



social development

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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH CAMPS: “The Department of Social Development Model”

FINAL DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION REPORT



BREAK THE CHAINS
Development Services cc

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|----------|---|
| APP | Annual Performance Plan |
| AIDS | Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome |
| BTC | Break the Chains Development Services |
| COVID-19 | Coronavirus Disease 2019 |
| CSOs | Civil society organisations |
| DDM | District Development Model |
| DOD | Department of Defence |
| DoH | Department of Health |
| DSD | Department of Social Development |
| EC | Eastern Cape Province |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussions |
| FS | Free State Province |
| GBV | Gender-Based Violence |
| GP | Gauteng Province |
| ID | Identification |
| KII | Key Informant Interviews |
| LGBTIQA+ | Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual |
| LP | Limpopo Province |
| M&E | Monitoring and evaluation |
| NARYSEC | National Rural Youth Service Corps |
| NDP | National Development Plan |
| NPO | Non-Profit Organisations |
| NYDA | National Youth Development Agency |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| POPI Act | Protection of Personal Information Act |
| SETA | Sector Education and Training Authority |
| SOPs | Standard operating procedures |
| TOC | Theory of Change |
| ToR | Terms of reference |
| YC | Youth Camp |

1. INTRODUCTION

This report documents the approach, methodology, findings, and recommendations of the Department of Social Development, “DSD Model” Youth Camps design and implementation evaluation. In this report, we provide information regarding the rationale behind the concept of youth camps, the background to the evaluation, its objectives and the expected deliverables and then present a detailed explanation of the evaluation design and the approach and methodology used. We then provide detailed quantitative and qualitative findings in a triangulated manner to reveal insights that both approaches revealed. We also provide lessons learnt from other countries, including South Africa, where youth camps have been implemented. We then propose a model informed by the findings and recommendations from the evaluation that we believe will make the whole concept of youth camps more sustainable in future.

1.1 About Youth Camps

The Youth Camp is a legacy project and DSD programme. DSD has implemented youth camps since 2012 in all nine provinces. The programme targets youth aged 17 to 35 years. Through the youth camps, the Department has established a youth movement that enables them to play an active role in developing their communities. The youth involved in the DSD youth camps have also been encouraged to establish and revitalise youth-led organisations and sustainable activities that promote the adoption of positive values by young people and keep them away from the streets. Youth have also been encouraged to contribute towards building cohesive communities through participation in various social transformation initiatives. This programme also provides a vehicle to implement DSD programmes like campaigns on substance abuse, social crime, dialogues and youth leadership programmes.

The youth camps are intended to be an environment where young people are mobilised, moulded, guided and equipped to enhance their skills, capacities and employability and maximise their individual and collective energies for personal development and the development of broader society. These programmes aim to bring together youth of all races, geographical backgrounds and cultures and provide them with an enriching experience that builds their character and leadership skills. They are meant to prepare the youth to be agents of change with the capacity to contribute toward building a cohesive, equitable and vibrant South African society.

2. DESIGN and IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION OF THE DSD MODEL YOUTH CAMPS

The DSD Youth Directorate commissioned a design and implementation evaluation of the “DSD Model” youth camps. The purpose of the evaluation was to analyse the experiences of youth who are camp beneficiaries, evaluate the implementation of youth camps, and review the youth camp approach and models to date. The expected outcome is developing a youth camp model and database by recording and analysing experiences from the youth camps. Part of the design and implementation evaluation is revisiting the youth camps' design and developing a theory of change (ToC).

2.1. Evaluation Objectives and Key Evaluation Questions

The following evaluation objectives were outlined in the terms of reference (ToR):

- a) Conduct an in-depth research study on the impact of youth camps conducted by the DSD between 2012 and 2019.
- b) Analyse experiences of youth who are camp beneficiaries.
- c) Evaluate the implementation of youth camps.
- d) Review youth camp approach and models to date using comparative studies.
- e) Undertake case studies on the impact of the camps on participants; and
- f) The expected outcome is developing a youth camp model and database by recording and analysing experiences about the youth camps.

The ToR noted that the design and implementation evaluation of the youth camps was to be conducted in accordance with Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – Development Assistance Committee’s (DAC) criteria for evaluating development interventions¹. The criteria are explained in Table 1 below. In the table, we have aligned the DAC criteria to the evaluation questions in the ToR, which guide what DSD sought to understand about the youth camps.

Table 1: Evaluation Criteria according to OECD aligned to the Design and Implementation Evaluation of Youth Camps

| Evaluation Criteria | Scope according to OECD | Evaluation questions according to the ToR |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Relevance | The extent to which the intervention/activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and funder. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">To what extent have Youth Camps contributed to DSD’s strategic objectives/plan and the government’s strategic objectives/plans (such as those described in the national outcomes, where appropriate or the National Development Plan) and the relationship with the objectives of any other existing or planned programmes? |

¹ See: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

| Evaluation Criteria | Scope according to OECD | Evaluation questions according to the ToR |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Effectiveness | A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the design and implementation of Youth Camps been effective in achieving goals, objectives and intended outcomes? • What are the measurable results of Youth Camps in the period of review? • What are the main barriers and challenges of implementing Youth Camps? • Which aspects of the Youth Camps seem to be working and/or not working and require upscaling, including the skills component? • What is the effectiveness and impact of Youth Camps as a mobilisation tool? • What perceptions exist about Youth Camps, and how has the implementation of the Youth Camps influenced the lives of the individual youth and their families? • How can the Youth Camp model be considered to become an effective youth mobilisation strategy against gender-based violence, youth employment, substance abuse and other social ills affecting youth? |
| Efficiency | Efficiency measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term that signifies that the intervention/activity uses the least costly resources possible to achieve the desired results. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the implementation of Youth Camps been efficient with specific regards to (a) organisation design and applied delivery model(s); (b) core businesses processes used; (c) management and administration including record keeping; (d) value for money (costing of the implementation of the model)? |
| Sustainability | Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after funding has been withdrawn. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially sustainable. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How sustainable as Youth Camps? And what is the medium to long-term prognosis of Youth Camps? • Are there viable alternatives to the Youth Camps? • How can the model be improved and sustained? • What is a Youth Camp model and concept that aligns with the mandate of DSD? |
| Lessons learnt | N/A | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What evidence exists from other countries on solutions that are working? |

| Evaluation Criteria | Scope according to OECD | Evaluation questions according to the ToR |
|---------------------|-------------------------|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there lessons that can be learned from these countries to develop workable solutions and a Youth Camp model and concept? • How can a Youth Camp model be strategically redefined to become a Youth Empowerment strategy that enables youth to realise their potential, resulting in positive changes within families and communities? |

In the process of crafting our approach and methodology for the design and implementation evaluation, our emphasis was to assess how and to what extent each of these criteria, as defined by OECD, and in response to each evaluation question, applied to how the youth camps were designed and implemented across the country. The design and implementation evaluation, as explained in the following section, was to examine the youth camps implemented between 2012 and 2019.

2.2.Deliverables from the Design and Implementation Evaluation

The following deliverables were expected from the evaluation:

- ◆ Inception report.
- ◆ Programme survey report.
- ◆ A comprehensive database of youth camp beneficiaries, frameworks, theory of change and costing report.
- ◆ Fieldwork report.
- ◆ Draft Evaluation report.
- ◆ Final Evaluation report.

3. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

3.1Evaluation Design

In responding to the evaluation questions, we deemed a pragmatic research design more appropriate. Grounding the evaluation on the pragmatic design, we adopted a cross-sectional mixed methods design to adequately respond to the evaluation objectives (Rindfleisch et al., 2008²; OECD,

² Rindfleisch, A., Malter, A. J., Ganesan, S. & Moorman, C. (2008). Cross-sectional versus longitudinal survey research: Concepts, findings, and guidelines. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 45(3), 261-279

2012³). The mixed-methods design included qualitative and quantitative research methods implemented through a descriptive approach. Descriptive research aims to observe, describe, and document aspects of a situation as it naturally occurs (Polit & Hungler, 1999)⁴. The descriptive approach enables us to describe how the “DSD Model” youth camps were organised and implemented by national and provinces based on the experiences of the youth beneficiaries, the implementers, programme managers and other stakeholders. Using this research design, we captured and documented suggestions towards improving and maximising the impact of youth camps as mobilisation tools for Gender-based violence (GBV), youth employment, and addressing social ills in society.

Our team reviewed programme data, implementation reports, and other relevant documents to understand better how DSD implemented youth camps. From the financial data we received, we conducted an expenditure analysis indicating how the resources were spent to convene the youth camps, which is included in the later part of this report.

In response to the ToR, we crafted our evaluation design and methods, as summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Our Evaluation Design for Design and Implementation Evaluation of Youth Camps

| Respondent category/data source | Sample data required | Methods of data collection | Analysis methods |
|---------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Secondary data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature from other countries implementing Youth Camps: how they work, achievements, lessons learnt and best practices Relevant policies, strategies and programmatic documents that inform the design, formation and functionality of Youth Camps Reports on Youth Camps indicating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources allocated and expenditure patterns. Attendance over the years Demographics of the youth who attend the camps. Activities that they have been involved in Projects that the youth have started and how they have benefited them. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue-based literature review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content analysis Trend analysis of attendance rates, activities implemented, expenditure patterns, and demographics of youth participants. Econometric modelling for value-for-money analysis (expenditure versus outcomes) |

³ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD (2012). Broadening the range of designs and methods for impact evaluations

