process extended to over two months in some cases, warranting the implementation of default acceptance of deliverables. Critical reviewers expressed that their input was not sufficiently incorporated into LMIP outputs and that the feedback provided to the DHET was at times passed directly to LMIP stakeholders without applying the proper anonymity measures; the independence of the peer reviewing function should be retained for future projects.

3.3.8.2.7 Document Management

Research papers and other academic outputs were uploaded and stored on the LMIP repository that is accessible on the LMIP website. The Research Repository on Post-School Education and Training will be transferred to the Department at termination of the Project, and the Department will undertake its continued update and maintenance thereafter. Changes to the business plans and other scope revisions were agreed upon between LMIP research partners and theme leaders within DHET before being signed off on. Documents that had been signed off were stored

on the server by the project coordination team. In addition, documentation from engagements and meeting minutes were collected and uploaded onto the DHET server.

No official physical archive of project documentation exists, and not all documentation listed on the repository is fully accessible. Theme leaders retained formal signed-off communications between DHET and research partners; however, emails and other correspondence were not retained.

“People asked for funding for dubious work, meetings or calls that was not reported or evidenced.”

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

“Decisions were made between the theme leader and the researcher which resulted in changes to the agreed business plan; however, there was no formal process to document and approve these changes.”

“Emails will be available on the departmental server but have not been included in a project documentation repository.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

3.3.8.2.8 Human Resource Capacity

The majority of human resources from the Department took on the LMIP as an additional task to their daily duties. Theme leaders, the project coordinators and a number of other stakeholders within the DHET, government, and research bodies were included in the LMIP and were expected to attend various LMIP consultations and engagements over the lifetime of the Project. When key stakeholders were unable to attend engagements, a delegate was selected to stand in as proxy for that individual.

DHET staff brought into the LMIP as theme leaders were required to fulfil related LMIP tasks in addition to their pre-existing occupational requirements. As specialists of their individual themes, theme leaders intended their role as ‘expert advisors’ rather than managers of the work streams. Leaders’ time was used ineffectually in the early stages of the LMIP as they were required to undertake administrative tasks and ensure the management of the theme. However, once the current project coordination team became fully operational, the pressure of running administrative tasks was largely relieved from theme leaders.

“Initially, the theme leaders did project management of their own themes. This was a poor use of time as the theme leads’ roles were as expert advisors and not administrators. When Mmaphake took an active role in project deliverable management and project administration, it relieved a lot of time.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

Individuals who were asked to manage the Project did not have full content knowledge or formal project management skills when tasks were initially prescribed to them. The establishment and functional operation of a project management team is crucial from the inception of a project.

“It was a good idea to have the right people in the department as theme leaders, but mostly these were senior managers with many other tasks/projects on their plate. In future, it would be better to have someone who can deputise for this role from the outset, who would then always know what was happening and be able to take part in project meetings and fulfil other key responsibilities.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

Another resource constraint on theme leaders especially, but also relating to other project stakeholders, was the attendance required at a number of LMIP meetings. Stakeholders expressed an inability to attend meetings as frequently as was expected and some felt that the number of meetings required was not justified. HSRC did not have the capacity to assign a dedicated leader to each of the themes. This may at times have divided the capacity of individual researchers at the organisation and should be managed accordingly. In addition, some stakeholders expressed the need for more stringent internal review of work produced by HSRC prior to its submittal to DHET.

“HSRC was using interns. They used terms in the dictionary that were from standard dictionaries and were not applicable to the PSET system.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

Time management and allocation appeared to be a concern in the document reviewing process; the process to review and approve deliverables took between one (1) and two (2) months. The process was altered to follow a ‘1-month threshold’ whereby, if the time taken from submittal to review exceeded one calendar month, the document was considered accepted by default.

“The biggest challenge was timelines - getting input from other committees or people. By the time you get the report, you don’t always have time to get feedback.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

Lastly, stakeholders found the constant change of the LMIP personnel disruptive to the consistency of the Project. Continuity was affected when new individuals were brought on as they had to catch up to the current stage of the Project, as well as build relationships with those already integral to the work stream and the Project as a whole.

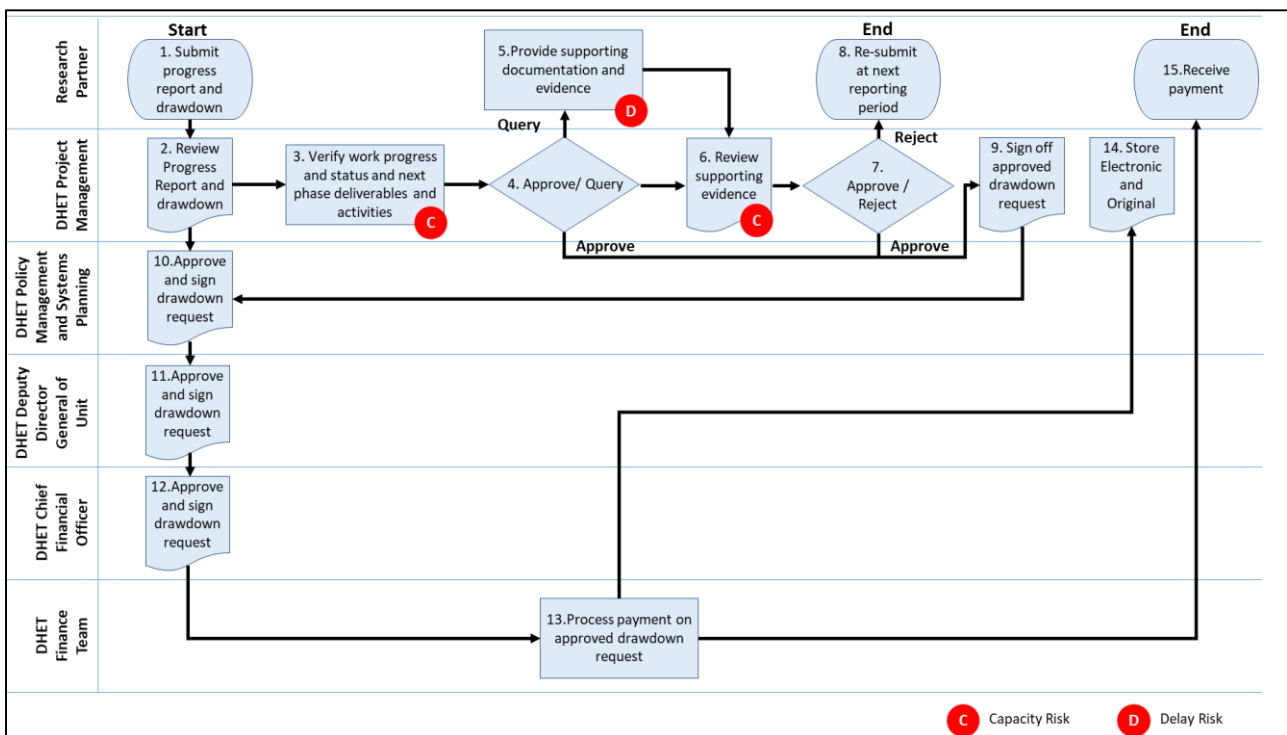
“There were a lot of changes of personnel during the LMIP programme from both sides, making consistency a challenge.”

- Source: Theme Leader, Interview (2017)

3.3.8.2.9 Disbursement of funds and verification of expenditure

This section examines the processes and controls relating to the disbursement of funds and verification of expenditure.

Figure 11: Payment approval and disbursement process



The processes described above are detailed in the table below.

Table 56: Description of payment approval and disbursement process





Process	Description	Risks
1. Submission of biannual progress reports	<p>Two (2) progress reports submitted per year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The initial submission date was according to the MoA and every six months thereafter. Research partners are allowed a twenty (20) day grace period for the submission of the progress reports. The reports provide a detailed breakdown of the progress achieved to date, the current status of project activities, completed activities and itemized financial expenditure. 	
2 & 3.. A review and verification of progress reports and drawdown requests is performed	<p>The LMIP project management team within the DHET performs a review and verifications of submissions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress on the activities and outputs of the previous drawdown request is verified. Current activities and outputs are verified. The next phase of activities and outputs is assessed. Draft and final outputs are circulated amongst DHET and government organizations for review and feedback. The DHET is allowed thirty (30) days to critique and provide feedback on requested changes, with a one (1) week grace period. Should the DHET not provide said feedback, the output in question is considered approved and completed. Where feedback is provided, this is to be incorporated into the output in question. Where this cannot be done, sufficient reasons and evidence must be provided to substantiate this course of action. 	<p>Capacity Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of capacity to review the documents. Lack of necessary technical skills to review respective outputs. DHET and government stakeholders are too busy with existing work responsibilities to perform reviews and provide feedback.
4. A decision to approve or query the progress report and drawdown request is made	<p>The LMIP project management team within the DHET signs off the approved drawdown request.</p>	
5. Research Partners are requested to provide supporting evidence and documentation	<p>Where necessary, the LMIP project management team requests evidence of progress made from the relevant research partners to support the drawdown request. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedules of workshops and meetings Presentation materials Minutes of workshops, presentations and meetings Attendance registers Fieldwork reports E-mail communications Draft reports and related materials 	<p>Delay Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No response or delayed responses to communications (i.e. e-mails). Delay in submission of supporting evidence for work completed. Research project manager or researchers are unavailable (i.e. travel).
6. Supporting evidence is reviewed and verified	<p>The LMIP project management team within the DHET performs a review and verifications of submissions.</p>	<p>Capacity Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of capacity to review the documents. Lack of necessary technical skills to

Process	Description	Risks
		review respective outputs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHET and government stakeholders are too busy with existing work responsibilities to perform reviews and provide feedback.
7. A decision is made to approve or reject the supporting evidence and documentation supplied by the research partners	The LMIP project management team within the DHET signs off the approved drawdown request. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a drawdown is queried, and no supporting evidence can be provided within sufficient time, the payment is delayed to the next reporting period's drawdown request. • Where a drawdown is queried and supporting evidence is provided, the requested payment is adjusted accordingly by mutual agreement between parties. • Any remaining balances are reallocated to contingencies or shifted to other project activities, provided mutual agreement between parties is reached. • Un-approved claims are removed from the drawdown request. 	
8. Reject drawdown request	Where there is insufficient supporting documentation and evidence of work completed, the drawdown request is rejected. The research partner is then responsible for compiling the relevant information required and re-submitting in the next reporting period.	
9. Sign-off approved draw down request	The LMIP project manager and the project management team, both within DHET, sign off the approved drawdown request. All necessary supporting documents and evidence is attached as Annexures.	
10. DHET Policy Management and Systems Planning approves and signs the drawdown request	The drawdown request is submitted to the policy management and systems planning head for approval.	
11. The Deputy Director General approves and signs the drawdown request	The drawdown request is submitted for approval of the Deputy Director General.	
12. The DHET CFO approves and signs the drawdown request	The drawdown request is submitted for approval of the CFO of the DHET	
13. The DHET finance team processes payment on the approved draw down request	The approved drawdown request is submitted to the DHET finance department for processing of payment. (15) Payment is subsequently received by the respective research partner.	


Process	Description	Risks
14. Original documents are stored electronically and in hardcopy	Original documents are sent back to the DHET LMIP project management team. Scanned copies of these are made and stored electronically. Originals are forwarded to the DHET registry for storage.	

Whilst the above-mentioned capacity and delay risks exist, there is no direct impact to cost and the overall budget of the Project. The insufficient capacity to review deliverables, renders certain deliverables approved without formal review and assessment of the appropriateness and quality of the deliverable, potentially resulting in wasteful expenditure. The potential delays in the process may affect the costs incurred by the research partners. Where a shift in funding from one project activity to another is required, a structured formal process, as detailed above, is followed and documented. Where both parties agree to the shift in funds, the respective project managers of both parties sign off on the request.

Table 57: Financial Management Assessment of the LMIP Project

Description ⁹	Financial Management Assessment	Additional Comments
<p>Plan Cost Management</p> <p>The process for establishing the policies, procedures, and documentation for planning, managing, expending, and controlling project costs.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All project policies, procedures, documentation were followed according to the regulations set out by the NSF. Non-cost adjustments were allowed for late delivery. Any shifting of funds was done by mutual agreement by both parties without affecting the overall cost of the Project. Whilst there were adjustments to the planned level of expenditure between project activities, the overall approved budgets were not exceeded. Where required, meetings were held between relevant parties to resolve discrepancies.
<p>Estimating Costs</p> <p>The process for developing the approximation of the monetary resources needed to complete project activities.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No alternatives were considered to comparatively assess the cost effectiveness of the Project. All costs related to the Project were allocated according to the approved budget submitted by Research partners as laid out in the MoA and approved business plans. Project activities were managed according to a project plan. Variances in the schedule were accommodated through non-costs extensions and shifting of funds between project activities.
<p>Determining Budget</p> <p>Process of aggregating the estimated costs of individual activities or work packages for the project to establish an authorized baseline/budget.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Project budgets were provided and attached to the MoAs and approved business plans. All costs related to the Project were disbursed according to the approved budgets.
<p>Control Costs</p> <p>The process of monitoring the status of the project to update the project budget and manage changes</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apart from the Project's committee meetings, 6 monthly progress reports were submitted, reviewed and verified to assess the status of the Project and budget.
Overall effectiveness and efficiency		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall the Financial Management of the LMIP Project has been assessed as partially met.

⁹ ©1996 Project Management Institute

Description ⁹	Financial Management Assessment	Additional Comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas for improvement relate to more effective use of approved funding.

* Where  = met;  = partially met;  = not met

There have been no noted inherent or process related weaknesses within the financial management and administration of the LMIP Project. An inconsistency has been noted in instances where payments were processed on drawdown requests, with no sufficient supporting evidence provided as requested by the DHET. A reason for this is that deliverables and expectations were not clearly defined from the onset.

Other noted instances of risk/weakness related to financial management of the LMIP Project are listed below:

- Delayed responses to communications
- Lack of supporting evidence provided
- Difficulty and delays as a result of relaying communications to third parties
- Mis-alignment of expectations and the definition of deliverables caused conflicts and discrepancies around the acceptance and payment for deliverables in question

3.4 Efficiency

Definition: Efficiency

Efficiency measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term which signifies that the [project] uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted.

Source: DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance, 2016.

Efficiency relates to how economically the LMIP Project inputs were translated into outputs relative to comparable approaches.

