

FINAL REPORT

*Impact Assessment: Retail Management
Development Programme (RMDP)*

**WHOLESALE AND RETAIL
SECTOR EDUCATION &
TRAINING AUTHORITY**

13 MARCH 2020

IMPACT ASSESSMENT: RETAIL MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (RMDP)

Prepared for

**WHOLESALE AND RETAIL SECTOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING AUTHORITY
(W&RSETA)**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBA	Cost Benefit Analysis
CHE	Council for Higher Education
CIPD	Chartered Institute for Personnel Development
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
HTFVs	Hard to Fill Vacancies
ILDp	International Leadership Development Programme
ISM	International School of Management
NACC	Nigerian-American Chamber of Commerce
NDP	National Development Plan
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSDP	National Skills Development Plan
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
HDI	Historically Disadvantaged Individual
RAE	Rapid Assessment Evaluation
RMDP	Retail Management Development Programme
ROI	Return on Investment
SA	South Africa
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
UCS	Underhill Corporate Solutions
USA	United States of America
W&R	Wholesale and Retail
W&RSETA	Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Introduction and background

The Retail Management Development Programme (RMDP) was launched in 2012 by the Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA) as one of its flagship programmes aiming to address skills gaps in middle management levels in the Wholesale and Retail (W&R) sector. In 2019, the W&RSETA sought a service provider to conduct an impact assessment of the Retail Management Development Programme (RMDP) covering the period between 2015-2019. This impact assessment sought to establish the extent to which the RMDP has met its objectives and has provided positive impacts to all stakeholders in the W&R sector.

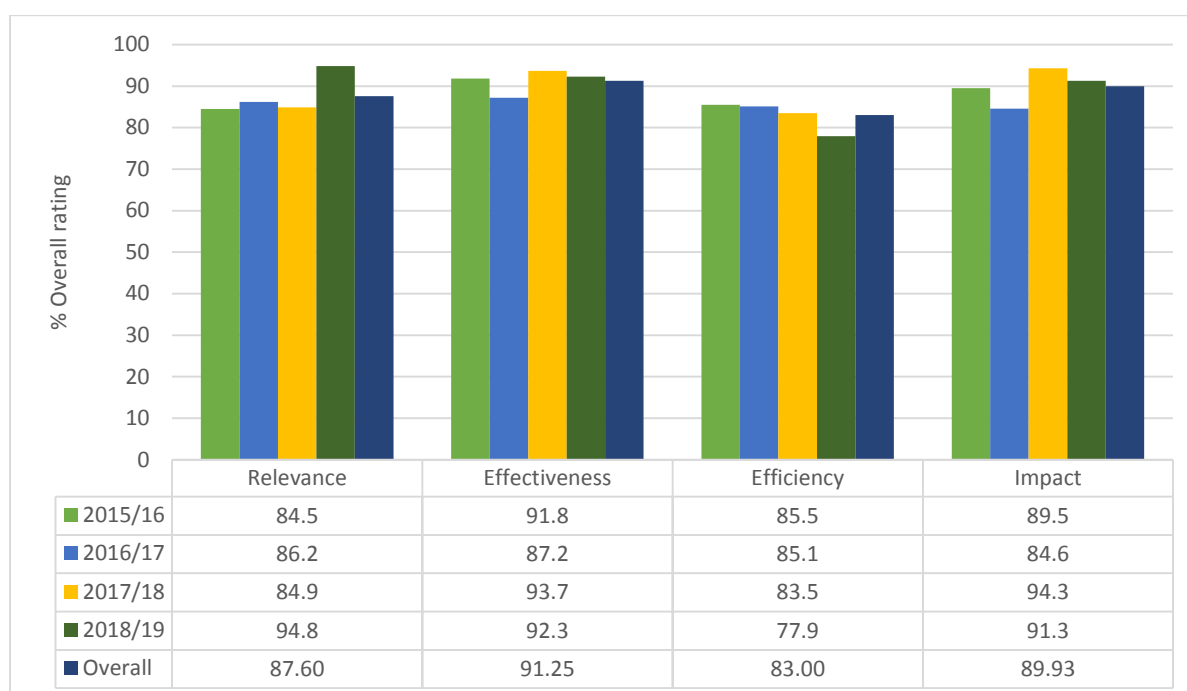
2. Approach and methodology

The impact evaluation model applied was based on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD (2018)'s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria for evaluations of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the programme. Further modifications to the model included the addition of replicability as the 6th criteria, based on work by Dale (2004). Data was collected from a sample of 249 beneficiaries of the RMDP between 2015 and 2019, employers in the retail sector, and training providers of the programme. A mixed methods research approach was employed, with quantitative responses collected from beneficiaries and answering questions relating to the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact, while qualitative responses were collected from employers, training providers and other beneficiaries through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Study findings were analysed and triangulated to provide the overall response based on inputs from all stakeholders.

3. Main findings

The programme relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact were assessed using both quantitative and qualitative methods, and overall ratings are presented on Figure 0.1, while sustainability and replicability were assessed using qualitative methods.

Figure 0.1: Overall assessment of the RMDP based on the DAC OECD evaluation criteria



- As shown in Figure 0.1, the programme relevance was ranked highest by the 2018/19 group (94.8%) and lowest by the 2015/16 group (84.5%) of participants. The overall score of RMDP relevance was 87.6% which revealed that the majority found the programme to be relevant. Interviews with beneficiaries and employers further attested to the relevance of the programme, with suggestions being made on course content to be added. These suggested contents included the addition of practical immersions, basic computer skills (the Office suite), focus on entrepreneurship and introduction of simulations in all courses, among other additions.
- Effectiveness was ranked highest by the 2017/18 group of participants (93.7%) and ranked lowest by the 2016/17 group (87.2%), giving an overall effectiveness of 91.3%. In assessing the effectiveness of the RMDP, the majority of beneficiaries classified the programme as very effective.
- Efficiency meanwhile was ranked highest by the 2015/16 group (85.5%) and lowest by the 2018/19 group (77.9%), giving an overall efficiency rating of 83%. In understanding efficiency, the majority of beneficiaries also ranked the programme as highly efficient.

In addition, the majority of beneficiaries emphasised that they were happy with the entire RMDP value chain, and interview responses also attested to the same.

- Impact was ranked highest by the 2017/18 group (94.3%) and lowest by the 2016/17 group (84.6%), giving an overall impact rating of 89.9%. Regarding the assessment of the impact, several testimonials from beneficiaries and employers noted that the programme has been highly instrumental in the development of beneficiaries. The majority of participants highlighted that the RMDP had met their expectations, and evidence showed an improvement in the average number of subordinates per beneficiary from 37 to 66. The majority also noted that their career level had improved since graduation, with 70% noting that they obtained promotions, against 27.8% who have not received promotions. Only 2.2% of the beneficiaries' job positions regressed since the RMDP graduation.
- In terms of overall impact in skills improvement, the majority of beneficiaries noted that the programme had highly enhanced their productivity. This was topped by the 2017/18 group. An assessment of Return on Investment (ROI) found that neither employers nor the W&RSETA had so far quantified the benefits of the RMDP in monetary terms, thus making the calculating of percentage ROI difficult. However, the following costs and benefits of the programme were compiled:

Costs

- Training costs (covered by the SETA through levies received)
- Travel costs, accommodation and allowances
- Time away from work, leading to reduced productivity

Benefits

- Cost-savings due to reduction of staff turnover and promotion from within
- Improved profitability due to increase in productivity and introduction of new and innovative business opportunities
- Clear evidence of leadership competency development from graduates
- Promotion of Historically Disadvantaged Individuals (HDIs) in the workplace
- Closure of skills gaps

- Despite the costs of the programme, employers and the W&RSETA, the RMDP programme manager noted that the benefits outweigh the costs. The RMDP is thus considered a highly worthwhile investment, since performance improvements are clearly observable from the graduates, and most graduates get promotions upon completion. However, it was also noted that there is a greater need to ensure more beneficiaries get promoted, and the accredited status of the current the RMDP should be utilised by many to seek higher education.
- Results from the quantitative assessment showed that, while beneficiaries in 2018 found the programme to be highly relevant compared to the views of beneficiaries from other years, they found the programme to be comparatively less effective, efficient and impactful than the previous views of 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18. For the 2017/18 group however, beneficiaries found the programme to be comparatively more effective and impactful, while beneficiaries in 2015/16 found the programme to be most efficient compared to the views of beneficiaries from other years. This was corroborated by the results of a non-parametric test for independent samples (Kruskal-Wallis H test) which was conducted to establish the extent of the significance of differences in beneficiaries' perceptions of the RMDP. Test results concluded that, with a 5% margin of error, beneficiary views on the relevance and impact of the RMDP were significantly different between years. This points to the likelihood of limitations in terms of standardisation of the programme delivery across the years, since beneficiaries had significantly different programme ratings. Differences between the impact between 2018/19 and other years however may be because this group was still in class and had not yet realised the maximum impact from the programme.
- Further qualitative assessments of in-depth interview results showed that employers and beneficiaries were of the view that the overall quality of management for the RMDP had declined from 2018. Stakeholders mostly pointed to poor communication, and more focus on qualification (theoretical) driven learning at the expense of content (practical) driven learning. The changes in entrance criteria likely alienated some previously disadvantaged individuals without the NQF 5 minimum qualification required.

- Assessment of sustainability was conducted through qualitative, in-depth discussions with training providers, employers and the W&RSETA RMDP programme manager. A total of 85% of employers noted the programme would need constant updates in the future to keep it relevant with new trends such as the 4th industrial revolution. However, structural shifts such as changes in the training provider were still a challenge, since there was currently no standardisation of programme content. This resulted in content changes along with changes in training providers, as noted by 70% of employers. Regardless of the challenges however, the programme's ability to provide lasting positive impacts to beneficiaries which can lead them to influence other leaders in the sector were noted to be key in ensuring the sustainability of the RMDP.

- Assessment of replicability established that stakeholders had conflicting views about the accreditation status of the RMDP. Whilst 65% believed that it was necessary, since it provided certificates that could be used for further education, 35% were concerned with the move towards qualification-driven, rather than content driven study. In addition, the accreditation of the RMDP after nominations were closed meant that several beneficiaries failed to get through. Graduates from the RMDP would not be able to use their National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 6 qualification for entrance into the International Leadership Development Programme (ILDP), which now requires a minimum of NQF Level 7. This gap, therefore, needs to be bridged, to maintain the link between the programmes.

- A number of challenges along the RMDP value chain were identified and noted by employers, beneficiaries and training providers as follows:
 - *Entrance and selection* – In 2018, selection was conducted through a third party with no involvement of the training provider. This resulted in mismatches of required entry criteria into the (now accredited) RMDP.
 - *Content and programme structure* – Some beneficiaries (40%) noted that four days of study in a week were not enough for them to sufficiently learn some courses.

- *Logistics* – It was noted by all employers that the current training provider was having challenges with securing accredited venues for countrywide training, which delayed the commencement of 2018 classes in other provinces besides Gauteng.
- *Programme management* – 95% of Stakeholders indicated that since 2018, the efficiency in management of the RMDP had declined, and communication had been poorly handled. All employers indicated that they were not notified of changes in the training provider and accreditation which resulted in the selection criteria changes after closure of nominations. This led to several nominees failing to get through the programme.
- *Impact* – It was noted by 30% of beneficiaries that some RMDP beneficiaries had not yet received promotions, more than a year after graduation. This included some who were promised promotions before going through training. As a result, 25% of beneficiaries wished the W&RSETA could intervene by making follow-ups with their employers to check on the career progress of beneficiaries.

4. Recommendations

Recommendations for the improvement of the W&RSETA RMDP were based on study findings as well as stakeholder suggestions. They are grouped into entrance process, course content, logistics and impact recommendations, and are presented as follows:

Streamlining the entrance process into the RMDP

- Stakeholders were of the agreement that changes in the entrance criteria, delays in the programme and other communications were not handled well by the W&RSETA. Accordingly, as a matter of urgency, the SETA should streamline the entrance process for the RMDP to ensure that programme objectives are clearly stated. The entrance criteria must be available to all stakeholders, and communication must be professionally handled. In enhancing communication, the SETA should consider employing an email alert system with a database of all levy-paying employers and beneficiaries who would have been successful in that financial year. This system can be used to alert all stakeholders on nomination dates and changes thereof, or any programme delays and other information essential for stakeholders to make decisions.

- In light of the accreditation status of the RMDP, the training provider should be directly involved in the selection process of successful beneficiaries. Hence, the SETA should consider doing away with the third-party assessor and establish a taskforce for assessment made up of SETA representatives and the training provider. Alternatively, the SETA should revert back to its process with the previous training provider, where the initial selection was conducted by the SETA, and the provider had a chance to conduct next-phase assessments. Both approaches will provide the training provider with a greater say on who gets through to the programme. It will ensure that all beneficiaries going through the RMDP meet the qualification criteria.
- The time lag between acceptance of beneficiaries into the RMDP and commencement of training should be minimised as far as possible. This time lag creates greater anxiety and leads to complaints from beneficiaries and employers. To achieve this, processes can be conducted simultaneously to eliminate delays. For instance, while the selection is in process, the training provider should plan and submit a detailed delivery plan to the SETA on all dates and venues for training sessions countrywide.

Enhancing content and delivery of the RMDP

- Firstly, the standards, course content and processes for the RMDP should be made uniform even with training provider changes. This will eliminate the possible differences in skills levels and perceptions of the programme by graduates from different years. However, it is also understood that standardising the content of the RMDP in its current accredited state will be highly challenging, since the process of accrediting qualifications is resource and time consuming. Perhaps this can be considered as a longer-term venture, but it is still highly necessary to implement.
- Secondly, the training provider should initiate consultations with employers and successful beneficiaries immediately after closure of the selection processes so as to establish the possible programme lengths and dates. This can help address any needs for additional time per module, with the endorsement of both employers and beneficiaries.
- Lastly, a bridging programme between the accredited RMDP and ILDP should be developed and implemented. This will restore the connection between the two programmes and ensure that the RMDP graduates can still use their certificates as an

entry qualification into the ILDP. The bridging programme should be able to satisfy NQF Level 7, which is the minimum entrance into ILDP. Ensuring continuity between the RMDP and ILDP will also act as a tool to enhance the sustainability of the RMDP in its current accredited state.

Streamlining the logistical and administration processes of the RMDP

- The overall logistical process must be enhanced which includes making announcements to stakeholders and handling queries such as beneficiaries' failure to attend certain classes. The SETA should ensure that **only one** point of contact exists to communicate with beneficiaries and employers shortly after assessment is complete. According to employer and beneficiary testimonies, this was implemented successfully by the previous training provider, and the logistical process was noted to be 'seamless'. The SETA's communication with beneficiaries should end at the nomination process, and resume when graduation plans are made.

Enhancing impact of the RMDP

- The SETA should emphasise to employers the need to provide promotional opportunities to all graduates of the RMDP. A year after each graduate group has left the programme, a snapshot tracer evaluation should be run focusing on collecting (i) the success stories from beneficiaries of the programme, (ii) the percentage of beneficiaries who have obtained promotions, and (iii) the reasons for non-promotion of some beneficiaries of the RMDP. This process will act as an ongoing ROI assessment and will allow the SETA to closely monitor successes with regard to equity and transformation in the sector.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction

This study aimed to conduct an impact assessment of the Retail Management Development Programme (RMDP) from 2015-2019. The impact assessment purpose was to establish the extent to which the RMDP has met its objectives and provided positive impacts to all stakeholders in the W&R sector. In answering the research question, the study collected data from stakeholders in the wholesale and retail sector which included beneficiaries of the programme, employers, training providers and the RMDP programme managers. This chapter provides a discussion into the background of the WRSETA RMDP, the programme purpose and objectives, previous beneficiary statistics, the value chain as well as the purpose of the study. The rest of the report is made up of the literature review (chapter 2), methodology and approach (chapter 3), the presentation of findings (chapter 4) and recommendations and conclusion (chapter 5).

1.2. Background to the W&RSETA RMDP

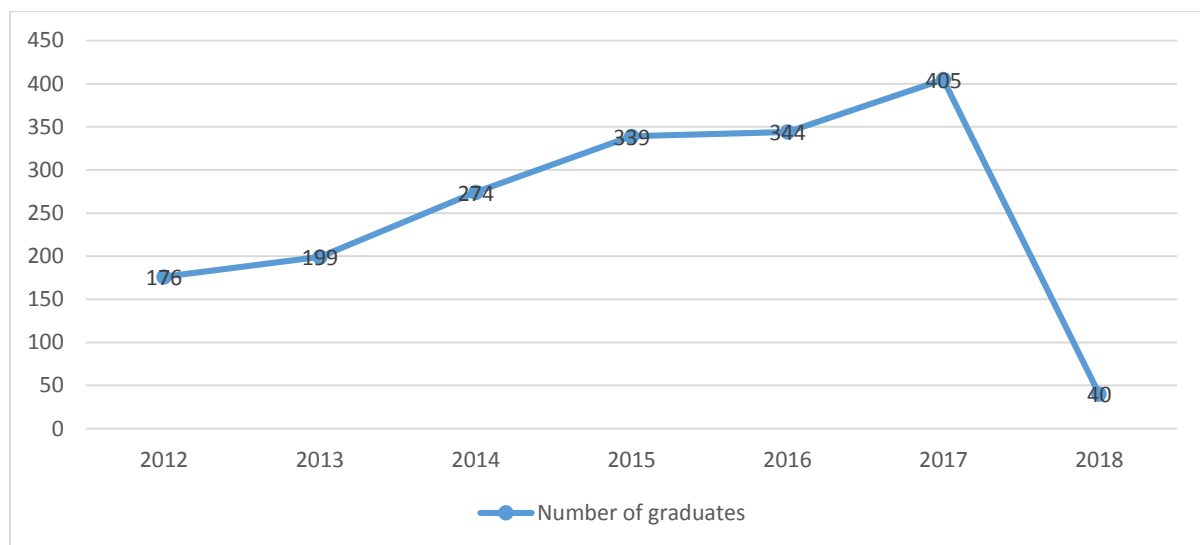
The RMDP was launched in 2012 by the Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA) as a measure to address skills gaps existing in middle management levels in the Wholesale and Retail (W&R) sector. Through offering an opportunity for graduates of this programme to advance through to the International Leadership Development Programme (ILDP), the RMDP aims at turning their delegates into more effective managers. To date, 1 738 graduates have completed the RMDP; with 400 more who were registered for the 2018/19 financial year. However, the programme has only commenced with 40 beneficiaries in the Gauteng province, while other provinces have not yet commenced.

Broadly, the programme seeks to achieve a number of outcomes which benefit participants, W&R companies, and the overall South African (SA) economy. It aims to (i) upskill existing managers within retail employment, (ii) assist businesses to increase their rewards and their bottom line, (iii) broaden managers' knowledge and skills in the W&R sector, (iv) achieve the W&RSETA NSDS (now replaced by NSDP) targets and (v) assist government to meet the skills development requirements of previously disadvantaged individuals.

1.2.1. Graduate statistics per year

To achieve the project aims and outcomes, the RMDP project included a yearly recruitment of participants meeting the required criteria (employed in supervisory/ management positions in the SA W&R sector, completed matric, have a 2-year relevant work experience etc.) from levy-paying W&R firms for training. The programme contains 9 study modules which cover a diverse content such as global and SA retail contexts, retail technology & information management, financial management and human resource management as well as an additional research module. Using the resources availed from levy-paying firms through the W&RSETA, the programme has produced graduates since its inception; although some participants drop out before completing and others have failed the programme. Figure 1.1 shows the number of successful graduates whose certificates were printed, as obtained from the Enterprises University of Pretoria records, the training provider for the RMDP.

Figure 1.1: Number of successful graduates from the RMDP programme, 2012-18



Source: Adapted from W&RSETA records (2015-2019)

As shown in Figure 1.1, graduates from the RMDP programme were 176 in 2012, 199 in 2013, 274 in 2014, 339 in 2015, 344 in 2016, 405 in 2017 and 40 in 2018. The programme was temporarily frozen for 2018 but has since resumed for 2019 with a group of 40 beneficiaries from the Gauteng province who are currently in class. Other provinces are yet to commence. The trend shows a consistent increase in the number of RMDP completions each year until

2017 with a sharp drop in 2018, where only a group of 40 beneficiaries have commenced. With increasing investment into the programme, an impact assessment study is necessary to explore the extent to which the programme is enhancing productivity among W&R sector companies and eliminating sector skills gaps. Table 1.1 shows the demographic distribution of the RMDP beneficiaries from 2015-2019.