⁴ Polit, D.F. and Hungler, B.P. (1999). Nursing Research: Principles and Methods (6th Ed.) Philadelphia, Lippincott

| Respondent category/data source | Sample data required | Methods of data collection | Analysis methods |
|--|---|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other achievements of the Youth Camps Documented improvements and the extent to which they have been implemented. Challenges faced by Youth Camps and attempt to deal with these challenges | | |
| Youth participants of Youth Camps (past and present) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demographic data of the youth beneficiaries How long they were part of the Youth Camp The activities they were involved in. The activities they enjoyed most and which ones they did not. What they learnt from the Youth Camp How beneficial it was being part of the Youth Camp What they have done after leaving the Youth Camp: for themselves, their families and their communities The usefulness of Youth camps as mobilisation tools for GBV, youth employment and for addressing social ills in society What needs to be improved about the Youth Camps: what they do, how they are run, how they can deliver a more significant impact, etc. Mechanisms for tracing youth who have participated in Youth Camps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveys Focus group discussions. Case studies on projects implemented | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of proportions and frequency distributions between Youth Camps Multilevel mixed regression models will be used to compare Youth Camps and locations (districts and provinces) Inductive content analysis of focus group data Case study analysis and documentation |
| Managers/administrators of Youth Camps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Their role in the running of Youth Camps The activities implemented in Youth camps. The activities that youth enjoy the most and which ones they do not. The benefits that youth derive from Youth Camps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key informant interviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inductive content analysis of key informant interview data |

| Respondent category/data source | Sample data required | Methods of data collection | Analysis methods |
|--|--|----------------------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What the youth have done after leaving the Youth Camp: for themselves, their families and their communities • The usefulness of Youth camps as mobilisation tools for GBV, youth employment and for addressing social ills in society • What needs to be improved about the Youth Camps: what they do, how they are run, how they can deliver a more significant impact, etc. • The investment into Youth Camps and whether this investment has delivered desired results. • Mechanisms for tracing youth who have participated in Youth Camps | | |
| DSD officials responsible for Youth Camps – district, province and national | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The usefulness of Youth camps as mobilisation tools for GBV, youth employment and for addressing social ills in society • What needs to be improved about the Youth Camps: what they do, how they are run, how they can deliver a more significant impact, etc. • The investment into Youth Camps and whether this investment has delivered desired results. • Mechanisms for tracing youth who have participated in Youth Camps | Key informant interviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inductive content analysis of key informant interview data |
| Other partners involved with the functioning of Youth Camps (e.g., National Youth Development Agency, Civil Society Organisations involved in youth development. DSD to advise on these respondents) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The usefulness of Youth camps as mobilisation tools for GBV, youth employment and for addressing social ills in society • What needs to be improved about the Youth Camps: what they do, how they are run, how they can deliver a more significant impact, etc. • The investment into Youth Camps and whether this | Key informant interviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inductive content analysis of key informant interview data |

| Respondent category/data source | Sample data required | Methods of data collection | Analysis methods |
|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------|------------------|
| | investment has delivered desired results. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanisms for tracing youth who have participated in Youth Camps | | |

3.2 Evaluation Process

Based on the evaluation design above, we developed an elaborate evaluation process shown in Figure 1 below. The evaluation process outlines the steps that we have followed during the evaluation.

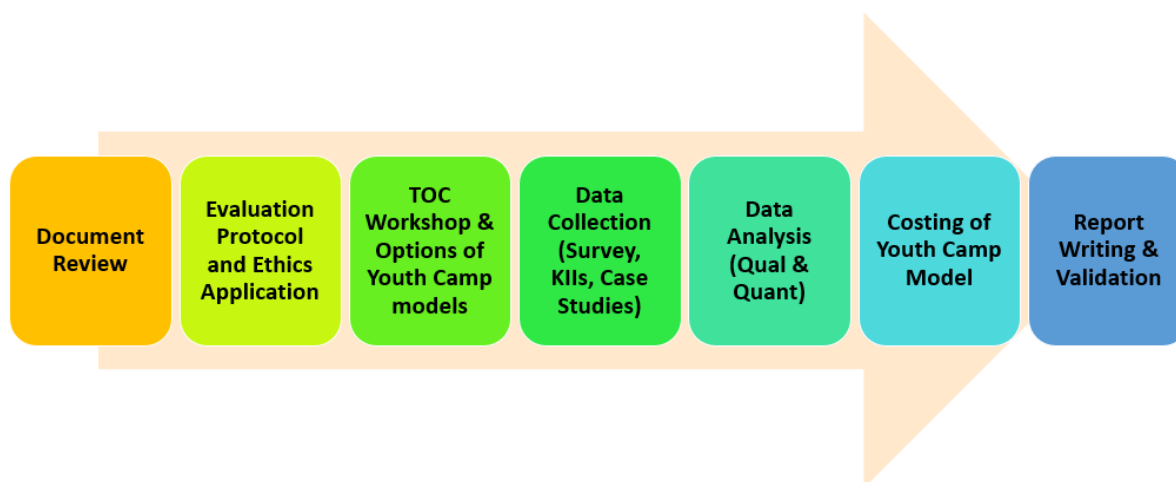


Figure 1: Evaluation Process

The implementation of each step in the evaluation process is elaborated as follows:

a. Literature Review

A comprehensive literature review was undertaken on youth camps and the different local and international models. The review covered literature on policy, research and programmatic information on youth camps. It was used to draw out lessons on what has been done, what has worked, what has not, and what needs to be done for more effective youth mobilisation and empowerment.

b. Programme Document Review

We reviewed programme reports of how the youth camps were implemented across the different provinces and understood and documented the daily activities of youth camps as they were implemented across the country (*see Appendix 1 for a summary of youth camp daily activities*).

c. Comprehensive Database

Based on the excel data files, the MS Word reports, and the physical files we received from DSD, we were able to consolidate a database for youth camp beneficiaries. While we submitted the database

to DSD last year, we received an additional dataset for youth camp beneficiaries implemented in the Western Cape and Eastern Cape Provinces in December 2022. We updated the original database and submitted it to DSD with the programme survey report.

d. Evaluation Protocol and Ethics Application

Prior to commencing field work, our team developed an Evaluation Protocol, which was submitted to Pharma-Ethics. The evaluation protocol was approved by Pharma-Ethics as evidence that it met all the scientific and research ethics requirements (see *Appendix 2 for the ethics approval letter*).

e. Theory of Change and Design of DSD Model Youth Camp

A two-day workshop was conducted with the key stakeholders on 30 and 31 May 2022. The first day was dedicated to developing the Theory of Change (ToC) for the youth camp programme. During the second day, participants examined the design of the youth camp model and proposed a refined model guided by the new ToC. The workshop report comprising the two outputs was submitted to DSD (see *Appendix 3 for the Workshop Report*).

f. Data Collection

The sample for the process evaluation was to be picked from a population comprising; youth camp beneficiaries, youth camp implementers, programme managers (at the national and provincial level) and other stakeholders who participated in the implementation processes.

The sample size for the youth camp beneficiary survey: these being the bulk of the study population, we selected a stratified sample based on their familiarity with the work and functioning of youth camps. The sample size for the youth camp beneficiary survey targeted young people aged between 17 to 35 years who had attended a youth camp organised by either national or provincial DSD. The sample size for this category of respondents, who are the majority, was determined using a 5% margin of error and 80% power, and 95% confidence interval – see Table 3 below. It was estimated that a sample size of 1080 youth would be selected.

Table 3: Sample Size Computation for Youth Beneficiaries

| <u>Indicators</u> | <u>Sample size</u> |
|---|--------------------|
| Proportion (P) | 0.46 |
| Level of significance (α) | 0.05 |
| Z-score corresponding to (Z_{α}) | 1.96 |
| Desired precision (E) | 0.056 |
| Desired sample size | 310 |
| Intracluster correlation (ρ) | 0.020 |
| Number of individuals in each cluster | 120 |
| Design effect (DE) | 3.38 |
| Required minimum sample size | 1047 |
| Number of clusters (n_c) | 9 |

For 9 clusters (provinces), the sample size was rounded to $120 * 9 \text{ provinces} = 1\,080$.

We broke this number down to ensure representativeness of youth from all provinces and age groups (17-35 years), the period when they participated in the youth camp (from 2012 to date), youth in

school, youth out of school, youth in employment, youth out of employment, youth with disabilities, youth from disadvantaged backgrounds, and youth in business engaged in DSD camps.

The sample size for qualitative research respondents: the criteria for selecting respondents who would participate in the qualitative research was purposive⁵, based on their familiarity or involvement with the youth camps implementation processes. Table 4 below summarises the sample size for qualitative research respondents.

Table 4: Sample size for qualitative research respondents

| Respondent Category | Data Collection Method | Number by Respondent Category |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Youth camp beneficiaries | Case studies | 5 (WC, EC, LP, FS, GP) |
| | Focus group discussion | 9 (one per province, 10-12 youth) |
| Youth Mentors | Case studies | 5 (WC, EC, LP, FS, GP) |
| YC Managers, Coordinators & Mentors (District; Prov; Nat) | Focus group | 9 (1 per province) |
| | Case studies | 5 (WC, EC, LP, FS, GP) |
| Service Providers (facilitators) | Key informant interview | 9 (1 per province) |
| Youth Directorate officials (National & provincial) | Key informant interview | 6 (National) |
| | | 9 (1 per province) |
| Others: NYDA, NPOs, DoD, etc. | Key informant interview | 1 (per organisation) |

Data collection tools: We developed appropriate tools based on the respondent categories in Tables 3 and 4 above to guide our data collection processes. The tools developed for each respondent category are shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Tools Developed for Each Respondent Category

| Name of the Data Collection Tool | Respondent Category |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Online Survey Tool | Youth camp beneficiaries |
| Focus Group Guide - 1 | Youth Camp beneficiaries |
| Focus Group Guide - 2 | Youth Camp Implementors |
| Key Informant Discussion Guide – 1 | Programme and Monitoring and Evaluation Staff |
| Key informant Interview Guide - 2 | Other Stakeholders |
| Case Study Guide | Youth camp beneficiaries |

g. Ethical Considerations

Due to the nature of this evaluation, the evaluation proposal was submitted for ethics approval to Pharma-Ethics before commencing the evaluation. Ethics approval was granted by Pharma-Ethics Reference number: 220324651. The evaluation implementation was conducted in accordance with

⁵ Palys, T. (2008). Purposive sampling. In L. M. Given (Ed.) The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods, 2, 697-698. Sage: Los Angeles.

several ethical considerations, including abiding by the POPI Act. Key ethical considerations included confidentiality, consent, and least harm principles.

Confidentiality and anonymity: as part of the data collection, clients' records were collected, which may have personal information. The study team ensured all client records were anonymised, with all identifiers such as names, ID numbers and contacts removed from the data obtained. Each participant was assigned a computer-generated unique identifier. All data collected, including audio recordings, were password protected, monitored and controlled by the lead investigator. All data will be stored for a minimum of five years after the report of the study is produced. Using an office shredder, any research material in paper form will be shredded at the end of the storage period. Extra care will be taken with sensitive and confidential information, and a secure paper destruction service bin will be used. The digital audio data will be destroyed by deleting and overwriting information on the storage devices. Data collected using electronic applications will be backed up in real-time to a secure server and not stored on the tablet application for confidentiality reasons.

Informed Consent: In compliance with good research practices, all participants were adequately informed of the purpose and methods of the assessment, risks, and benefits. Every individual's right to decline participation was accepted and respected without prejudice. Voluntary participation in the survey was allowed and accepted after all participants had signed the informed consent forms or verbally consented in the event of a recorded telephonic interview.

In compliance with the **Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA)** of 2013, the study team ensured the confidentiality of personal data and privacy protections built into the design and implementation of the study. The field workers and the technical team signed a binding confidentiality clause to prevent disclosing participants' information.