3.4.1 Summary Findings

The following table summarises efficiency findings for LMIP. These findings are based on stakeholder perceptions (for some items, e.g. efficient use of time allocated), review of relevant outputs (e.g. progress reports) and processes (as outlined in relevant documents and as reported through interviews), as well as comparison of LMIP costs to available benchmarks.

Table 58: Overall Assessment of Efficiency

Findings of the Evaluation related to Efficiency	
Financial Management	●
Project Management	●
Research Reports	●
Tools	●
Dissemination	●
Capacity Building	●
Efficient Use of time allocated	●
Overall Assessment of Efficiency	●
Key:	<div style="display: inline-block; width: 100px; height: 15px; background-color: red; margin-right: 5px;"></div> Not Met <div style="display: inline-block; width: 100px; height: 15px; background-color: yellow; margin-right: 5px; margin-left: 10px;"></div> Partially Met <div style="display: inline-block; width: 100px; height: 15px; background-color: green; margin-left: 10px;"></div> Met

In this summary, commentary is focused on financial efficiency (including cost efficiency). Financial efficiency is highlighted here given the strong views expressed on this matter by some stakeholders. Other areas assessed for efficiency (as outlined in the table above) are covered in detail in the sub-sections that follow.

Financial efficiency was generally well perceived by stakeholders consulted during the evaluation (Evaluation Interviews, 2017). Surveys have elicited positive views from stakeholders regarding items such as cost effectiveness of LMIP relative to outputs achieved, as well as the extent to which alternative approaches would have yielded similar results at a lower cost. These positive findings were further substantiated by views expressed in interviews.

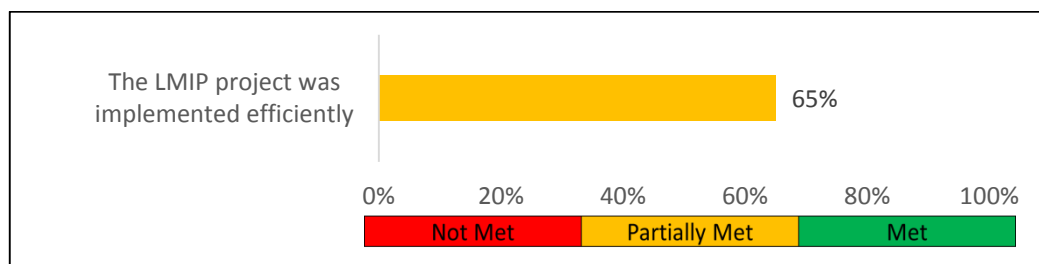
Examination of costs with regard to comparable benchmarks have also, typically, indicated that the costs for LMIP are not unreasonable; viewed from a cost-effectiveness perspective. For instance, the cost for research reports (accounting for 40% of the total cost) for LMIP does not appear to be out of sync with that experienced outside the project. However, it must be noted that views on the efficacy of research report production are mixed. Some stakeholders decry what they perceive as expensive reports that do not address the information requirements of skills planners, while others commend the usefulness of the reports (Evaluation Interviews, 2017).

Based on alternate quotations obtained by the Department, it appears that the LMIP skills forecasting model (accounting for 18% of total LMIP costs) developed by ADRS on behalf of Wits, could potentially have been produced at a lower cost than that incurred. This perspective is compounded by licencing issues resulting in the model, at time of writing, not being available for use.

3.4.2 Overall perceived efficiency

As indicated in the figure below, according to stakeholders polled on the topic, LMIP was viewed overall as moderately efficient. This overall perspective is unpacked in the sections that follow.

Figure 12: Overall Efficiency



Source: Consolidated LMIP Surveys – To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (LMIP Project Team; LMIP Partner)

3.4.3 Financial Management Efficiency

The evaluation of the efficient use of financial resources allocated to the LMIP is discussed in the following sub-sections. This section begins with an overview of the financial resources allocated to LMIP research partners and the perceived efficiency of the financial management of the LMIP Project. Alternative approaches are compared to the activities undertaken under the LMIP project to assess if similar outputs could have been produced at reduced costs.

3.4.3.1 Allocation of Financial Resources

A total of R81 417 128 (eighty-one million, four hundred and seventeen thousand, one hundred and twenty eight) was allocated to the LMIP Project, as per the MoAs signed between the Department and the HSRC and Wits. Whilst the survey responses, detailed in the sub-sections below, indicate that the Financial Management activities of the LMIP project have been executed efficiently, a key recommendation for greater financial efficiency relates to exploring alternate sources or approaches that can provide similar benefits and outputs at reduced costs. The efficiency of Financial Management activities has been assessed as being partially met.

3.4.3.1.1 Human Sciences Research Council

The details of the financial arrangement between the HSRC and the DHET is laid out in Section 4: Obligations of the DHET, in the original Memorandum of Agreement, signed between the DHET and the HSRC in February 2012.

As per the original MoA, the initial value of funding allocated to the HSRC amounted to R74 500 000 (seventy-four million five hundred thousand rand). This budget was later reduced, according to the Second Addendum to the MoA, to R 66 500 000 (sixty-six million five hundred thousand rand), based on a cost savings of R 8 000 000 (eight million rand) effected after October 2013. An initial payment of R16 000 000 (sixteen million rand) was made after the signing of the agreement by both parties. Thereafter, subsequent payments for successful project delivery was made upon the submission; by HSRC, and assessment and approval; by the DHET, of biannual progress reports, as per the First Addendum to the MoA. These subsequent payments were made against drawdowns submitted by HSRC, and took into account the drawdown amount requested for the next phase of work to be delivered. This excluded the reconciled balance of the previous drawdown payments received by the HSRC.

In addition to the biannual reports, Clause 8.2.2 of the First Addendum to the MoA requested the HSRC to submit annual reports to the DHET, detailing the overall financial status, state of affairs, developments, challenges and achievements of the LMIP Project for the financial year. As per the MoA, the DHET retained 10% of the total project amount. It was stipulated that this amount shall only be paid upon the successful closure of the Project and submission, approval and acceptance of the final project close out report. As part of the abovementioned grant funding received, the HSRC contributed two (2) amounts of R1 800 000 (one million eight hundred thousand) at the end of 2012 and 2013, to the National Research Foundation for the “Granting, management, monitoring, and administrative services by the NRF for the HSRC Capacity Building Initiative for the Labour Market Intelligence Research Programme” (2nd Addendum to the Memorandum of Agreement between the HSRC and NRF, 2015).

3.4.3.1.2 University of Witwatersrand

The details of the financial arrangement between the HSRC and the DHET is laid out in Section 5: Obligations of the DHET, in the original Memorandum of Agreement, signed between the DHET and Wits in December 2011, and the addendum to the agreement, effective as at 1 September 2014.

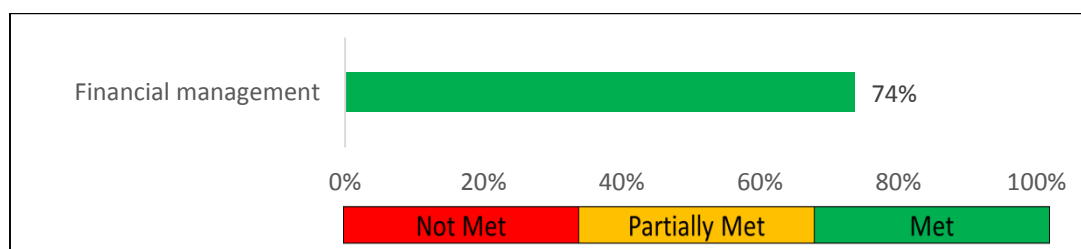
The initial value of funding allocated to Wits amounted to R 14 917 128 (Fourteen million, nine hundred and seventeen thousand, one hundred and twenty-eight rand). The first payment to Wits was made after the first quarter as specified in the project drawdown schedule and on submission of the signed agreement and necessary supporting documents. As stipulated by Clause 5.2 of the MoA, the payment of subsequent drawdowns was dependent on the submission of quarterly progress reports and supporting documents. This was later changed to biannual progress reports in the addendum to the Master Agreement. These biannual reports detailed the progress made against project plans, expenditure against the project budget and any other information relating to the Project as required by the DHET. Wits was remunerated in advance according to the project budget, provided that biannual progress reports were submitted.

Clause 5.10 of the MoA also states that all un-utilised funds (including interest earned) in the possession of Wits shall be refunded to the NSF within three (3) months after completion of the Project. Similar to the agreement between DHET and HSRC, a specified amount has been retained until the submission, approval and acceptance of the final project closure report.

3.4.3.2 Financial Efficiency Findings

The assessment of financial efficiency measures how efficiently monetary resources allocated to the Project were transformed into outputs. The LMIP Project was funded by an unsolicited grant, allocated by the NSF. Efficiency of financial management was considered high by survey respondents, attaining a score of 74%.

Figure 13: Outcome Financial Management Efficiency



Source: Consolidated LMIP Surveys – To what extent would you consider the following LMIP project activities to have been executed efficiently? (LMIP Project Team; LMIP Partner)

This perception is supported by feedback received, commending the manner in which LMIP project management team within the DHET managed the project progress, reports and budgets.

“Internal DHET management – [has] done justice. Hersheela and team have done very well in ensuring reports, progress and budgets are kept track of. Relied on Glenda [HSRC] as well”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

Other respondents perceived that the time and budget for the Project should have been allocated and planned more effectively from the onset given the broad scope of the Project.

“Overall, the project was a good start. However, the funds could have been used better if there was better engagement between the HSRC and the DHET on the key research questions for the project, and if the project had been phased in.”

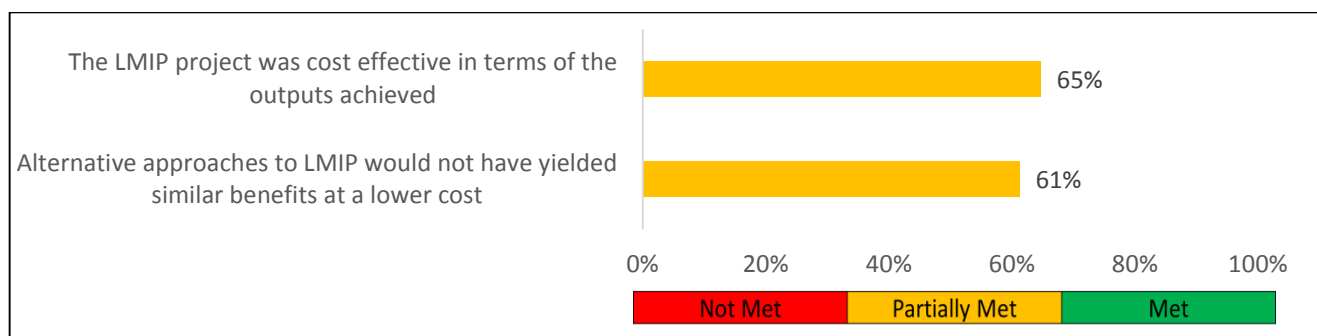
- Source: DHET, Survey (2017)

“Time and budget allocations were not suitably planned. The broad scope of the project requirements impacted on the initial time allocation and budget allocations.”

- Source: DHET, Survey (2017)

The Project in general was considered to have been executed with a moderate degree of financial efficiency, achieving an average score of 63%.

Figure 14: Outcome Financial Efficiency



Source: Consolidated LMIP Surveys – To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (LMIP Project Team; LMIP Partner)

3.4.3.3 The LMIP project was cost effective in terms of the outputs achieved

Cost effectiveness of the Project in relation to what was produced was perceived as moderate.

“We did a lot of work for a pretty decent price.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

The Project was generally viewed as expensive due to the substantial budgetary allocation. Whether the incurred costs were justified was contested by a research partner stating that *“the Project has effectively finished and there is no skills mechanism in sight”* adding that *“it was an expensive failure because it didn’t deliver its key deliverable”* (Research Partner, 2017). The various sub-projects were regarded as possessing varying levels of cost-effectiveness. A particularly costly exercise, the development of an econometric model to forecast skills demand, was considered as *“an appalling waste of money and time”* and *“a waste of resources”* (Research Partner, 2017) whereas the sub-project involving the production of the OiHDL was regarded as being *“the most profound document that has come out during the period”* and was reportedly produced *“on a very small budget”* (Research Partner, 2017).

“It [macroeconomic modelling] was the wrong technique. I kept saying that this was the wrong instrument to use for this purpose. To project forward and see where the occupational shortages are for manpower planning is a push button approach which always comes with error. Trying to predict how many electronic engineers you will need over the next twenty-five years was just a waste of resources. A lot of money went into that.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

Whilst there was perceived value derived from the Project in relation to the cost of the Project, other respondents viewed the Project as *“expensive”* and consequently unsustainable.

“There is value in the programme for the money spent. I would say 8/10. Some might say this is a waste of money. From my side, this has been value for money.”

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

“For the money that was given to the HSRC, the DHET should have had by now a world-class skills planning mechanism. Over five (5) years on, the DHET has nothing.”

- Source: Research Partner, Survey (2017)

“A lot of costs were associated – the project may be viewed as very expensive and unsustainable.”

Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

Findings for the cost efficiency for research reports and forecasting model for skills supply and demand are covered in the sections that follow.

3.4.3.4 Alternative approaches to LMIP would not have yielded similar benefits at a lower cost

Respondents held mixed views concerning whether alternative approaches to the LMIP would have yielded similar benefits at a lower cost. To lower costs, several stakeholders suggested that government could “*improve the functioning of the SETAs and get better information there*” as an example of something government can do “*that doesn’t require such a huge and expensive research project*” (Research Partner, 2017).

“Through the skills planning unit, you don’t need a huge consortium to identify very discrete outputs if you define the project well (e.g. repeat the SETA survey for 3 SETAs). Can legislate that every SETA (within its own budget which is already allocated and accounted for through the levy) have to run these surveys. Also, planners can let a lot of research go through the SETAs and their budget. DHET must coordinate and manage the SETAs – this would have brought the expenses of DHET down to almost zero.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

This view was supported by the comment that “*this [the LMIP Project] is a very labour-intensive and costly form of analysis*” (Research Partner, 2017). Consequently, the DHET “*can’t make this kind of approach the basis of a skills planning exercise*” because “*it is not practical and feasible for routine data collection*” although “*it produced useful research and a good piece of analysis*” (Research Partner, 2017). Another stakeholder expressed the alternative view that “*there isn’t a simple alternative*” since “*what it [LMIP Project] was intended to do is incredibly complex and incredibly difficult*” because “*you try to look at a whole set of interrelated phenomena that are difficult, each in their own right and when they interact with each other they become incredibly complicated*”. The stakeholder also commented that “*there are many ways that the education system relates to the economy and society*” (Research Partner, 2017). A comparative assessment of alternative approaches or similar activities is conducted in the review of the LMIP outputs and activities in the sections below, where sufficient information has been available and obtainable.