Table 1.1: Demographic classification of the RMDP beneficiaries, 2015-2019

Demographic variable	2015/16 (%)	2016/17 (%)	2017/18 (%)	2018/19 (%)
Gender				
Male	53.8	55.6	54.6	47.5
Female	46.2	44.4	45.4	52.5
Race				
Black African	40.0	34.4	35.0	85.0
Indian/Asian	22.1	19.0	14.4	2.5
Coloured	19.7	17.6	22.8	2.5
White	31.2	29.0	27.8	10.0
Age group				
20-30 years	2.7	5.5	9.9	5.0
31-40 years	49.7	48.1	50.4	60.0
41-50 years	41.5	38.5	32.8	32.5
Above 50 years	6.0	7.9	6.9	2.5
Disability status				
Living with disability	-	0.2	0.0	-
Have no disability	-	99.8	100	-
Province of residence				
North West	2.2	3.0	0.7	-
Eastern Cape	1.9	7.3	4.7	-
Mpumalanga	3.0	4.5	6.5	12.5
KwaZulu-Natal	20.3	46.1	53.6	-
Gauteng	43.7	15.3	12.2	75.0
Western Cape	22.8	17.3	17.7	-
Limpopo	3.3	2.8	2.2	12.5
Free State	1.6	3.3	2.2	-
Northern Cape	1.1	0.5	0.0	-

Source: Adapted from W&RSETA records, (2015-2019)

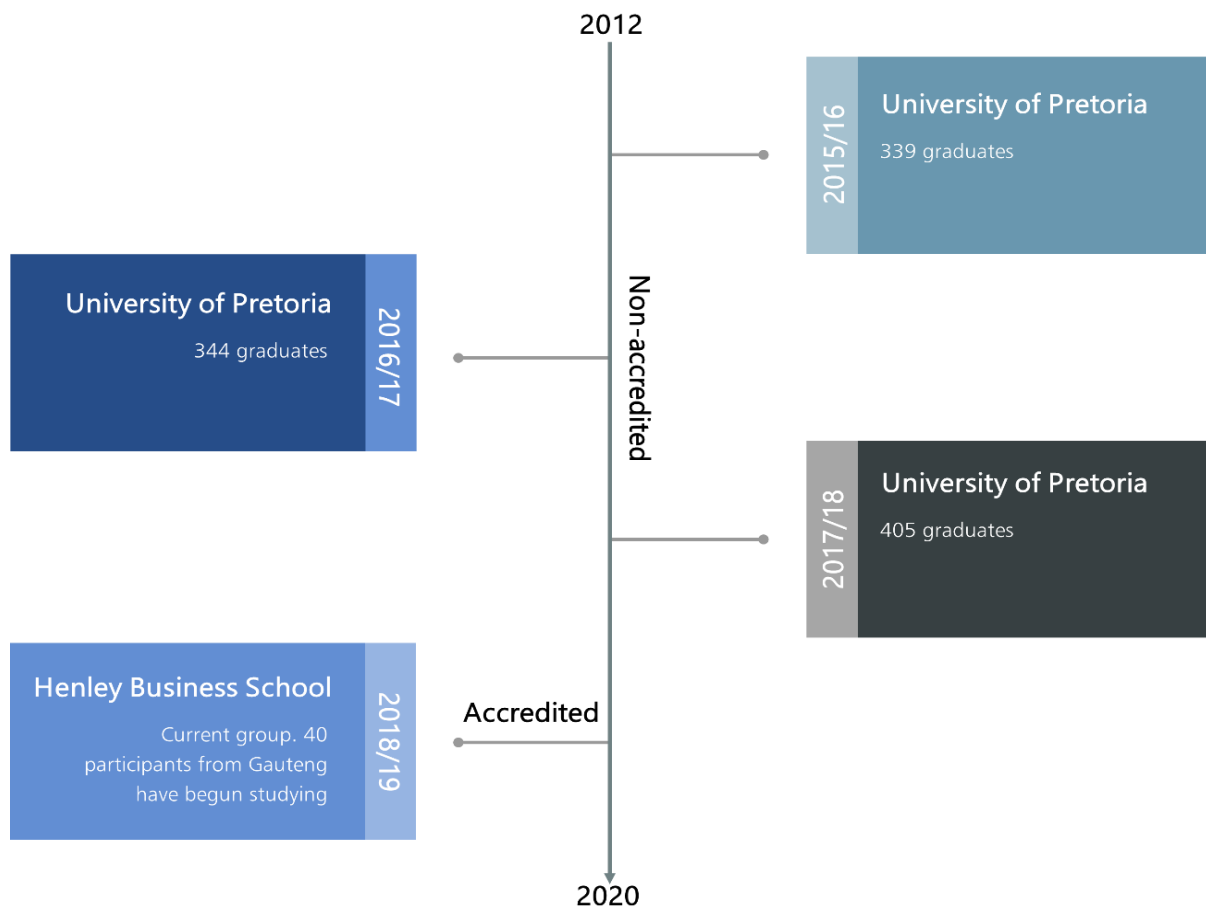
Table 1.1 shows that males outnumbered female beneficiaries up to 2017 but were outnumbered by females in 2018. Black Africans were the majority throughout the period, followed by whites. Age distributions show that the 31-40-year age group was dominant

throughout all the years studied, followed by the 41-50 and 51 plus age groups respectively. The lowest participation in the RMDP was the 20-30-year age group, which was below 10% across all the years under review. Regarding the provinces of residence, the majority of beneficiaries for the RMDP between 2015 and 2019 were in the Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape provinces.

While the RMDP commenced in 2012 with the Enterprises University of Pretoria (UP) as the training provider, it was run as an unaccredited management development programme. When it was rolled out, the RMDP had 200 beneficiaries and was implemented nationwide for a total of four weeks of study, spread over four different months. During the period between 2012 and 2017, the RMDP accepted applications from individuals from the NQF level 4 and above. After the pilot group of 2012, the programme length was adjusted to 5 weeks, based on consultations with employers and beneficiaries. This length was maintained in the subsequent years, with beneficiary numbers being increased from 200 to 300, to 350, and to 400.

However, before the 2018/19 group commenced their studies, the training provider was changed to the Henley Business School, and the RMDP was transformed into an accredited qualification (refer to Figure 1.2), accredited by the Council on Higher Education (CHE). This resulted in the change in educational qualification criteria from a minimum of the NQF Level 4 to the NQF Level 5, since graduating from the programme leads to an NQF Level 6 qualification. Figure 1.2 shows a timeline of the RMDP specifically between 2015/16 and 2018/19, which are the targets for this study. As at February 2020, the 2018/19 group is currently going through the RMDP, and study has commenced in the Gauteng province, with other provinces yet to commence their studies.

Figure 1.2: The RMDP timeline from 2015 to present

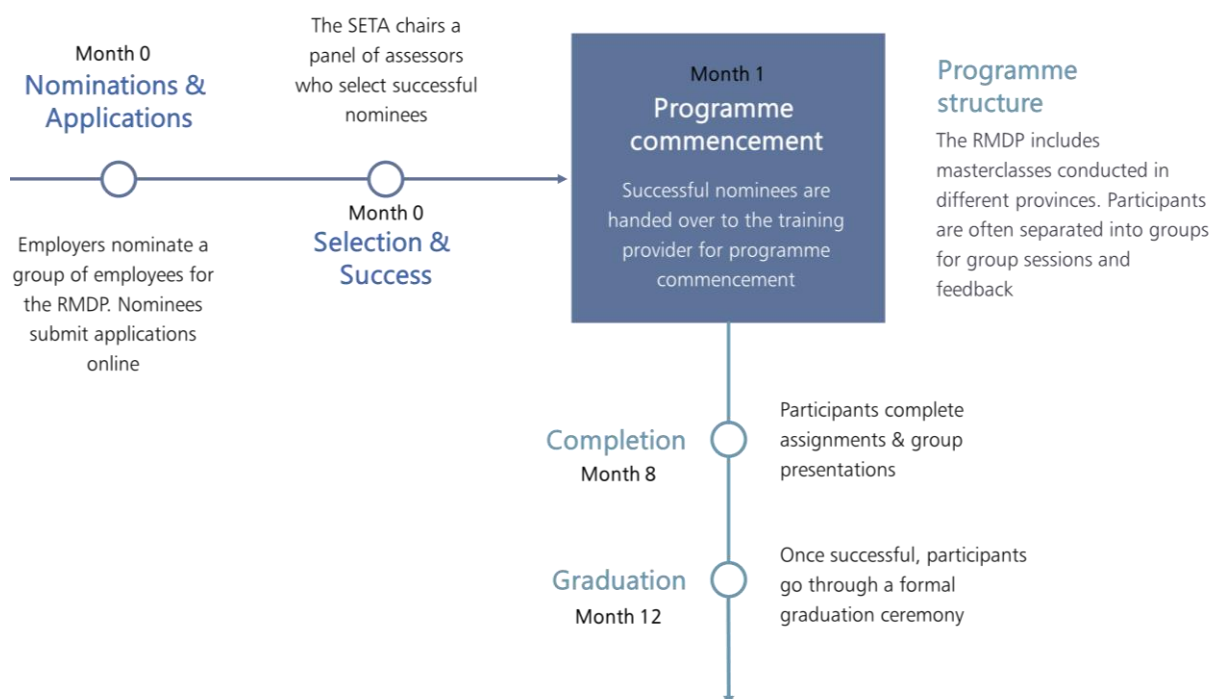


Source: Adapted from W&RSETA graduate records (2015-2018)

1.2.2. The W&RSETA RMDP value chain

The value chain for the W&RSETA RMDP (Figure 1.3) refers to the entire process from selection into the programme up to graduation. The process begins with the publication of an advert by the SETA calling for nominations of beneficiaries by their employers. In this process, the SETA specifies the selection criteria as well as the maximum number of beneficiaries from each company. Where the number of nominees is less than the target towards the closure of nominations, the SETA usually follows up with employers, thus creating the first possible bottleneck or delay in the process. Once nomination has been effectively closed, participants go through an evaluation process which at times includes interviews and psychometric tests. The selection process currently is handled by the SETA through a third-party provider, the process of which creates a potential for conflict between training provider's view of qualification criteria and the SETA's view.

Figure 1.3: The RMDP value chain



Source: RMDP Training providers

Successful nominees are notified after selection, however before 2018, unsuccessful nominees were also notified of the reasons for their failure to get through. For the 2018 group, unsuccessful nominees were not notified why they could not get through. The programme commences once the successful beneficiaries are all notified and grouped into cohorts based on their location (usually province and regions). The training provider sends a team of facilitators across the whole country to conduct the programme one cohort at a time. During this period, any beneficiaries who fail to attend one cohort may be arranged to attend the same course with a different cohort, usually in another region. The programme assessment includes mainly group assignments, presentations and reflections as well as limited individual assignments. Where the programme progresses with limited delays, by the eighth month all cohorts would usually have completed the programme, and the graduation ceremony with certificates is prepared. By the 12th to 13th month since programme commencement, beneficiaries graduate with the RMDP qualification non-accredited (pre-2018) and accredited (post-2018).

1.3. Purpose of the study

This study sought to conduct a five-year impact assessment exercise for the W&RSETA RMDP between 2015 and 2019. Through an impact assessment, the target was to establish the extent to which the programme is meeting its intended objectives and making an impact among beneficiaries, their employers and the wholesale and retail sector at large. To achieve this, the study targeted all key stakeholders of the RMDP which included levy-paying employer organisations, training providers and the beneficiaries. Overall, the aim of the study was to identify gaps in the RMDP value chain and hence spearhead the development of recommendations for improving the programme.

1.4. Objectives

As outlined by the W&RSETA, the objective of the study was to appoint a service provider to conduct an impact study for the RMDP, from 2015-2019. The RMDP impact study has provided a clear understanding of the project benefits in relation to the following:

- To produce high calibre junior- middle managers in the retail sector;
- To increase the talent of highly promotable "HDI" leaders;
- To create champions (successful young leaders) for the sector who can influence other young leaders;
- Potentially increase business profits; and
- To produce local participation to provide solutions for key industry challenges.

The RMDP impact study further provides a clear understanding of project organisational benefits and beneficiaries, in relation to the following:

- Career acceleration and succession of beneficiaries towards senior/ executive management over the past five years;
- Programme evaluation, inclusive of theoretical knowledge components in support of beneficiaries and exposure and relevance to and in the workplace and work succession;
- Attainment and outcome against the SETA SSP and relevant scarce skills identified over the past five years SSP's; and
- Impact of investment vs impact over the past five years by the SETA.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews existing literature on the methodological approaches employed in impact assessment studies worldwide as well as empirical findings on programmes related to the RMDP. The chapter begins by exploring the roles and importance of management as well as management development in organisations before exploring programmes across the world similar to the RMDP and ends with a discussion of methodologies applicable in impact assessment for training interventions. Reviewing existing literature on applicable models in impact assessment is crucial in developing the most appropriate model for assessing the impact of the RMDP.

2.2. Roles of management in an organisation

Management in general is recognised to be a dynamic role which encompasses dealing with many challenges and issues which arise in an organisational environment. In dealing with such emerging challenges in the workplace, it is necessary to ensure organisations invest in management development to enhance their skills and competencies in dealing with people. In the process of discussing management development, it is necessary to understand primary management roles as well as the importance for management of contextualising the need for management development. Managers exist to satisfy the following broad roles (Robbins, 2001:2):

- **Planning:** defining an organisation's goals, establishing an overall strategy for achieving organisational goals and developing plans to integrate and coordinate activities
- **Organising:** designing the organisational structure. In addition, management determines which tasks are to be done, who is to do them, how the tasks are grouped, who reports to whom, and where decisions are to be made
- **Leading:** directing and coordinating the organisation's people. This also includes motivation of employees, directing activities, effective communication and conflict resolution

- **Controlling:** ensuring that things are going as they should. Managers get to compare actual performance with set goals, establish the deviations and reorient the organisation to ensure goals are met.

In the 1960s, Henry Mintzberg found through his study of five senior managers that management roles can be grouped into three major categories:

- **Interpersonal roles:** acting as a figurehead, leader and liaison in an organisation
- **Informational roles:** managers monitor and disseminate information in an organisation as well as acting as spokespersons of their organisations
- **Decisional roles:** acting as an entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator and negotiator on behalf of the organisation.

Upon a review of management roles and responsibilities, it is clear that management functions need experienced people to fill them who possess not only academic knowledge but also dynamic interpersonal knowledge. According to Robbins (2001), management require technical skills, human skills and conceptual skills to successfully exercise their roles.

2.3. Importance of management development

The Chartered Institute for Personnel Development (CIPD) defines management development as a "structured process by which managers enhance their skills, competencies and/or knowledge, via formal or informal learning methods, to the benefit of both individual and organisational performance" (CIPD, 2018). This shows that management development does not only help in upskilling managers themselves, but also presents results that can cascade to lower levels as well as enhance organisational success.

In South Africa, programmes such as the RMDP are specifically placed to ensure that existing lower and middle level management are able to advance their skills. This covers skills gaps and Hard To Fill Vacancies (HTFVs) in the wholesale and retail space. With management as a dynamic role, individuals in management positions are often expected to possess a diverse knowledge in formulating strategies, programmes, tactics and policies in respect of people, resources, information, operations and finance (CIPD, 2018). However, according to Coetzer (2006:21), few people in management positions possess the necessary skills for their leadership positions. Thus the need exists for organisational investment in management training and

development. While training will provide managers with specific competencies to correct their existing deficiencies, development will focus on capacitating employees to deal with future organisational needs (Coetzer, 2006:21).

2.4. Approaches to management development

Broadly, scholars and institutions agree that a number of approaches and techniques exist which can be used in developing managers. The CIPD (2018) identifies two such major techniques. These are formal learning methods and work-based methods.

Formal learning methods include exposing managers to:

- Undergraduate, postgraduate (most notably the Master's in Business Administration) or other higher education qualifications in business/management
- Vocational qualifications in the area of management/business studies
- Courses and qualifications from management membership organisations including the 'chartered manager' programme provided by the Chartered Management Institute
- Specialist courses, including those delivered by professional bodies as part of continuing professional development
- Management apprenticeships in a wide range of areas such as purchasing and supply management

Meanwhile, work-based exposure includes:

- Coaching and mentoring
- Shadowing
- Secondments (temporarily reassigning a manager to another role for him/her to broaden existing skills)
- Sharing knowledge
- Communities of practice (exchange of knowledge among managers in similar fields)

It is often up to specific organisations to determine the processes through which management for their organisation should be developed. In the RMDP, levy paying companies nominate their employees to take up a year of training in practical and theoretical fields through the University of Pretoria's facilitation. Meanwhile, workplace-based management growth

exercises are often non-stop, and encompass managers' exposure to their own superiors and the existing work networks (Obiewa, 2016:2).

2.5. International Management development programmes similar to the RMDP

Most of the courses found in South Africa targeted towards management development are privately offered by universities and other higher learning institutions instead of through government funding. Key similarities among the programmes targeted towards management development worldwide are their focus on workshop type learning with prolonged exposure to practical management aspects.

2.5.1. Nigeria

In Nigeria, the International School of Management (ISM) in Lagos offers training programmes in partnership with the International School of Management London and other institutions. The courses offered often stand as "annual refresher workshops and fast-track expositions on most recent research that are timely and relevant to various management areas and leadership in general" (ISLM Lagos, 2019). Unlike the W&RSETA RMDP, these courses are delivered to attendees in choice locations in countries like the Gambia, UK and the United Arab Emirates amongst others, and are not funded through government-private sector collaborations. Other programmes in Nigeria include the one-day management development programme offered through the Nigerian-American Chamber of Commerce (NACC). According to the invitation for training attendance (NACC, 2019), the programme allows managers to:

- Meet, interact and learn from the experience of business owners and seasoned consultants;
- Learn how to perceive opportunities, manage risks, organise resources and add value;
- Have an opportunity to address various issues arising in the organisation; and
- Discuss the attitudes, values, characteristics, behaviour and processes associated with processing a successful business mindset.

Such management trainings are aimed at enhancing competitiveness in business ownership, and unlocking opportunities for SMEs, start-ups, junior and mid-level management staff, business clinics, business consultants, serial entrepreneurs as well as businessmen and women.

In another prestigious management development programme, a company called GLOMACS Training and Consultancy in Dubai partners with international academic institutions to offer training in management development. Their latest programme, “Strategic Planning & Goal Setting” is conducted in the United Arab Emirates, Abuja, Nigeria and Cape Town, South Africa as a five-day training course. It is open to specialist managers, operational managers and team leaders (GLOMACS Training & Consultancy, 2019). The programme itself aims to ensure managers can:

- Examine how to design visionary strategic plans;
- Consider utilization of a model for organizational assessment;
- Formulate insights into which strategic planning problems to avoid;
- Identify and learn from examples of strategic success and failure;
- Develop understanding of the nature of the organizational life cycle; and
- Study the preparation of effective contingency plans.

2.5.2. South Africa

At the W&RSETA, the RMDP programme is paired with the ILDP as the SETA’s flagship programmes aimed at addressing skills shortages in middle, and top management positions in the wholesale and retail sector. Meanwhile, there are a number of other management development programmes sponsored by government bodies as well as those privately offered by academic institutions.

One such programme is the Principals Management Development Programme that is currently being offered in the Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu Natal provinces. This programme is conducted through the facilitation of Performance Solutions Africa. This is a private training provider which combines centralised monthly training, ‘virtual colleges’ and on-site training in the delivery of management development. The programme is targeted at enhancing the skills of circuit managers and principals in schools in the abovementioned provinces. It aims to improve school performance through the rapid upgrading and transfer of management skills to education management staff. The areas included are school governance; curriculum management; direction and planning; financial management; resource acquisition and management and people management. The Principals Management Development Programme is offered in 600 schools in KwaZulu Natal, 150 schools in the

Eastern Cape and 80 schools in Mpumalanga. From its inception in 2009, the programme has moved from being offered exclusively in KwaZulu Natal and has expanded to the Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga.

Another Management Development Programme is offered by CBM Training in South Africa. Offered at NQF level 5, the programme blends both Operational skills and Strategic focus to develop delegates' core management capability in different facets of management. The programme is 16 days long, and is spread over a period of between 8-12 months, while offering the following courses:

- Management and Leadership Essentials (2 days);
- Time Management to Maximise Productivity (1 Day);
- Managing Diversity and Business Etiquette (1 day);
- Performance Management and Coaching Skills (1 day);
- Team Leadership Using Emotional Intelligence (2 days);
- A Manager's Guide to South African Labour Law (2 days);
- Practical Finance, Accounts and Budgets (2 days);
- Powerful Business Negotiation Skills (2 days);
- Intelligent Business Communication Skills (1 day); and
- Rapid Problem Solving and Decision Making (2 days).

