higher education
& training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

PRESENTATION TO HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA

Motivation for the response: Preamble

The response took into consideration the policy framework as set out by the White Paper for Post School Education and Training which was promulgated after the release of the HRDC Skills System Review Technical Task Team (SSR TTT) Report as well as the feasibility of implementing some of the recommendations under the current legislative framework governing the post school landscape. It is against this background that the recommendations were made with the full understanding that to ensure a radical shift with minimum disruption and continuity, implementation will assume a medium to long term approach. To give effect to the recommendations in the spirit of the WP PSET, some of the areas will be regulated in the short to medium term whilst new post school legislation is developed to optimally cater for the new mandate starting with the priorities of the National Development Plan 2030.

1. Provisional agreement on the establishment of a single national skills council

Motivation:

It was the intention of the DHET Task Team to provide a comprehensive response to the report whilst avoiding to act prematurely by pre-empting the details that will inform the establishment of the National Skills Council, however, the presentation made attempted to provide some of the fundamental policy prescripts and the legislative frameworks that have a direct and indirect influence on the structural design and the strategic intent of the National Skills Council. The presentation details on this aspect are as follows:

From the proposed high level functions of the proposed council as the presentation, it is apparent that there are a number of processes that must still unfold and engagement within the DHET that must still take place to ensure that whatever structure or institution to be established promotes coherence, integration, effectiveness and responsiveness of the PSET.

2. Key policy issues on the Business Case;

Motivation:

Guiding Principles of the Skills System

The business case and the development process of the post school skills system to be undertaken should be guided by the legislative and policy mandate as well as by the contextual realities of our evolving democratic revolution. As much as we may want to learn good skills development practices from other countries, we must not forget that every system takes time to evolve and mature; thus, ours is still new and influenced by a variety of factors as well as the high expectation of the youth and the previously disadvantaged African people in the main. Some of the key issues are:

- **Building on the strength** of the available capacity and the resources
- **range of pathways:** involve skill sets and full qualifications, progression within and across industry and education sectors as appropriate to skills building, skills deepening and changing career direction
- **Industry direction**: The system is based on industry defined competency standards and industry input to key policy directions
- **National consistency**: Skills System should be a nationally agreed. Qualifications, training and assessment should be consistent. This will be achieved through agreed protocols, regulation and quality assurance.
- **Flexibility**: There is no differentiation in programs by age. Participation of learners is assisted by recognition of prior learning pathways
- **Involvement of provincial structure:** clarify the role to be played by structures at provincial, district and municipal level

The Business Case on the Skills System Review process should take into consideration the timelines attached to other crucial processes with implications and these are:

- Expiry of current Seta Landscape License period in March 2016
- The National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III review by March 2016
- South African Institute for Vocational and continuing Education and Training (SAIVCET) process that should unfold
- White Paper (WP) for Post School Education (PSET) implementation plan process that seeks to align policy imperatives. Once the WP-PSET Implementation plan is approved, appropriate timelines will be set for the Skills System Review process which must be underpinned by the principles encapsulated in the following questions that seek to respond a number of issues including:

  ❖ increased capacity of the delivery system;
  ❖ what form of governance structure will effectively support the delivery system;
  ❖ the extent to which current provision meets the demand for skills;

- ❖ what new programs are required to meet demand;
- ❖ which programs should be delivered where, and by whom;
- ❖ what pathways/articulation links should be in place between different programs;
- ❖ what standards, curriculum, qualifications and teacher training programs should be set and delivered;
- ❖ what are the shared services that should be centralised across all SETAs to leverage economies of scale
- ❖ and reduce administration costs in particular;
- ❖ what additional infrastructure is required; and
- ❖ what might be the most effective utilization of public resources and effort.

Requirements of the Skills System

The business case should be aligned to the broad requirements of the Skills System whilst addressing pertinent contextual imperatives. The ILO states these requirements as:

- Meet demands of labour market and society and anticipate skills needs
- Engage employers and employees in decision making related to skills Development
- Maintain the quality and relevance of Training
- Make training accessible to all
- Ensure viable and equitable financing Mechanisms
- Monitor and evaluate the economic and social outcomes of training

Whilst the envisaged business case will outline in detail the new structures and systems for the effective realisation of the outcomes of the Post School Skills Landscape, it is important to ensure the participation of the social partners at most partners at most crucial level of informing the expected outcomes of the system. The SETAs will interface with the various beneficiaries and role players who should in the main deploy people with the relevant technical knowledge to serve in various skills forums.

3. The architecture of the hybrid model

Motivation:

The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (PSET), sub-titled 'building an expanded, effective and integrated post-school system'– proposes a system that

threads the different parts of the post-school system together. It follows that the future role, function and architecture of SETAs must be framed in this context, as too must be the setting of strategic priorities.

This does not mean that the propositions of the many working groups that worked prior to the publication of the White Paper are not worthy sources of input into the implementation of the White Paper – simply which their inputs need to be judged in the light of it. This applies to the HRDC TTT Report on "Review of the current skills development system and recommendations towards the best model for delivering skills in the country" as much as to the other Ministerial and HRDC Task Teams. This is the understanding that has framed the approach of the DHET Task Team.

A key factor that should influence the focus of this framework is the relationship between TVET and skills development more broadly. The definition and scope of skills development, including formal Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is a key issue when considering the issues of structure and coordination. Defining skills development is crucial for the proper decision making process. Skills development can be conceived more broadly to include:

- pre-employment and livelihood skills training;
- education and training for employed workers, including workplace training; and
- employment oriented and job-related short courses, including apprenticeships.

It can be argued that the term skills development is more useful to describe the full range of activities involving some form of technical and vocational education and skills training. Viewed in this way, skills development includes the activities of all private and industry based training organisations, as well as the large number of NGO and government organisations involved in skills oriented education and training. Consequently, the scope of this review of structure, system, strategy and coordination should not be limited to formal Skills development only but also to how it will impact the TVET system in general.