3.4.4 Project Management

Project management activities include, amongst others, project governance, project communications, project administration and project planning. The average score from survey responses for Project management efficiency is 67%, and is rated as being partially met.

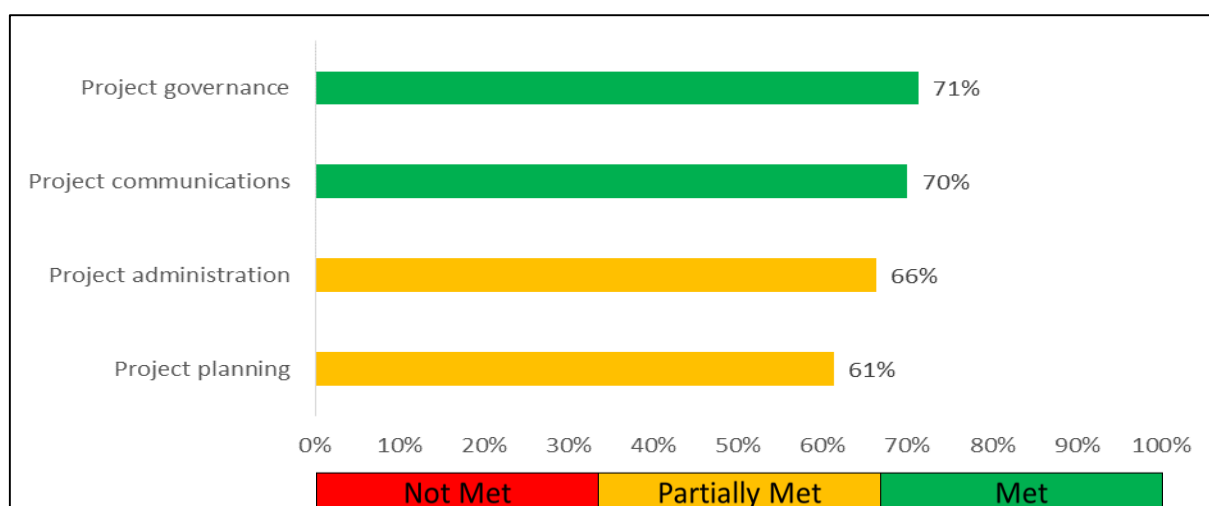
Information on the allocation and utilisation of budget for project management activities was based on the review of the *Actual expenditure as at March 2017 and forecast amounts for the period 1 April 2017 to 30 September 2017* (HSRC, 2017). A total of R7 432 000 of the total utilised budget, was recorded for project management, equating to approximately 12.5% of the utilised budget. Project management costs typically range between 8% and 20% of total project costs¹⁰. LMIP’s project management activities falls within this norm and can be assessed as having been carried out relatively efficiently.

¹⁰ <http://strikingprojectmanagement.com/cost-of-project-management/>: It depends on the size and complexity of the project... But a good rule of thumb is somewhere between 8% and 18% of the overall project budget.

<http://www.projectmanagement.com/discussion-topic/15690/Estimate-Project-Management-hours-for-a-project>: I have typically seen 12% - 15% used for PM hours when performing early high-level estimating of a typical development project. However, a quick risk assessment of some other factors may require an increase to 20%.

<http://it.toolbox.com/blogs/enterprise-solutions/rule-of-thumb-project-mgmt-support-effort-3886>: Management and support effort increases as the size of the project increases. A small project (e.g., from 25 to 50 person months) will require approximately 12 percent of total project effort; a large project (around 6,500 person months) will require approximately 18 percent of total project effort.

Figure 15: Project Management Efficiency – LMIP



Source: Consolidated LMIP Surveys – To what extent would you consider the following LMIP project activities to have been executed efficiently? (LMIP Project Team; LMIP Partner)

3.4.4.1 Project Governance

Project governance entails the key oversight function to manage a project to enable the attainment of intended objectives and successful project completion (Alie, 2015). This includes defining accountabilities and responsibilities, identifying all project stakeholders, and the definition of stakeholder communications, meetings and reporting. The LMIP project governance is detailed in the document, *Labour Market Intelligence Project Terms of Reference for Governance Structures and Mechanisms* (DHET, 2014). It is apparent that this document was produced after the start of the actual project, reducing its effective and efficient application. The document outlines the Project’s key stakeholders who form part of its advisory, steering, departmental coordinating, theme and capacity building committees. The function, composition, administration, frequency of meetings and terms of office is detailed for each committee.

Views on governance of LMIP are mixed. Feedback on governance, as established through surveys is positive. Some stakeholders expressed the view that internalisation of the research aspect would streamline production of outcomes and result in a more centralised approach to skills planning, where communication and agendas between researchers and planners are better structured and aligned. The suggested consolidation and internalisation of skills planning-related activities will require capacity within the DHET to build on existing research to read the signals of demand from the economy, government growth strategies and trade and investment policies to formulate policies which matches skills supply and demand.

“If it had been evolved to a research unit within DHET, rather than at a massive senior level and a massive steering committee – you could have achieved more.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

The view was expressed that *“the problem was that there was very poor leadership”* (Research Partner, 2017). One notable constraint to effective governance was identified as the lack of a dedicated project manager within the DHET when the LMIP was launched and during the initial stages of conceptualisation, with a survey respondent stating that *“a dedicated project manager only came on board in September 2012, at a time when the HSRC business plans had to be signed off”* (DHET, 2017).

3.4.4.2 Project administration

Project administration was evaluated as having been conducted with a moderate degree of efficiency. The approach of appointing dedicated theme-specific leaders was highlighted in an interview as an efficient administrative approach (DHET, 2017). However, concerns were raised regarding the lack of continuity of assigned theme leaders, supported by the interview comment that *“the replacement theme leader in the DHET had a different idea on what was required and made the final deliverables more difficult to deliver”* (Research Partner, 2017).

"I would still vouch for the structure of appointing theme leaders, provided that from now on there are also other people on-board who can stand in when the theme leader is not available."

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

3.4.4.3 Project communications

Project communications in general were evaluated as having been performed with a significant degree of efficiency. Several interviewees; however, reiterated that communication surrounding conceptual understanding of what the Project entails and what it aims to achieve was less than effective. This was attributed to the DHET's inability to articulate requirements to the research consortium when the Project was launched. A research partner commented that *"we consequently spent the first year getting a clear understanding of where we were and what the boundaries were regarding the role of the researchers and the role of the DHET"* (Research Partner, 2017). Likewise, a DHET staff member acknowledged that *"I'm sure the researchers weren't given proper guidance. I'm quite sure they were given mixed messages throughout the Project. That is why the outputs are so broad and unfocussed"* (DHET, 2017). Consequently, *"people did whatever research they found interesting"* (DHET, 2017), presumably because they were given the flexibility afforded by inadequate definition of project objectives and outputs.

"[Impediments to efficiency] Capacity and the people doing the work; a clear understanding of what the work is, what they have to do and what it is actually all about."

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

3.4.4.4 Project planning

Project planning efficiency was evaluated as moderate. Stakeholders attributed this to volatility of expected deliverables as the Project progressed (Research Partner, 2017).

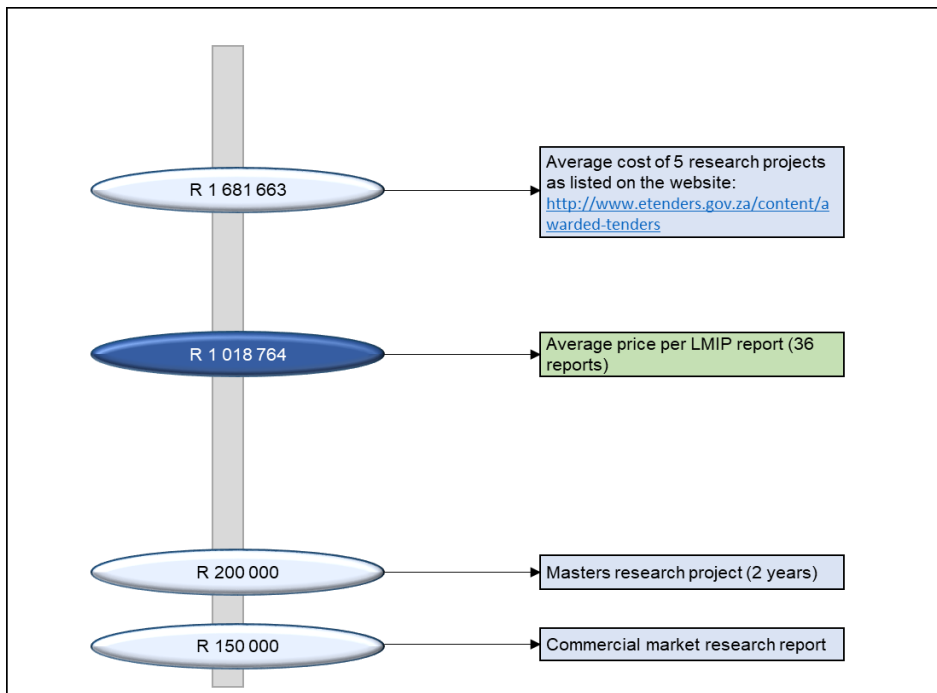
"When we did our business plans that were approved, we should have stuck to that. The business plans had to go through a rigorous process and were finally approved, but there was a lot of chopping and changing later and the deliverables changed very often."

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

3.4.5 Research Reports

The production of research reports was assessed based on the amount spent on this, at the level of granularity possible by available project financial records. The average cost of a research report produced under the LMIP was calculated to be approximately R1 020 000. The figure below provides a comparison of the costs incurred in producing similar research outputs, with the lowest cost being R150 000 for generic commercial market research reports and the highest cost, R1 681 663, based on the average cost of five research projects published on the National Treasury website. At face value, it may appear that the cost per research report for LMIP is not out of alignment with other research reports produced for government. The efficiency of these research reports; however, is dependent on the perceived value of these reports, the perception of which is mixed.

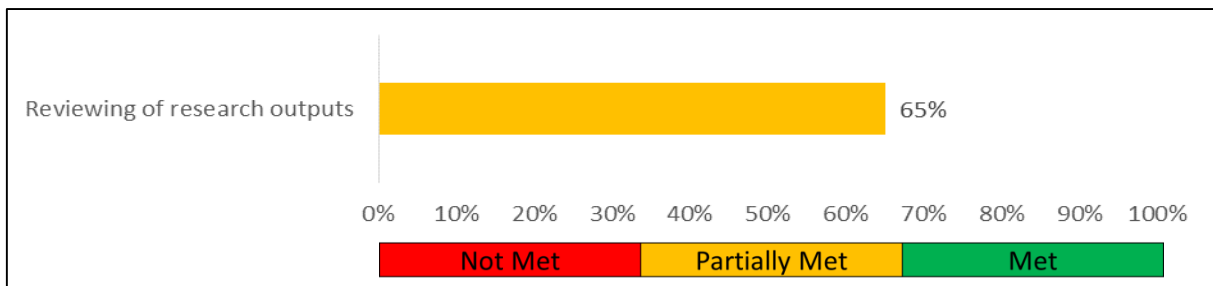
Figure 16: Comparable cost of research report activities



3.4.5.1 Reviewing of research outputs

Respondents evaluated the efficiency of this activity as having been Partially Met.

Table 59: Efficiency of reviewing reports



Source: Consolidated LMIP Surveys – To what extent would you consider the following LMIP project activities to have been executed efficiently? (LMIP Project Team; LMIP Partner)

Constraints to efficiency related to the reviewing of reports were identified as “failing in the bureaucracy” and the “inability of civil servants to read these 200-page reports”, resulting in a “communication barrier” (Research Partner, 2017). This observation was supported by the survey comment that “there was also a lot of pressure on DHET staff to read through numerous documents within limited time constraints and input was expected on documents for which one did not have the expertise to engage with constructively” (DHET, 2017). This constraint was thought to have caused delays in final delivery, thereby contributing to the observation that the researchers were “always behind with deliverables.” (DHET, 2017) To address this issue, one stakeholder suggested that DHET required an internal research complement that could engage with the research products arising from the Project.

“What would improve the interface is if the DHET had internal capacity of actual researchers who actually understand the issues and can engage with researchers who are doing the research.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

The utilisation of financial resources to produce research outputs can be evaluated as being partially met. The inefficiency and lack of effective reviews of research reports compromises efficiency as outputs may not be aligned to beneficiary needs, resulting in potentially wasteful expenditure and utilisation of resources.

3.4.6 Tools

The following sub-sections assess the production of the tools produced under the LMIP. The efficiency of the tools produced under the LMIP project has been assessed as being partially met.

3.4.6.1 Econometric Model

The development of the econometric model, projections, technical training workshops and related reports produced under thematic area 2 (*Forecasting Demand for and Supply of Skills: Developing Better Tools to Inform Strategic Decision-Making in the Education Sector*) had an assigned budget of approximately R12 million. This tool however, has not been handed over to the Department, due to additional licensing and subscription requirements by the developer of the tool, in addition to the allocated budget.

"[Regarding] Econometric modelling – [costs] R200 000 per year for [the] subscription to the tool. Automated database using StatsSA data that was going to try to drill down more deeply. It's a very complicated IT operation to run. [DHET are] now negotiating an annual subscription of R200 000 annually."

- Source: Research Partner, Research Partner Interviews (2017)

An alternate source ("Oxford University") for the development of the econometric model has been considered by the Department, that may yield similar projections, has been quoted at R5,5 million. With regard to the time required to produce the model, it has been indicated by the Department, that it would take approximately three years to undertake a similar project to that of Theme 2. From the above, it would appear that the production of the Econometric model could have been achieved at lower cost, and thus more efficiently. This situation is compounded by the model not being available for use, given the issues outlined above.