The programme is partially similar to the W&RSETA RMDP especially in its course structure which focuses on business communication, practical finance and change management. The RMDP is however an NQF level higher, rated at NQF Level 6 by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA). In addition, the CBM Training's management development programme introduces managers to the South African labour law, unlike the W&RSETA RMDP; hence it opens up managers to become more aware of legal implications of their interactions with staff.

Evidence across the globe shows that several courses, workshops and trainings are offered in many countries across the world. Table 2.1 summarises and compares these programmes in terms of length, content structure and country.

Table 2.1: Management programmes similar to the RMDP

Country	Programme name	Programme objectives	Institution offering and/ sponsoring	Length
South Africa	Management Development Programme	Exposing managers to a variety of key management courses such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essentials of leadership and management • Managing diversity in business • Financial management • Performance management 	CBM Training	16 days over 8-12 months
	Retail Management Development Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To produce high calibre junior- middle managers in the retail sector • To increase the talent of highly promotable “HDI” leaders • To create champions (successful young leaders) for the sector who can influence other young leaders • Potentially increase business profits • To produce local participation to provide solutions for key industry challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Pretoria • W&RSETA 	1year part time
	Principals Management Development Programme	To improve school performance through rapid upgrading and transfer of management skills to education management staff, in areas such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school governance; • curriculum management; • direction and planning; • financial management; • resource acquisition and • management and people management 	Performance Solutions Africa	Unspecified

Nigeria	Nigerian-American Chamber of Commerce	<p>The programme allows delegates to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet, interact and learn from the experience of business owners and seasoned consultants • Learn how to perceive opportunities, manage risks, organise resources and add value • Have an opportunity to address various issues arising in the organisation • Discuss the attitudes, values, characteristics, behaviour and processes associated with processing a successful business mind-set 	Management Development Programme	1 day
USA	Diploma in Retail Management	<p>The programme enhances career advances for individuals in the retail industry through exposure to the following courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and recognising skills • Leading and managing people • Managing Human Resources • Financial Management • Store operations • Marketing 	International Career Institute (ICI)	6 months
	Retail Omni channel Management	The programme is facilitated by real-world retailers and is aimed at exposing management to the transformations in the retail space.	Dartmouth College	5 weeks
	Management Development Programme	<p>This programme targets individuals who would have been just recently elevated to managerial roles by equipping them with key managerial skills courses include focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational structure • Managerial styles and staff needs • Performance management • Managing change • Manager self-sustainability 	NAFSA: Association of International Educators	3 days

2.6. Approaches to impact assessment reviews

Srivastava (2018) notes that since organisations spend significant amounts of time, energy and money developing their employees through training, it is essential that impact assessments be conducted to ascertain the effectiveness of such trainings. While the RMDP is administered by the W&RSETA, the overall objective is to upskill lower and middle management in W&R firms for the purpose of addressing sector scarce skills. Hence, assessing the extent of achievement of this programme is necessary to establish its value to the W&R sector. A review of international literature shows that evaluations of developmental interventions often follow the OECD DAC's suggested format by assessing programme relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability (Dale, 2004; Ofir, 2017; Chianca, 2008). These criteria are investigated in greater detail in this section to ascertain how they are understood and measured.

2.6.1. The five-set evaluation criteria

According to Chianca (2008:43), the OECD in 1992 developed the five-set evaluation criteria used to guide evaluators of development interventions. This is made up of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Dale (2004) later added replicability as a separate criterion; adding that the evaluation of projects can be conducted using the Rapid Assessment Evaluation (RAE) methodology. This approach allows for collection and analysis of evaluation data over a short time period.

2.6.1.1. Relevance

According to the OECD (2018), measuring development programme relevance involves efforts to establish the extent to which the programme suits the needs and priorities of its target group. The Austrian Development Agency (2008:2) points out that programme relevancy is established by assessing whether an intervention is significant in meeting the requirements of local and national stakeholders. The following questions put forward by the OECD/DAC should be asked by evaluators when establishing programme relevance:

- To what extent are the objectives of the programme still valid?
- Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives?

- Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with its intended impacts and effects?

These questions can hence be adapted, customised and expanded to meet the objectives of the specific programme being evaluated (Chianca, 2008). For instance, in this study, the purpose was to assess the relevance of the RMDP to produce graduates qualified enough to occupy scarce skills in the sector. Building upon the customisations by the Umsobomvu Youth Fund (2006:12) in their guidelines for programme evaluation, the RMDP could be considered relevant if:

- The programme's goals, targets, material and intended impacts are consistent with skills needs in the W&R sector such that graduates from the programme can occupy critical skill positions;
- The programme's intended impacts are consistent with the national imperatives which include consistency with the National Development Plan (NDP) and the National Skills Development Plan 2030 (NSDP); and
- The programme execution is consistent with national desires to empower historically disadvantaged individuals, the youth and women.

2.6.1.2. Effectiveness

Smith (2012) defines the effectiveness of a programme as its ability to meet its intended outcomes. This means by reviewing a programme's purpose and objectives versus its achievement levels, its effectiveness can be determined. Dassah (2011) views an assessment of effectiveness as a key process in programme evaluation since it answers the question of, should we keep investing in this programme as is? According to Dale (2004:77), effectiveness *"expresses to what extent the planned outputs, expected changes, intended effects (immediate and effect objectives) and intended impact (development objective) are being or have been produced or achieved."* Two key questions for measuring effectiveness provided by the OECD (OECD, 2018) are as follows:

- To what extent were the objectives achieved / are likely to be achieved?
- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

Dassah (2011) and Chianca (2008) believe that it is necessary to evaluate the factors influencing achievement of projects as a way of ensuring that solvable challenges are quickly addressed while the project commences so as to enhance overall success. Aiyahya and Mat (2013) also believe that parts of Kirkpatrick's four level model can be used to measure effectiveness, by asking relevant questions to beneficiaries, training providers and W&R sector companies. According to the Umsobomvu Youth Fund (2006), indicators of effectiveness can hence be extended from the broad questions to include:

- Were the broad targets, purposes and structure of the RMDP communicated with beneficiaries before and during their training?
- Is the RMDP relevant to the needs of W&R organisations?
- Are the outcomes as realised upon completion of the RMDP related to the programme's goals as stated in project proposals?
- Are the outcomes from the RMDP project realistic?

2.6.1.3. Efficiency

According to the DAC criteria for evaluation, assessing programme efficiency is the process of evaluating inputs into and outputs from the programme, whether qualitative or quantitative (OECD, 2018). In addition, efficiency of the analysis can be enhanced by incorporating alternative methods of conducting the programme and making comparisons. Dale (2004) incorporates the review of alternatives as a distinct stage in programme evaluation. In this approach, for instance, alternative programme objectives, training delivery methods or alternative programmes altogether are identified and assessed. The following questions have been put forward by the DAC as measures of efficiency (OECD, 2018):

- Were activities cost-efficient?
- Were objectives achieved on time?
- Was the programme or project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?

A review of efficiency methods reveals that approaches which compare costs and benefits of a project are most widely applied in programme evaluations (Dassah, 2011). One such is the Return on Investment model by Phillips (1996). Phillips proposes that training costs can be fully captured and considered at the beginning of the training. These can be compared to

financial benefits of the training which are likely in terms of an increase in gross profits of organisations, where employees have undergone training (Toister, 2016). The benefits revealed with qualitative analysis can be translated into monetary terms to facilitate the ROI calculation through the formula:

$$ROI = \frac{\$ Benefit\ of\ training - \$ Cost\ of\ training}{\$ Cost\ of\ training} \times 100$$

The ROI model offers a key dimension to training evaluation through its incorporation of monetary benefits and costs to a training program (Srivastava, 2018; Downes, 2017; Jasson & Govender, 2017). Further, ROI satisfied the needs of this study by facilitating the achievement of section 4 of the Terms of Reference which requires the calculation of ROI. However, empirical studies applying ROI have noted that is challenging to establish the exact monetary benefits of a project, especially where there are no control groups to assist with the comparison and isolation of training related benefits (Srivastava, 2018:6).

2.6.1.4. Impact

This is concerned with evaluating the positive and negative influence that has been directly or indirectly exerted on the target groups by the programme (Chianca, 2008; Ofir, 2017). Chianca (2008) argues that both the intended and unintended results of a programme should be measured. The effects of outside factors such as economic conditions and cooperation from relevant stakeholders should also be considered. The following questions were put forward by the DAC as measures of programme impact (OECD, 2018):

- What has happened as a result of the programme or project?
- What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries?
- How many people have been affected?

For impact assessment to be effective, Smith (2012) proposes that a full scan of the programme's intended beneficiaries and other stakeholders be conducted. As a result, impacts can be assessed per individual stakeholder using techniques such as a 'before-and-after analysis' (OECD, 2014). In this study, impact considered the RMDP beneficiaries, W&R sector organisation and the economy at large. Meanwhile, Aiyahya and Mat (2013) believe that

impact evaluation can be conducted using Kirkpatrick's four level model which is a hierarchical representation of measures of training effectiveness (see Figure 1). Using Kirkpatrick's model, the DAC questions could be expanded to investigate outcomes for the RMDP beneficiaries as a result of completing the programme. This would include improvements in productivity, enhanced confidence levels, and promotion in the workplace.

2.6.1.5. Sustainability

This is the last of the five criteria for programme evaluations by the DAC. Chianca (2008) views sustainability as the continual flow of benefits from a development intervention after the discontinuation of major programme assistance; the probability of continued long-term flow of benefits and the net benefit flow's resilience to risk over time. The OECD (2018) views successful projects as those which are sustainable financially (able to finance themselves) over time. Funders should hence determine ways of ensuring their development projects become self-sustaining.

According to the Umsobomvu Youth Fund (2006) guidelines, project sustainability can be tested by asking a series of questions. These do not only seek to establish the level of sustainability for a specific project, but also whether its sustainability exists or not. For instance, questions such as, 'do you have any sustainability measures in place for this project' and 'how do you plan to ensure that the project remains sustainable over time' are all valid questions. The DAC guidelines (OECD, 2018) specify the following questions for measuring sustainability:

- To what extent did the benefits of a programme or project continue after donor funding ceased?
- What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the programme or project?

Dale (2004:81) notes that sustainability is achieved in a number of ways which are beyond monetary issues. For example, evaluators may not necessarily focus on the financial sustainability of a project, but on how the project benefits are likely to carry on into the future. The following sustainability indicators are identified by Dale (2004:81):

- Maintenance of facilities produced by the project;
- Continued use of facilities produced by the project;

- Continued ability to plan and manage similar development work;
- Continued production of the same outputs (for instance, RMDP graduates);
- Maintenance of the scheme's effects and impact over time; and
- Multiplication of effects and impact over time.

2.6.1.6. Replicability

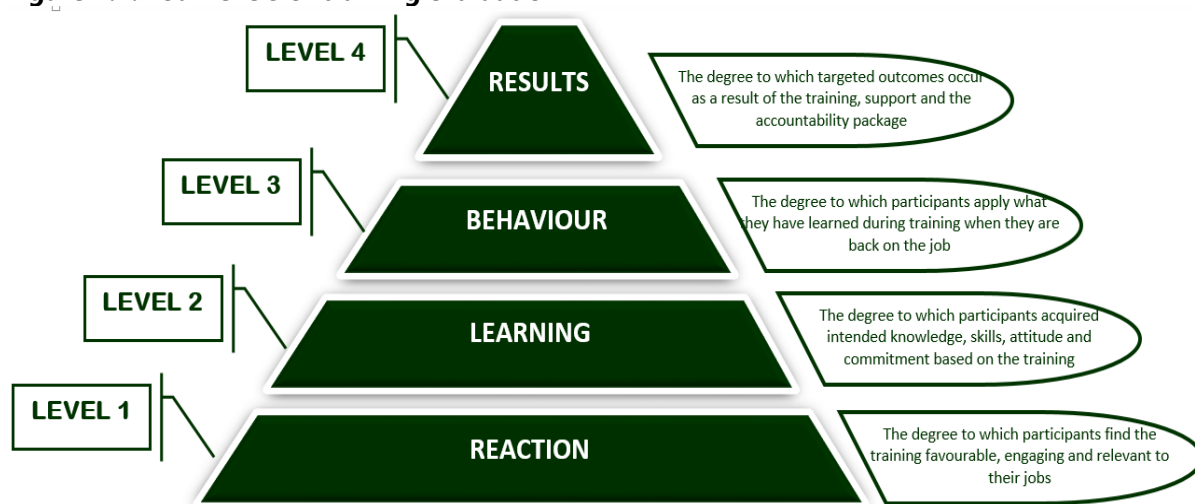
While this criterion does not exist among the OECD DAC criteria, Dale (2004) proposes that development projects should be assessed for replicability. Replicability measures *"the feasibility of repeating the particular programme or project or parts of it in another context"* (Dale, 2004:81). For instance, the extent to which the RMDP/ or a similar programme can be repeated at a different time in the future, targeted at a different set of beneficiaries (such as another sector) or run by a different organisation (such as a new training provider or a new administrator).

While Dale (2004) believes that replicability may not be an important variable for most studies, he argues that instances such as pilot projects greatly require an assessment of project replicability to assess whether it can be applied on a larger scale. Lastly, Dale (2004:82) proposes that the approach to replicability analysis should include expected modifications to the current programme that will enhance the scope of its replication.

2.6.2. Kirkpatrick's four level training evaluation model

Developed by Kirkpatrick in 1959, the model can be implemented before, during, and after training to show the value of training in achieving intended outcomes in terms of elements such as relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact (Mindtools, 2013). The most recent version of the four-level training evaluation model was developed in 1993 and was communicated through Kirkpatrick's book, "Evaluating Training Programs". Kirkpatrick's model views training evaluation as a four-level phenomenon which requires unpacking the Reaction, Learning, Behaviour, and Results of a training program, as summarised in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Four levels of training evaluation



Source: Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (1994)

Level 1: Reactions – the degree to which programme participants found it to be engaging, relevant to their jobs and generally enjoyable.

Level 2: Learning – the extent to which the programme participants successfully learnt and grasped concepts contained in the training material.

Level 3: Behaviour – workplace behavioural changes by programme participants post-graduation. These changes include improvements in human resource and financial management ability, better grasp of concepts and improved analytical skills.

Level 4: Results – the overall impacts of training on companies whose employees were trained. These include improved sales and lowered overheads.

Empirical studies found Kirkpatrick's model to be the most comprehensive, hence it is the preferred main approach to training evaluation; and has been applied in many studies since its inception (Adedokun-Shittu & Shittu, 2013; Cowman & McCarthy, 2012; Kurt, 2016; Srivastava, 2018; Zahro & Wu, 2016). Researchers such as Tan and Newman (2013) and Attia (1998) successfully applied Kirkpatrick's model in their studies.

2.6.3. OECD impact assessment approaches

In a policy paper by the OECD (2014), a number of distinct impact assessment approaches are covered. These are applicable to distinct areas of research and cover a number of areas such as the impact of training, infrastructure development, policy interventions and other activities.

Overall, the choice of an impact assessment approach will depend on (i) the specific objectives of the impact assessment project and (ii) the data and other resources that will need to be assembled for the study (OECD, 2014:1). Accordingly, impact assessment approaches are summarised by the OECD into four categories namely: impacts in monetary terms, studies to understand how impacts happen, studies focusing on particular limited outcomes and studies on performance measurement. The specific approaches include:

- **Before-after analysis** – this approach requires pre-training data to be collected so as to allow researchers to analyse paired samples and ascertain how beneficiaries perform after the training intervention. The pre-training results will hence form a baseline/proxy, with the net-effect being the difference between the pre and post test scores. With the use of inferential methods such as paired samples t-tests, researchers will be able to establish whether the training intervention has yielded any significantly positive result or not. However, this approach is inapplicable in instances where pre-training data was not collected due to the absence of a proxy, as in this study.
- **Cost-Benefit analysis (CBA)** – a common approach, CBA is the process of quantifying in monetary terms the benefits and costs of a specific project. This approach is applicable both as a project appraisal tool (to ascertain project feasibility) and as an impact assessment tool (to ascertain the results of a project) (Orren & Terblanche, 2009). CBA allows for an assessment of both quantifiable and non-quantifiable benefits and costs of a project, and can be customised to identify groups of stakeholders that would be affected by a project. However, this approach is costly and time consuming due to its requirement of large amounts of secondary data for the analysis of costs and benefits (Munoz & Munoz, 2000).
- **Surveys, Interviews** – The OECD (2014:12) also defines a survey (through interviews and questionnaires) as a distinct approach to impact assessment. The researcher can obtain first hand information from participants of the training about their experiences, understanding and transformation as induced by the training. However, while the value of surveys is undeniable, their reliance on self-evaluation leaves them prone to response bias and any biases introduced by the survey team.

From the four approaches discussed above, it can be seen that training impact assessments can be achieved through the collection of either primary or secondary data on the results of

the training. These approaches mostly focus on a holistic view of defining what impact the training provided rather than defining a set of variables to be assessed as part of training evaluation. They therefore integrate well with approaches such as Rapid Assessment Evaluation focusing on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and replicability as the key variables.

2.6.4. Synthesis and applied model of evaluation

To comprehensively evaluate the RMDP project based on existing guidelines such as the OECD DAC evaluation criteria, the Umsobomvu Youth Fund (2006)'s expanded evaluation criteria indicators, and Dale (2004)'s guidelines, the overall methodology should cover all relevant stakeholders and evaluation criteria. A review of each evaluation criterion shows that there are a set of questions and/ indicators that can be used to measure the programme relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and replicability. By customising these questions based on an understanding of the RMDP's goals, objectives, course content and intended impacts, a comprehensive evaluation of the programme can be achieved. It is also apparent that techniques discussed in this chapter such as before-and-after analysis, Cost Benefit Analysis, ROI analysis and Kirkpatrick's four level training evaluation model can be utilised as tools for evaluating the RMDP by following the evaluation criteria. Table 2.2 shows the variables of the study, measurement approaches proposed and target stakeholders to provide relevant information for each variable.

Table 2.2: Synthesis of evaluation models

	Variable	Indicators and techniques for measurement	Target stakeholder(s)
1	Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extent of validity of programme objectives in addressing W&R sector scarce skills - Whether the calibre of the RMDP graduates satisfy the goals of the programme - Whether the programme execution is in line with intended impacts (empowering young leaders, etc.) - Link between NDP, NSDO & the RMDP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kirkpatrick's model levels 1, 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RMDP beneficiaries - W&R companies - W&RSETA programme managers
2	Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants' appreciation and understanding of the RMDP objectives - Specific skills gaps being addressed by the RMDP - Levels of achievement of the RMDP objectives - How realistic the RMDP objectives are - Factors influencing achievement & non- achievement of the RMDP objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kirkpatrick's model levels 2, 4 • Before-and-after analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RMDP beneficiaries - W&RSETA programme managers - W&R companies
3	Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monetary & non-monetary costs of the RMDP - Logistical issues & challenges - Timely achievement of programme targets e.g. completion - Number of entrances vs graduates (drop-out analysis) of the programme - Alternative approaches to conducting the RMDP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before-and-after analysis • Cost Benefit Analysis • ROI analysis • Kirkpatrick's model level 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the RMDP beneficiaries - W&RSETA programme managers - Retail organisations
4	Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List of results achieved by the RMDP - Positive differences brought by the RMDP to beneficiaries (e.g. career advancement) - Improvement in W&R companies' financial positions, competitiveness etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RMDP beneficiaries - W&R organisations - W&RSETA programme managers

	Variable	Indicators and techniques for measurement	Target stakeholder(s)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of scarce skills in the W&R sector before and after graduations from the RMDP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before-and-after analysis Kirkpatrick's model level 3, 4 	
5	Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current sustainability status of the RMDP Future sustainability measures planned Continuation of non-financial sustainability indicators such as shared knowledge, sustained production and impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training providers W&RSETA programme managers
6	Replicability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment of the RMDP structure with skills needs for other sectors Compatibility concerns and prospects of merging the RMDP with similar programmes such as ILDP Possible impacts of changing the RMDP training provider <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W&RSETA programme managers Retail organisations Training providers

Source: Underhill Corporate Solutions (2020)

2.7. Summary and statement of the problem

The RMDP was paired with the ILDP as flagship programme interventions introduced to address skills gaps in middle and top-level management organisations in the W&R sector. Since their inception, the two programmes have produced graduates believed to be sufficiently equipped with skills necessary to cover the identified skills gaps. To assess the extent to which the RMDP has managed to address these skills gaps, an impact evaluation study was proposed by the W&RSETA. This study sought to solicit input from a diverse number of stakeholders to triangulate the truest value of the RMDP and identify the need, if any, for modifications to the programme. To achieve this, the study assessed the programme's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and replicability through the use of multiple analytical tools. The next chapter presents a discussion of the methodology employed in the impact assessment.

3. METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented a discussion of literature related to the study, including an assessment of similar programmes across the world, approaches to impact assessment reviews and the synthesis of a number of approaches to determine the chosen model. This chapter will discuss the research approach employed in the study, the main model for impact assessment, population and targets for the study, data collection and analysis procedures as well as ethical considerations.

3.2. Research approach

Evaluation (or assessment) of development programmes and projects entails describing, judging and explaining what has been done, how activities have been performed, what has been achieved, and, commonly, what future prospects or options may exist.

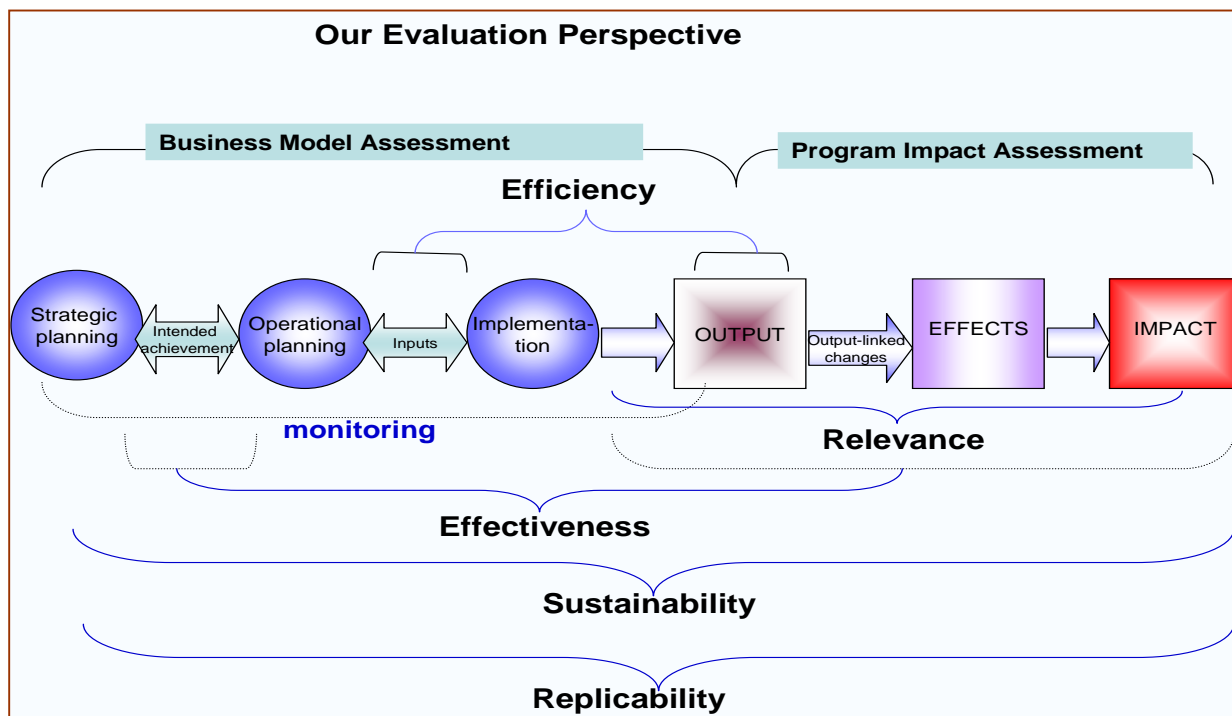
Systematic evaluation of developmental programmes and projects was conceived and formalised from the 1960s onwards by donor agencies, which wanted a '*true*' account of how well things had been done and *what had been achieved*. The idea is to have 'objective' assessments, done by '*independent*' persons using '*professional*' methods of data collection and analysis (Mikkelsen, 2005; Rubin, 1995). The most appropriate methodological approaches for this study were the Rapid Assessment Evaluation (RAE) and Impact Assessment Methods. The RAE was chosen since it combines group (or individual) interviews, key informants, case studies and secondary data and the impact assessment measures the impact of the RMDP on diverse stakeholders.

3.3 Evaluation terminology

It was noted from literature on educational programme evaluations that the overall assessment should cover issues to do with the programme relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, replicability and, sustainability. Figure 3.1 illustrates the understanding of programme evaluations. It involves an evaluation of the 'design and delivery of the programme model (referred to in the graph as

Business Model Assessment), and an evaluation of the project itself in terms of its impact on the intended beneficiaries (referred to as Programme Impact Assessment).

Figure 3.1: Understanding of Programme Evaluation



Source: Underhill Corporate Solutions (2020)

As illustrated in Figure 3.1, the specific objectives of the study were categorised into distinctly evaluation terminology such as relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, replicability, and efficiency in terms of the level at which relevant data could be obtained. The main advantage of this categorisation is that it allows for the development of clear impact indicators which can be measured with a higher degree of objectivity.

3.3. Variables of the study

As outlined in 3.2 above, this study focused on analysing the RMDP's relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and replicability as the main variables. Table 3.1 summarises the study variables, indicators, target participants per variable and the data collection tools that were employed.

Table 3.1: Model of the study, participants and data collection tools

	Variable	Indicators and measurement techniques	Target stakeholder(s)	Research instruments & Approach
1	Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extent of validity of programme objectives in addressing W&R sector scarce skills - Whether the calibre of the RMDP graduates satisfy the goals of the programme - Whether the programme execution is in line with intended impacts (empowering young leaders, etc.) - Link between NDP, NSDO & the RMDP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kirkpatrick's model levels 1, 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RMDP beneficiaries - W&R companies - W&RSETA programme managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questionnaires & semi- structured interviews - In-depth interviews - Focus Group <p>Quantitative and Qualitative</p>
2	Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants' appreciation and understanding of the RMDP objectives - Specific skills gaps being addressed by the RMDP - Levels of achievement of the RMDP objectives - How realistic the RMDP objectives are - Factors influencing achievement & non- achievement of the RMDP objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kirkpatrick's model levels 2, 4 • Before-and-after analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RMDP beneficiaries - W&RSETA programme managers - W&R companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questionnaires & semi- structured interviews - In-depth interviews - Focus Group <p>Quantitative and Qualitative</p>
3	Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monetary & non-monetary costs of the RMDP - Logistical issues & challenges - Timely achievement of programme targets e.g. completion - Number of entrances vs graduates (drop-out analysis) of the programme - Alternative approaches to conducting the RMDP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before-and-after analysis • Cost Benefit Analysis • ROI analysis • Kirkpatrick's model level 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RMDP beneficiaries - W&RSETA programme managers - Retail organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questionnaires - In-depth interviews - Focus Group <p>Quantitative and Qualitative</p>

	Variable	Indicators and measurement techniques	Target stakeholder(s)	Research instruments & Approach
4	Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List of results achieved by the RMDP - Positive differences brought by the RMDP to beneficiaries (e.g. career advancement) - Improvement in W&R companies' financial positions, competitiveness etc. - List of scarce skills in the W&R sector before and after graduations from the RMDP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before-and-after analysis • Kirkpatrick's model level 3, 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RMDP beneficiaries - W&R organisations - W&RSETA programme managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questionnaires & semi structured interviews - In-depth interviews - Focus Group <p>Quantitative and Qualitative</p>
5	Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current sustainability status of the RMDP - Future sustainability measures planned - Continuation of non-financial sustainability indicators such as shared knowledge, sustained production and impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training providers - Industry experts - W&RSETA programme managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In-depth interviews <p>Qualitative</p>
6	Replicability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alignment of the RMDP structure with skills needs for other sectors - Compatibility concerns and prospects of merging the RMDP with similar programmes such as ILDP - Possible impacts of changing the RMDP training provider <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - W&RSETA programme managers - Retail organisations - Industry experts - Training providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In-depth interviews <p>Qualitative</p>

3.4. Data collection procedures

As shown in Table 3.1, this study targeted the RMDP beneficiaries, W&R companies whose employees completed the RMDP, programme training providers, and the W&RSETA programme managers. To ensure that only relevant data was collected per variable, the study collected responses from only the most relevant stakeholders. For instance, W&R companies were best suited for answering questions on how the organisational performance of beneficiaries has improved post completion of the RMDP by some of their employees. The research employed the following data collection methods:

- i. In depth interviews;
- ii. Semi-structure interviews; and
- iii. Focus Group Discussions.

Table 3.2 shows the population and sample size for the RMDP beneficiaries as determined by the Raosoft sample size calculator for quantitative studies.

Table 3.2: Sampling Strategy

Year	Population of Beneficiaries	Total sample size	Face to Face Interviews @ 15% of sample
2015/16	339	85	13
2016/17	344	89	13
2017/18	405	91	14
2018/19	40	20	3
TOTALS	1 088	285	43

Source: W&RSETA (2019)

As can be seen from Table 3.2, the study targeted a total of 285 beneficiaries of the RMDP based on a population of 1 088. Of the total sample size, 15% (43) were targeted to be interviewed face to face with beneficiaries across the country, while the rest (85%) or (242) were targeted for online completion. The questionnaire for online completion was sent via email to beneficiaries through SurveyMonkey, while physical completions were delivered face to face and later captured onto SurveyMonkey to consolidate responses. In addition, the study also targeted engagement with 15 employers of the RMDP beneficiaries, as well as the current and previous training providers.

3.5. Data analysis and interpretation

Data analysis was conducted in line with the model employed in the study, which targeted the assessment of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and replicability of the RMDP. A mixed methods research approach was employed, and responses were triangulated to obtain an overall picture based on input from multiple stakeholders. Frequencies such as percentages, means and medians were used where necessary, while charts and tables were also used to present responses. In assessing the differences in beneficiaries' ratings of the RMDP, a non-parametric test for independent samples (Kruskal-Wallis H) was applied to the responses at the 95% confidence level.

Qualitative data obtained from interviews and focus groups was analysed using a technique known as Thematic Content Analysis (TCA). The content analysis was performed using an analytical structure that is linked to the overall evaluation framework. The qualitative analysis framework was guided by the overall evaluation objective. Units that emerged from the data were integrated into themes using a grouping procedure based on both similarities and differences and using the principles of internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity. The use of content analysis permitted the research team to identify theme cores and nodes that emerged from the data, thus allowing the researchers to proceed from the particular to the general.

3.6. Ethical considerations

The study was conducted in adherence to established ethical guidelines for primary research. All participants in the study were asked to confirm and consent to taking part in the study after the field researcher explained all key aspects of the study. Beneficiaries who completed the study online were required to tick a checkbox for informed consent, while all interview and focus group participants signed a separate consent form for their participation. In addition, field officers expressly requested permission to record the discussions before recording, and no participants were recorded against their will. Participation in the study was also voluntary for each participant, and no one was coerced to take part. Field data collectors made sure to

notify all potential participants of the voluntary nature of the study, and that they had the right to withdraw at any point during the discussion process.

Lastly, all participation responses were treated confidentially, and participants were notified of the respect for privacy of their input. No individual participants' names were employed in any part of the report. Where quotes were used, pseudonyms were employed to protect the privacy of participants. Transcriptions of recordings were sent to the SETA as part of evidence of conducting the study.

4. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses results of the impact assessment for the RMDP from 2015 – 2019. Data were collected from programme beneficiaries, employers, training providers as well as the programme managers of the RMDP at the W&RSETA.

4.2. Participants' biographic information

Table 4.1 presents the demographic information of the RMDP beneficiaries who participated in the study. This includes participants' gender, race, age group, disability status, highest qualification, province of residents, management experience and employer size.

Table 4.1: Research participants' demographic information¹

Demographic variable	2015/16 (%)	2016/17 (%)	2017/18 (%)	2018/19 (%)
Gender				
Male	56.6	57.4	52.7	38.9
Female	43.4	42.6	47.3	61.1
Race				
Black African	42.6	27.7	52.7	88.9
Indian/Asian	18.0	14.9	20.0	5.6
Coloured	12.3	25.5	10.9	5.6
White	26.2	30.9	16.4	-
Age group				
20-30 years	6.6	6.4	10.9	-
31-40 years	49.2	47.9	47.3	61.1
41-50 years	37.7	38.3	36.4	38.9
Above 50 years	6.6	7.4	5.5	-
Disability status				
Living with disability	1.7	3.2	-	-
Have no disability	98.3	96.8	100	100
Highest academic qualification before the RMDP				
Below Matric	3.3	2.1	3.6	-
Matric	57.9	44.7	54.5	44.4
College diploma	28.9	23.4	20.0	16.7
Bachelor's degree	5.0	14.9	9.1	22.2
Honours degree	1.7	7.4	1.8	-

¹ With RMDP 2018/19 still to be rolled out countrywide, 2018/19 statistics are based on responses collected from participants from Gauteng province, who have begun studying

Demographic variable	2015/16 (%)	2016/17 (%)	2017/18 (%)	2018/19 (%)
Master's degree	0.8	-	1.8	-
Certificate/ professional qualification	2.5	7.4	9.1	16.7
Province of residence				
North West	3.3	2.1	1.8	-
Eastern Cape	3.3	6.4	7.3	-
Mpumalanga	6.6	4.3	3.6	22.2
KwaZulu-Natal	16.4	17.0	23.6	-
Gauteng	43.4	38.3	43.6	66.7
Western Cape	21.3	25.5	16.4	-
Limpopo	3.3	3.2	3.6	11.1
Free State	1.6	2.1	-	-
Northern Cape	0.8	1.1	-	-
Management level before the RMDP				
Junior management	24.6	25.3	35.3	11.1
Middle management	41.8	55.4	47.1	55.6
Top management	19.8	19.3	17.6	33.3
Years of management experience before the RMDP				
No management experience	14.8	11.7	9.4	-
1 – 7 years	39.8	34.0	43.4	22.2
8 – 17 years	36.1	41.5	35.8	72.2
18 and above	9.3	7.4	11.3	5.6
Current employer size				
Small corporation	5.0	3.2	5.6	-
Medium size	9.2	14.0	7.4	5.6
Large corporation	85.8	82.8	87.0	94.4
Workplace geographical location				
Rural area	5.8	3.2	11.3	5.6
Urban area	80.0	80.6	83.0	72.2
Peri-urban (outskirts, rural + urban)	14.2	16.1	5.7	22.2

Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

4.2.1. Gender

On Table 4.1, the proportion of male participants was greater than females from 2015/16 to 2017/18 but reversed in 2018/19, where the majority of participants were female. An increase in the proportion of female RMDP beneficiaries signifies a positive movement in the programme's objective of accommodating more women.

4.2.2. Racial distribution

As in Table 4.1, the majority of participants were black Africans followed by whites in 2015/16. In 2016/17, the majority of participants were white, followed by coloured, then black Africans and Indians/Asians last. In 2017/18, 52.7% of participants were black, followed by Indians/Asians, then whites and coloureds last. In 2018/19, the majority (88.9%) of participants were black Africans, followed by Indians/Asians, coloureds with no whites.

4.2.3. Age distribution

As shown on Table 4.1, the majority of participants in the survey were in the 31-40-year-old group from 2015/16 to 2018/19, followed by participants from the 41-50-year age group. In addition, even though there was a slight increase of 4.3 percentage points in the 20-30-year group between 2015/16 and 2017/18, no individuals in the 20-30-year old group from 2018/19 participated in the study.

4.2.4. Provincial distribution

As can be seen from Table 4.1, the majority of study participants resided in the Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape provinces. The rest of the provinces had less participants, with the lowest being the Northern Cape province.

4.2.5. Highest educational levels

Further, as presented in Table 4.1, the largest number of participants indicated that they had matric as their highest educational qualification before admission into the RMDP. The second largest group of participants indicated that they had a college diploma at the time, and the lowest group of participants noted that they did not have matric. With reference to the qualification criteria for the RMDP, it is evident from Table 4.1 that 3.3%, 2.1% and 3.6% of participants who went through the RMDP in 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 respectively did not meet the minimum educational level currently required for entrance (equivalent to NQF Level 4).

4.2.6. Management level and experience

Table 4.1 shows that the majority of participants were in middle management levels before they went through the RMDP, followed by those in junior management and top management.

Furthermore, the majority of participants either had between 1 and 7 years or between 8 and 17 years of retail management experience. Participants who had no management experience when they started the RMDP were 14.8% in 2015/16, 13.7% in 2016/17 and 25.6% in 2017/18, thus showing that there are significant numbers of beneficiaries that went through the RMDP, but who did not meet the minimum number of years of 2 years of retail experience required. In addition, since the RMDP mainly accommodates individuals in supervisory, junior and middle management levels, the percentage of individuals in top management represents beneficiaries that are above the requirement for entrance into the RMDP.

4.2.7. Employer sizes and location

Table 4.1 shows that the majority of beneficiaries who participated in the study were from large corporates, followed by medium corporates and small corporations. In terms of geographical location of the current workplaces, the majority of participants from 2015/16 to 2018/19 all work in urban areas, while others work in the outskirts and the smallest group works in rural areas.

4.3. Relevance of the RMDP

The assessment of the RMDP's relevance established the extent to which it meets the needs and priorities of beneficiaries, employers, the W&RSETA and the sector as a whole. Relevance was assessed through both quantitative and qualitative approaches, through the beneficiaries' questionnaires as well as interviews with other stakeholders.

4.3.1. Relevance to beneficiaries' workplaces

In assessing the relevance of the RMDP for beneficiaries' workplaces, a set of nine quantitative scenarios were provided to beneficiaries, with their possible responses varying on a five-point Likert scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. Table 4.2 summarises beneficiaries' responses by showing the percentage who agreed versus to those who disagreed for each scenario presented.

Table 4.2: Beneficiaries' views on relevance of the RMDP

Scenario	2015/16 (%)		2016/17 (%)		2017/18 (%)		2018/19 (%)	
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree
1. The objectives of the RMDP were clearly defined and communicated before training	5.7	91.0	2.2	94.7	3.7	90.7	-	94.4
2. All topics covered are relevant to me and my organisation	5.7	90.2	1.1	91.5	1.8	94.5	-	100
3. All topics covered are relevant to the Wholesale and Retail (W&R) sector	3.3	95	-	96.8	3.6	94.6	5.6	94.5
4. Completing the RMDP places an individual in a position to be able to fill in part of the HTFVs in our organisation	6.6	88.1	6.4	78.7	9.1	76.4	-	100
5. The content of the RMDP exceeded my expectations	5.0	90.0	3.2	86.1	1.8	90.9	-	94.5
6. The RMDP fully prepares individuals to become a more effective leaders; and empowers them to influence others	4.1	92.7	1.1	94.6	1.8	94.6	-	100
7. I would recommend my colleagues to participate in the RMDP as is	4.9	91.8	4.3	92.5	3.6	94.6	-	100
8. I would recommend my colleagues to participate in the RMDP on condition that it is improved	24.6	58.2	30.1	46.3	22.3	53.7	22.2	72.2
9. Masterclasses/Speakers covered topics relevant to what is expected of a leader	4.2	94.3	1.1	96.9	1.8	94.6	-	100
Overall	7.1	87.9	5.5	86.5	5.5	87.2	3.1	95.1

Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

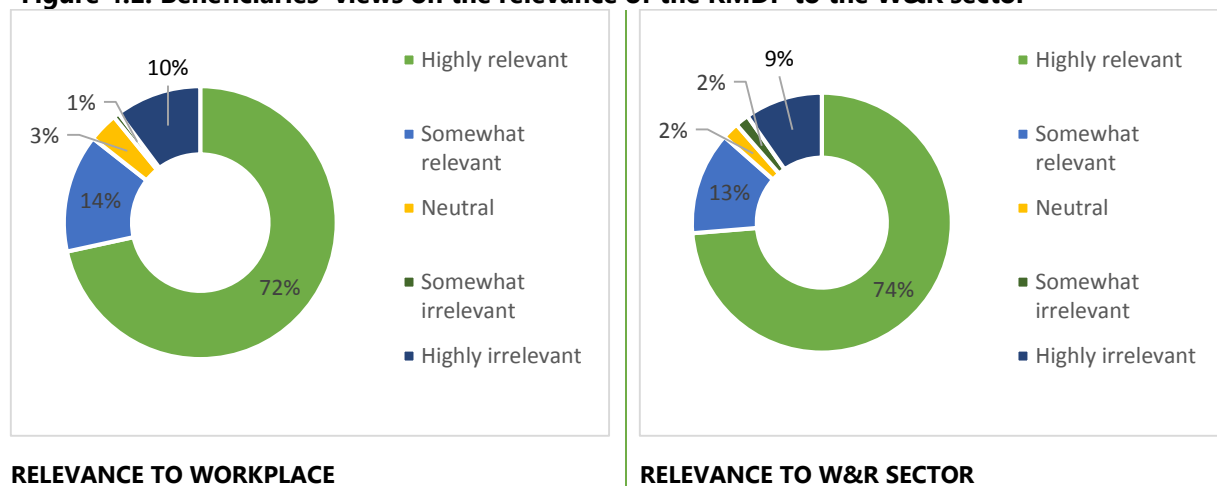
Table 4.2 shows that in the first scenario relating to clarity in the definition of the RMDP objectives, the percentage of participants who agreed was consistently higher than those who disagreed throughout the years under review, with the highest number of participants who agreed being in 2016/17. For the second scenario on the relevance of topics covered, the highest number of participants who agreed was in 2018/19, with 100% either agreeing or

strongly agreeing. Furthermore, for scenarios 2,4, 6, 7 and 9, there was 100% agreement in 2018/19. There were however higher disagreements about scenario 8 which suggested that beneficiaries would recommend the RMDP to their peers on condition that it is improved from its current position, thus showing that participants view the programme as relevant. Overall, there was general agreement among participants through all the years that the RMDP is highly relevant to people's workplaces and the W&R sector.