Covid 19 mitigation measures: The execution of data collection and workshops was guided by government regulations on physical distancing. In addition, appropriate measures were taken to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission and infection through field worker training, using suitable personal protective equipment, and carefully selecting the interview environment.

Furthermore, we developed information sheets and consent forms for all study participants (see *Appendix 4 for the data collection tools, information sheets and consent forms*).

4. FINDINGS OF THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION

4.1 Beneficiary Survey Respondents

Table 6 below summarises the youth camp beneficiaries who completed the online survey. The data shows that data collection among the youth camp beneficiaries has occurred in all nine provinces, with the Eastern Cape having the highest response rate (84%). In contrast, Free State had the lowest

(25%). Three other provinces, namely Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Northern Cape, performed poorly, with response rates below 60%. This demonstrates the challenge of mobilising the youth camp beneficiaries country-wide to participate in the evaluation. Nevertheless, the evaluation revealed several insights about implementing youth camps and recommendations on what DSD can do to improve and sustain them.

Table 6: Number of Survey Respondents

| Province | Number of Youth Respondents* | Response Rate (Denominator = 120 per province) |
|--------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Free State | 30 | 25% |
| Gauteng | 56 | 47% |
| KwaZulu-Natal | 95 | 79% |
| Limpopo | 86 | 72% |
| Mpumalanga | 52 | 43% |
| Northwest | 76 | 63% |
| Northern Cape | 64 | 53% |
| Western Cape | 75 | 63% |
| Eastern Cape | 101 | 84% |
| Grand Total | 635 | 59% |

Response rates, especially for population-based studies, have attracted much debate among researchers because of nonresponse bias, affecting the veracity and soundness of the conclusions. According to Fincham (2008), "Response rates approximating 60% for most research should be the goal of researchers and certainly are the expectation of the Editor and Associate Editors of the Journal" (p. 1).⁶ After examining 140 of 175 different studies of papers covering about 200,000 respondents between 1975 and 1995 (20 years) in notable journals, including Academy of Management Journal, Human Relations, Journal of Applied Psychology, Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, and Journal of International Business Studies, Yehuda (1999)⁷ found that the average response rate was 55.6 with a standard deviation of 19.7. Lower response rates were especially found in studies involving top management or organisational representatives (average 36.1, standard deviation of 13.3). In order to deal with a lack of representativeness or lower response rates, Brick and Kalton (1996)⁸ advise weighting the study sample segments to reflect the greater population attributes.

The advantage of the youth evaluation is that we adopted a mixed methods study design. The use of mixed-methods research offers numerous benefits to the researcher.⁹ Using this research design,

⁶ Fincham, J. E. (2008). Response Rates and Responsiveness for Surveys, Standards, and the Journal. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 72 (2) Article 43.

⁷ Yehuda, B. (1999). Response Rate in Academic Studies - A Comparative Analysis. *Human Relations*, 52(4):421-438. DOI: 10.1177/001872679905200401

⁸ Brick, J. M & Kalton, G. (1996). Handling missing data in survey research. *Statistical Methods in Medical Research*, 5, 215-38.

⁹ Creswell, J. W. (2013). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches. London: Sage. Leech, N. L., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2010). Guidelines for conducting and reporting mixed research in the field of counselling and beyond. *Journal of Counselling & Development*, 88, 61-69.

the study benefits from counterbalancing the flaws of using either a qualitative or quantitative research approach alone. For instance, using a quantitative approach may not facilitate a deeper comprehension of how individuals act. Qualitative research makes up for this weakness when using mixed design.

Conversely, qualitative research, though rich in description, does not facilitate inferring results to a bigger population due to the lower samples involved. It can be argued that quantitative research does not have that flaw. Therefore, by utilising both qualitative and quantitative research designs, the weaknesses of either methodology can be counteracted by the strengths of the other. Also, the mixed method offers a more comprehensive and complete comprehension of the research questions than when using either a qualitative or quantitative approach alone. Mixed-method research provides a method for creating a more context-specific instrument. For instance, by employing qualitative research, it is probable to collect information concerning a particular topic to build a better and more valid instrument.

Moreover, mixed-method research assists in explaining the findings. The multiplicity of observations produces more varied data; because diverse data sources and types, contexts, environments, and analyses are considered. Consequently, more robust scientific inferences are made possible by using mixed methods.

4.2 Key Informant Interviews

Several interviews have been conducted with national and provincial stakeholders. Table 7 below shows the details of the stakeholders who have been interviewed.

Table 7: Respondents for the Key Informant Interviews

| Respondent Category | Level | Number |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Provincial DSD officials | DSD Limpopo | 1 |
| | DSD Mpumalanga | 1 |
| | DSD Mpumalanga | 1 |
| | DSD Northwest | 1 |
| | DSD KwaZulu Natal | 1 |
| | DSD Gauteng | 1 |
| | DSD Gauteng | 1 |
| | DSD Northern Cape | 1 |
| | DSD Eastern Cape | 1 |
| | DSD Free State | 1 |
| | DSD Western Cape | 1 |
| Implementers / Facilitators | Mayikhethele Project | 1 |
| | The Star Cooperative | 1 |
| | Inqaba Yokulinda Youth Organisation | 1 |
| | Sakhisizwe Youth Centre | 1 |

| Respondent Category | Level | Number |
|------------------------|------------------|-----------|
| | DSD Western Cape | 1 |
| National DSD officials | DSD National | 7 |
| Total | | 24 |

4.3 Focus Group Discussions with Youth Camp Beneficiaries and Implementers

Table 8 provides details of focus group discussions (FGD) conducted with youth camp beneficiaries and implementers.

Table 8: Focus group discussions conducted with youth camp beneficiaries and implementers.

| Province | Focus Group with Youth implementers | Focus Group with Youth Camp Beneficiaries |
|----------------|--|---|
| Northern Cape | Conducted one FGD with 8 participants | Conducted one FGD with 12 participants |
| Gauteng | Not done. The province could not organise it | Conducted one FGD with 12 participants |
| Northwest | Conducted one FGD with 25 participants | Conducted one FGD with 8 participants |
| Kwa-Zulu Natal | Conducted one FGD with 10 participants | Conducted one FGD with 12 participants |
| Western Cape | Conducted one FGD with 8 participants | It did not take place |
| Mpumalanga | Conducted one FGD with 17 participants | Conducted one FGD with 12 participants |
| Limpopo | Conducted one FGD with 5 participants | Conducted one FGD with 10 participants from Capricorn and another FGD with 12 participants from Vhembe District |
| Totals | 73 youth camp implementors participated in six FGDs | 78 youth camp beneficiaries participated in seven FGDs |

4.4 Case Studies

Case studies with youth camp beneficiaries have been documented in the following Provinces – Table 9.

Table 9: Provinces where case studies have been documented.

| Province | Number of Case Studies Documented |
|------------|-----------------------------------|
| Gauteng | 6 |
| Mpumalanga | 2 |
| Limpopo | 4 |

| | |
|--------------|-----------|
| Total | 12 |
|--------------|-----------|

5. DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were performed for the data we received, which emanated into plots and tabulations of key outcome variables for the different data collection points. Cross-tabulation was also implemented to measure the responses across districts, camp years and age groups. We also did a correlation on the respondent's overall outcome from attending the camp with the responses on the relevance or extend in participating in certain events. An exploratory factor analysis was also performed as the dataset has a relatively large set of variables. This allowed us to identify underlying relationships within our variables, guiding the reporting of the credible and robust informative variable of interest. To increase the validity and reliability of our findings, we also performed data triangulation using the quantitative and qualitative data sets which allowed us to perform further data analysis to confirm the overarching findings from both data sources hence ensuring robust and reliability measures are being reported. All analysis was done using Excel and RStudio with R 3.3.0.

5.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

All the key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and case studies were voice recorded and transcribed verbatim. Transcripts were uploaded into the MAXQDA Analysis Pro 2022 for analysis. Data analysis was conducted using a combination of inductive content analysis (Armat et al., 2018¹⁰; Kibiswa, 2019¹¹; Winson-Geideman, 2018¹²) and the Gioia method (Gioia et al., 2013¹³). We developed a coding system initially from the evaluation criteria in response to the evaluation questions in the terms of reference. The coding system guided data extraction from the interview transcripts into themes or natural meaning units (Holm & Kildevang, 1996¹⁴; Moustakas, 1994¹⁵). All coded statements under each theme were further examined to contextualise their meaning and were paraphrased to offer clarity to the underlying message behind the theme (Connolly et al., 2006¹⁶; Bann, 2009¹⁷). Further sub-themes were developed using inductive content analysis, enabling the tallying and collation of statements with similar meanings. The sub-themes have been used to highlight different perspectives and ensure that alternative voices of the different respondent categories were heard (Janice et al., 2002¹⁸). The qualitative data is presented under the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and lessons learnt.

6. LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES

This evaluation took much longer than anticipated, with the main challenge being the mobilisation of the youth camp beneficiaries to participate in the evaluation. Provinces decried the lack of

¹⁰ Armat, M. R., Assarroudi, A., Rad, M., Sharifi, H., & Heydari, A. (2018). Inductive and deductive: Ambiguous labels in qualitative content analysis. *The Qualitative Report; Fort Lauderdale*, 23 (1), 219-221. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2018.2872>

¹¹ Kibiswa, N. K. (2019). Directed qualitative content analysis (DQICA): A tool for conflict analysis. *The Qualitative Report; Fort Lauderdale*, 24(8), 2059-2079.

¹² Winson-Geideman, K. (2018). Sentiments and semantics: A review of the content analysis literature in the era of big data. *Journal of Real Estate Literature; Clemson*, 26(1), 3-12.

¹³ Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G. & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on the Gioia methodology. In *Organizational Research Methods*. DOI: 10.1177/1094428112452151.

¹⁴ Holm, L., & Kildevang, H. (1996). Consumers views on food quality: A qualitative interview study. *Appetite*, 27(1), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1006/appe.1996.0029>

¹⁵ Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. California: Sage Publications.

¹⁶ Connolly, R., O'Gorman, B. & Bogue, J. (2006). An Exploratory study of the process by which Recent Graduate Entrepreneurs (RGEs) become self-employed. *Irish Journal of Management*, 26(2), 185-210.

¹⁷ Bann, C. L. (2009). An innovative view of the entrepreneur through exploration of the "lived experience" of the entrepreneur in start-up of the business. *Journal of Business & Economic Studies*, 15(2), 62-74.

¹⁸ Janice, M. M., Barrett, M., Mayan, M., Olson, K., & Spiers, J. (2002). Verification strategies for establishing reliability validity in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1, 1-19.

resources as the main reason for this challenge. The other challenge raised was that the contact numbers of the youth had either changed or were no longer in use, making it difficult to reach them.