3.4.6.2 Research Repository

The online research repository of research outputs produced under the LMIP was developed at a cost R460 013. Whilst no alternate quoted cost for similar scope was available at the time of writing, this cost is not viewed as unreasonable, and this LMIP output may thus be viewed as efficient.

3.4.6.3 LMIP Dictionary

The LMIP Dictionary on Skills Supply and Demand was developed at a cost R375 622. There is insufficient information to assess the efficient production of the dictionary relative to a similar output.

3.4.6.4 Compendium of Research Outputs

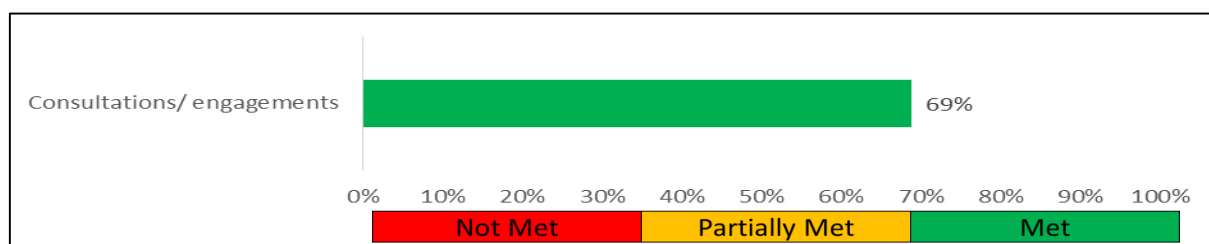
The Compendium of LMIP research outputs was produced at a cost R1 949 310. There was insufficient information to conduct a comparative assessment of alternative activities that may yield a similar output.

3.4.7 Dissemination

The efficient dissemination of research outputs, consultations/engagements, events and publications, is assessed in the sub-sections below. The Dissemination of research outputs has been assessed according to the stakeholder perception in the figure below due to the limited information available.

3.4.7.1 Consultations/engagements

Table 60: Efficiency of consultations and engagements



Source: Consolidated LMIP Surveys – To what extent would you consider the following LMIP project activities to have been executed efficiently? (LMIP Project Team; LMIP Partner)

Survey respondents were of the view that consultations/engagements were generally conducted efficiently. A research partner stated that “we attended steering committee meetings” but questioned whether this committee was still adding value (Research Partner, 2017). Another concern was the lack of continuity regarding participants attending workshops (Research Partner, 2017).

“Participation at workshops could have been done more efficiently. If we do this again, I would insist upon more consistency with regards to the participants of the training. The Department should have nominated persons to own the model and attend all training pertaining to it so that these individuals could drive it after the end of the Project. This approach would have made skills within the Department more efficient and rigorous. If people had more understanding of the model, it could have progressed faster.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

3.4.7.2 Events

The cost of hosting events to ensure the effective dissemination of LMIP research outputs was recorded as R2 057 517. The dissemination of research outputs included the following events, presentations, policy roundtables, ministerial briefings, research colloquium and seminars; with a total of 104 events. The average cost of an event to disseminate LMIP research outputs is approximately R19 784. While such costs are dependent on the services (e.g. food etc.) availed at such sessions, there are no indications that this cost was unreasonable. There is thus, no reason to believe these sessions were inefficiently undertaken.

3.4.7.3 Publications

The publications produced under the LMIP project include, 18 journal articles and 5 books (including drafts). The cost to produce these publications amount to R1 721 938. The average cost of a publication is R74 867. There is currently insufficient information to assess the relative cost efficiency of publications.

3.4.7.3.1 Capacity Building

The efficiency of the Capacity Building activities is assessed below relative to comparable activities that yield similar outputs. The relative efficiency of Capacity Building activities has been assessed as being met. Whilst further information and details on similar bursaries is required to make an accurate comparative assessment, it can be recommended that the cost of Masters bursaries be reassessed to ensure a greater degree of cost efficiency.

3.4.7.4 Bursaries

A total of 42 bursary units were awarded for Master and Honours students. The total cost for these bursaries amounted to R4 881 857. Masters bursary were costed at R100 000 each and Honours bursaries, R60 000 each.

No similar comparative cost assessments could be made to assess efficiency. This is due to the varied conditions and terms for bursaries amongst different qualifications and universities. However; the average cost of bursaries in general, ranges from R67 500 (University of Pretoria – Honours Bursary) to R76 000 (University of Pretoria and Wits – Masters Bursary). The bursaries awarded under the LMIP can be assessed as being cost-efficient for Honours bursaries and potentially in-efficient for Masters Bursaries.

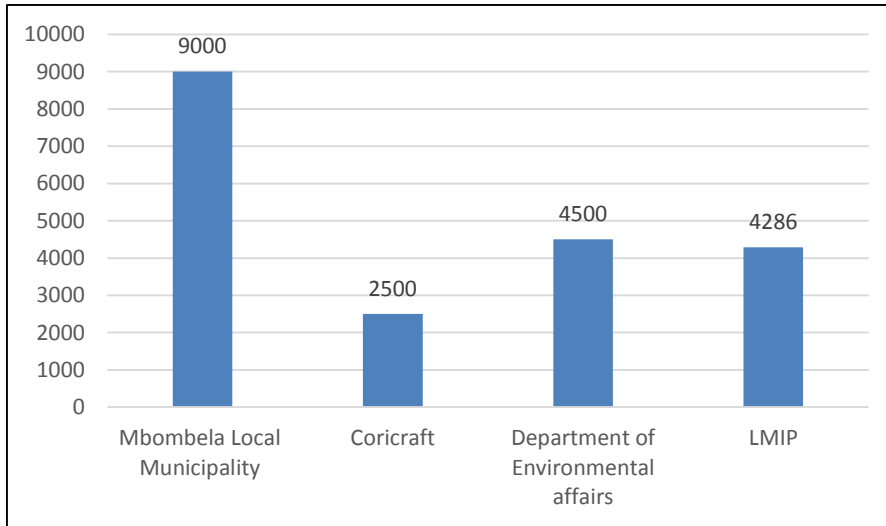
The cost of Masters Bursaries can be reassessed to ensure a greater degree of cost efficiency relative to similar bursaries being awarded.

3.4.7.5 Internships

A total of 11 internships were provided under the LMIP Project. The cost of these internships amounted to R565 795. The average monthly stipend for internships amounted to R4 286 per year per student. The graphs below compare the stipends paid by LMIP to other projects, for which this study was able to secure data.

As may be observed from the graphs, it would appear that stipend amounts paid by the LMIP aligns to other national government entities.

Figure 17: Stipend Amounts Paid by Various Organisations to Graduates

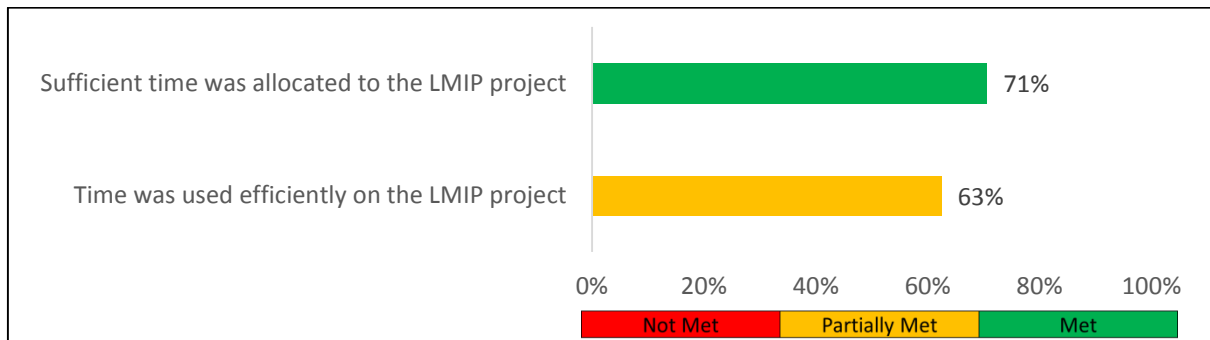


Source: www.puffandpass.co.za

3.4.8 Time-Related Efficiency

The assessment of time-related efficiency measures how efficiently time allocated to the Project was utilised to produce outputs. The Project was evaluated as meeting the efficient use of time, achieving an average score of 67%, based on survey perceptions.

Figure 18: Outcome Timing Efficiency



Source: Consolidated LMIP Surveys – To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (LMIP Project Team; LMIP Partner)

3.4.8.1 Sufficient time was allocated to the LMIP project

The amount of time allocated to the LMIP Project was considered sufficient by survey respondents. An interviewee expressed the opinion that the time allocated was “unnecessarily long” rather than merely sufficient, adding that he/she is “not sure what the value-add still is” (Research Partner, 2017). The survey result was also contradicted by

the opposing view that “*the LMIP project might have moved too fast*” (Research Partner, 2017) and “*time allocations were not suitable*” (DHET, 2017).

Time allocation was addressed by the DHET via “*targets and key deliverables that were set and had to be completed by certain dates*” (DHET, 2017). This initial allocation was reportedly not always sufficient, as demonstrated by a described scenario where “*the team would realise that it’s a lot more work than anticipated and thus, extend the timeframe,*” resulting in project overrun which might have been mitigated if the business plans could be adapted annually (Research Partner, 2017). One interviewee offered the view that “*research always runs overtime*” since “*there are always delays in data collection*” adding that “*it wasn’t anything extraordinary or unusual*” (Research Partner, 2017). From one researcher’s perspective, research should remain external to the DHET and public workers should respect that the production of quality research is a time-consuming process. This underestimation of time required, precipitated by a perceived lack of capacity and research experience in skills research and planning in both the DHET and HSRC may have been the cause for the observation of a survey respondent, stating that a key challenge of the Project was that “*time and budget allocations were not suitably planned.*” The respondent added that the scope of the Project was broadened after establishing the initial time and budget allocations (DHET, 2017).

“The project should not be within the state, rather at a distance. The state must take into account that research takes long and needs to respect that to ensure quality work.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

3.4.8.2 Time was used efficiently on the LMIP project

Respondents perceived that time was utilized with moderate efficiency during the LMIP Project. A possible catalyst for the perceived lack of efficient use of time and reported overruns was the absence of a formal process for adjusting target dates. It was reported that the planners and researchers were at liberty to “*just decide between ourselves if we wanted to adjust target dates*” (DHET, 2017) and that researchers were afforded “*the benefit of no cost extensions*” (Research Partner, 2017). Alternative reported explanations for extensions include issues with “*managing, finance and reporting*” and a lack of capacity on “*the empirical research side*” (Research Partner, 2017).

Contrary to these views, several comments revealed that certain sub-projects were completed ahead of schedule with a high degree of efficiency. In these cases, there was a reported “*lag coming from steering committee meeting and the documents not being read*” and that “*it was an over-bureaucratic process in terms of managing the research*” (Research Partner, 2017).

“We had a very good team. We over delivered and produced three more papers than we needed to.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

3.5 Emerging Impact

Definition: Impact

The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main impacts and effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators.

Source: DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance, 2016.

Given that LMIP has not been completed yet, and as required by the ToR for the evaluation, the evaluation focused on assessing the emerging impact, as opposed to the longer-term impact, of LMIP.

For the LMIP to achieve its intended impact, it should ultimately contribute to the establishment of a CIMSP. The CIMSP itself is intended to reduce occupational shortages in the economy, reduce skills gaps in the workforce and reduce imbalances and mismatches between skills supply and demand. The LMIP contributed to this by establishing an evidence base describing the current and future skills demand and supply levels, and imbalances and mismatches between these. It also developed roadmaps, instruments and methodologies which are thought to enable skills planners to continually read the signal of demand for skills from the economy, government growth strategies and trade and investment policies (Evaluation Interviews, 2017).

The goal of establishing a skills planning mechanism, referring to the intelligence, institutional structures, processes and agreements for undertaking planning as well as the wider context which influences decisions on how resources are allocated for skills development, appears to have been partially addressed by the production of LMI and the development of methodologies to be employed by institutional structures (provisionally envisioned as the proposed skills planning unit, or SPU). In addition, the National Skills Fund (NSF) has reportedly utilised the OiHDL (produced as part of the amended scope of LMIP) to guide resource allocation towards bursaries which supplement identified scarce skills.

The reported progress is in alignment with the progression outlined in the Logical Model, and is attributable to the nature of the LMIP as a research project. The indirect, long term socio-economic changes are expected to be realised only once the SPU (or a similar capability) has been established, active skills planning interventions are incorporated into policies and these are then effectively implemented.

3.6 Sustainability

Definition: Sustainability

A measurement of whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after funding has been withdrawn.

Source: DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance, 2016.

LMIP's sustainability, as per the DAC definition above, was assessed as the extent to which the benefits of LMIP are likely to continue after the end of the project. Given that LMIP is yet to be completed, the extent of continuing benefits was assessed indirectly through:

- the identification of particular LMIP outputs that would survive beyond the end of the project; and
- stakeholder perceptions of the longevity of LMIP outcomes.

3.6.1 The identification of particular LMIP activities and outputs that would survive beyond the end of the project

The following LMIP outputs are expected to survive beyond the end of the project:

- the LMIP research repository, which will be transferred to the DHET, and which contains, among others, reports of pathway studies;
- key indicators for skills planning;
- dictionary of terms related to skills planning;
- the forecasting model on skills supply and demand;
- the methodology for the development of the National Occupations in High Demand List (OiHDL); and
- methodologies for the execution of tracer studies.

It is crucial that various key outputs produced by LMIP, particularly the scarce skills list and the skills forecasting supply and demand model, be kept up-to-date to ensure that policy-informing intelligence generated by the LMIP remains a real-time reflection of the labour market. A research partner suggested that "*various outputs of the consortium need updating*" and that the "*DHET needs to decide what it wants to update and just do those*" (Research Partner Interview, 2017). From a SETA perspective, "*the benefits need to be evaluated*" to determine which sub-projects should be continued beyond the end of the Project, adding that "*if people understand the benefits, you're in a better position to implement those benefits to ensure sustainability*" (SETA Interview, 2017).

The likelihood of sustained use of research outputs can also be improved by conversion of the voluminous and academically orientated literature into easy-to-read and policy orientated briefs which can be absorbed by the policy realm. In the final stages of LMIP, researchers involved in ongoing research should attempt to guide policy thinking away from short-termism to a more extended focus and utility (Ranchod, 2016) if the effects of the project are to last well beyond LMIP's close.