4.3.2. Relevance to the W&R sector

Beneficiaries were also asked to rate their views of the relevance of the RMDP from 'highly irrelevant' to 'highly relevant'. Results are presented in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Beneficiaries' views on the relevance of the RMDP to the W&R sector



Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

The results of the two charts in Figure 4.1 demonstrate that the majority of participants viewed the RMDP as highly relevant to both their workplaces (72%) and the W&R sector (74%). The second majority ranked it as somewhat relevant, the third group ranked it as highly irrelevant, while others were neutral, and a minimum number ranked the programme as highly irrelevant to their workplaces and the sector. Views on the relevance of the RMDP were also obtained from employers, who corroborated responses from beneficiaries. Most employers described the RMDP as 'very relevant' and 'highly relevant' to their needs. In addition to equipping their employees with valuable leadership skills, improving business acumen and giving them greater exposure to diverse views from the market, employers also noted that the RMDP is key in unlocking promotion opportunities to beneficiaries. This is attested in the following quote:

"The programme is providing succession opportunities to our employees. We make sure to always promote beneficiaries of the RMDP after their graduation" (Employer 1²).

In addition, employers viewed the RMDP as highly relevant due to its exposure of employees to local and international knowledge on the retail sector. This enhances the chances of RMDP graduates taking up positions in the W&R sector HTFVs. One employer had this to say about the RMDP:

"The RMDP is highly relevant and remains key in shaping and developing middle management and leadership competency and pipeline within our organisation" (Employer 2).*

Employers' views on the relevance of the RMDP are further corroborated by training providers who noted that the curriculum development process was conducted in consultation with all major employers in the sector and the W&RSETA. This was performed through a steering committee set up by the W&RSETA.

4.3.3. Need for courses to be added or removed from the programme

As a further assessment of relevance, beneficiaries of the programme were asked to identify what they think should be added and removed from the RMDP. Table 4.3 summarises the most common themes of beneficiaries' views on content to be added and removed.

Table 4.3: Beneficiaries' views on content to be added and removed from the RMDP

Courses/aspects to be added	Courses/aspects to be removed
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practical immersions/ site visits 2. Modern leadership styles 3. ICT and basic computer skills (e.g. Office Suite) 4. More time per module, especially more challenging courses like Finance 5. Introduction of simulations to other courses 6. Entrepreneurship 7. Ecommerce and logistics 8. Increasing depth of content in the finance module 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supply chain management 2. Economics

Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

*2 Name of employer withheld for ethical reasons

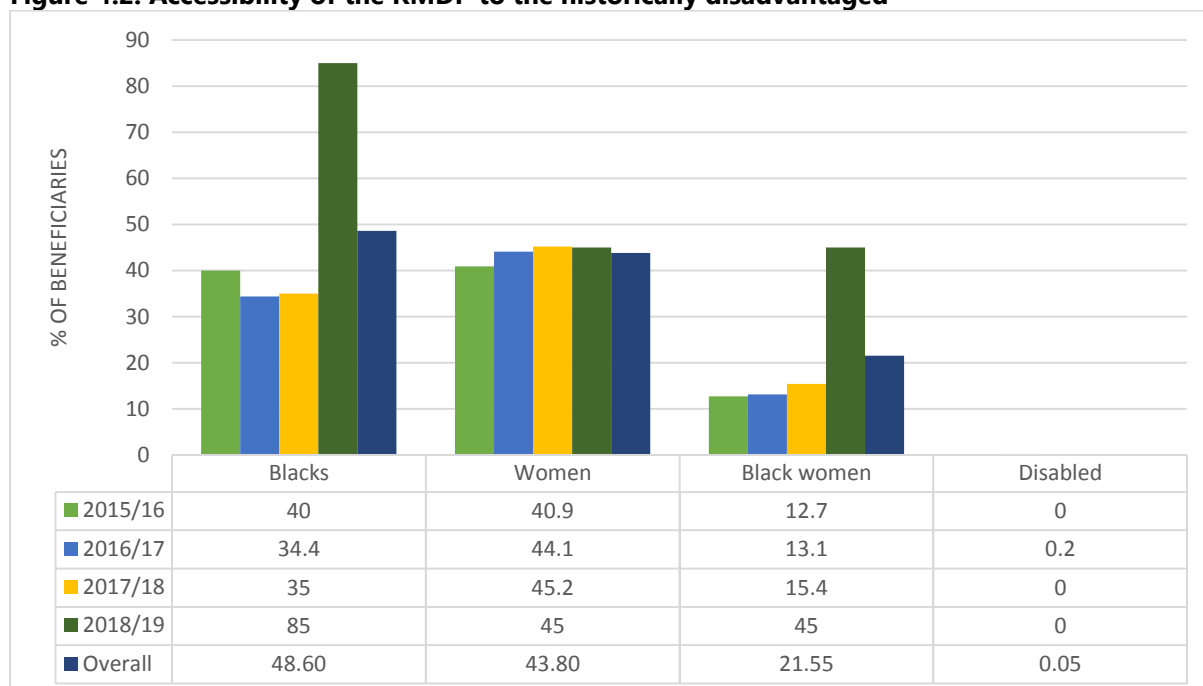
As shown in Table 4.3, courses commonly mentioned as in need of addition and/enhancement include the introduction of practical immersions, teaching on modern leadership styles and ICT skills. Aspects mentioned include more time per module, introducing simulations to more courses, entrepreneurship courses, ecommerce and logistics as well as increasing the depth of content in the finance module. Regarding practical immersions, beneficiaries generally agreed that it was necessary as a way of enhancing classroom knowledge, to visit local retailers in South Africa, mall areas or distribution centres on a one-day immersion. Regarding which courses should be removed, only supply chain management and economics were commonly mentioned. The supply chain management module was noted by many as relevant, while others felt that it is not relevant to their workplaces since the supply chain is managed through their head offices. However, the majority of beneficiaries indicated that the current course structure isn't in need of changes, and no courses should be removed from, or added to it. Employers also corroborated most arguments by beneficiaries and argued that the programme content was largely applicable.

4.4. Effectiveness of the RMDP

4.4.1. Accessibility and transformation

Part of the SETA's mandate involves the delivery of skills development initiatives and unlocking opportunities for the historically disadvantaged groups in South Africa. In terms of accessibility and transformation, this was measured through an assessment of the programme's access to women (black women in particular) and accessibility to black individuals (men + women). Figure 4.2 shows the percentage of the RMDP beneficiaries who are black, women, black women and the disabled as per the W&RSETA database of beneficiaries from 2015-2019.

Figure 4.2: Accessibility of the RMDP to the historically disadvantaged³



Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

Regarding Figure 4.2, the percentage of black individuals accessing the RMDP was 40% in 2015/16, 34.4% in 2016/17, 35% in 2017/18, 85% in 2018/19 and 49.4% overall. The percentage of women accessing the RMDP was 40.9% in 2015/16, 44.1% in 2016/17, 45.2% in 2017/18, 45% in 2018/19 and 43.8% overall. Meanwhile, the percentage of black women accessing the RMDP was 12.7% in 2015/16, 13.1% in 2016/17, 15.4% in 2017/18, 45% in 2018/19 and 21.6% overall. The percentage of the disabled with access to the RMDP was however only 0.2% in 2016. In terms of accessibility to blacks, women and black women, there is evidence of slight improvements over the years, and the number of women with access to the RMDP was consistently above the target of 40%. However, the programme is still inaccessible to the disabled, and statistics on black women accessing the RMDP were mostly less than 20%.

When asked to elaborate on the level of accessibility of the programme to HDI beneficiaries, employers highlighted that they follow strict equity guidelines which lead to their promotion to a greater extent, of HDI beneficiaries. Some employer testimonials are shown below:

³ 2018 statistics may not be fully reflective of the true situation since they are based on a group of 40 beneficiaries who have commenced RMDP in Gauteng

"Here at XYZ corporation, we promote people in rural and HDI areas, and send them through RMDP. From lower levels going up, we ensure to promote at least 50% women" (Employer 5).*

"We only nominate previously disadvantaged individuals onto RMDP" (Employer 3).*

However, other employers highlighted that talent, performance, dedication and commitment were initial determinants for individuals to be nominated, before equality is considered. This is done to ensure only qualifying individuals access the programme. One employer had this to say:

"People are nominated based on pre-set criteria. We refer to our talent heat map and utilise individual development plans for each employee" (Employer 7).*

4.4.2. Achievement of programme objectives

Assessment of the of the RMDP effectiveness was also based on the achievement of overall set objectives especially in terms of delivering required course content and creating required influence on young leaders.

Table 4.4: Beneficiaries' views on the RMDP's achievement of set objectives

Scenario	2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree
1. All information, targets and intended outcomes were explained to me before training	0.8	88.5	1.1	89.3	-	96.3	5.6	87.9
2. The objectives of the training programme were fully met by the time I completed	-	95.1	-	93.7	1.9	96.3	-	100
3. The objectives of the RMDP were easy to meet/ fully achievable	2.4	83.6	-	85.1	1.8	87.3	-	88.8
4. The RMDP has improved my research skills in the context of the W&R sector	-	95.0	-	88.2	-	96.4	-	94.4
5. The RMDP has enhanced my appreciation of the global W&R sector	-	92.7	-	90.5	-	92.7	-	94.4

Scenario	2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree
6. My skills in Operations, Supply Chain Management and marketing have improved due to the RMDP	-	95.0	1.1	89.4	-	87.3	-	88.9
7. I now have a stronger grasp of Retail Technology & Information Management	-	90	1.1	86.2	-	85.4	-	83.4
8. As a result of the programme, I can now better manage the human resources and budget assigned to me	1.6	89.2	2.2	86.2	-	98.2	5.6	84.2
9. The RMDP has given me sufficient background learning for me to pursue the RMDP in the future	0.8	90.9	1.1	87.2	-	92.7	-	100
10. The RMDP has made me a champion for the W&R sector able to influence other young leaders	0.8	92.5	2.2	84.9	-	90.9	-	100
Overall	0.6	91.3	0.9	88.1	0.4	92.4	1.1	92.2

Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

In Table 4.4, participants generally ranked the effectiveness of the RMDP to be very high in terms of delivering of intended objectives. Beneficiaries from 2015/16 were highest in terms of effectiveness ranking in case 2 (95.1%) and case 4 & 6 (95% each). Meanwhile, beneficiaries from 2016/17 ranked the RMDP highest in terms of effectiveness in case 2 (93.7%), case 5 (90.5%), case 6 (89.4%) and case 1 (89.3%). Beneficiaries from 2017/18 ranked the RMDP highest in terms of effectiveness in case 8 (98.2%), case 4 (96.4%), and cases 1 & 2 (96.3% each). In addition, beneficiaries from 2018/19 ranked the RMDP as the highest in effectiveness in cases 2, 9 & 10 (100% each) followed by cases 4 & 5 (94.4% each). Overall, the highest rating of effectiveness was found in 2017/18 (92.4%), and the lowest in 2016/17 (88.1%).

4.5. Efficiency of the RMDP

The process of efficiency measurement involves an assessment of whether the RMDP manages to produce intended outputs even with limited resources. In this section, the efficiency and challenges of the RMDP are discussed in terms of preparation and entrance, content, delivery logistics, completions, dropouts and the overall value chain. Table 4.5 presents views on the efficiency of the RMDP from beneficiaries who took part in the study.

Table 4.5: Beneficiaries' views on the efficiency of the RMDP

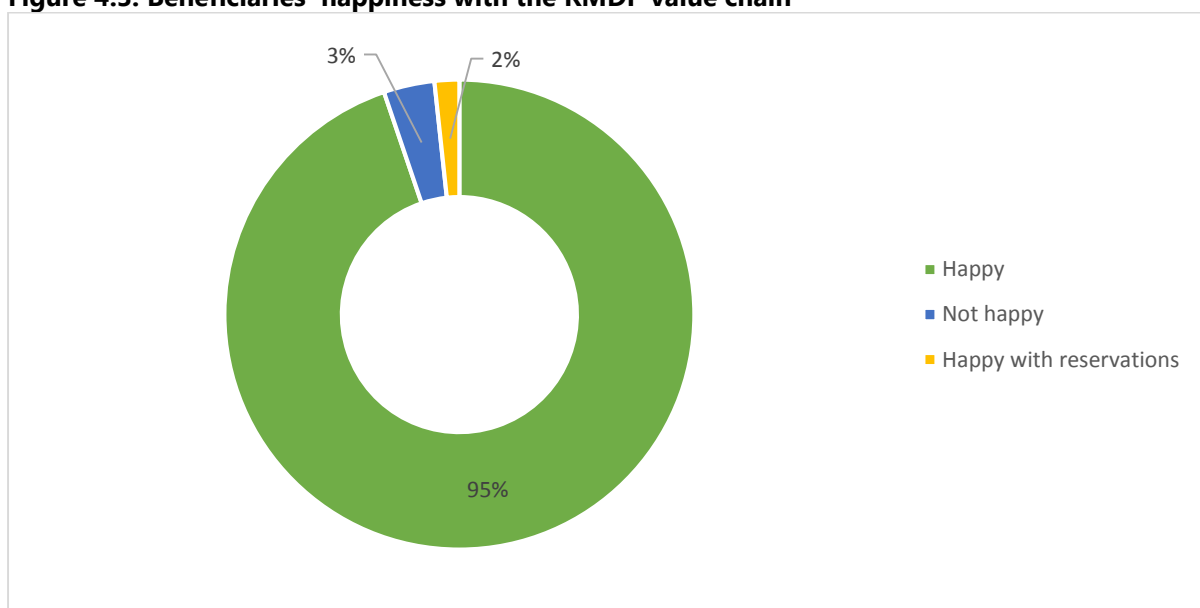
Scenario	2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree
1. Logistical preparations for the RMDP are easy, and I moved through the process with little difficulty	1.6	80.3	6.4	78.7	7.2	85.4	16.7	77.8
2. Selection, registration and training were all done on time, and I graduated at the originally set date	0.8	92.5	3.2	94.3	5.6	85.2	22.2	66.6
3. The programme content and delivery structure are favourable for completion; and do not lead to any dropouts	1.6	88.3	3.2	91.5	3.7	90.8	5.6	83.4
4. There shouldn't be an alternative approach to the structure of the RMDP since it is fairly effective in addressing W&R sector scarce skills	4.1	82.0	7.5	81.9	1.9	87.1	5.6	77.7
	2.0	85.8	5.1	86.6	4.6	87.1	12.5	76.4

Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

Table 4.5 displays generally high levels of agreement with the notion that the RMDP is an efficiently run programme. However, there are differences in views between years of completion. For instance, on the first scenario relating to the ease of logistical preparations for the RMDP, 16.7% of 2018/19 beneficiaries disagreed as compared to the lowest which was 1.6% from 2015/16. Furthermore, on the second scenario regarding the ease of and timeliness of selection, registration and training, 22.2% of beneficiaries from 2018/19 disagreed when compared to the lowest of 0.8% from 2015/16. For case 3, there were less disagreements among participants, but the 2015/16 group ranked the RMDP content and delivery as most

favourable for completion, discouraging dropouts. On the fourth scenario, there were also general agreements, thus indicating that there is no need for an alternative delivery approach for the RMDP, with 2017/18 participants agreeing the most to this. Overall, it is evident from the levels of agreement and disagreement that beneficiaries from 2018/19 rank the RMDP as least efficient, thus showing the possibility that quality of delivery or content may have declined in 2018/19 since commencement. Beneficiaries were further asked to state whether they are happy with the entire value chain for the RMDP, and their views are presented in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3: Beneficiaries' happiness with the RMDP value chain



Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

As shown in Figure 4.3, 95% of the beneficiaries noted that they were happy with the entire RMDP value chain, 2% said they were happy with the RMDP but had a number of reservations about it, and 3% were not happy with the programme. When asked further about their reasons for their happiness with the programme, most beneficiaries pointed to the skill levels of facilitators, and the professionalism with which the programme was run. One of the beneficiary's attests:

"The whole process was seamless, and our lecturers were top form" (**Rajesh, 2015/16 beneficiary⁴**).

⁴ Name altered for ethical reasons.

Other beneficiaries added that the programme opens up promotional opportunities for most graduates. Also, the grouping of people based on their assessment feedback was seen as a strength by some beneficiaries as shown by the following quote:

"Assessment feedback was used to group people, which made it easier to work together" (**Lerato, 2017/18 beneficiary**) *.

However, those who were not happy with the programme value chain pointed to the challenges in managing group dynamics, since they were of the opinion that the current grouping system left some groups strong, but others weak. This was mostly related to the instances where individuals with too many differences, such as different management levels, academic levels and experience were placed in one group which made communication difficult and work challenging to complete. The following quotes relate to participants' views on how the group selection weakened group cohesion:

"Big differences in skills and management level of participants for us weakened group interactions" (**Johannes, 2016/17 beneficiary**) *.

"Mixing junior and lowly qualified people to higher qualified people sets groups up for failure" (**Arjun, 2015/16 beneficiary**) *.

Other reservations that beneficiaries had related to the insufficiency of study time for some modules. Beneficiaries had to travel long distances to get to and from the study venue. There was a long-time lag between succession and selection into the RMDP, and the commencement of learning, which was seen to be too long.

4.5.1. Challenges in the RMDP value chain

A number of challenges/ weaknesses of the RMDP were identified through the interactions with stakeholders in beneficiary and employer one on one interviews, training providers, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. These mainly concern the application and selection process, logistical issues, course content delivery and programme quality since the change in training provider. Most concerns about the RMDP application and selection process were raised by employers as well as beneficiaries in the current, 2018 group. It was noted that

communication challenges topped the list as noted by employers, while the changes in the selection criteria and in programme accreditation status were also noted. Meanwhile, beneficiaries from other years had concerns with parts of the logistical approaches of the programme as well as group dynamics. Table 4.6 summarises the challenges/ limitations of the RMDP, and the specific stakeholders who noted them, as shown by the (✓).