Even for the provinces that could bring the youth together, completing the online survey was not possible for some of them. A completed survey was filled in and submitted with the acknowledgement that the form had been successfully completed. To ensure this was done, our research assistants were present to guide the youth to access the questionnaire, respond to the questions appropriately, and submit the completed form. It is still unclear why some youths could not complete the online survey form successfully. Possible reasons could be data and network challenges, using phones that do not support access to online surveys or a lack of tech-savviness by some youth.

The other limitation is with the responses themselves, especially for survey questions. We tried to examine the data to find patterns that could provide a causal relationship between attending camps and using the knowledge and skills gained to either find a job, start a business, start an NPO or go back to school. However, no distinguishable and unique patterns of behaviour could be gleaned from the responses of the youth who implemented these follow-up actions. However, we have attempted to profile their demographic characteristics to understand the qualities of the youth that DSD could consider inviting in future to participate in the camps, with the expectation that there is a greater likelihood for them to attain the required outcomes.

7. KEY FINDINGS

7.1 Demographic Data of Survey Participants

The total sample of survey respondents was 635 individuals whose demographic characteristics are summarised in Table 10 below. They comprised 49% male, 47% female and 4% other. Five per cent (5%) of the respondents reported having a disability. Participants' ages ranged from 12 to 34 years at the time of their participation in the youth camps. However, the majority (68%) were in the 20-24 age group. Some 57% of the participants reported that their highest level of education is a secondary school, 27% had attained tertiary-level education, and 15% had professional training. Regarding employment status at the time of the survey, findings show that 59% of respondents were not working, 23% had full-time jobs, and 16% were self-employed.

Table 10: Demographic characteristics of survey respondents

| Characteristics | Number | Percentage |
|--|--------|------------|
| No. of participants/respondents | 635 | 100% |
| Gender: | | |
| Female | 298 | 47% |
| LGBTQIA+ person | 28 | 4% |
| Male | 309 | 49% |
| Age Group at time of camp attendance: | | |
| < 15 | 2 | 0% |
| > 30 | 14 | 2% |

| Characteristics | Number | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| 15 - 19 | 97 | 15% |
| 20 - 24 | 416 | 66% |
| 25 - 29 | 85 | 13% |
| DoB missing | 21 | 3% |
| Highest Level of Education: | | |
| Primary | 9 | 1% |
| Professional training | 92 | 14% |
| Secondary (high school) | 364 | 57% |
| Tertiary | 170 | 27% |
| Disability: | | |
| No | 606 | 95% |
| Yes | 29 | 5% |
| Current Employment: | | |
| Full-time job | 143 | 23% |
| Job Seeker | 214 | 34% |
| Self-employed | 102 | 16% |
| Unemployed | 162 | 26% |
| Not Applicable (Not specified) | 14 | 2% |
| Province of Living / Working: | | |
| Eastern Cape | 100 | 16% |
| Free State | 29 | 5% |
| Gauteng | 54 | 9% |
| Kwazulu Natal | 95 | 15% |
| Limpopo | 85 | 14% |
| Mpumalanga | 52 | 8% |
| North West | 73 | 12% |
| Northern Cape | 63 | 10% |
| Western Cape | 75 | 12% |
| Not indicated | 9 | 1% |

7.2 Participation in Youth Camps

The survey respondents attended youth camps held between 2012 to 2019. Nearly 60% of respondents attended in 2018 and 2019 (*see Figure 2 below*).

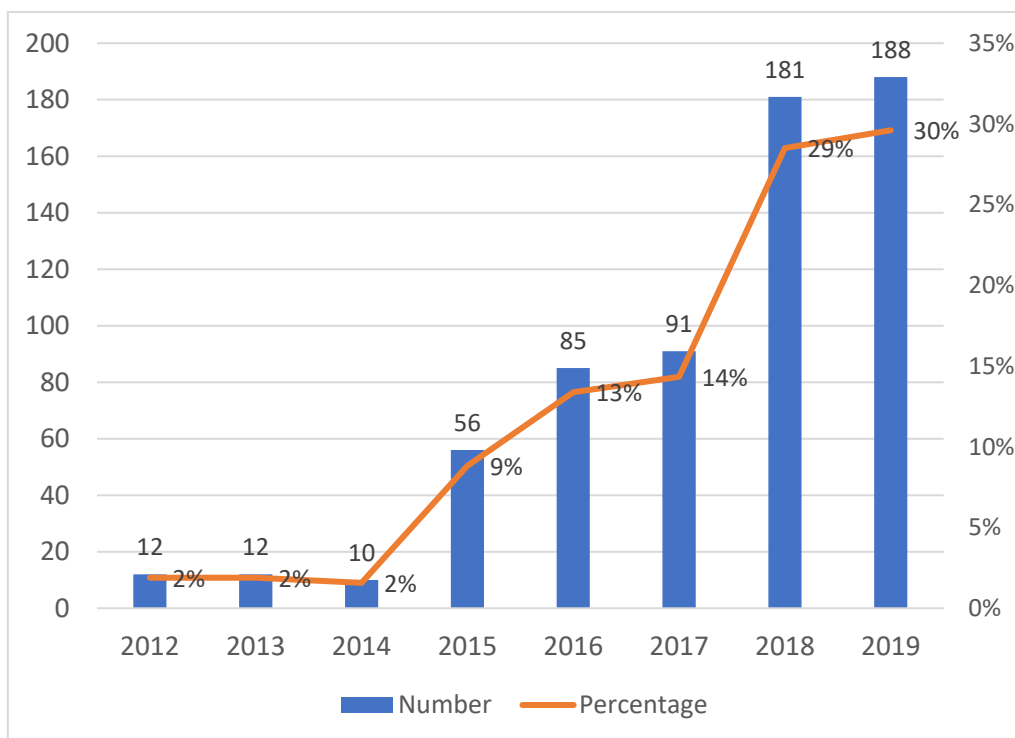


Figure 2: Number of Respondents by Year of Attending the Youth Camp

7.3.Relevance

This criterion looks at the extent to which youth camps are suited to the priorities and policies of DSD. Respondents were asked how youth camps contribute to achieving DSD strategic objectives and plans. Their responses were coded, and from the inductive analysis, two angles were revealed from which they could be understood. On the one hand, the responses outlined the current contribution of youth camps to DSD objectives and plans (Table 11). On the other hand, the responses indicate how youth camps can be re-positioned to contribute better to DSD objectives and plans (Table 12). Quite expectedly, most of the responses were from DSD national and provincial officials, with isolated responses from youth camp implementers and beneficiaries. Responses from national DSD officials indicated that the dialogues that preceded the youth camps enabled the department to engage directly with the youth and understand firsthand the issues that affect them. This facilitates the design and implementation of interventions to respond to these issues. Officials from the national DSD also indicated that since youth camps relate to social development programmes as a whole, they can be used as platforms where youth can be mobilised as agents of change to promote the youth agenda for community action. Emphasising how the youth camps help the department to connect directly with young people, one official from the national DSD said:

“In addition, part of the reason why these camps were established, according to the Minister, is what she saw as she was going around the country, engaging young people through taking DSD to the communities, so at the time, the camp came as an intervention to address those challenges facing young people.”

Similarly, provincial officials indicated that youth camps enable youth from different backgrounds to come together and engage on issues of national importance, encouraging them to participate in addressing social ills such as GBV and substance abuse.

From the perspective of the beneficiaries, the youth camps enabled the youth to feel the hand of government support in improving their self-esteem, confidence and leadership skills, qualities that they have used to exploit opportunities for career growth. Appreciating how they have benefited from attending the youth and continued support from DSD, a participant from a focus group discussion in the North West province had this to say:

“So, whenever we feel like we are down because of unemployment, they will call us and encourage us, so we don’t lose hope. The DSD has boosted my self-esteem and my confidence, and you know that it is very important to build your self-esteem and confidence before you go and look for work because if you are confident, you can easily speak for yourself when you are called for interviews, you won’t be scared. .. It also helps us youths to interact with one another, because you’d find some people aren’t very sociable, like me when I got there, I was a very shy person and would get bored very quickly when they would have very important conversations... because the DSD would call big organisations like the NYDA and other organisations... Overall, the DSD looks out for us, it is our umbrella, and when we run out of piece jobs, they would call us and offer us other opportunities in the community. I am very happy with the DSD; it helps us and encourages us.”

Table 11: How youth camps currently contribute to DSD objectives and plans.

| Coded Statements | Tally by Respondent Category | | | |
|---|------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| Dialogues allow the department to filter and escalate issues coming from different districts and provinces | 1 | | | |
| Dialogues allow young people to express challenges that affect them and how the department can assist them | 1 | | | |
| Camps fulfil the objective of mobilising young people to actively participate in their own development as change agents. | | 1 | | |
| Camps motivate young people to deal with issues affecting their communities, such as social cohesion, patriotism, and GBV. | | 1 | | |
| Youth appreciate how DSD has improved their self-esteem, confidence and leadership skills; they now can express themselves in interviews, public speaking and networking. | | | 1 | |
| Youth camps enable the department to engage directly with the youth and also serve as an intervention to address some of the issues | 1 | | | |
| Youth camps enable youth directorates to drive the youth development agenda on the ground | 1 | | | |
| Youth camps enabled youth from disadvantaged backgrounds to access clothing. | | | | 1 |
| Youth camps expose previously disadvantaged youth to issues of national importance. | | 1 | | |
| Youth camps impart knowledge to the youth. | | 1 | | |

| Coded Statements | Tally by Respondent Category | | | |
|--|------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| Youth camps provide a platform for young people of different backgrounds to come together. | | 1 | | |
| Youth camps relate to social development programmes as a whole | 1 | | | |
| Youth camps serve as a springboard to community action driven by young people | 1 | | | |
| Youth camps were initiated by the former minister to enable DSD programmes to impact the lives of young people | 1 | | | |

According to Table 12, national DSD officials indicated that youth camps would be more impactful if they were conceptualised as a programme on youth development rather than an event. In this way, several initiatives implemented over a period of time would culminate in youth accessing opportunities such as bursaries, starter packs for businesses and NPOs, skills development and additional resources for career development. However, DSD national officials believe this would be possible if the recruitment criteria targeted youth with the potential, mindset and interest to cause change for themselves and their communities. This would also be achieved if a comprehensive and well-resourced exit strategy existed that included a robust system for tracking, following up and providing post-camp support to youth camp beneficiaries.

As it is now, apart from a few who have made a breakthrough, most youth who have attended youth camps have not done much to improve their situation because of limited post-camp support.