Ultimately, the extent to which the benefits associated with LMIP outputs listed above may be expected to outlive the project, depends heavily on the extent to which the outputs above are actively utilised in the generation and uptake

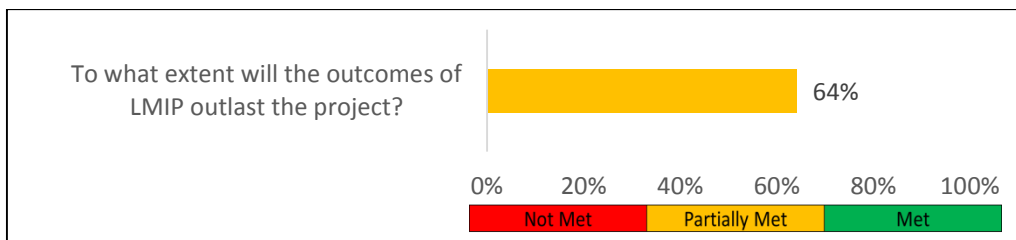
of skills research. The extent to which these outputs are utilised, and the extent to which the behaviours encouraged by LMIP (e.g. a research community of practice) persevere, would be fostered by an ongoing, and potentially enhanced, LMIP-like capability. Such a capability, as proposed by DHET, is introduced in the section that follows.

3.6.2 Stakeholder perceptions of the longevity of LMIP outcomes.

Stakeholders were polled on their overall impression of the extent to which LMIP outcomes would outlast the end of the project. They were also asked for their perception of the extent to which particular LMIP outcomes (in particular the intermediate outcomes) would survive beyond the end of the project. The resulting assessment, based on survey results and input from stakeholder interviews are included below.

As indicated in the figure below, stakeholders were of the view that LMIP outcomes in general will outlast the end of the project to a moderate degree.

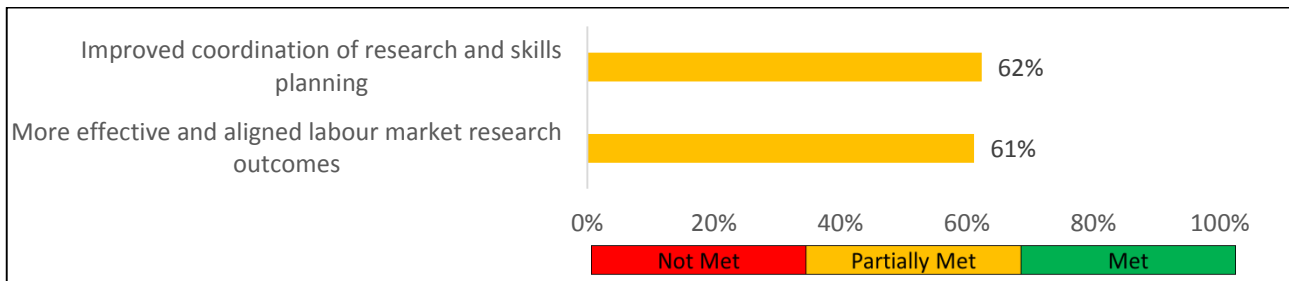
Figure 19: General Outcome Sustainability - LMIP



Source: Consolidated LMIP Surveys – To what extent will the outcomes of LMIP outlast the Project? (LMIP Project Team; LMIP Partner)

The overall stakeholder perception of longevity of LMIP outcomes, as per the graph above, is borne out by stakeholder perceptions of the extent to which specific intermediate outcomes would outlast the project, outlined in the figure below.

Figure 20: Intermediate Outcome Sustainability - LMIP



Source: Consolidated LMIP Surveys – To what extent will the following particular LMIP project outcomes survive beyond the end of the Project? (LMIP Project Team; LMIP Partner)

3.6.2.1 Improved coordination of research and skills planning

Collaboration between the research community, the economy and skills planners was facilitated by “*getting all the PSET stakeholders together to discuss the issues openly and honestly*” over the course of the LMIP project “*to ensure that demand and supply skills address the needs of the relevant stakeholders*” (Research Partner Interview, 2017). This improved coordination and integration of the disparate information sources regarding the supply and demand for skills, thereby “*standardizing the approach to skills planning and the mechanisms available right now*” (DHET Interview, 2017). The econometric model was described as a LMIP output which can potentially facilitate a higher degree of coordination between projections of national and other entities, provided that it is maintained, updated and utilised appropriately (Research Partner Interview, 2017).

Coordination is partially facilitated by knowledge transfer between the researchers and skills planners, which occurred predominantly via research papers produced by the LMIP project. The research papers produced were described by some as being “*much too long and not user friendly at all*” and the approach was “*fine for academic, but not for policy-informing decisions*” (Research Partner Interview, 2017). Issues such as these may have limited the degree of collaboration between skills researchers and skills planners.

“The quality of the work was uneven. It comprised of a loose consortium of players instead of a focused approach.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

3.6.2.2 More effective and aligned labour market research outcomes

Outcomes which are aligned to the needs of various public, private and research entities are expected to yield higher degrees of coordination between the groups utilising these outputs. A research partner reported that several of the outcomes of LMIP are aligned to the needs of the SETAs, particularly the labour market survey, and are expected to be continued by the SETAs, provided that the SETAs are functional and have access to the survey. The SETAs also commented that “*sub-projects of value to the SETAs which should continue are sectoral analysis, market information and skills planning*” (SETA Interview, 2017). To achieve higher efficacy of labour market research outcomes, quality research should be continued by skilled external or internal DHET researchers.

3.6.3 The SPU as a vehicle to sustain and extend LMIP-like benefits

Various research partners raised concerns about the lack of clarity regarding “*who the drivers going forwards*” (Research Partner Interview, 2017), and suggested that “*one option going forwards is that DHET can internalize skills planning capacity and set up their own research outputs to continue the work through the establishment of a SPU which is responsible for maintaining, updating and building on research outcomes as well as implementing suggested policies arising from the existing research outcomes.*” This recommendation was supported by the opinion that “*the skills planning mechanism ultimately cannot be controlled by an outside entity*” and “*the DHET has to manage it*” (Research Partner Interview, 2017). The success of the continuation of LMI generation and utilisation within DHET will be dependent on how the Project is handed over and internalised by DHET, as well as the level of available internal capacity for research. To this effect, advancements in the level of institutional research capacity have been noted over the course of the LMIP project.

“The biggest challenge is how the department can present what was produced and build its own kind of institutional capacity for using the models, tools, etc. and figuring out what the Department needs to do internally and whether it needs to contract people going forward. That is going to be very challenging. It’s going to require enormous amount of capacity building internally in the structures of the Department.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

“The LMIP has to be handed over to DHET properly to deliver in a sustainable manner. There has to be a proper handover of capacity and skills to DHET to enable them to become an independent research body within the ministry. Outsourcing muddles the mandate and ability to translate outputs into policy.”

- Source: SETAs, Interview (2017)

A vehicle to address the comments from stakeholders regarding a way forward beyond LMIP has been proposed by the Department in the form of the SPU, focused on achieving the following objectives:

- conducting analysis of the labour market;
- undertaking planning for the PSET system; and
- monitoring the performance and funding of the PSET system.

Longevity of the benefits of LMIP may be thus achieved provided that the proposed SPU receives political support and significant budget and is able to employ staff with the requisite skills.

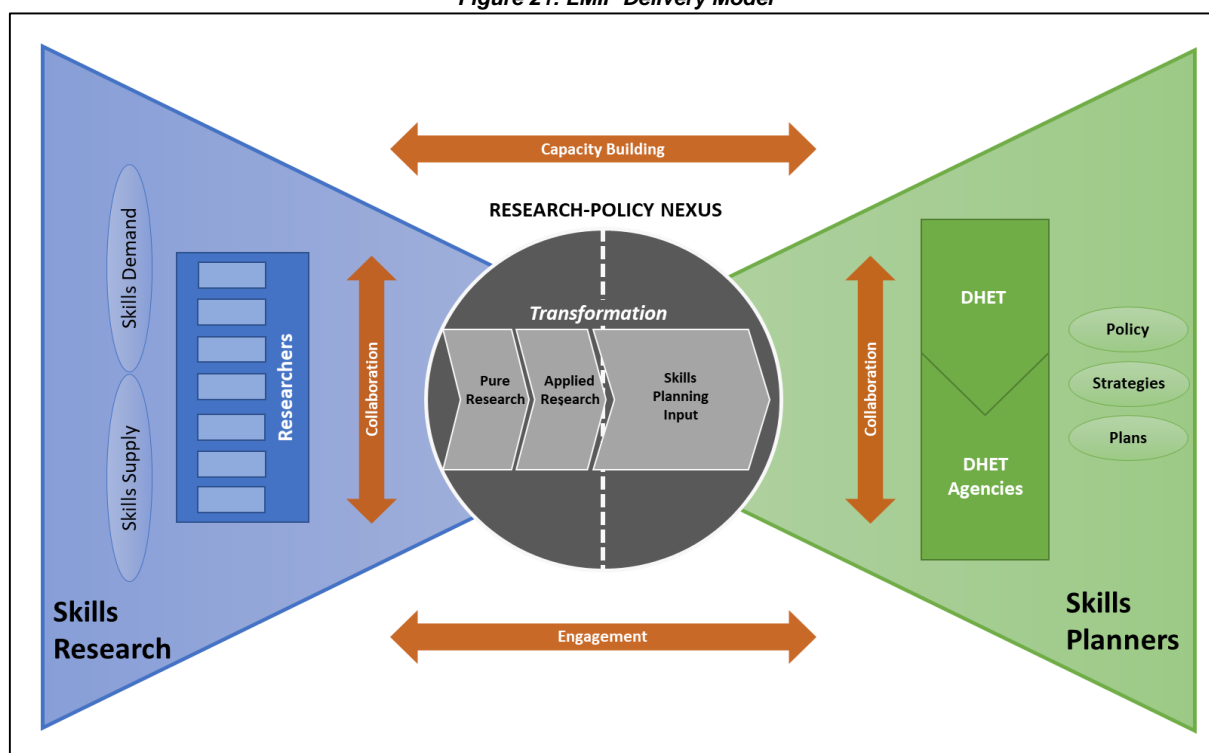
4 Lessons Learnt

4.1 Lessons Learnt: Framed within the LMIP Delivery Model

4.1.1 Outline of the LMIP Delivery Model

The LMIP Delivery Model (as per the figure below) describes the key components that contributed to the delivery of the Project's objectives.

Figure 21: LMIP Delivery Model



While not conceived at the Project's inception, the above model describes the way in which the LMIP Project operated and was intended to achieve its envisioned results.

The Delivery Model consists of the following key components:

- **Skills Research**
which refers to the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions on areas of interest relating to skills;
- **Research-Policy Nexus**
which refers to the engagement and interaction of skills researchers and skills planners on skills planning, policy making and strategy formulation. This involves the transformation, dissemination and advocacy of pure and applied evidence based research;
- **Skills Planning**
which refers to the formulation of plans, strategies and policies focused on the development of skills.

Skills Research was intended to focus on key aspects of the supply and demand for skills, enabled through collaborative efforts amongst researchers, informed by the needs of skills planners, primarily from DHET. While it was understood that some research outcomes were expected to be academically oriented, it was hoped that a significant portion of the research would be of an applied nature. The Research-Policy Nexus was expected to translate the research outcomes produced by researchers into a format that could be used as input for skills planning purposes. This translation was expected to be coupled with engagement between researchers and planners, to facilitate the understanding and enrichment of the research outcomes. Skills Planning was intended to result in the

production of required skills strategies, policies and plans, through the focused and coordinated skills planning efforts of DHET and its agencies.

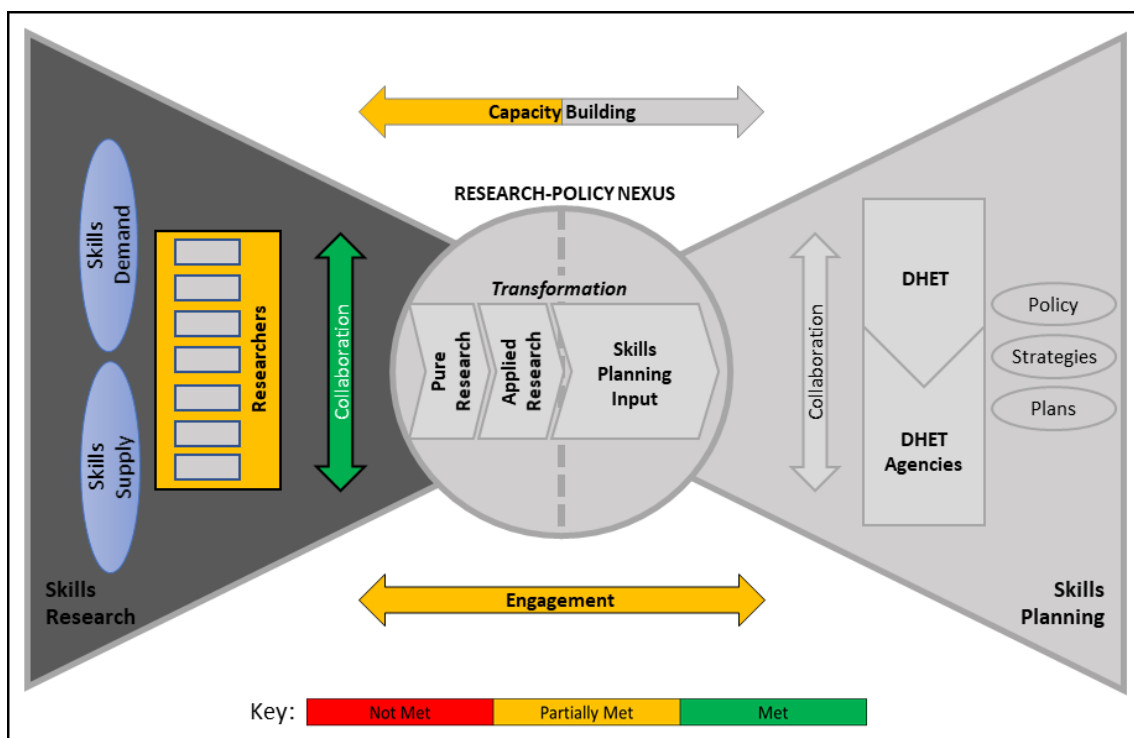
4.1.2 Lessons learnt framed within the LMIP Delivery Model

The LMIP Project focused on addressing the “*weak capacity to identify skills needs (Limited, typically short-duration, technically weak, fragmented and uncoordinated skills research) resulting, in part, in an unresponsive PSET system*” (Redflank, 2017). The LMIP Delivery Model serves as a framework against which the key lessons learnt from the LMIP Project may be articulated. The following subsections describe the lessons learnt relating to the delivery of the LMIP Project, articulated in the context of the Delivery Model.