Table 4.6: Summary of challenges with the RMDP as noted by stakeholders

Challenge noted	Employers	Beneficiaries	Training providers
Confusion in the sending of success emails to people selected. Some who had not qualified for the RMDP were contacted to attend training	✓	✓	×
On 2018 application, emails went back and forth, and one thing that was sent over and over again	✓	×	×
For 2018, emails on successful candidates were sent directly to beneficiaries, and employers were not told which of their employees had succeeded, and the training dates	×	✓	×
A lot of people who did not qualify for the programme went through, due to the poor selection process	✓	×	✓
Employers were not notified of the change in selection criteria for the RMDP to a minimum of NQF 5. This change was conducted after nominations had already been completed	✓	✓	×
Nominees who failed to get into the programme in 2018 were not told why. Follow-ups with the SETA on this were not answered	✓	✓	×
In 2018, selection was conducted through a third party without the training provider input. This eliminated the ability of the training providers to conduct their own assessments regarding qualification onto the RMDP	×	×	✓
The current RMDP training provider has been experiencing challenges in identifying accredited venues outside Gauteng for other beneficiaries to start	✓	×	✓
The non-accredited nature of the RMDP pre-2018 meant it was a challenge to use it for further education	✓	✓	×
Course assessment is weak, since it focuses more on group work with limited individual assignments, tests and no closing exam	✓	×	×
Long distances had to be travelled by some beneficiaries to attend training	✓	✓	×
The current process with Henley has not yet been streamlined to ensure a smooth takeover of the RMDP from UP	✓	✓	×
Communication about programme delays for the 2018 group has not been handled properly. To date, most employers and beneficiaries do not know why there are delays, and only the Gauteng beneficiaries have commenced training	✓	✓	×

Challenge noted	Employers	Beneficiaries	Training providers
The lack of accredited training centres for Henley outside Gauteng has delayed training of beneficiaries from other provinces	×	✓	✓

Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

As shown in Table 4.6, several limitations to the programme were noted, and the majority relate to the RMDP from 2018. It is notable that a number of communication limitations ensued, and stakeholders are largely unsure of the direction with which the RMDP is currently taking. A number of employers and beneficiaries also pointed to the change in training provider as the main cause for the decline in the RMDP provision standards. Some of the focus group discussion participants attest as follows:

*"In terms of the change in training provider, I am extremely disappointed by the process. There was an incredible mix-up last year, and the level of professionalism is shocking" (Employer 8) *.*

*"Since the training provider has been changed, the programme has flopped, it has turned into a disaster" (Employer 3) *.*

Furthermore, employers noted that programme delays since 2018 have derailed several of their internal skills development plans for their employees. This was because most employers set aside skills development programmes for managers while opting for the RMDP, but the absence of the RMDP from 2018, and the current two-year lag has left several employees without access to skills development. The following quote attests to this:

"For my managers to miss out on this programme two years in a row, the fact that the SETA let me personally, down, by delaying the programme so much, I take offense to that" (Employer 8).*

While it is significant that programme delays resulted from the transition of the RMDP from a non-accredited to an accredited qualification, stakeholders said that the entire process was poorly communicated to them. Moreover, the lack of accredited training venues for the current training provider has severely delayed the commencement of training for beneficiaries in other provinces besides Gauteng. One employer had this to say:

*"Surely that should have been part of the selection criteria, and the SETA is at fault for their failure to select a service provider who is able to deliver. How has the previous provider been able to conduct training using outside venues this whole time?" (Employer 4) *.*

4.5.2. Factors affecting dropouts from the programme

Discussions with training providers, beneficiaries and employers showed that in general, dropouts are rare and spaced apart. Regardless, a number of factors were found to lead to the dropping-out of some beneficiaries from the programme. Firstly, career movement of individuals going outside of the W&R environment resulted in the SETA withdrawing the beneficiary from the RMDP. Secondly, personal circumstances such as sickness were also causes of dropping out. One beneficiary attested that he nearly dropped out of the programme when he had to attend his father's funeral in the United Kingdom (UK), and this led to him deciding not to attend the funeral to remain on the programme. Other withdrawals were also noted to arise from employers' suggestions due to work pressure, but such beneficiaries are usually given an opportunity to join the upcoming groups.

4.6. Impacts of the RMDP

The impact of the RMDP was measured by assessing the programme's ability to meet stakeholder expectations, career acceleration of beneficiaries, productivity improvements, application of what was learned and Return on Investment.

4.6.1. Meeting of expectations

When asked to indicate what expectations they had before enrolling in the RMDP, a number of expectations were put forward by beneficiaries. These included the desire to learn and gain knowledge, a desire to grow in the workplace, personal development, becoming a better leader and obtaining a promotion. The following quotes attest:

*"I wanted to enrich my knowledge of the retail sector I worked in, so that I could grow" (Lungile, 2015/16 beneficiary) *.*

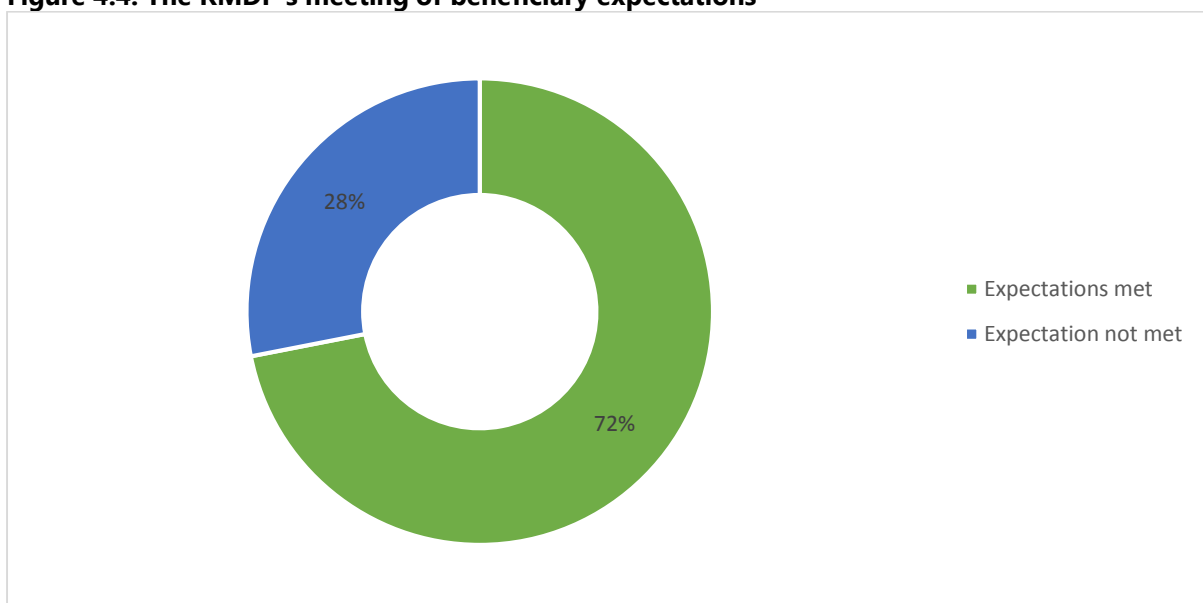
*"Pretty moderate, I wanted to learn more and perhaps perform better as a manager" (Sipho, 2015/16 beneficiary) *.*

Other beneficiaries however had little or no expectations from the programme. This was mainly because the RMDP nomination process is handled by employers, and many people knew little about the programme until they went through. Regardless, most beneficiaries who did not know what to expect were highly impressed by the programme and felt it changed their professional lives, as evidenced by the following quote:

*"I was unsure of potential of RMDP but as the course progressed, I found that it broadened my thinking. As a result, I have developed a whole new perspective of my workplace and area of responsibility" (Mohamed, 2016/17 beneficiary) *.*

Moreover, employers also expected a lot in terms of growth and productivity whenever they send employees through the RMDP. The most common expectations from employers included growth, improvement in confidence and productivity, readying employees for promotion, commitment and overall culture change. These expectations were also corroborated by one training provider's response, which noted that since commencement, the RMDP has become a pre-requisite for individuals to get promotions in most retail organisations. Employers have also noted that their expectations are usually met, and the RMDP graduates often show visible change and improvement from the time they begin to go through the programme. Figure 4.4 shows the percentage of beneficiaries who highlighted that the RMDP has met their expectations, versus those who say it has not.

Figure 4.4: The RMDP's meeting of beneficiary expectations



Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

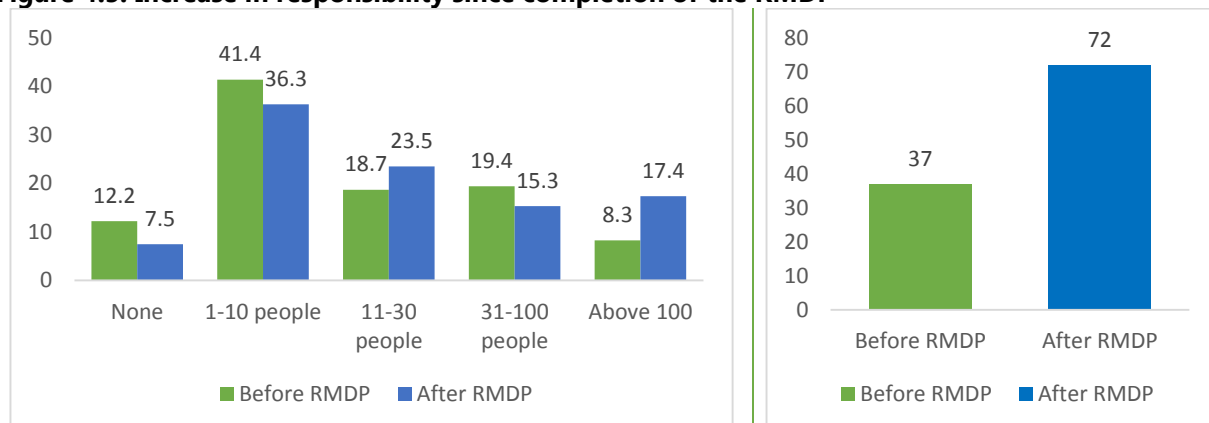
Figure 4.4 shows that 72% of beneficiaries highlight that their expectations were met by the RMDP, and 28% indicated that their expectations have not been met. Of the 28%, most noted that they have not yet managed to get promotions since completing the RMDP, especially those who work in retail operations such as store managers and those in organisations currently undergoing restructuring. These responses were corroborated by employers who noted that some organisational structures were generally not favourable for promotions. For instance, while there can be multiple store managers, there are much fewer regional, general managers and executives due to the flat structures. When employers and beneficiaries were asked to attest to any positive developments accruing to the RMDP graduates, the following themes emerged:

- Promotions/ career advancements at work;
- Improved understanding of the work environment;
- Better management skills;
- Improvement in productivity and target completion;
- Improved analytical abilities and insights;
- Improved communication with people at all management levels;
- Self-reflection; and
- Greater hunger for learning and further education.

4.6.2. Career acceleration of beneficiaries

Figure 4.5 shows the changes in responsibility to beneficiaries through changes in the number of subordinates before and after the RMDP graduation.

Figure 4.5: Increase in responsibility since completion of the RMDP



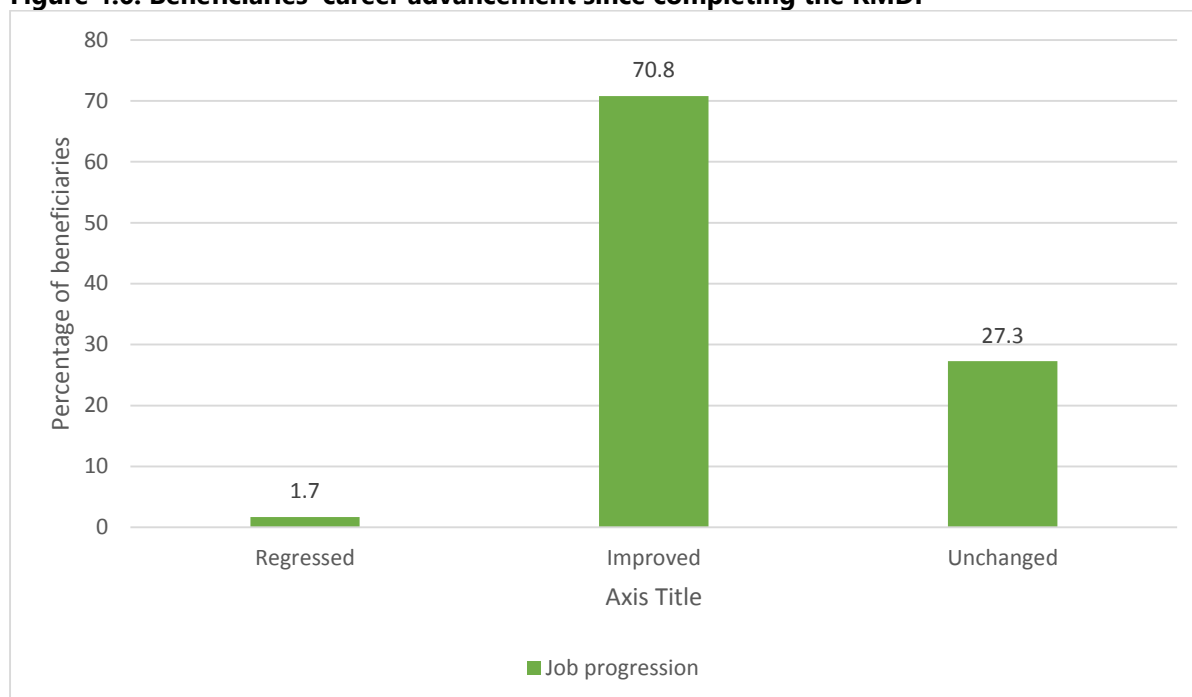
Subordinates before & after the RMDP

Mean subordinates before & after the RMDP

Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

Figure 4.5 reveals that the percentage of beneficiaries who had no subordinates below them declined after they completed the RMDP. The number of subordinates also declined for those who had 1-10 people and 31-100 people after completing the programme. However, the percentages of beneficiaries with 11-30 people and above 100 people increased post completion of the RMDP. This shows a positive shift and increase in responsibilities given to beneficiaries and is corroborated by the beneficiaries' opinions of the ability of the programme to meet their expectations. In addition, Figure 4.5 also shows that there was an increase in the average number of subordinates per beneficiary from a mean of 37 subordinates before the RMDP to 66 after the RMDP. Figure 4.6 shows the levels of career development of beneficiaries since the RMDP completion.

Figure 4.6: Beneficiaries' career advancement since completing the RMDP



Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

As shown in Figure 4.6, 70.8% of beneficiaries said that their career position has improved since completing the RMDP; 27.3% said their position has remained the same and 1.7% said that their positions have regressed.

4.6.3. Sector impact: productivity and skills improvements

Table 4.7 summarises beneficiaries' views on the improvement of productivity and value creation since their graduation from the RMDP. Beneficiaries were asked to rank their level of agreement with six scenarios presented on a five-point Likert scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. Responses were consolidated to combine agreeing beneficiaries together and disagreeing beneficiaries together as well.

Table 4.7: Productivity improvements since completion of the RMDP

Scenario	2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree
1. I am now a more effective supervisor/manager since completing the RMDP	1.6	91.8	1.1	87.2	1.9	96.3	-	94.1
2. I can execute tasks I previously struggled with more efficiently and effectively	1.6	88.5	3.2	81.9	1.9	96.6	-	100

Scenario	2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree
3. My target achievement rate has significantly improved since completing the RMDP	1.6	83.6	3.2	83.0	-	94.4	4.3	87.3
4. The RMDP learning material is fully applicable to my day to day work routine	1.6	90.2	4.4	83.9	1.9	94.4	2.4	88.7
5. I can now contribute greater value to my company due to my completion of the RMDP	0.9	89.3	3.2	89.3	1.9	92.6	-	94.4
6. I am fully able to pass on the training knowledge and skills learnt through the RMDP to my subordinates and others	1.6	93.4	2.2	91.5	-	96.3	1.9	90.5
Overall	1.5	89.5	2.9	86.1	1.3	95.1	1.4	92.5

Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

Table 4.7, beneficiaries agreed that the RMDP has had positive impacts in their professional lives through productivity increases. Beneficiaries from 2017/18 agreed mostly on scenario 1 (being a more effective leader), scenario 2 (executing tasks better), scenario 4 (application of the RMDP learning material) and scenario 6 (passing on learnt knowledge to others). Meanwhile, participants from 2018/19 agreed most on scenario 5 (contributing greater value) and scenario 6 (imparting the knowledge and skills learnt). Overall, the largest percentage of agreements with the RMDP's impacts were from the 2017/18 group (95.1%), with the largest percentage of disagreements found from the 2016/17 group (2.9%).

4.6.4. Application of what was learnt

Beneficiaries were further asked to highlight which aspects or courses of their learning are most applicable to their current workplaces. Responses show that beneficiaries working in retail operations found human resources inapplicable, while those in support functions found supply chain and sales related courses inapplicable to them. Nevertheless, the majority of beneficiaries agree that all course content of the RMDP is highly applicable. Although they do not equitably apply each course in their workspaces, it is good to have an appreciation of how other retail functions work. The following themes emerged from the discussion of application of courses learnt:

- Everything learnt is applicable;
- Leadership;
- Research skills in the context of the W&R environment;
- Management;
- Finance and budgeting;
- Operations and logistics; and
- Industrial relations and Human Resources.

4.6.5. Return on Investment

The assessment of ROI from the RMDP was conducted in consultation with employers in the W&R environment. Most employers noted that they have never attempted to calculate the value of ROI from the RMDP since its commencement. However, employers unanimously agreed that the RMDP is definitely worth their while as an investment. It provides them value for money in terms of skills improvements of beneficiaries, opening opportunities for internal promotions and overall cost-saving. To estimate the return from the RMDP, employers were asked to list monetary and non-monetary benefits and costs arising from the RMDP, and the results are presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Costs and benefits associated with the RMDP

Monetary costs	Monetary benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training costs (covered by the SETA through levies received) • Travel costs • Travel allowances • Accommodation costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost-savings due to reduction of staff turnover, leading to retention • Cost-savings due to promotions from within • Cost-savings on tuition for upskilling using other providers besides W&RSETA • Improved profitability due to increase in productivity • New business ideas open opportunities
Non-monetary costs	Non-monetary benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time away from work, leading to reduced productivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership competency development • Closure of skills gaps • Higher engagement levels • Improved communication • Increase in company goodwill

Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

Table 4.8 shows that most costs incurred by employers include travelling, accommodation and allowances, where employees have to travel far to get to the training venue. In addition, it was commonly noted that the time away from work results in an opportunity cost due to lost production, since all have to be out of office for a week at a time as they go through modules. Benefits are the number of cost savings accruing from the RMDP such as promotions from within, the reduction of staff turnover (employee retention) and savings of possible tuition companies would have invested elsewhere to upskill their employees. Other potential monetary benefits include improved productivity of beneficiaries as well as the introduction of new and profitable ideas. In terms of non-monetary benefits, employers noted that the RMDP enhances leadership competencies, closes skills gaps, improves engagement, improves communication and results in greater goodwill for the company.

Furthermore, interactions with the RMDP programme manager provided a similar view to employers on sustainability. From the SETA's viewpoint, with the programme's cost of R42 000 per beneficiary, graduates of the RMDP should get upskilled enough to ensure they contribute greater value to their respective organisations and get promotions especially with reference to the historically disadvantaged. However, the high cost of sending people through the RMDP further raises the need for promotions to be provided to as many beneficiaries as possible and was a key factor leading to the need for accreditation of the programme.

4.7. Sustainability of the RMDP

In this study, sustainability was defined as the ability of the RMDP to offer continued positive impacts to all stakeholders in the W&R sector. Sustainability was mostly discussed through interactions with the RMDP programme manager as well as training providers. Findings showed that the RMDP has registered several success stories as attested by testimonials received from graduates, and several graduates have been promoted since completing the programme. In addition, the RMDP graduates are generally able to fill positions in scarce and critical skills as well as HTFVs in the W&R sector. However, according to the RMDP programme manager, the programme is not yet fully sustainable, and improvements still need to be made to enhance its value chain. For instance, in its current form, the RMDP is not sufficiently elastic to meet future skills needs such as the 4th industrial revolution and accommodating different individuals. As a result, key modifications to be made to the RMDP should involve the addition

of content relating to the 4th industrial revolution and new technology trends arising in the sector. This will be key in ensuring that the programme remains relevant to the sector as production, supply chain and selling processes change in the wake of new technology advancements. Further, in addressing past imbalances, the programme manager noted that modifications to beneficiaries can be conducted to increase HDI beneficiaries' exposure for instance through 'the RMDP for women'.

However, while in agreement that the RMDP content needs constant updates, training providers noted that it is not necessary to make structural adjustments to the programme such as combining it with the ILDP. Rather, outcomes and expectations from each programme need to be clearly defined and communicated with all stakeholders. The programme manager further noted that modifications which include changes in training providers can be disastrous. The current provider for the RMDP has experienced several challenges in handling the programme, especially due to the unavailability of accredited training centres countrywide. This results in the need for deeper due diligence for each training provider to ensure that training facilities and the course quality does not decline for each change.