Explaining the challenge of treating youth camps as an event, one of the provincial officials had this to say:

“I think one of the challenges is that we have made the camp an event, not a programme, and if it’s an event, it becomes a problem... Because this is not a programme, but we treat it as an event, and once it has taken place, we forget, and that is the reason why officials to struggle to pinpoint... The challenges that I have observed, many of my colleagues have indicated that we are treating the programme as an event, whereas you are supposed to say after the camp, you are supposed to sit down and develop... To monitor this programme and check for any successes and be able to report on where there are challenges and intervene and help those participants, but that at the current moment, it doesn’t happen.”

Table 12: How youth camps can be re-positioned to contribute better to DSD objectives and plans

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Category | |
|--|------------------------------|----------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD |
| Youth camps should be conceptualised as a programme, not an event, for it to make a meaningful impact | 1 | |
| Camps should be implemented as a year-long training culminating in access to bursaries and other opportunities | 1 | |
| DSD APPs should focus on the interest and needs of young people: jobs, decent lives, housing, and income generation | | 1 |
| Economic challenges and budget cuts do not make it possible for all provinces to prioritise youth development in their operational plans, and APPs | 1 | |
| Limited budgets make it difficult to elevate youth camps to a programme in the APP | 1 | |
| Only a few young people take the camps seriously and become active in their communities; the rest take it as fun. | | 1 |
| Young people involved in development programmes should be the ones invited because they have demonstrated commitment to growing and helping their communities. | | 1 |
| Strengthen elements of entry and exit and track how many youths go back and do something in their communities | 1 | |

Provincial DSD officials also agreed with their national colleagues on the need for a recruitment strategy that targets youth already involved in community programmes and have demonstrated commitment to helping and developing their communities. Recruitment criteria have been focussed more on meeting targets rather than attracting the youth with the potential, mindset, interest and commitment to cause change for themselves and their communities. This point was emphasised by one of the national DSD officials as follows:

“... mobilisation is one of the reasons or still remains one of the biggest challenges; not getting the right people for the camps, so you end up getting the wrong people for the right people, and that cannot be attributed to concept development here at the national office because we have been clear and even in the concept development it is written that it is 18 to 24 years... Unfortunately, the government works with numbers. We are working with targets. If they said to bring in 1000 and you bring in 999, then you didn’t achieve.”

The challenge of recruitment was also raised during the focus group discussion with the camp beneficiaries in KZN Province, where one participant said:

“They need to plan these youth camps with us. Also, DSD must be able to identify the people who need to attend these camps and not just take anyone from the streets because DSD will take anyone from the streets. You’d find that these people they are recruiting are not in any NPO. Some will go there as smokers and cause issues with the soldier, putting us all in trouble.”

Perhaps one of the reasons why camps are treated as an event and not a programme is that they are not reflected in the national and provincial APPs. Hence, there is no specific budget allocated to them. This issue was explained by one of the provincial DSD officials: *"Now you see the other challenge about camps, they are not considered as part of the APP, the annual performance plan, so even the budget it's only at the national level..."* This issue was confirmed by one of the national DSD officials, who noted as follows:

"At this point, I am just speaking in terms of alignment in terms of what we are doing and what the provinces are doing. The provinces align themselves to the APP of the national department, and within the national department, you'd have one or two APP targets, and then 3, 4, 5 and 6 added to the whole operational plan for the year, and at this point, the challenge as it relates to the camps is that camps are not in the APP and therefore we find it a challenge... Camps are equally important because they are in the OPS-Plan, but because they are in our OPS-Plan, provinces would put money into the APP, which is not reflective of camps..."

Another challenge raised with implementing youth camps is the absence of a comprehensive and well-resourced exit strategy that includes a robust system for tracking, following up and providing post-camp support to youth camp beneficiaries. Explaining the absence of an exit plan, one of the provincial DSD officials had this to say: *"I will start with the post, you see it has always been a challenge because we take these young people through this beautiful programme where they get to know themselves, but we don't have an exit plan."* Another provincial DSD official explained the lack of a tracking and follow-up system for youth who attended youth camps: *"We do not have a system that tracks them; there is no such thing currently."*

This matter was also emphasised by another provincial DSD official, saying: *"I would say the follow-through programmes after the camps, like when we conduct camps, we have all these personal development plans, but we don't have a plan after that to track and trace that whatever we have agreed as a programme of action during those camps we are able to follow the progress and offer support where necessary as well as trace these young people. It's like a microwave approach; we just warm things up after we have warmed it up, it is done."*

Based on the survey data on relevance, findings indicate that the most popular camp activities that were rated highest in terms of relevance were the sessions on communication, the mentorship sessions on developing personal development plans and GBV, as well as the session on Self Mastery (see Figure 4 below).

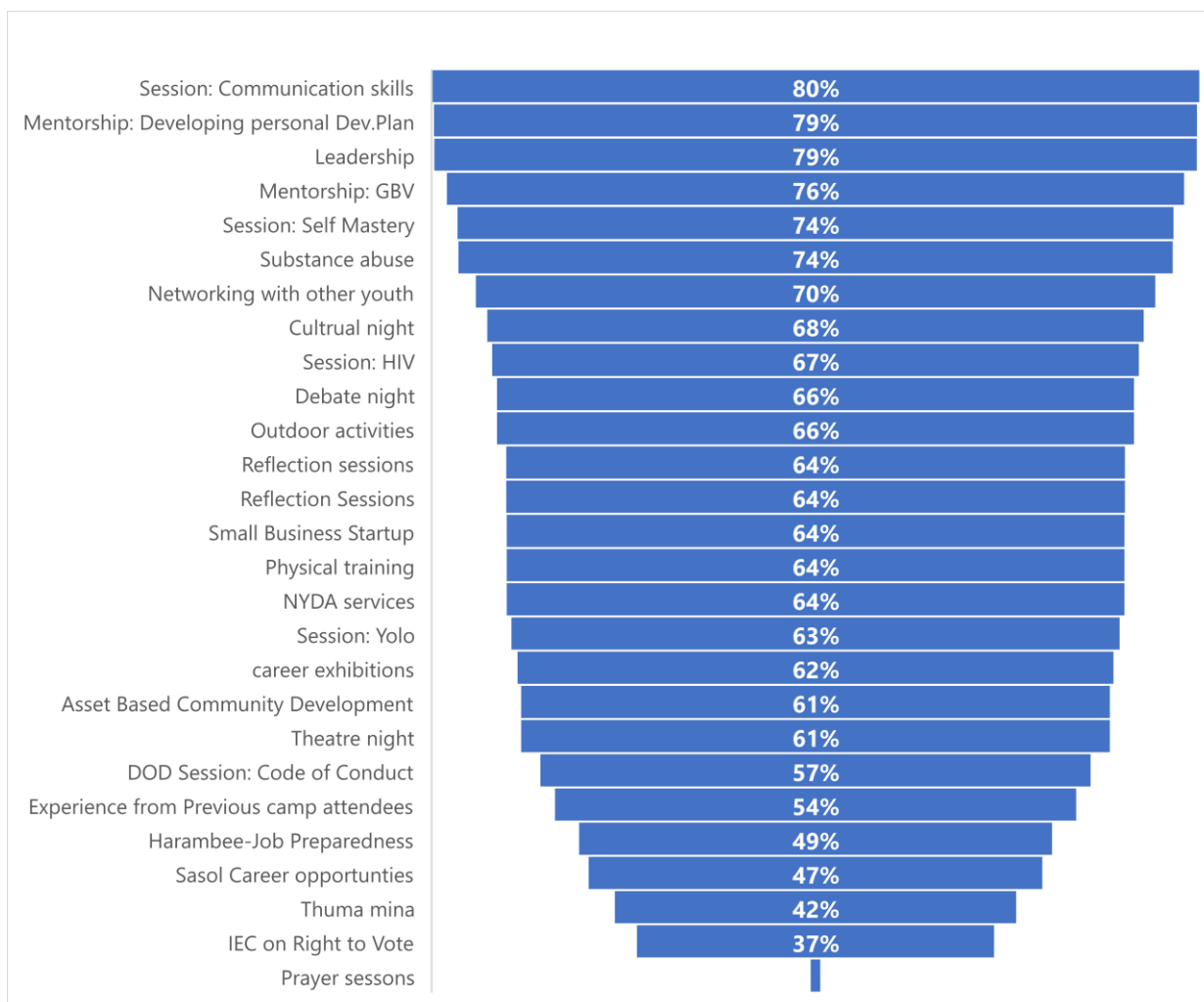


Figure 3: Proportion of Participants that Rated the Different Activities as Very Relevant

These findings generally show that sessions that built personal skills were considered the most relevant by youth.

7.4 Effectiveness

This criterion examines the extent to which youth camps attained their intended objectives. In response to this requirement, several themes were inductively developed to unpack how youth camps were implemented:

- ◆ Design and implementation of youth camps, including aspects of youth camp implementation that went well.
- ◆ How youth camps can be considered an effective youth mobilisation tool
- ◆ How youth camps have influenced the lives of individual youth and their families
- ◆ Measurable results of youth camps
- ◆ Main barriers and challenges faced in the implementation of youth camps.

Each of these themes is discussed in detail below.

7.4.1 Design and Implementation of Youth Camps

Respondents were engaged in understanding how youth camps were planned, organised and implemented. Based on their responses, three phases were identified: pre-implementation, implementation and post-implementation. The pre-implementation phase constitutes the planning period when youth camps were conceptualised, planned and budgeted for at both provincial and national levels. The implementation phase is the period when the Department of Defence (DoD) military facilities hosted the camps. The post-implementation phase is from the time when the youth leave the camps and return to their communities. Based on these phases, more sub-themes were inductively developed. The responses do not necessarily reflect the linearity of the processes; rather, they indicate the key activities involved.

Under the pre-implementation phase, the following sub-themes were developed:

- ◆ Conceptualisation, planning, budgeting and content development
- ◆ Establishment and operationalisation of structures for implementation oversight
- ◆ Mobilisation of participants

Pre-implementation Phase

Under the pre-implementation phase, the responses under the sub-theme conceptualisation, planning, budgeting and content development are shown in Table 13 below. For the national camps, the responses indicated that the processes to develop the camp concept, budgets, logistical plans, and programme content involve rigorous consultations between national and provincial officials. At the provincial levels, Table 13 shows that the camp commander undertakes these processes in consultation with colleagues and district officials. Upon completion, the camp concept, budget and logistics plan are submitted to the Head of Department (HoD) for approval. Respondents noted that to make the content relevant to the needs of participants, issues arising from dialogues are escalated to provinces and national and are accordingly incorporated. Once approved, the committees develop the camp manual outlining the programme for each day of the camp. Service providers are also identified and appointed to implement various aspects of the camp content.