4.1.2.1 Skills Research

The following figure depicts the Skills Research component of the LMIP Delivery Model, “colour rated” to indicate the extent to which components of the model were effective in producing intended outcomes.

Figure 22: Skills Research component of the LMIP Delivery Model



Skills Research was key to the delivery of the LMIP Project. As depicted in the model, this required the integration of skills supply research and skills demand research, and the establishment of partnerships and collaborative relationships amongst researchers and researcher organisations to provide credible labour market information and intelligence. A number of stakeholders that participated in the Evaluation interviews expressed the view that the LMIP Project was successful in establishing a community and network of researchers involved in skills and policy research.

4.1.2.1.1 An Enabling Skills Research Community of Practice

LMIP brought skills researchers together in a way that had not been experienced previously. This included frequent engagement amongst researchers, productively focused through a shared interest in particular areas of skills research. The skills research community that emerged through researchers’ involvement in LMIP enabled both research capacity, and the production of coherent research outcomes, that was an improvement on the past.

“It did build a research community. The research network which was built up is very important and steps should be taken to ensure it continues.”

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

Key to an enabling skills research community is the collaboration between researchers, as depicted in the Delivery Model. This should be supported and strengthened within the research community. While not perfect, the virtual skills research community established during LMIP demonstrated successful practices that future skills planning endeavours would do well to emulate.

4.1.2.1.2 Fit-to-Purpose Skills Research

LMIP is replete with examples of research outcomes that were well received, as well as outcomes that were regarded poorly. Instances of research that were viewed positively typically related to those cases where the research scope was properly scoped by the end-consumer of the research (a skills planner), where the scope was clearly articulated, where the research was undertaken by a researcher well versed in the field of interest, and where skills planners and researchers collaborated on the research.

“A large number of reports have been produced – most are quite relevant to what we are doing at a national level.”

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

In some cases, researchers complained that DHET was not clear on what it wanted the research to focus on, or that DHET changed its mind post commencement of a particular research project. In other instances, DHET indicated that researchers pursued research topics related to their individual areas of interest (sometimes perceived to be focused on academic recognition) at the expense of producing research outcomes that addressed specific skills planning agendas. This resulted in the perception from stakeholder that *“the research projects were a mixed bag...”* (Research Partner Interview, 2017).

“The LMIP in general was a difficult project in terms of initial understanding. The Department struggled to articulate in the first year what they actually wanted... We consequently spent the first year getting a clear understanding of where we were and what the boundaries were regarding the role of the researchers and the role of the Department.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

LMIP has highlighted the need for skills research topics to be clearly scoped and clarified, taking into account skills planning priorities, for skills research outcomes to be well received and to be taken up by skills planners. This should include a clear definition of the information, data, insights and knowledge required for effective skills planning; and should be documented and communicated at the inception phase of the project. This may require reflection and review of the purpose of the research, thereby ensuring that skills research conducted remains relevant to the needs to skills planners. This may shift over time, and may thus be more amenable to an evolutionary approach to defining skills research requirements. It is therefore important that the skills planning process is flexible and responsive enough to adjust to changing skills planning needs.

On reflection, defining the scope for skills research, and undertaking skills research, may have delivered more useable research outcomes (for skills planners) had this been undertaken in phases, to allow for the evolving understanding and needs of skills planners.

4.1.2.1.3 Centrally Co-ordinated Research

Research undertaken during LMIP was structured as projects. These projects were capacitated from the research community, through organisations such as HSRC and Wits. In some cases, specialist researches were contracted into these projects. Longer term resource capacity was supported through capacity building initiatives, as described elsewhere in this document. LMIP stopped short of creating a pervasive, operationally oriented research capability. While it was the intention at conceptualisation that LMIP would venture down this path, the project plan did not explicitly cater for this. Unhappiness reported by some stakeholders with regard to DHET's and its agencies' inability to make ongoing use of the forecasting model produced under Theme 2 is illustrative of the issues that arise without the forward planning required to ensure sustainable, operationalised skills research capability.

The DHET is currently in the process of establishing a skills planning unit (SPU) to serve as a central, coordinating unit for skills research and planning.

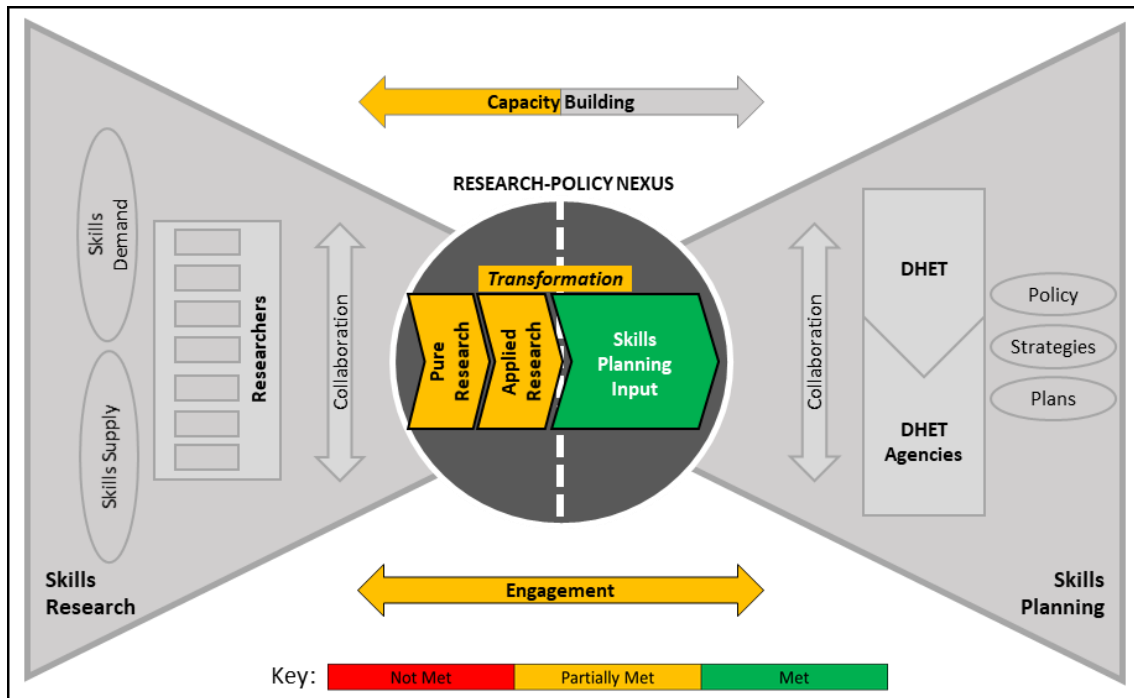
“The instrument has not yet been given to the Department for implementation. A starting point would be to make the instrument available.”

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

4.1.2.2 The Research-Policy Nexus

The following figure depicts the Research-Policy Nexus component of the LMIP Delivery Model, “colour rated” to indicate the extent to which relevant components of the model were effective in producing intended outcomes.

Figure 23: Research-Policy Nexus component of the LMIP Delivery Model



The Research-Policy Nexus, as described above, refers to the engagement and interaction of skills researchers and skills planners on skills planning, policy making and strategy formulation to ensure that evidence is taken up in support of policymaking. This involves the transformation, dissemination and advocacy of pure and applied evidence based research. The Research-Policy Nexus also refers to a site at which research outcomes produced by researchers are translated into a format that could be used as input for skills planning purposes. This translation was expected to be coupled with engagement between researchers and planners, to facilitate the understanding and enrichment of the research outcomes. This aspect of the delivery model is evaluated by describing the nature of the interaction between the relevant actors in the research-policy interface and the means by which the uptake of evidence into policy may be enhanced.

4.1.2.2.1 Translation of Research Outputs

The Research-Policy Nexus (“the Nexus”) involves the transformation of pure and applied research into inputs for skills strategies, policies and plans. Research is thought to provide an evidence base to support policy making using a rational and pragmatic approach. However, the policy process is subject to additional pressures influenced by a range of actors and interests, thereby increasing the complexity of the policymaking process and refutes the assumption that a knowledge base is the primary determinant of the policy/ strategy formulation process (Ranchod, 2016). There are inherent contextual and political complexities characterising the relationship between evidence and policy which undermines the perception that evidence is a purely rational instrument which is converted to policy in a linear fashion (Ranchod, 2016). The research policy nexus is thus constituted by ‘an intricate web of interactions’ (De Leeuw et al., 2008) wherein the functional roles of the researcher and policymaker are not well defined, and which requires active management. In addition to these complexities, key challenges around the Nexus is the alignment and translation of research outputs to the precise needs of policymakers. This requires, to a large degree, consistent engagement between researchers and policymakers. As depicted in the delivery model above, the

transformation and translation of pure and applied research was evaluated as being partially met, with areas for improvement relating to a greater degree of articulation of the Research outputs required, in a way that is easily understandable and readily useable by skills planners.

“The translation has 2 functions. From HSRC’s side, accessible presentation is needed which gets to the point and highlights the key areas. On the side of the Department, their component is taking the presentation and applying it from the general to the specifics of the research. A weakness stems from both sides not fulfilling these respective processes.”

“The research policy nexus didn’t work as well as we would have liked it to.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

DHET stakeholders have commented on the need for LMIP outputs to be translated further to enable more effective application towards policymaking and planning. Research partners have commented on their effort made to “orient” research through policy roundtables and policy briefs for use by the Department and other policymakers, and have stated that the translation and application of research should be done within the DHET, “... translation should be done by DHET and application should come from translation” (Research Partner Interview, 2017). Research partners posed the question, “Where is the line between doing the work of the Department and supporting the Department” (Research Partner, 2017). It can be recommended that the method of presentation should be palatable and suitable to the intended skills planning audience (i.e. Department of Home Affairs, NSF, NSA or DHET Branches). Infographics should be developed and utilised to where possible to communicate complex and sizable information sets.

Practically speaking, research outcomes need to move beyond the theoretical, and need to be articulated in a language and format that enables skills planners to readily understand and assimilate the research outcomes for their skills planning purposes.

Critical questions were raised surrounding the nature and capacity of the bureaucratic apparatus to utilise evidence (Ranchod, 2016). DHET should develop internal capacity around researchers who are well adept to understand and engage with researchers at all levels for alignment and effective delivery. At present, the ability of the DHET to conduct this translation exercise is limited, “As a department we don’t have the capacity to translate all the information from the LMIP” (DHET Interview, 2017).

“What would improve the interface is if the DHET had internal capacity of actual researchers who actually understand the issues and can engage with researchers who are doing the research.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

“HSRC’s role is research and independent findings. DHET’s role is to translate this into policy. However, DHET believed that our role was to help them translate the research findings into policy recommendations.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

4.1.2.2.2 Active Collaboration and engagement between Skills Researchers and Planners

There is a definite need for an increased level of collaboration engagement between researchers and the DHET to align research to the specific needs of policy makers and planners. Researchers commented on the need to engage and converse more with key policymakers to allow a greater level of aligned research and absorption of the research by policymakers.

“We learn by doing. If researchers had a more active engagement with DHET. They could’ve forced researchers to answer very particular questions provided the data was available – it could’ve addressed more detailed and rigorous research questions. We have to move beyond these broad, vague statements around the skills shortage and so on, to more specific or detailed rigorous areas of research.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

"I would have liked to have more conversations with key policy makers in DHET – for these policy makers to absorb the research."

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

Whilst DHET and other government stakeholders did attend and engage researchers at meetings and workshops held under the LMIP Project, there was a noted lack of attendance at meetings and workshops. Where proxies were sent to represent invited attendees, they were at times uninformed and unable to effectively participate and provide the necessary insights and feedback. There was also an inability to get research experts and "decision makers" to meet frequently enough. This is primarily due to a lack of sufficient and permanent dedicated resources assigned to the LMIP within the DHET. Despite capacity challenges, government managers reported that they would have preferred greater collaboration and engagement to input into the content and scope of the research and to build stronger connections between the evidence and policy. Ranchod (2016) recommended that interactivity across the research-policy boundary could be improved by direct and personal contact between relevant researchers and decision-makers, rather than through formal structures. The personal relationships, improved mutual understanding and trust built through personal contact is thought to contribute to *"reducing the distance between the focus of the research enterprise and policy requirements of the Department"* (Ranchod, 2016) via consensus building, collaboration and knowledge sharing.

"People that were supposed to attend meetings would say sorry they can't make it and then they would send someone in their place who hasn't been there before. So, you have a different person sitting there and listening but not really participating or getting involved."

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

There were also noted conflicts and breakdown in relationships between certain Research partners and members of the Department. The relationship between the organisations was described to be at times "very antagonistic" with the HSRC not "[regarding] the DHET as an important client" (Research Partner, Interview, 2017). Researchers, on the other hand, felt that there was a lack of trust on the part of the Department, which impacted on the work they were required to carry out. The 'politics of funding' was also considered a contributor to the boundary between actors, especially in cases where this power was exercised over research outputs and certain research was prioritised out of bureaucratic necessity (Ranchod, 2016). The deterioration of relationship suggests incompatibilities between the nature of research execution and bureaucracy (Ranchod, 2016).

"Lack of trust from DHET's side. They were used to working with consultants addressing their specific research needs. HSRC went into research to find aspects which needed more work to draw out policy implications. HSRC had to keep trying to prove themselves and the work they were doing."

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

Multiple stakeholders indicated the LMIP facilitated an increase in collaboration and engagement between PSET stakeholders, bringing them together and allowing open discussion and dialogue around standardised approaches to skills planning and the existing mechanisms. Learning sessions were regarded as being successful in providing the opportunity for researcher to engage with skills planners. The LMIP has advanced and influenced the relationship between researchers and policymakers, however it has not reached the full expectation that was anticipated at the start of the project.

"I think we made a huge advance compared to how we have done things in the past and how researchers and policy makers have worked in the past. I don't think we got as far as we wanted to in the beginning."