4.8. Replicability of the RMDP

Replicability of the programme was assessed through the interactions with training providers and the RMDP programme manager. It was assessed to establish the extent to which the RMDP can be modified to enhance its impact, as well as the implications of modifying the RMDP from its current state. In an effort to enhance replicability of the RMDP through linking it with the National Qualification Framework, the SETA obtained the services of a new training provider offering the RMDP as an accredited qualification starting in 2018. The training provider's accreditation process followed the use of an existing accredited qualification at NQF 6 and branding the RMDP onto it. Evidence from stakeholders however shows that there are conflicting views on the need for an accredited management programme. Some stakeholders argue that an accreditation certificate is a necessary boost to the morale of beneficiaries who have never had any academic qualification, and this will make their plans for further education easier. However, arguments against accreditation note that a qualification is usually too theoretical, which takes away from the initial need to provide practical and relatable learning to managers in the workplace. Furthermore, since the change to an accredited qualification

was hardly communicated to employers and was implemented after nominations had been made, several beneficiaries failed to get through. One employer attested:

*"Can you believe we sent 14 our best nominees, with confidence that all of them would get through, but only one went through, one!" (Employer 1) **

While accreditation is important for replicability, it appears that the SETA has not set any standard for what is required from a training provider, and as of now, the RMDP would drastically change each time a new training provider is employed. This is because training providers own the entire content of the RMDP, and the accredited qualification they offer is based on their own internal capabilities, which are private. In argument for non-accreditation, one employer had this to say:

*"While the tender process is important, why would you need to fix anything that had not been broken? I am just asking" (Employer 2) **

Accreditation further provides challenges in the entrance criteria for the RMDP, since only beneficiaries with a minimum of NQF 5 would qualify. Some stakeholders have noted that this will further alienate HDI beneficiaries with no academic background, even though they make up for that with industry experience. In attesting to this, the previous RMDP training provider said the following:

*"Our preference has always been on people with no post-school qualifications, and work in operations rather than support. Accreditation is definitely a good thing to have, but it has implications" (Previous training provider) **

As part of solving the challenges with minimum entrance into the RMDP, the current training provider had to separate beneficiaries into two groups, those with NQF 5 and those without to ensure they graduate at different NQF levels on completion. This however has raised further protests among beneficiaries and employers who feel some of their employees are being discriminated against by the adverse selection criteria. Before accreditation, the RMDP completion was used by employers as a pre-requisite for entrance into the ILDP. However, since the move to accredited programmes, a rift has been created between the two programmes, and the RMDP qualification is no longer sufficient to meet minimum entrance requirements into the ILDP. This is because the RMDP is pegged at NQF 6 on completion, while

the ILDP is pegged at NQF 8, meaning that a minimum of NQF 7 will be required for entrance into the ILDP, which is no longer achievable using an RMDP qualification. Without a bridge to close the rift between the programmes, the targets for HDI beneficiaries will likely fail to be achieved due to their non-qualification into further education. Moreover, in its current state, the RMDP will prove highly challenging to change a training provider in the future. This is because the accreditation process is costly and time intensive, and other providers who are private organisations, may find it not worth their while, since winning the tender is not guaranteed.

4.9. Stakeholders' suggestions for improving the RMDP

In light of challenges experienced in the RMDP value chain and ensuring sustainability and replicability, stakeholders were asked to put forward suggestions for the improvement of the programme, and their suggestions were grouped into themes, presented in Table 4.9, which shows suggestions and the stakeholders who made them. The suggestions were grouped into those relating to the entrance process, course content, logistics and impact.

Table 4.9: Stakeholder suggestions for the improvement of the RMDP

Suggestion put forward	Employers	Beneficiaries	Training providers
Entrance process			
The W&RSETA to improve administration processes. Timelines from nomination to accepting one to do assessment should be shorter	✓	✓	✓
All changes in the selection criteria and delays should be communicated clearly with all stakeholders	✓	✓	✓
As opposed to academic qualifications, experience should be considered for entrance into the RMDP	✓	✓	×
The training provider should be directly involved in the selection process for beneficiaries, and should take over communication and logistics from the SETA	✓	✓	✓
Course content			
The programme content should be standardised even when different training providers are used	✓	✓	×
A bridge between the RMDP and ILDP should be urgently created to ensure a transition from the RMDP to the ILDP	✓	✓	✓
Programme levels should be separated into NQF 5 and NQF 6, to cater for different academic levels and maintain accreditation	×	×	✓

Suggestion put forward	Employers	Beneficiaries	Training providers
Lessons should be possibly extended to weekends to ensure people have more time to learn and grasp concepts	×	✓	×
Programme logistics			
The RMDP should be returned to the previous providers who were much better in handling it and had the capacity to deliver	✓	✓	×
There should be one contact person for stakeholders to communicate with about everything, preferably someone from the training provider	✓	✓	×
Programme impact			
The SETA should urgently provide a bridging course to all previous RMDP graduates who went through the non-accredited RMDP	✓	×	×
The SETA should follow-up with all employers to ensure that beneficiaries of the programme get promoted. After a given time, employers should explain why some beneficiaries would not have been promoted since graduation	✓	✓	×
The collection of success stories should be conducted better to ensure a ROI of the programme can be calculated.	✓	×	×
Periodic evaluations of the service provider should be conducted to assess the service quality and meeting of set standards	✓	✓	×

Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

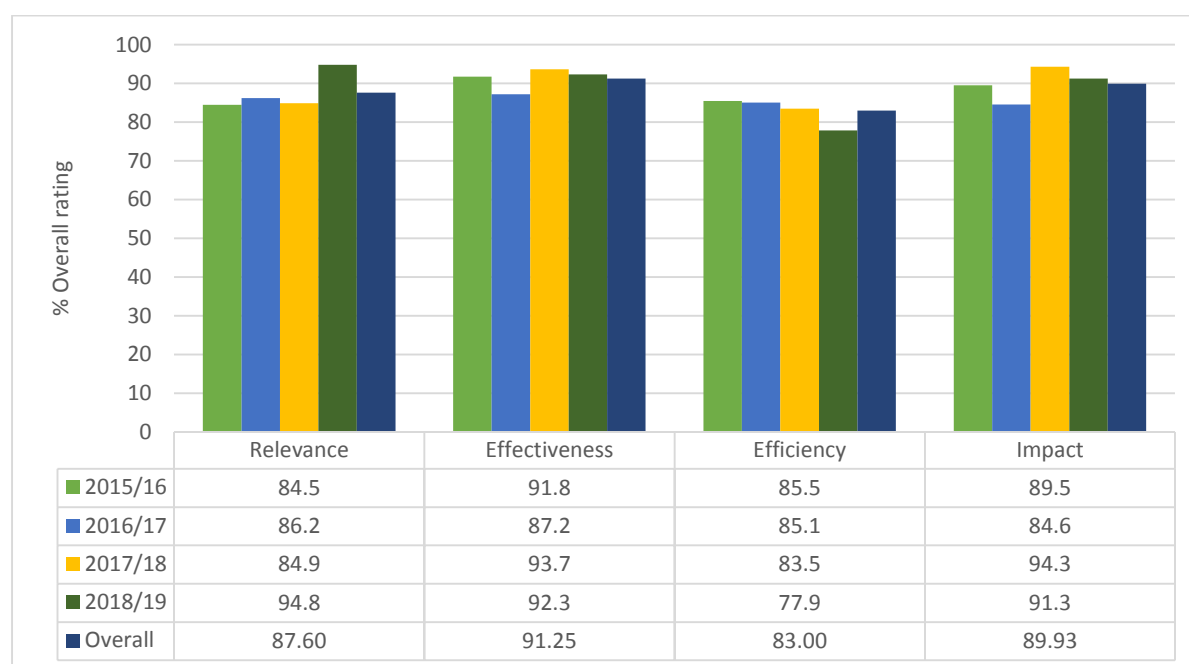
Table 4.9 shows that a number of suggestions were commonly made by stakeholders, and suggestions such as the improvement of administration, selection process and overall programme managers were raised by all stakeholder groups. Meanwhile, suggestions such as the need for a bridging course for previous RMDP graduates was a concern mostly for employers. Some beneficiaries also felt that the learning times should be extended to ensure more time to understand concepts. There were also several beneficiary concerns with the lack of promotion since their graduation; thus, they recommended that the SETA should follow-up employers to ensure the RMDP beneficiaries get promoted.

4.10. Summary

This chapter presented study findings collected from employers, beneficiaries and training providers in the W&R sector on the impact of the RMDP between 2015 and 2019. Data analysis was based on the DAC OECD (2018) five-set evaluation criteria containing an addition of another criterion by Dale (2004). The modified criteria focused on assessing the relevance,

effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and replicability of the programme. The first four variables were assessed using both quantitative and qualitative methods, and are presented in Figure 4.7, and the other two were assessed using qualitative methods.

Figure 4.7: Overall assessment of the RMDP based on the DAC OECD evaluation criteria



Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

On Figure 4.7, the programme relevance was ranked highest by the 2018/18 group (94.8%) and lowest by the 2015/16 group (84.5%) of participants. The overall score of the RMDP relevance was 87.6%. Effectiveness was ranked highest by the 2017/18 group of participants (93.7%) and ranked lowest by the 2016/17 group (87.2%), giving an overall score of 91.3%. Efficiency meanwhile was ranked highest by the 2015/16 group (85.5%) and lowest by the 2018/19 group (77.9%), giving an overall efficiency rating of 83%. Lastly, impact was ranked highest by the 2017/18 group (94.3%) and lowest by the 2016/17 group (84.6%), giving an overall impact rating of 89.9%. These results hence show that, while beneficiaries in 2018/19 found the programme to be highly relevant compared to other years, they found the programme to be comparatively less effective, efficient and impactful than other years. Beneficiaries in 2017/18 however found the programme to be comparatively more effective, and impactful while beneficiaries in 2015/16 found the programme to be the most efficient than other years. To establish the level of significance of differences, a non-parametric test for

independent samples (Kruskal-Wallis H test) was conducted at the 95% confidence level, and results are presented on Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Significance of differences in the RMDP ratings between years

Variable	Test results	Decision
Relevance	11.288 (p= 0.010)	Reject the null hypothesis
Effectiveness	2.501 (p= 0.475)	Do not reject the null hypothesis
Efficiency	5.732 (p= 0.125)	Do not reject the null hypothesis
Impact	13.750 (p= 0.003)	Reject the null hypothesis

Source: W&RSETA Impact Study (2020)

Test results presented on Table 4.10 show that the test value for relevance was 11.288 (p = 0.010), 2.501 for effectiveness (p = 0.475), 5.732 for efficiency (p = 0.125) and 13.750 for impact (p = 0.003). The null hypothesis⁵ was hence rejected on relevance and impact of the RMPD. This led to the conclusion that, with a 5% margin of error, beneficiary views on the relevance and impact of the RMDP were significantly different between years. This points to the likelihood of limitations in terms of standardisation of the programme delivery across the years, since beneficiaries had significantly different programme ratings.

⁵ The null hypothesis stated that there were no significant differences in mean ratings across the years 2015 – 2018.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented findings collected from employers, beneficiaries and training providers in the W&R sector on the impact of the RMDP between 2015 and 2019. This chapter presents a summary of the study findings, makes recommendations based on the findings and suggestions from stakeholders, before presenting an overall conclusion.

5.2. Summary of findings

This study sought to conduct an impact assessment of the RMDP on stakeholders in the W&R sector between 2015 and 2019. An assessment of the demographic variables showed slight improvements in accessibility of the programme to black people, women and black women over the years under review. However, accessibility by the disabled is still very low.

In the assessment of programme relevance, it was noted that the majority found the programme to be relevant. Interviews with beneficiaries and employers further attested to the relevance of the programme, with suggestions being made on course content to be added. In assessing the effectiveness of the RMDP, the majority of beneficiaries classified the programme as very effective, with participants from the 2017/18 group ranking the programme highest in effectiveness. In understanding efficiency, the majority of beneficiaries also ranked the programme as highly efficient, topped by participants from the 2015/16 group. In addition, the majority of beneficiaries highlighted that they were happy with the entire RMDP value, and interview responses also attested to the same. However, a number of challenges which affect the value chain were identified and were noted by employers, beneficiaries and training providers. It was further noted that identified challenges were mostly concerned with the entrance criteria and process, which were raised especially with reference to the RMDP process for 2018/19. On the assessment of impact, several testimonials from beneficiaries and employers noted that the programme has been highly instrumental in the development of beneficiaries. The majority of participants highlighted that the RMDP has met their expectations, and evidence showed an improvement in the average number of subordinates per beneficiary, while the majority also noted that their career level has improved since

graduation. In terms of overall impact in skills improvement, the majority of beneficiaries noted that the programme has highly enhanced their productivity; this was topped by the 2017/18 group. An assessment of ROI for the RMDP also established that the RMDP is highly worthwhile for the SETA and employers, but there is greater need to ensure that beneficiaries get promoted and utilise the accredited status of the RMDP to seek higher education.

Assessment of sustainability and replicability was conducted through qualitative, in-depth discussions with training providers, employers and the RMDP programme manager. It was established in the sustainability assessment that 85% of employers think the programme will still need constant updates in the future to keep it relevant to new trends such as the 4th industrial revolution. However, structural shifts such as changes in the training provider are still fairly challenging, since there is currently no standardisation of programme content, and content changes with changes in training providers, as noted by 70% of employers. Regardless of the challenge of sustainability, the programme's ability to provide lasting positive impacts to beneficiaries, which can lead them to influence other leaders in the sector were noted to be key in ensuring sustainability of the RMDP. Assessment of replicability found that stakeholders have conflicting views about the accreditation status of the RMDP. While some (65%) believe that it is necessary since it provides certificates that can be used for further education. Others (35%) are concerned with the move towards qualification-driven, rather than content driven study. In addition, the accreditation of the RMDP after nominations were closed which meant that several beneficiaries failed to get through. Graduates from the RMDP will therefore not be able to use their NQF 6 qualification for entrance into the ILDP, which now requires a minimum of NQF 7. This gap hence needs to be bridged, to maintain the link between the programmes.

A number of challenges along the RMDP value chain were identified and noted by employers, beneficiaries and training providers as follows:

- *Entrance and selection* – In 2018, selection was conducted through a third party with no involvement of the training provider. This resulted in mismatches of required entry criteria into the (now accredited) RMDP.
- *Content and programme structure* – Some beneficiaries (40%) noted that four days of study in a week were not enough for them to sufficiently learn some courses.

- *Logistics* – It was noted by all employers that the current training provider was having challenges with securing accredited venues for countrywide training. This delayed the commencement of 2018 classes in other provinces besides Gauteng.
- *Programme management* – 95% of stakeholders indicated that since 2018, the efficiency in management of the RMDP had declined, and communication was been poorly handled. All employers indicated that they were not notified of changes in the training provider and accreditation which resulted in the selection criteria change after the closure of nominations. This led to several nominees failing to get through the programme
- *Impact* – It was noted by 30% of beneficiaries that some who went through the RMDP had not yet received promotions , more than a year after graduation, including some who were promised promotions before going through training. As a result, 25% of beneficiaries wished the W&RSETA could intervene by doing follow-ups with their employers to check on their career progress.

In light of the challenges identified, stakeholders put forward a number of key suggestions relating to the entrance into the RMDP, course content and structure, logistics and impact. Key suggestions included the need for improved communication from the SETA, the involvement of training providers in the selection of beneficiaries and the need to implement a bridge between the RMDP and the ILDP.

5.3. Conclusion

This study sought to conduct an impact assessment of the RMDP on stakeholders in the W&R sector between 2015 and 2019. An assessment of the programme was based on a modified set of five evaluation criteria derived from the OECD (2018). These were criteria for evaluating development assistance by adding replicability in addition to relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Through a mixed methods and triangulation of responses from beneficiaries, employers, training providers and the programme manager, it was found that the programme is generally noted as highly relevant, efficient, effective and impactful. However, interventions still need to be implemented to enhance sustainability of the programme such as through streamlining the accreditation process and enhancing replicability by standardising programme content and structure across all training providers.

Further evaluation of differences in programme ratings per year found that these varied significantly in terms of relevance and impact between beneficiaries from different years. This showed that mostly between 2018/19 and other financial years, the training provider change and accreditation of the RMDP resulted in significant changes in perceptions about the programme.

5.4. Recommendations

Recommendations for the improvement of the W&RSETA RMDP were based on study findings as well as stakeholder suggestions. They are grouped into entrance process, course content, logistics and impact recommendations, and are presented in this section.

Streamlining the entrance process into the RMDP

- Stakeholders agreed that changes in the entrance criteria, and delays in the programme and other communications were not handled well by the W&RSETA. Accordingly, as a matter of urgency, the SETA should streamline the entrance process for the RMDP to ensure programme objectives are clearly stated, the entrance criteria is available to all stakeholders and communication is professionally handled. In enhancing communication, the SETA should consider employing an email alert system with a database of all levy-paying employers and beneficiaries who would have been successful in that financial year. This system can be used to alert all stakeholders on nomination dates and changes thereof, any programme delays and other information essential for stakeholders to make decisions.
- As another matter of urgency especially in light of the accreditation status of the RMDP, the training provider should be directly involved in the selection process of successful beneficiaries. The SETA should hence consider doing away with the third-party assessor and establish a taskforce for assessment made up of SETA representatives and the training provider. Alternatively, the SETA should revert back to its process with the previous training provider, where initial selection was conducted by the SETA, and the provider had a chance to conduct next-phase assessments. Both approaches will give the training provider greater say on who gets through to the programme, and ensure all beneficiaries going through the RMDP meet the qualification criteria.

- As far as possible, the time lag between the acceptance of beneficiaries into the RMDP and commencement of training should be minimised. This time lag likely creates greater anxiety and leads to complaints from beneficiaries and employers. To achieve this, processes can be conducted simultaneously to eliminate delays. For instance, while selection is in process, the training provider should plan and submit a detailed delivery plan to the SETA on all dates and venues for training sessions countrywide.

Enhancing content and delivery of the RMDP

- Firstly, the standards, course content and processes for the RMDP should be made uniform even with training provider changes. This will eliminate the possible differences in skills levels and perceptions of the programme by graduates from different years. However, it is also understood that standardising content of the RMDP in its current accredited state will be highly challenging since the process of accrediting qualifications is resource and time consuming. Perhaps this can be considered as a longer-term venture but is still highly necessary to implement.
- Secondly, the training provider should initiate consultations with employers and successful beneficiaries immediately after closure of the selection processes to establish the possible programme lengths and dates. This can help address any needs for additional time per module, with the endorsement of both employers and beneficiaries.
- Lastly, a bridging programme between the accredited RMDP and ILDP should be developed and implemented. This will restore the connection between programmes and ensure the RMDP graduates can still use their qualification to get into the ILDP. This bridging programme should be able to satisfy the NQF Level 7, which is the minimum entrance into the ILDP. Ensuring continuity between the RMDP and the ILDP will also act as a tool to enhance the sustainability of the RMDP in its current accredited state.

Streamlining the logistical and administration processes of the RMDP

- To enhance the overall logistical process which includes making announcements to stakeholders and handling queries such as beneficiaries' failure to attend certain classes, the SETA should ensure that **only one** point of contact exists to communicate

with beneficiaries and employers shortly after assessment is complete. According to employers and beneficiary testimonies, this was implemented successfully by the previous training provider, and the logistical process was noted to be 'seamless'. The SETA's communication with beneficiaries should end at the nomination process, and resume when graduation plans are made.

Enhancing impacts of the RMDP

- The SETA should emphasise to employers the need to provide promotional opportunities to all graduates of the RMDP. A year after each graduate group has left the programme, a snapshot tracer evaluation should be run focusing on collecting (i) the success stories from beneficiaries of the programme, (ii) the percentage of beneficiaries who have obtained promotions, and (iii) the reasons for non-promotion of some beneficiaries of the RMDP. This process will act as an ongoing ROI assessment and will allow the SETA to closely monitor successes with regard to equity and transformation in the sector.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A: ACCESS LETTER



Dear Stakeholder,

Re: Impact Study: Retail Development Management Programme (RMDP).

The Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA) is one of the statutory bodies that have been re-established by the Minister of Higher Education and Training in terms of the Skills Development Act of 1998 to enable its stakeholders to advance the national and global position of the Wholesale and Retail sector. As guided by its mandate, the W&RSETA develops and implements the Sector Skills Plan within the framework of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS); promote and facilitate the skills development in the Wholesale and Retail Sector.

The Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA) has appointed UNDERHILL SOLUTIONS to conduct research on the Retail Development Management Programme (RMDP). The research findings and recommendations will assist W&RSETA in implementing responsive interventions and programmes for RMDP.

We would like to appeal for your participation in contributing towards the successful completion of this study and urge you to kindly avail yourself for further engagement with the Researcher. Should you require more details about this study or should you have any enquiries, please don't hesitate to contact us.

We look forward to your positive participation.

Kind Regards,

Deborah Machard

Chief Officer: Qualifications & Research (COQR)

Board: Yvonne Mbane (Chairperson), Zinhle Tyikwe, Reggie Sibiya, Lwazi Koyana, Praise God Ndaba, Mogomotsi Masoabi, Themba Mthembu, David Makuwa, Fachmy Abrahams, Sibusiso Busane, Margaret Bango.