Table 13: Conceptualisation, Planning, Budgeting and Content Development

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Category | |
|---|------------------------------|----------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD |
| For provincial camps, the camp commander develops the camp concept and budgets, which are approved by the HoD, and thereafter works with the districts to plan for logistics, venues and service providers. | | 8 |
| For national camps, national DSD, in consultation with provinces, develops the camp concept, budgets, logistical plans and programme content | 1 | 3 |
| Service providers, including sign language interpreters, are appointed/contracted by either national or provincial depending on the type of camp. | | 3 |

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Category | |
|---|------------------------------|----------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD |
| The programme design and communication committee prepare the content and daily activities informed by the issues arising from the dialogues, communicates daily activities and makes changes if necessary, and writes the report for the camp | 1 | 1 |

Following the approval of the camp concept, structures for implementation oversight are put in place, as shown in Table 14. The structures comprise several committees, each with defined roles assigned to handle aspects of the youth camp.¹⁹ This applies to both national and provincial youth camps. Mentors identified from recommendations from districts and provinces are invited to attend mentorship and facilitation training to support different activities in the youth camp. Before the arrival of participants, the committees ensure that everything is ready and that the facility is ready to receive and welcome them.

Table 14: Establishment and Operationalisation of Structures for Implementation Oversight

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Category | | |
|--|------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Implementers |
| After approval of the camp concept, an implementation/coordinating structure is established with several committees comprising national and provincial DSD officials, DoD, and other departments and partners, representatives are elected to the committees, and roles and responsibilities are defined | 2 | 11 | |
| The coordinating structure, through its committees, organises camp activities according to the camp programme | 2 | 5 | |
| Identification of mentors is made with inputs from the districts, clarification of their roles and mentoring sessions are held | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Service providers, including sign language interpreters, are appointed/contracted by either national or provincial, depending on the type of camp. | | 3 | |
| To standardise the conduct of the provincial camps, dialogues were held, and officials and mentors were also trained | 1 | | |
| Before the arrival of participants and delegates, meetings are held by the committees, including mentors, to check that all arrangements, including venues, logistics, transport, hospitality, screening of participants and service providers, are all set and ready | 1 | 10 | |
| Assignment of selected mentors to co-facilitate the sessions with the service providers, facilitators | | 1 | |

¹⁹ The following committees were established: The Steering Committee; Health Committee; Transport committee; Hospitality committee; Content, Report Writing and Communication Committee; Entertainment and Sports Committee; Administration Committee; Venues and Facilities Committee; The Facilitation Committee; Psycho-Social, Security and Disciplinary Committee; and Promotional Material and Distribution Committee.

The third aspect of the pre-implementation phase was the mobilisation of participants. As shown in Table 15, respondents indicated that participants are mobilised through dialogues held in wards, sub-districts, and districts. These dialogues, directed by provincial officials, were held through DSD-supported NPOs and schools. For national camps, participants were selected by the provinces from among those who attended provincial camps.

Table 15: Mobilisation of Participants

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Category | | |
|---|------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| Provinces select participants from the provincial camps to attend the national camp | 2 | | |
| With provincial oversight, participants are mobilised and selected through dialogues held at ward level, sub-districts and district levels and working with DSD-funded NPOs and schools | 11 | 6 | 2 |
| Youth with disabilities are mobilised through the schools, venues are checked for suitability, feedback is given to them, and relatives are requested to help where necessary | 3 | | |

7.4.2 Things That Went Well

Based on the responses, things that went well were further divided into four sub-themes: things that went well during the pre-implementation phase, things that went well in the manner in which the youth camps were implemented and managed, things that went well during the delivery of the content during the camp, and things that went well after the camps. According to Table 16, the main things that went well during the pre-implementation phase were the identification and training of mentors, who later became handy during the camps to support the participants and the facilitators, making the camps much more effective. These mentors have continued to make themselves available to support initiatives by the department.

Respondents agreed that mentors added value to the camps because they acted as a first line of support to the youth, supported and participated in facilitating different sessions, and helped keep the youth together to participate in planned activities actively. A provincial DSD official explained how mentors were trained and how they became an important resource during the camps:

“Another thing is that the mentors also got the opportunity to develop their leadership skills and the self-awareness ... so through the youth camps, they are getting these opportunities of which they are very beneficial to them as young people... You could see there was a good relationship between the mentors and mentees, and there was no involvement from other staff.”

The screening of participants led by the Department of Health (DoH) made it possible to identify youth who came with knives and dagga and those who presented with infectious diseases that could infect others. It also emerged, especially from the provinces, that issues picked up during mobilisation gave them an indication of the motivation to attend the youth camps. It also emerged from national respondents that sometimes they had to show pictures and slides about youth camps to demonstrate what happens during the camps to the youth during mobilisation. This was done to manage the expectations of the youth wishing to attend the camps.

Table 16: What went well during the Pre-Camp Phase

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Categories | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Implementers |
| At the national camps, potential mentors were identified, introduced to the manual and trained on mentorship and facilitation skills to become facilitators who made the camps effective. | | 3 | 2 |
| Screening of participants made it possible to identify young people with dagga, knives and infectious diseases. | | 2 | |
| A mentors database was developed; today, mentors are still proud and active in responding to any activity initiated by DSD. | | 1 | |
| The department provided buses to transport participants to the camps. | | 1 | |
| Checking service providers to ensure everything is ready | | 1 | |
| Following through the activities from ward dialogues, district dialogues, and the provincial camp to have an understanding of why youth want to attend the camp | | 1 | |
| Learning from the mistakes and challenges from previous camps and striving to be better | 1 | | |
| Presenting the national camp to young people during mobilisation with slides and pictures so that they can see for themselves what to expect from the camps | 1 | | |

Table 17 shows what went well in the way the camps were implemented and managed. Respondents from the national lauded the quality of facilitators, and the good working relationship between national and provincial officials and the mentors, especially highlighting that everyone knew what they were meant to do. One of the beneficiaries from the Mpumalanga focus group discussion had this to say about the quality of the facilitators: ***“What I noticed is that these guys are not just training you, but they want to build that confidence in you that you can do it and that even when things are tough, you can still go on. It took me two days, but then I got used to it.”***

Respondents also commended the positive feedback from the participants on how they were benefitting from the camps. Provincial respondents appreciated the relationship between DSD and DoD, as well as between the mentors and participants. On the other hand, beneficiaries and implementers applauded fellow participants’ energy, enthusiasm and willingness to work, which most likely also rubbed onto the officials. Similarly, implementers appreciated how the WhatsApp group that was set up improved communication and coordination between the relevant parties.

Table 17: What went well in the manner that the youth camps were implemented and managed

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Categories | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| There was a lot of enthusiasm, energy and willingness to work from the youth, and the energy and focus of the officials were evident. | | | 1 | 1 |
| A WhatsApp group of mentors, the officials from the districts and the sub-districts for ease of communication | | | | 1 |
| Arrangements between DSD and DoD were of discipline and commitment. | | 1 | | |
| Bread, butter and tea during the breaks were offered because people were not getting full from the same portion. | | | | 1 |
| Checking that content delivery is happening exactly as it is supposed to be | | 1 | | |
| Facilitators and mentors were good at transferring skills to mentees | 1 | | | |
| Facilities of DoD were cost-effective. | | 1 | | |
| Good relationship between mentors and mentees | | 1 | | |
| Having the people from the provinces coordinating their provincial teams and following through with some of the actions agreed upon for implementation | | 1 | | |
| In national camps, all provinces and national coming together to discuss issues affecting them | 1 | | | |
| Kids without jerseys or those that wore the same clothes or those without shoes were identified and were assisted. | | | | 1 |
| Seeing the day-to-day progress of youth participants and seeing them change and develop was exciting to watch | 1 | | | |
| So many young people said they learnt a lot and they will take what they learnt back to their communities | 1 | | | |
| The partnership between DSD and DoD made such a difference in terms of cost-effectiveness. | | 1 | | |
| The quality of the facilitators and the content has been improving. | | 1 | | |
| The support from the national was good, officials and mentors were trained, and everyone knew exactly what they were meant to do | 1 | | | |

Table 18 shows what went well during the actual implementation of the camps. It is not surprising that this question attracted the most responses. According to the beneficiaries, cultural nights were their memorable highlight because they could showcase their talents and cultures. Beneficiaries also

appreciated sports, outdoor activities and physical exercises, which in a way, also taught them discipline and time management. They also applauded debates which improved their communication skills and confidence.

Additionally, they appreciated drama sessions and leadership and personal development training. The beneficiaries also appreciated presentations on self-actualisation, self-love, self-identity and social ills such as GBV, substance abuse and teenage pregnancy. Among the provincial officials, the most common response was the discipline instilled by DoD. They also noted that cultural nights and sporting activities were popular among the participants. National officials appreciated the exchange of ideas among the youth from different backgrounds. Like their provincial counterparts, they also noted the discipline the soldiers instilled in participants and the exposure the camps gave to the youth.

Table 18: What went well during the delivery of the content during the camp

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Categories | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| Cultural nights offered entertainment, helped young people become more confident, showcase their talents and cultures, and communicated important messages. | | 5 | 31 | 3 |
| Sports activities exposed youth to different kinds of sports, and the physical training taught lessons about discipline, time management and honour. | | 5 | 12 | 1 |
| Discipline from the soldiers helped to deal with attitude issues, inculcate responsibility with a purpose, and soldiers also experienced the human side | 2 | 9 | 3 | 1 |
| Debates were enjoyable as they helped improve communication skills and confidence. | | | 14 | |
| Exposure, meeting people with different minds and backgrounds and understanding the dynamics of different communities | 2 | 4 | 4 | 1 |
| A variety of speakers spoke on different topics, such as GBV, social cohesion, substance abuse, and patriotism, with knowledge and expertise. | | 3 | 5 | 2 |
| Self-actualisation, self-love, self-identity and communication skills helped change mindsets and gave the youth confidence, even for those who were initially shy, and helped them think outside of the box. | | 2 | 5 | 2 |
| Leadership skills and personal development enabled youth to set goals, understand leadership styles, take responsibility and know how to handle issues and manage conflicts. | | 1 | 7 | |
| Interactive motivational talks from celebrities and successful people and sharing of experiences from mentors and fellow youth participants motivated the youth. | | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Drama was enjoyable because the actors showed emotions and put everything into it. | | | 7 | |

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Categories | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| All topics and activities were relevant, well implemented and offered opportunities for participants to learn | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Activities with interesting scenarios where the youth had to express themselves made a difference as they showed how to deal with situations | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Music and dancing helped young people showcase their talents. | | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| Male-to-male and female-to-female dialogues allowed discussions on how men can protect women and what youth go through in their communities as victims and perpetrators. | | | 2 | 3 |
| Personal development unpacked the talents of young people and forced them to think about their goals and how to treat other people and be patriotic. | | 2 | 3 | |
| Self-mastery and entrepreneurship encouraged youth to present possible interventions or businesses that they can engage in and champion for change in their communities. | | 3 | 2 | |
| Team building skills taught young people to work in oneness during preparations, and the performance was amazing | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Life skills and exchange of ideas had a positive impact and opened up participants to become assertive | 3 | 1 | | |
| Sessions on teenage pregnancy, rape, and substance abuse revealed cases referred to social workers who offered psychosocial support to the victims. | | | 3 | |
| Different speakers spoke to young people about career opportunities either for employment or further studies. | | | 1 | 1 |
| Prayer sessions | | | 2 | |
| Social issues like GBV cannot just be spoken about, but programmes should be implemented to alleviate them. | | | 2 | |

From the survey data, we determined the hierarchy of activities based on the proportion of respondents that reported having fully enjoyed the different sessions. It is clear from the findings that skills-building sessions stood out as the most thoroughly enjoyed activities, while presentations and speeches were among the least enjoyed (*see Figure 5 below*).