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

4.1.2.2.3 Adequate Capacity on both the Skills Research and Skills Planning Ends of the Nexus

A key enabler to more effective collaboration and engagement for better aligned, translated, articulated and usable research outputs, is the development, accessibility and availability of capacity amongst both the DHET and researchers. Capacity was notably limited in the Department, affecting the ability of officials in the education and training space to engage with the evidence presented to them, given its volume and complexity (Ranchod, 2016).

This hindered the quality and responsiveness of evidence to policy needs. Internal capacity deficits in the Department also prevented engagements from functioning as exchanges between equals, thereby decreasing the likelihood that research uptake and use is improved. Researchers were reportedly perceived as “*academically arrogant*” and there was a need for them to be a humbler when engaging within an under capacitated and highly pressured policy realm. (Ranchod, 2016).

Whilst the development of capacity on the skills research side was partially achieved through the provision of bursaries to external students, it is unclear as to whether this resulted in an improvement in capacity within the Department and the Research partners to enable effective delivery. Capacity building initiatives, such as the learning sessions, were found useful by the DHET, SETA and research partner attendees. However, these were not sufficient, for the effective functioning and delivery of the Research Policy Nexus. These development initiatives should be continued and supported, but a greater focus should be given to internalising and retaining the capacity and capabilities generated, especially within the DHET, to ensure that capacity is available and accessible.

4.1.2.2.4 Pure and Applied Research for Skills Planning Inputs

As covered in the previous section, certain government stakeholders felt research outputs were useful. A DHET stakeholder emphasised the need for empirical evidence based research to support policymaking decisions, which the LMIP was successful in producing.

“In my experience it is around research. We are using a lot of the information. In terms of the research, it is where the impact can be felt. The information is empirical evidence. If the information does not have authority, then it will fault our policy making decisions. If we do not have empirical evidence then we are in trouble. The research must be scientific, it must be empirical.”

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

Certain stakeholders; however, felt researcher papers produced were not suitable for the intended skills policymaking audience. Stakeholders commented on the approaches and outputs produced as being “*overly academic*”, too lengthy and not aligned or focused on what the Department actually needed and could use (DHET Interview, 2017).

“Often the approach was overly academic and not sufficiently focussed on what DHET needed and could actually be used, applied and interpreted.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

“The papers produced were academic but the readers were not academics. The papers were much too long and not user friendly at all.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

However, Research partners have commented on the lack of articulation and support provided by the DHET on the Department’s requirements. Contributing to this is the lack of definition of the boundary relating to the role and responsibility for the transformation and translation of research outputs. A need for improvement as mentioned previously is the clear articulation of what LMI is and what intelligence is required. Research stakeholders have commented that this should be clearly articulated in the ToR. Other Research partners have stated that, whilst the DHET attempted to provide guidance, the Department did not know what was really needed. The lack of expertise in this area may have resulted in the inability by the Department to define its exact needs; poor direction resulted in researchers adopting broad approach to scoping certain research outputs.

The Evaluation noted multiple issues regarding research documents that were not read, causing delays and lack of feedback on the outputs produced. It was also noted that the process for managing the research undertaken was over-bureaucratic, specifically in relation to the LMIP Steering Committee meetings. DHET Stakeholders associated these problems with insufficient capacity, expertise and technical know-how, as well as insufficient time to review research outputs due to normal and daily work requirements. The lack of expertise and technical know-how also contributed to an inability to absorb and utilise certain research outputs for decision making, action and implementation. This has impeded the effective delivery of the Project and requires improvement.

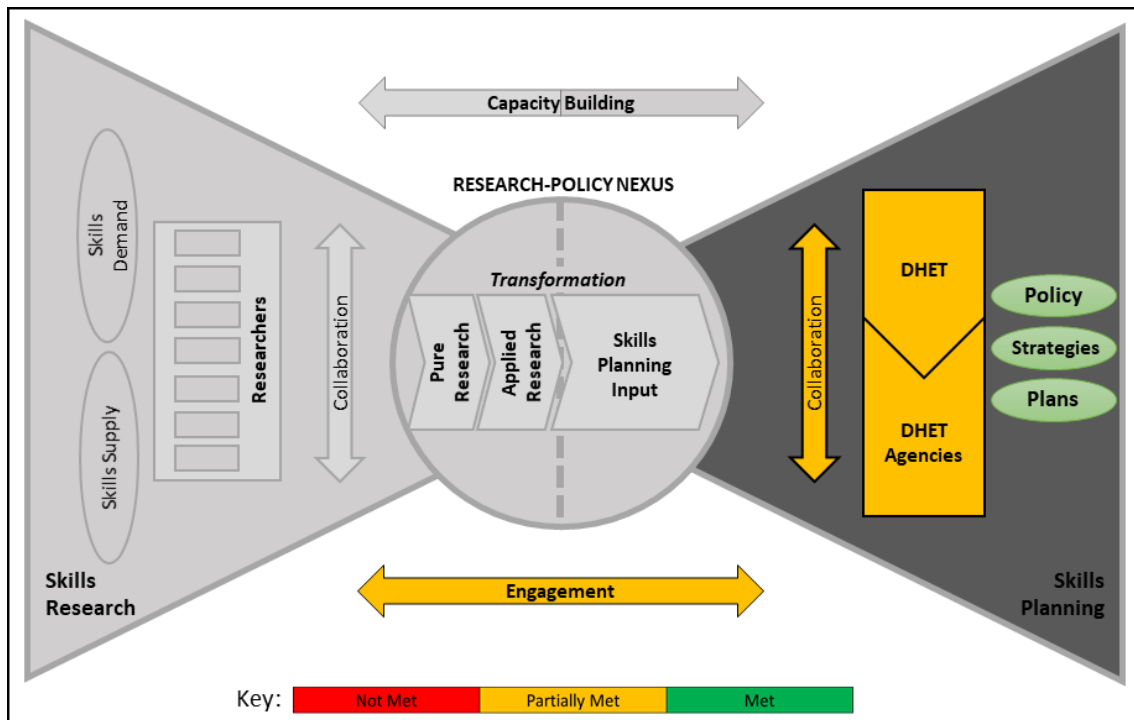
“DHET currently doesn’t have the capacity to absorb all the information effectively.”

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

4.1.2.3 Skills Planning

The following figure depicts the Skills Planning component of the LMIP Delivery Model, “colour rated” to indicate the extent to which relevant components of the model were effective in producing intended outcomes.

Figure 24: Skills Planning component of the LMIP Delivery Model



The Skills Planning component of the delivery model refers to the formulation of plans, strategies and policies focused on the development of skills, by the DHET and related DHET agencies (i.e. SETA’s, SAQA, the NSA). Skills planning was intended to result in the production of required skills strategies, policies and plans, through the focused and coordinated collaboration of skills planning efforts amongst DHET and its agencies.

4.1.2.3.1 Adequate Skills Planning Focus, Capability and Capacity

Stakeholders have attributed the improvement in the Departments capacity and ability to undertake skills planning and respond to skills needs of South Africa to the LMIP Project. Whilst there has been an improvement in the capacity of the Department to undertake skills planning, it was commented that the DHET did not have the internal capacity and expertise to absorb certain outputs produced and translate this into usable information for decision making.

“In an ideal setup, there would be a skills planning unit within DHET. However, there was no group to receive the work within DHET. No one could take the info and make decisions within DHET.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

However, multiple stakeholders have made specific reference to support the establishment of a SPU within the DHET. There have also been multiple suggestions from Research partners that the skills planning mechanism be established and remain under the control of the Department. It has also been suggested that whilst the LMIP has built knowledge on skills planning and grown the research community, it will not be able to establish the mechanism on its own. This has to be established and managed by the Department. It has been recommended that the Department internalise the capacity and expertise created through the LMIP Project and create a SPU. The potential SPU would be

responsible for defining and commissioning labour market and skills research and for providing oversight and the review of research outputs produced to inform decision making and policy planning.

“With regards to usability – need someone who can read and interpret the documents. In DHET – it was directed toward key people. In order for the research to be more useful to DHET they need to get a skills planning unit.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

The unit would collaborate with other branches within the Department as well as coordinate interaction, collaboration and partnerships with external government institutions. This would contribute to the institutionalising of the skills planning mechanism. It has been indicated in stakeholder responses that this agenda has already been tabled, specifically within the Department’s Planning and Research branch. A dedicated project manager (including a senior project manager), project administrator, and risk management roles, should be assigned for the proposed unit and similar planned projects to ensure effective planning, management and administration and delivery.

“The onus of sustainability falls on DHET which is in the process of setting up a skills planning unit. The question remains what the Department means by skills planning. Planning is a misnomer, but DHET can steer and advise.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

4.1.2.3.2 Coordinated, Cohesive, Integrated Skills Planning

The Skills Planning component of the Delivery Model is contingent on the collaboration amongst the Department and its related agencies and institutions. Collaboration is required to share and utilise applied and empirical research and skills planning inputs to support and inform skills policies, strategies and plans. Stakeholders have commented on the use of LMIP research outputs to inform their planning and support their recommendations at national meetings (i.e. Nedlac).

“The capacity of doing skills planning in the Department has been improved.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

“With all of this in place, it should be better for us to respond. We are trying to come up with a skills system that better responds to the needs in South Africa.”

“I wasn’t involved in LMIP but I have been using a lot of the LMIP outputs to inform my planning.”

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

Other stakeholders have reported no improvement in skills planning or have not observed LMIP research informing skills planning, stating the LMIP has “fallen short of expectations given the resources expended on the project” (SETA Interview, 2017). It was expected that there would have been a greater impact and improvement in this area; however, these stakeholders mentioned that this can be expected to improve as plans begin to “roll out” (DHET Interview, 2017; SETA Interview, 2017). Whilst certain stakeholders have commented on the LMIP failing to deliver on the establishment of a skills planning mechanism, “at very high costs”, it must be noted that the LMIP Project was not intended to solely establish the skills planning mechanism, but rather to contribute toward its establishment.

“The project has effectively finished and there is no skills mechanism in sight. It was an expensive failure because it didn’t deliver its key deliverable.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

Another stakeholder has indicated that the LMIP Project has achieved the establishment of a CIMSP, in that it has allowed their organisation to effectively plan for the anticipated demand for skills through the utilisation of the forecasting model produced under Theme 2.

"It has achieved the establishment of a credible institutional skills planning mechanism. They gave us the research which can be used for planning and the forecasting model which is used when we do our planning. It can tell us how many artisans we are going to need in 5 years or next year. I would give it an 8/10"

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

Although the skills planning mechanism is not where it was envisioned to be currently, it is expected that the DHET will have a "good planning system" in place within the short-to-medium term

"The biggest challenge is how the department can present what was produced and build its own kind of institutional capacity for using the models, tools, etc. and figuring out what the Department needs to do internally and whether it needs to contract people going forward. That is going to be very challenging. It's going to require enormous amount of capacity building internally in the structures of the Department."

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

One alternate option that has been suggested for the way forward is for the LMIP to be carried out by an external university department, who would operate independently. Alternatively, the Department could exercise a greater degree of control to improve the "functioning" of SETAs to derive information from existing sources. This would imply that this could be achieved utilising existing resources, thereby only expending resources for those specific areas where additional key information is required.

"I think there are things that you could do as a government that don't require such a huge and expensive research project. Another thing that you can do as a government is improve the functioning of the SETAs and get better information there."

"The department should grant a university department somewhere with a complement to do the job. Permanently, independently, professionally."

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

Skills planning needs to take into account the occupations to which the skills relate. As such, considerations relating to the structure and adequacy of OFO codes need to be taken into account.

4.2 Lessons Learnt: Framed within the LMIP Governance and Management Model

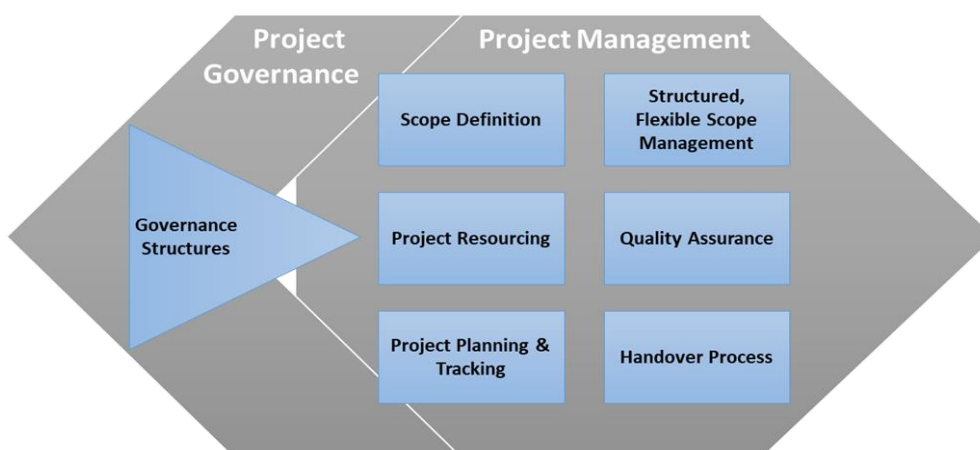
4.2.1 Outline of the LMIP Governance and Management Model

The LMIP Governance and Management Model (as per the figure below) describes the key administrative components that contributed to the delivery of the Project's objectives. While not conceived at the Project's inception, the above model describes the way in which the LMIP Project operated and was intended to achieve its envisioned results. The Governance and Management Model consists of the following key components:

- Project Governance
which relates to the governance structures of LMIP that direct the establishment, management and control of the Project;
- Project Management
which relates to the definition of the scope of LMIP, the Project resourcing, Project planning and tracking, the structure and flexibility of the scope, quality assurance and the formal handover process;

The LMIP Governance and Management Model serves as a framework against which key lessons learnt from the LMIP Project may be articulated.

Figure 25: LMIP Governance and Management Model



4.2.2 Project Governance

Project governance relates to the LMIP as the policies, procedures and functions that direct the establishment, management and control of the Project.

4.2.2.1 Appropriate and Effective Governance Structures

The LMIP was governed at the macro level by the Minister, the DG and the DDG, at the meso-level by the various members of the Project's committees, and from the micro level of the Technical Team. The various governance functions and responsibilities were outlined in the governance ToR (LMIP, 2014). The governance structures were in place; however, their functioning varied across their respective levels. The involvement of the macro-level governance team was not always sufficient due to the resource constraints inherent to these positions. The supporting role that the meso-level team was intended to fill was not always possible due to similar constraints.