Hennops House, Riverside Office Park, 1303 Heuwel Avenue, Cnr Lenchen and Heuwel Avenues, Centurion, 0157 Private Bag X106, Centurion, 0046 | Tel: 012 622 9500 | Fax: 012 663 9585
Email: wrseta@wrseta.org.za | Website: www.wrseta.org.za

Tom Mkhwanazi, Chief Executive Officer

ANNEXURE B: ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER



**APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL OF A RESEARCH PROJECT FROM THE
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL SECTOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING AUTHORITY
(W&RSETA).**

21/10/2019

RFP/2019/23593

**Name of Lead Researcher: Dr
Edmore Mahembe**

**Company Name: UNDERHILL
CORPORATE SOLUTION**

Dear Dr Edmore Mahembe

Decision: Ethical Approval

**Period: 21/10/2019 to 31/
05/2020**

**Title of project: Impact Study of the Retail Management Development Programme (ILDLP),
2015 – 2019.**

Project Manager: Mxolisi Maphakela

Project: Impact Study

Thank you for conducting this project. W&R SETA hereby grants you permission for the continuation of the above-mentioned project.

**Please note that this approval letter is only valid for a period of seven (7) months.
after which the project will be completed.**

The due date for a progress report: 28 February 2020

Board: Yvonne Mbane (Chairperson), Zinhle Tyikwe, Reggie Sibiya, Lwazi Koyana, Praise God Ndaba, Mogomotsi Masoabi, Themba Mthembu, David Makuwa, Fachmy Abrahams, Sibusiso Busane, Margaret Bango.



Hennops House, Riverside Office Park, 1303 Heuwel Avenue, Cnr Lenchen and Heuwel Avenues, Centurion, 0157
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Email: wrseta@wrseta.org.za | Website: www.wrseta.org.za

Tom Mkhwanazi, Chief Executive Officer

The proposed Research project may commence under the conditions that:

1. The Researcher will warrant that the research project obeys to the values and principles expressed by W&R SETA.
2. Any contrary circumstances arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to W&R SETA.
3. The researcher will ensure that the research project abides by any applicable national legislation, professional code of conduct and W&R SETA guidelines.

Note:

The RFP number (top right corner of this Communique) should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication (e.g. E-mail, Letters, Questionnaire) with the intended research participants.

Project Manager

Signature: _____

Date: 23/10/2019

Mr. Mxolisi Maphakela

Acting Manager: Skills Planning and Research (SP&R)

Project Owner

Signature: _____

Date: 23-10-19

Ms. Deborah Machard

Chief Officer: Qualifications and Research (COQR)

Lead Researcher

Signature: _____

Date: 23/10/2019

Dr. Edmore Mahembe

Underhill Corporate Solution

Board: Yvonne Mbane (Chairperson), Zinhle Tyikwe, Reggie Sibiya, Lwazi Koyana, Praise God Ndaba, Mogomotsi Masoabi, Themba Mthembu, David Makuwa, Fachmy Abrahams, Sibusiso Busane, Margaret Bango.

ANNEXURE C: BENEFICIARIES QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE NUMBER

Name of interviewer			
Name of organisation			



IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY OF THE RETAIL MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (RMDP) FROM 2015-2019

RMDP BENEFICIARIES QUESTIONNAIRE

RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY



UNDERHILL CORPORATE SOLUTIONS
Inspired solutions for world-wide impact!

Research Ethics

1. Participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you can withdraw your participation at any point during the questionnaire completion process
2. All information will be treated as confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study. No sensitive personal information of participants will be in the report. All responses will be aggregated and results presented as overall results not individual responses.
3. Please note that there are no right or wrong answers. We have no vested interest in the results, other than to report the findings to the W&RSETA
4. The questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. No rewards of any form will be given to you for participating in this study.

ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION

	Tick	Comments
Interview completed		
Hard copy		
Electronically		
File name		

INTRODUCTION

Underhill Corporate Solutions (UCS) has been contracted by the Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA) to conduct a study titled *“Impact assessment study for the Retail Management Development Programme (RMDP) from 2015-2019”* which includes the administration of questionnaires to programme beneficiaries such as yourself.

The study is meant to establish the extent to which the RMDP programme is achieving its intended targets, set from inception in 2015. Among the key issues to be examined are; relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, Impact and replicability of the programme.

We appreciate your participation and your opinions in this process

Interviewee undertaking

I confirm that I am voluntarily participating in this study and have not been coerced in any way to do so. I also understand there are no rewards of any form accruing from my participation in this study.

SIGNED: _____
Signature of interviewee

DATE: _____

For office use:**CROSS-CHECK ON INTERVIEW BY UCS DATA COLLECTION SUPERVISOR****Outcome of cross-check:**

Questionnaire was completed correctly?	Yes	No
----------------------------------------	-----	----

COMMENTS

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

A1. Please indicate your gender

Male	1	Female	2	Other	3
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A2. Please indicate your race

Black African	1	Coloured	3	White	4
Indian/Asian	2	Other (specify)			5

A3. Please indicate your age

20 – 30 years	1	31 – 40 years	2	41 – 50 years	3	Above 50 years	4
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A4. Highest academic qualification before RMDP training

Below matric	1	Matric	2	College Diploma	3	Bachelor's Degree	4
Honours Degree	5	Master's Degree	6	PhD	7	Other (specify) 8	

A5. Please indicate your province of residence

Gauteng	1	Northern Cape	2
North West	3	Eastern Cape	4
Mpumalanga	5	Western Cape	6
Limpopo	7	Free State	8
KwaZulu-Natal	9		

A6. Year of completion of the RMDP

2015/16	1	2016/17	2	2017/18	3
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A7. How many years of management experience did you have when you enrolled for the RMDP?

A8. What management level were you at by the time you enrolled into the RMDP?

Junior management		Middle management		Senior management	
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A9. Do you have disability?

Yes	1	No	2
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A10. Name of the company you are currently working for

A11. How would you categorise the company you are working for?

Small/ Micro	1	Medium	2	Large	3
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A12. How would you define the geographical area of the company (branch) you are currently working at?

Rural area	1	Urban area	2	Peri-urban (outskirts, rural urban)	3
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SECTION B: EVALUATION OF RELEVANCE OF RMDP

This section seeks to evaluate your views as RMDP graduate, in terms of how relevant you found the programme to be.

B1. Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements outlined below:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
B1.1. The objectives of the RMDP were clearly defined and communicated to me before training					
B1.2. All topics covered throughout the programme are relevant to me and my organisation					
B1.3. All topics covered throughout the programme are relevant to the Wholesale and Retail (W&R) sector					
B1.4. Completing the RMDP places an individual at a position able to fill in part of the Hard to Fill Vacancies in our organisation					
B1.5. Content of the RMDP exceeded my expectations					
B1.6. The way the RMDP is contacted fully prepares an individual to become a more effective leader; and empowers them to influence others					
B1.7. I would recommend my colleagues to participate in the RMDP as is					
B1.8. I would recommend my colleagues to participate in the RMDP on condition that it is improved					
B1.9. Masterclasses/Speakers covered topics relevant to what is expected of a leader					

SECTION C: EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS OF THE RMDP

This section seeks to establish whether the RMDP managed to deliver expected knowledge to you.

C1. Please indicate the extent to which you have acquired learning across the following lines:

	Not at all	Not well	Neutral	Well	Very well
C1.1. All background information, targets and intended outcomes were explained to me before commencement of the training					
C1.2. The objectives of the training programme were fully met by the time I graduated					
C1.3. The objectives of the RMDP were easy to meet/ fully achievable					
C1.4. The RMDP has improved my research skills in the context of the W&R sector					
C1.5. The RMDP has enhanced my appreciation of the global W&R sector					
C1.6. My skills in Operations, Supply Chain Management as well as marketing have improved due to the RMDP					
C1.7. I now have a stronger grasp of Retail Technology & Information Management					
C1.8. As a result of the programme, I can now better manage the human resources and budget assigned to me					
C1.9. The RMDP has given me sufficient background learning for me to pursue the RMDP in the future					
C1.10. The RMDP has made me a champion for the W&R sector able to influence other young leaders					

C2. How would you describe the relevance of the RMDP to:

	Highly relevant	Somewhat relevant	Neutral	Irrelevant	Highly irrelevant
C2.1. To yourself?					
C2.2. The workplace?					
C2.3. The W&R sector?					

SECTION D: EVALUATION OF EFFICIENCY OF THE RMDP

This section assesses the ease with which the RMDP achieved its goals and intended outcomes

D1. Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements outlined below:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
D1.1. Logistical preparations for the RMDP are easy, and I moved through the process with little difficulty					
D1.2. Selection, registration and training were all done on time, and I graduated at the originally set date					
D1.3. The programme content and delivery structure are favourable for completion; and do not lead to any dropouts					
D1.4. I do not think there should be an alternative approach to delivery or structure of the RMDP since it is fairly effective in addressing W&R sector scarce skills					

SECTION E: EVALUATION OF IMPACT OF THE RMDP

The purpose of this section is to establish the extent to which you are applying skills/competencies learnt through the RMDP in your workplace

E1. Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements outlined below:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
E1.1. I am now a more effective supervisor/manager since completing RMDP					
E1.2. I can execute tasks I previously struggled with more efficiently and effectively					
E1.3. My target achievement rate has significantly improved since completing RMDP					
E1.4. The RMDP learning material is fully applicable to my day to day work routine					
E1.5. I can now contribute greater value to my company due to my completion of RMDP					
E1.6. I am fully able to pass on the training knowledge and skills learnt through RMDP to my subordinates and others					

SECTION F: CAREER ADVANCEMENT SINCE RMDP COMPLETION

This section measures the career advancements (if any) you experienced since completion of the RMDP programme

F1. Are you still employed by the same company you were in when you got enrolled into the RMDP?	Yes	1	No	2
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----	---	----	---

F2. IF not, what employment are you currently on since the completing RMDP

F3. What was the nature of your employment before and after RMDP graduation?

Before RMDP		After RMDP			
Permanently employed	Self-employed	Permanently employed	Contract / consultant	Self-employed	Unemployed

F3. Indicate your job title before and after RMDP graduation

Before RMDP Graduation	After RMDP Graduation

F4. Indicate the number of people reporting to you before and after RMDP graduation

Before RMDP Graduation	After RMDP Graduation

F5. Has your job position improved/regressed since your graduation with the RMDP programme?

Improved		Regressed		Unchanged	
----------	--	-----------	--	-----------	--

SECTION G: OTHER FOLLOW-UP (IN-DEPTH) QUESTIONS

G1. What were your expectations in terms of learning and growth before you began studying RMDP?

G1. What were your expectations in terms of learning and growth before you began RMDP?

G2. Were your expectations in 'G2' above met?

Yes	1	No	2
-----	---	----	---

G3. List any positive impacts after completion of the programme (e.g. promotion)

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

G4.

G5. Which areas of your overall learning do you think you are going to apply/are already applying in your workplace; and which aspects are inapplicable to you?

Applicable aspects/material/content	Inapplicable aspects/material/content

G1. Indicate (with reasons) examples of content/courses you expect to be added or removed from the RMDP

Courses to be added	Courses to be removed

G2. Are you happy with the course delivery approach of the RMDP? If no, give reasons and provide own alternative delivery approach(es)

Happy/not	
Reason(s)	
Alternative delivery approach(es)	

G3. What do you think are the major weaknesses of the W&RSETA RMDP?

--

G4. Suggest any recommendations for improvement of the W&RSETA RMDP in terms of entry, logistics, delivery/ content and relevance to skills needs of the sector

--

END, THANK YOU

ANNEXURE D: EMPLOYERS INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTERVIEW NUMBER

Name of interviewer			
Name of organisation			



**IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY FOR THE RETAIL MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (the RMDP)
FROM 2015-2019**

the RMDP EMPLOYERS DISCUSSION GUIDE

RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY



Research Ethics

5. Participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you can withdraw your participation at any point during the questionnaire completion process
6. All information will be treated as confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study. No sensitive personal information of participants will be in the report. All responses will be aggregated and results presented as overall results not individual responses.
7. Please note that there are no right or wrong answers. We have no vested interest in the results, other than to report the findings to the W&RSETA
8. The questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. No rewards of any form will be given to you for participating in this study.

ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION

Interview completed		
Hard copy		
Electronically		
File name		

INTRODUCTION

Underhill Corporate Solutions (UCS) has been contracted by the Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA) to conduct a study titled *“Impact assessment study for the Retail Management Development Programme (RMDP) from 2015-2019”* which includes the administration of questionnaires to employers of the programme beneficiaries .

The study is meant to establish the extent to which the RMDP programme is achieving its intended targets, set from inception in 2015. Among the key issues to be examined are; relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and replicability of the programme.

We appreciate your participation and your opinions in this process

Interviewee undertaking

I confirm that I am voluntarily participating in this study and have not been coerced in any way to do so. I also understand there are no rewards of any form accruing from my participation in this study.

SIGNED: _____
Signature of interviewee

DATE: _____

For office use:

CROSS-CHECK ON INTERVIEW BY UCS DATA COLLECTION SUPERVISOR		
Outcome of cross-check:		
Interview was completed correctly?	Yes	No
COMMENTS		

INSTITUTIONAL DETAILS

Complete or check information for correctness

Name of institution			
Name of Department			
Street address			
		Postal code	
Postal address (please include province and postal code)			
		Postal code	
Telephone number	()		
Fax number	()		
Title, name and surname of person interviewed			
Position of person interviewed			
E-mail address of person interviewed			

Number of employees of organisation

Below 20		21-30		31-40		41-60	
60-100		100-150		150-200		Above 200	

Company province of location

Gauteng	1		Northern Cape	2
North West	3		Eastern Cape	4
Mpumalanga	5		Western Cape	6
Limpopo	7		Free State	8
KwaZulu-Natal	9			

Company's main business

--

SECTION A: EVALUATION OF the RMDP RELEVANCE

- A1. Are you satisfied with the preparation process for the RMDP mainly in terms of nomination requirements, qualification criteria and funding for your employees? Elaborate.

--

- A2. To what extent do you think the RMDP content is relevant to the needs of your employees, your company and the overall W&R sector? In other words, do you think the RMDP course content is enough to address hard to fill vacancies among middle management?

--

- A3. Indicate (with reasons) examples of content/courses you think should be added or removed from the RMDP

Courses to be added	Courses to be removed

SECTION B: ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF The RMDP

- B1. Indicate the skills gaps being addressed by the RMDP in your company; and indicate which skills gaps still exist among lower and middle level managers

SKILLS GAPS COVERED	SKILLS GAPS STILL EXISTING

- B2. What costs (monetary and non-monetary) does your organisation face in the process of sending your employees through the RMDP programme?

Monetary costs

--

Non-monetary costs

--

- B3. What benefits (monetary and non-monetary) are your organisation enjoying from the graduation of your employees with the RMDP?

Monetary benefits

--

Non-monetary benefits

--

- B4. Do you conduct Return on Investment/ profitability calculations on the net benefits of sending your selected staff through the RMDP programme? YES/NO _____

- B5. If yes, elaborate on the profitability of the organisation attributable to completion of the RMDP by selected employees

--

SECTION B: ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT OF The RMDP ON THE ORGANISATION

- C1. Do you think the RMDP sufficiently meets its objective of producing high-calibre junior and middle managers in the W&R sector? Elaborate on the strengths and limitations.

--

- C2. What measures does your company take to ensure you comply with accessibility requirements for the RMDP such as the promotion of Historically Disadvantaged Individuals, women and the disabled?

--

- C3. What are your expectations when you nominate employees to be part of the RMDP?

--

C4. Are these expectations usually met? Elaborate on the programme's success or failure to meet your expectations

C5. In your organisation, have you noticed any performance improvements from your staff as well as career advancements post-completion of the RMDP? Elaborate while giving success stories (if any)

C6. Can you recommend any improvements for W&RSETA the RMDP in terms of entry, logistics, delivery/ content, accessibility and relevance to skills needs of the sector?

END, THANK YOU

ANNEXURE E: TRAINING PROVIDERS INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTERVIEW NUMBER

Name of interviewer			
Name of organisation			



**IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY FOR THE RETAIL MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (the RMDP)
FROM 2015-2019**

THE RMDP TRAINING PROVIDERS QUESTIONNAIRE

RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY



UNDERHILL CORPORATE SOLUTIONS
Inspired solutions for world-wide impact!

Research Ethics

9. Participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you can withdraw your participation at any point during the questionnaire completion process
10. All information will be treated as confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study. No sensitive personal information of participants will be in the report. All responses will be aggregated, and results presented as overall results not individual responses.
11. Please note that there are no right or wrong answers. We have no vested interest in the results, other than to report the findings to the W&RSETA
12. The questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. No rewards of any form will be given to you for participating in this study.

ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION

	Tick	Comments
Interview completed		
Hard copy		
Electronically		
File name		

INTRODUCTION

Underhill Corporate Solutions (UCS) has been contracted by the Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA) to conduct a study titled *“Impact assessment study for the Retail Management Development Programme (RMDP) from 2015-2019”* which includes the administration of questionnaires to programme trainers such as yourself.

The study is meant to establish the extent to which the RMDP programme is achieving its intended targets, set from inception in 2015. Among the key issues to be examined are; relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, Impact, sustainability and replicability of the programme.

We appreciate your participation and your opinions in this process

Interviewee undertaking

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SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____

Signature of interviewee

For office use:

CROSS-CHECK ON INTERVIEW BY UCS DATA COLLECTION SUPERVISOR

Outcome of cross-check:

Interview was completed correctly?	Yes	No
COMMENTS		

INSTITUTIONAL DETAILS

Complete or check information for correctness

Name of institution			
Name of Department			
Street address			
		Postal code	
Postal address (please include province and postal code)			
		Postal code	
Telephone number	()		
Fax number	()		
Title, name and surname of person interviewed			
Position of person interviewed			
E-mail address of person interviewed			

G2. Can you elaborate on the extent to which trainees coming for the RMDP meet the appropriate entrance criteria? Is there evidence of non-qualifying individuals who still participate in the program?

--

G3. What is the training process for the RMDP trainees, from programme orientation to graduation?

--

G4. What does the performance of the RMDP participants tell you about:

The relevance of training material to the Wholesale and Retail (W&R) sector?	
Participants' revealed levels of interest in the programme, their attentiveness and desire to perform better?	
Participants' ability to quickly and effectively grasp concepts?	
The difficulty level of training material, especially considering the entrance criteria?	

G5. What are the chances for failing the program? If yes, under what circumstances?

G6. What are the key factors leading to the drop out of some participants before completion of the RMDP?
(For instance, issues with the training itself, participants' failure of courses during training and unforeseen issues)

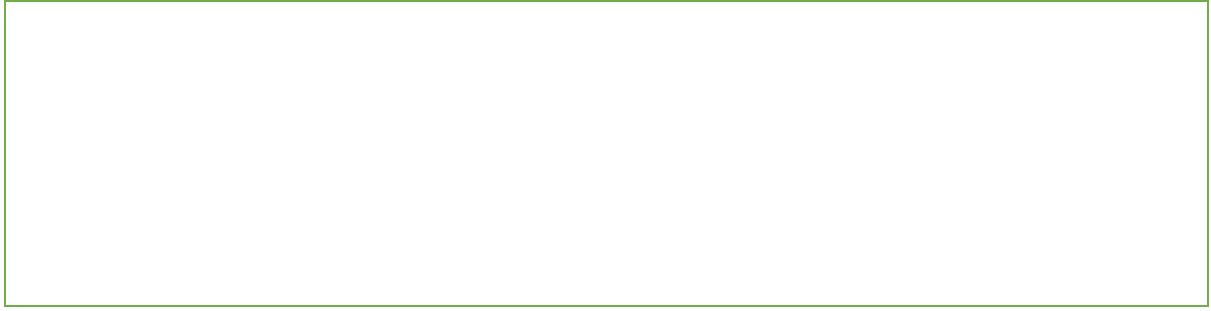
G7. Besides dropouts, what other challenges are facing the preparation, delivery and completion of the RMDP training?

G8. Currently, can the RMDP be defined as sustainable? Please elaborate on the current sustainability position

G9. What activities and enablers should be in place to ensure the W&RSETA the RMDP becomes more sustainable in the future?

G10. How do you think the merging of the RMDP with ILDP; or other interventions such as revising the course structure of the programme will affect its impact into the W&R sector?

G11. What recommendations can you put forward for improvement of the W&RSETA the RMDP in terms of entry, logistics, delivery/ content, accessibility and relevance to skills needs of the sector?



END, THANK YOU