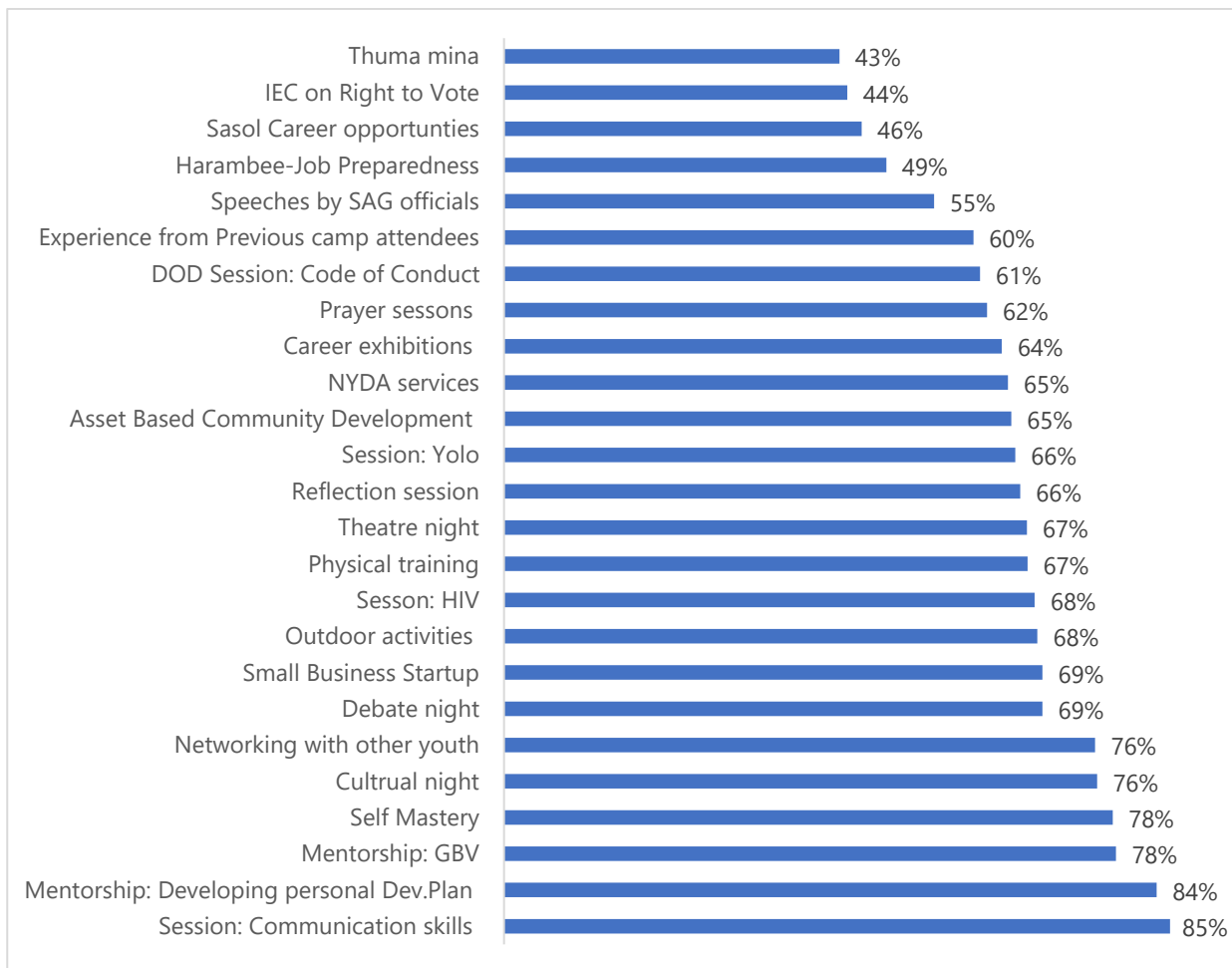


Figure 4: Proportion of Participants that Reported that they had Fully Enjoyed the Different Activities

Another important aspect that emerged from the survey data analysis was the varying levels of understanding of the different sessions/activities at the camp. Figure 6 below shows the hierarchy of sessions in terms of how the respondents were able to follow and understand them.

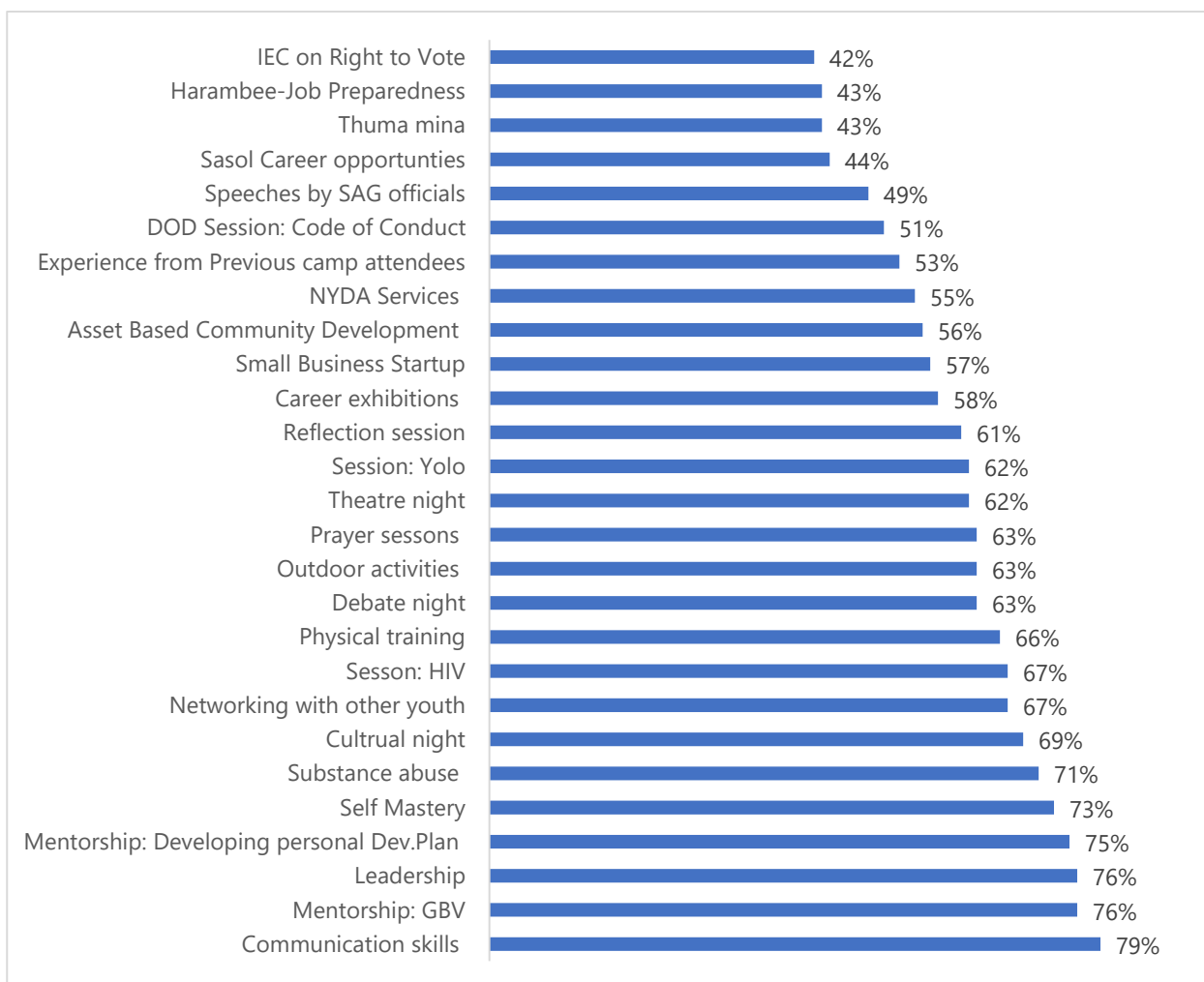


Figure 5: Proportion of Participants that reported having been able to fully understand and follow the activities/sessions.

Regarding participation in the camps, survey findings reveal varying attendance levels. The most frequently reported number of days participants attended was seven days, with 35% of all respondents. In total, 68% of respondents reported having attended camps for at least seven days, while 24% reported having attended for five to six days.

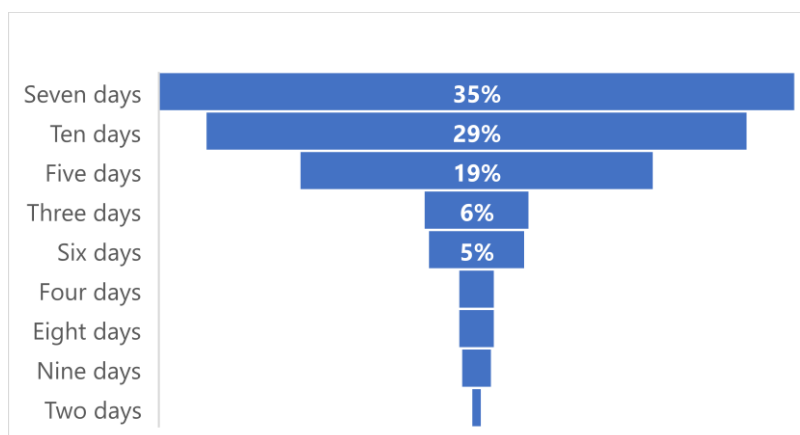


Figure 6: Proportion of Respondents by the Number of Days they attended at the Youth Camp

Comparing attendance data across provinces revealed significant variations, with the Western Cape being the best performer, as 95% of respondents reported having attended for at least seven days. The worst performing province was Free State, where nearly a quarter of participants only attended for four days or less (see Figure 8 below).