Attendance was poor at the majority of meetings. At times, when proxies were delegated to attend they were not involved enough in the Project to fully absorb content; inconsistency amongst attendees diluted the effectiveness of these meetings. Project management was not a well-defined role from inception; the micro-level governance that the Technical Team provided was only brought in after the initial phases of the LMIP. Prior to the Technical Team's appointment, individuals who lacked capacity to undertake both the advisory and the administrative role of their respective areas were put under undue strain.

"In future, project management should be put up front"

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

The Technical Team that was brought on provided a very useful service to the Project and made more time available for key resources to focus on Project requirements. Appropriate and effective governance structures improve the ability of skills research to be transformed into usable skills planning outputs.

4.2.3 Project Management

4.2.3.1 Clear Scope Definition at Project Onset

The lack of a clearly-stated and well-defined project plan led to miscommunications between stakeholders. Objectives and areas of priority differed between cohorts and resulted in scope changes over time. In addition, the relevance of certain research areas was contested and led to the removal of partly-completed work from the LMIP deliverables. This can be attributed to poor expectation management or definition of deliverables required due to the lack of clarity of the Project scope.

“If there was to be a LMIP2, I would suggest that the DHET begin the project with proper scoping and a problem statement on which to base expectations and create clear expectations about the outcome”

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

4.2.3.2 Adequate Project Resourcing

Project resourcing was inadequate from the perspective of role requirements. This relates to both the definition of roles within the Project, as well as the capacity of individuals to adequately attend to their Project responsibilities. Roles such as theme leaders and project management were not adequately outlined to meet the information requirements of individuals. This led to varying degrees of role engagement amongst stakeholders. Research partners involved in the LMIP also lacked dedicated resources for the individual project areas. Cross-theme involvement of stakeholders may have influenced the effectiveness of their roles.

“[Impediments to efficiency] Capacity and the people doing the work; a clear understanding of what the work is, what they have to do and what it is actually all about.”

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

With regard to role requirements, individuals felt that they lacked the content knowledge to adequately review outputs. The technical skill and academic knowledge needed to review research reports was not found within the Department; although expertise in this area was gradually accumulated. In addition, time constraints of key individuals affected their attendance at committee meetings which may have influenced the effectiveness of the meetings.

4.2.3.3 Active Project Planning and Project Tracking

Invoices were verified by the LMIP Technical Team prior to fund disbursement; this action follows from Section 8.1.1 of the MoA between the DHET and HSRC (DHET, 2011; DHET, 2012). Verification of work completed allowed for continual project planning and tracking of deliverables as they were completed – in part or in full. The progress reports and briefings to the DG also required an account of work completed and a consolidation of outstanding deliverables. Despite the commendable efforts of the Technical Team, the Project lacked overall planning from its inception. Furthermore, a considerable number of the timelines for deliverables were altered over the course of the Project which influenced the efficiency of project tracking.

“The scope of the deliverables often changed. As it was a 4-year project, there has to be some space to change, but we should have stuck much closer to the approved business plans.”

- Source: Research Partner, Interview (2017)

4.2.3.4 Structured, Flexible Scope Management

Stakeholders described the scope as *“loose and sprawling”* (Research Partner, 2017). The constant changes to key deliverables that were required disrupted the continuity of the Project. Conversely, another research partner interview revealed that the flexibility of the scope was necessary considering the changing nature of the labour market factors that formed part of the research.

“It became clear that the scope they were given concerning artisans did not stretch further to research deeper to show how the occupations were changing. So maybe in the future the scope needs to be broader that it has been.”

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

The scope should provide a framework in which the management of deliverables can occur, while providing flexibility for areas of development. Flexibility should ideally allow for extensions where work needs to be developed; however, the structure of the scope and the feedback mechanisms indicate that support is needed to eliminate scope creep. Scope creep was present in some areas of the LMIP where, at times, the research agenda was myopic to the areas of individual researchers' interest, rather than undertaken as a relevant part of the LMIP that could inform skills planning.

"I'm sure the researchers weren't given proper guidance. I'm quite sure they were given mixed messages throughout the project, which is why the outputs are so broad and unfocussed. People did whatever research they found interesting."

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

4.2.3.5 Quality Assurance Function

The limited content knowledge of theme leaders restricted the extent to which delivery reviews could be undertaken. The same concern arises from the verification of deliverables by the Technical Team; documents were assessed as having been completed or not, rather than on the quality of the content therein.

Despite the initial lack of content knowledge required to review outputs, theme leaders expressed that this process capacitated them over time. The suggestion would be for the Theme Leader review to be more heavily complemented by the critical review function in the early stages of projects like LMIP, leading to less active tandem involvement between these two parties as the Project progresses.

4.2.3.6 Formalised Handover Processes

Two key areas of handover require management at DHET: role handover and skills and output handover. Cross-theme involvement of stakeholders and the employee turnover within the DHET affected the stability of areas of the project - reassignment of staff within DHET had a similar effect. Role handover was not formalised within the LIMP. The exit of a key individual from the Project led to a period of discontinuity as the successor was selected and informally briefed on his/her future responsibilities. No formal handover process existed to provide sufficient guidance to LMIP entrants.

"Protocol should have existed for changing members. We merely replaced people as needed which caused delays."

- Source: DHET, Interview (2017)

Handover of skills was limited between research partners and the Department. While the DHET facilitated learning sessions and managed engagements at which training occurred, the capacitation that the Department had envisaged did not materialise. An effective skills handover would extend beyond the life of the Project and entail the establishment of a SPU within the Department to address this need. This would serve to address the concern raised by some stakeholders as to how the LMIP is being *"coordinated and directed towards a clear policy goal and implementation strategy"* (Research Partner, 2017). Output handover was generally sound, with the exception of the Theme 2 Linked Macro-Education Model (LM-EM). Poorly-defined contracts have hindered the handover of crucial deliverables to LMIP. This has created cost implications for the Project and tarnished the LMIP's delivery record and reputation to some stakeholders.

5 Key Findings and Recommendations

The following table outlines key findings from the evaluation as well as associated recommendations.

Table 61: Key Findings and Recommendations

Key Finding, by LMIP Objective	Recommendations for Relevant Stakeholders		
	Researchers	DHET	Skills Planners ¹¹
<p>Information and knowledge advancement regarding the Post-School Education and Training (PSET) system was enabled through good quality, credible scientific research, albeit broad and reportedly overly academic in a significant number of cases.</p>	<p>Based on input from stakeholders consulted during the evaluation, there is a need for researchers to familiarize themselves with the OFO Register – a coded occupational classification system that is a key tool utilized by the DHET for identification, reporting and monitoring of skills demand and supply in the South African labour market.</p>	<p>The proposed SPU to be established within DHET should translate existing skills planning research generated by the LMIP into non-academic language briefs that answer policy questions rather than academic research questions.</p> <p>DHET should articulate specific labour market intelligence requirements to external researchers to avoid an unfocussed and sprawling approach to scoping research outputs.</p> <p>Future research projects involving broad timelines and scope should adopt a more evolutionary approach to planning. The defined research content and approach should be routinely re-evaluated as a means to disaggregate the project. This will contribute to sustained alignment of project outputs to the needs of research consumers.</p>	<p>Critical information necessary to sustainably perform institutional skills planning should be identified and mechanisms should be implemented which ensure that this data continues to be gathered by appropriate organisations and is readily accessible in a usable format.</p>
<p>The LMIP Project has promoted labour market intelligence in light of policy, sectoral and other education, training and skills issues both through applied research and by highlighting key characteristics of the Research Policy Nexus, required for effective integration between skills research and skills planning.</p>	<p>Researchers should ensure that research outcomes are translated and communicated effectively to ensure uptake. It is noted that researchers will need to be supported in this by skills planners articulating their needs more clearly.</p>	<p>The functional roles of the researchers and policymakers at the research policy nexus should be defined and actively managed and coordinated by dedicated project management.</p>	<p>Research outputs should be packaged in a format which explicitly informs career guidance, enhances existing enrolment planning processes for universities and colleges, improves processes that inform allocations for bursaries and scholarships and supports different layers of the skills planning mechanism, namely national, sectoral and organisational.</p>

¹¹ In this table Skills Planners refers to those people involved in developing skills plans, skills strategies, and skills policies, outside of DHET head office. This may include skills planners at organisations such as public universities, TVET colleges, community colleges, SETAs, and government departments.

Key Finding, by LMIP Objective	Recommendations for Relevant Stakeholders		
	Researchers	DHET	Skills Planners ¹¹
<p>Capacity was notably limited in the Department, affecting the ability of officials in the education and training space to engage with the evidence presented to them, given its volume and complexity, thereby necessitating continued institutional capacity development.</p> <p>Delivery of the LMIP project was hamstrung by various project management issues (e.g. lack of resource capacity).</p>	<p>Contracted researchers should produce evidence which is aligned to the information requirements of institutional skills planners.</p>	<p>Internal technical know-how and expertise within DHET has to improve if research outputs are to be effectively absorbed and utilised for decision making, action and implementation.</p> <p>Dedicated project management roles should be defined, and responsibilities assigned, as indicated by the detailed evaluation findings.</p> <p>Key learnings (as outlined in the Lessons Learnt section of this document) from the project management of LMIP in designing, mobilising and implementing phases should be considered when designing projects of a similar nature.</p>	<p>Based on the view from stakeholders consulted during the evaluation, an expert on skills planning in the South African context is required to advise the envisioned SPU.</p> <p>Internalisation and retention of capacity and capabilities generated during LMIP can be improved by contractually binding future bursary recipients to participate in post study skills planning traineeships/ internships.</p>
<p>The LMIP Project has advanced research dissemination via an increase in collaboration and engagement between PSET stakeholders, allowing dialogue around standardised approaches to skills planning and the existing mechanisms, thereby significantly contributing to addressing key issues that plagued the skills planning landscape prior to its introduction.</p> <p>However, the research itself was undertaken in a siloed manner with limited coordination across the various contributing research institutions.</p>	<p>Research initiatives, both within and outside the skills development sector, are encouraged to emulate successful research practices as established by LMIP (e.g. research communities), but should emphasize cross-institutional/research group collaboration.</p>	<p>Further skills research initiatives pursued by DHET should consider the successful collaborative practices demonstrated by LMIP for inclusion in any skills research capabilities that these initiatives seek to establish.</p>	<p>National, sectoral and organisational skills planners should continually consult the research findings of the LMIP to guide future skills policy/ strategy/ resource allocation decisions.</p>

Key Finding, by LMIP Objective	Recommendations for Relevant Stakeholders		
	Researchers	DHET	Skills Planners ¹¹
<p>While the LMIP has delivered a number of successes regarding research dissemination, the progress appears to be poorly understood outside of those stakeholders closely involved in the Project.</p>	<p>Encourage more researchers to serve as ambassadors for LMIP in everyday interactions with relevant stakeholders; engaging stakeholders on the research outcomes produced during LMIP to encourage uptake.</p>	<p>Publicise LMIP's successes,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to encourage take-up of the Projects outputs, e.g. research reports; and • to disseminate learnings from this Project; and • to encourage further delivery against LMIP's goals. <p>Investigate avenues to better expose the outputs produced by LMIP. These avenues may include inserts in publications, more workshops with skills planners, segments on radio etc.</p>	<p>Look to replicate effective LMIP practices, as highlighted in this document, to continue its successes.</p> <p>The envisioned SPU should collaborate with multiple branches within the DHET as well as coordinate interactions, collaboration and partnerships with external public and private organisations, particularly education and training institutions.</p>
<p>Research capacity development was advanced through the process of successful delivery against the majority of target research objectives and intended outcomes, and through the allocation of bursaries and internships and through learning sessions.</p>	<p>Interventions should be deployed which increase the supply of research capacity relating to targeted qualifications and programmes as defined by national development strategies. These initiatives may include the development of sector specific skills research capacity, longer term research skills development initiatives.</p>	<p>Institutionalise continuation of critical, evolutionary sub-projects, including sectoral analyses, national OiHDL, tracer studies and use of the forecasting model for skills supply and demand, using methodologies developed over the course of LMIP.</p>	<p>Where necessary, new curricula should be developed to address gaps in the PSET system regarding labour market research to further enhance research capacity development.</p>
<p>The LMIP Project built a model to forecast the supply and demand of skills which has, together with complementary training to use the model, enhanced the skills forecasting capacity of skills planners. However, licencing issues have stymied access to the model itself.</p>	<p>Utilise outputs from the model to inform other areas of skills research.</p> <p>Explore applicability of the model to different areas of research.</p> <p>Given the sophisticated nature of the model, researchers will need to be trained on its use.</p>	<p>Resolve licencing issues to ensure that the macroeconomic model is available to relevant organisations (e.g. SETAs), capacitate users by hosting training sessions and ensure ongoing model utility and usability.</p>	<p>Work with researchers to optimise use of the model for skills planning; utilise the model to identify gaps that need to be addressed by targeted skills interventions.</p>

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7 Appendix

The Appendix to this document supplements the content of the Evaluation of the Labour Market Intelligence Partnership and is available as a separate document.

The contents of the Appendix are as follows:

7.1 Evaluation Approach and Methodology

- Rationale for the Evaluation
- Purpose of the Evaluation
- Scope and Focus Areas of the Evaluation
- Evaluation Approach & Design
- Conceptual Framework for the Evaluation
- Evaluation Criteria and Key Evaluation Questions
- Reporting, Project Management and Role of the Steering Committee
- Project Theory Development
- Instrument Development
- Data Collection Methodology
- Ethical Considerations

7.2 Key Evaluation Stakeholders

- Department of Higher Education and Training
- Redflank
- Human Sciences Research Council and Wits University
- Education and Training Institutions
- Other Government Departments
- The Logical Model
- Logical Model Indicators

7.3 Theory of Change Analysis

- Theory of Change for LMIP
- Preconditions for the LMIP Theory of Change
- Theory of Change Definitions
- Preconditions

7.4 Effectiveness of LMIP Processes/ Activities

- Information and Knowledge Advancement
- Labour Market Intelligence
- Institutional Capacity Development
- Skills Forecasting Capacity
- Research Capacity Development
- Research Dissemination

7.5 Fieldwork Report

- Data Collection Instruments
- Workshops
- Challenges