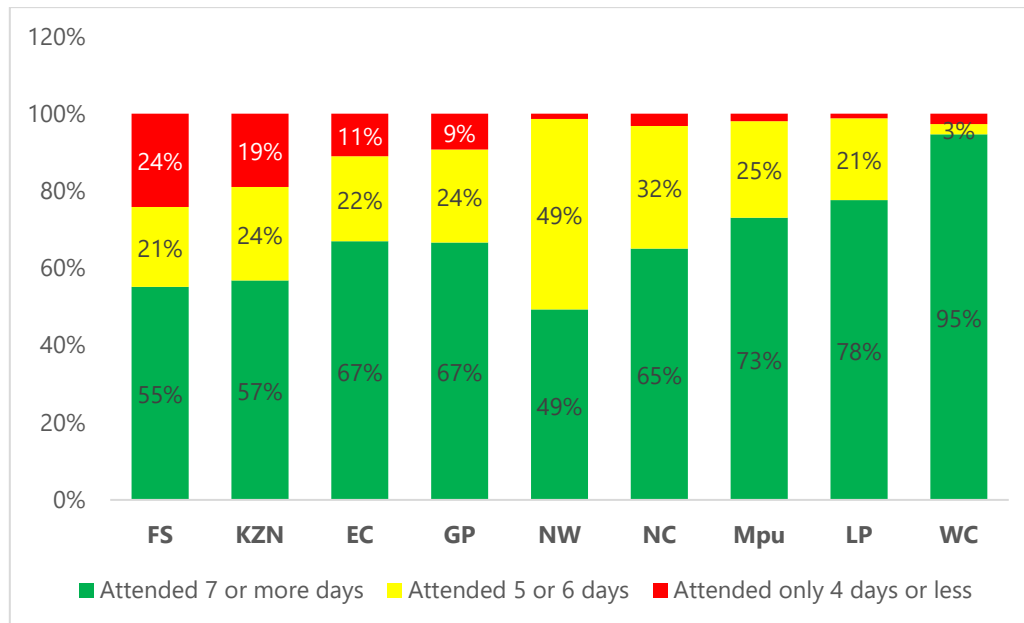


Figure 7: Number of Days Participants attended Camps by Province

Survey respondents also provided feedback on the usefulness of the different sessions to them. Based on the findings, it is clear that the sessions rated highest were those that provided personal development skills, including communication, leadership, personal development planning and self-mastery, as well as sessions addressing GBV and substance abuse.

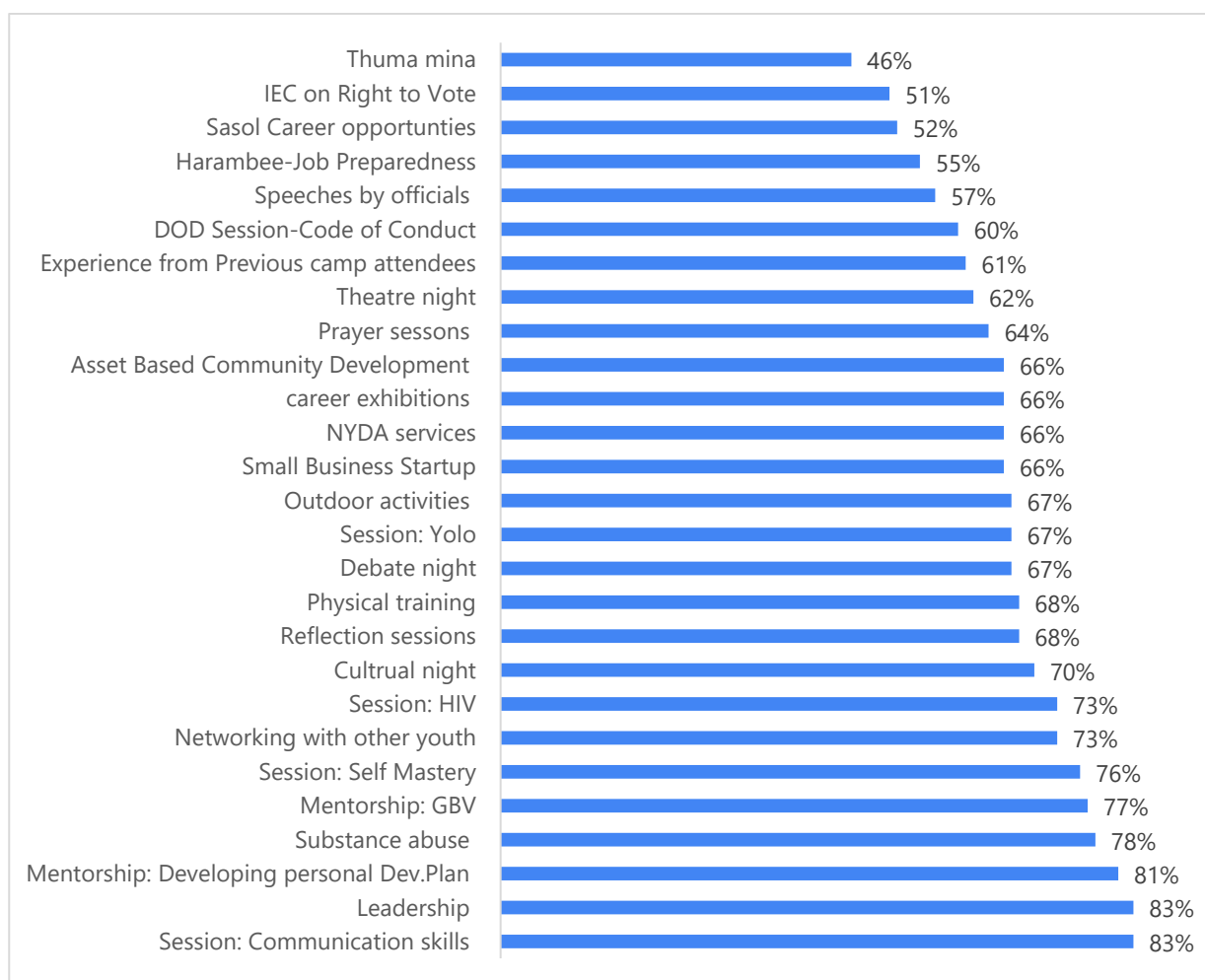


Figure 8: Respondents' Rating of the Usefulness of the Sessions/Activities to Them

During the implementation phase of youth camps, participants lauded the discipline inculcated by the military personnel from DoD. They noted that it taught them to be organised, keep time and take personal responsibility. Additionally, the camps took them out of their comfort zones, teaching them resilience and adaptability lessons.

However, one of the issues raised was the poor morality of some of the officials assigned to youth camps. Officials, especially from the provinces, complained that this set a bad example for the youth, who looked up to the officials as elders and role models. One provincial DSD official emphasised the importance of officials displaying good moral character as follows:

"When they do these camps, they should choose people who love people and their job. Choose people who know they are not there to play, but they are service driven and will give you the desired results that you want... There are ways that you can speak to these kids. You need to understand that you are speaking to the beneficiaries. You need to respect them so they can respect you. If you use hurtful words when speaking to them, you have killed the morale for that camp. The officials, especially the male officials, they need to understand that these kids are not to be devoured by them. I once received a call in the ... camps about this, but I ensured that no official entered or came close to the dorms. These officials sleep with the kids, and we have seen it. Also, we didn't have a problem with them drinking at night, but you are here to work, so do

that without being seen by the kids, and you'd hear the learners saying a particular official got them alcohol. So, the question is, do these officials understand that the kids came here to learn, not to drink or sleep with them or even be their friends."

Additionally, while all the youth were tasked to develop personal development plans, some respondents believed that some did not adequately capture what they would do when they returned to their communities.

While the issue of content was discussed in the preceding section, it needs to be emphasised that it is not only the development of the content that should be practical and action-oriented, but the same also applies to how it is delivered to the camp participants. A youth camp beneficiary participant from a focus group discussion in Limpopo Province summarised this challenge as follows:

"I feel where we need less time are the programmes where older people give presentations, and they end up taking the whole day, and we end up sleepy. They take the whole day reading a one-page presentation, and they end up using the time for other programmes. So, I think those ones need less time or vibrant presenters. I prefer content in terms of people coming in and presenting, but the only problem was that they don't open a space for us to engage. They just came and gave us information, but I would have liked it if they had presented for a few minutes and opened a space for us. Because in provincial camps, it is 350 people, and they will sleep if you don't engage with them. So, I wish they had opened more time for the mentees and the mentors to engage the content."

While it was acknowledged that the quality of the facilitators was good, perhaps in terms of their knowledge and expertise on the content, it was felt that some of them did not have the experience and the qualities to engage with young people. It was reported that some facilitators demonstrated a lack of patience and did not find creative ways of dealing with the youth. The issue of carefully selecting facilitators was raised during a focus group discussion with camp beneficiaries in the Mpumalanga province, where it was said:

"... The people you choose to facilitate those camps, those two things are very key. The reason for that is choosing the participants requires someone who understands what the young people on the ground are going through, and also facilitation requires people who have the patience, innovation, and creativity to make sure that those young people are... I remember our facilitator was creative, so the personal development stuck with me. She was very creative and made personal examples whereby she would say this is where she was when she attended the camp, and this is where I am today, but this is where I am going..."

Post Implementation Phase

This is perhaps the greatest area where the respondents noted the greatest gap in implementing youth camps. All respondents decried a lack of an exit strategy, including a robust system for tracking and following up on those who previously attended the camps. With such a system in place, it would be possible for DSD to know where everybody who previously attended the camps is currently, how far they have developed in their careers, the kind of initiatives they initiated and what the impact of these initiatives has been. This would also help to establish the actual impact of youth camps and, most importantly, to understand the support needs of these youth so that they can be capacitated

further to play more active and developmental roles in their communities. Such a system would also be supported by a referral system where the young attending youth camps would be directed to where they can access opportunities for career growth, skills development and resources. In the absence of such a system, many youth who attended the camps have been left sitting, wondering how they could apply what they learnt. Only a few who became mentors are those who succeeded in unlocking opportunities for themselves. Understandably, DSD and the youth directorate, in particular, on its own, would not be able to support and resource a robust exit strategy as expected by the camp attendees. Herein comes the need for the directorate to co-opt other partners that can lend a hand to support specific aspects of the post-camp support needs of the camp attendees.

Outcomes from Camp Participation

After the camps, a number of positive things were also noted, as shown in Table 19. What stood out from the responses from provincial officials was the positive feedback from the youth who attended the camps, narrating their achievements after leaving the camps and the good work that some of the mentors are doing in their communities. Beneficiaries also indicated how some of them had received funding from DSD while others had received bursaries to further their education.

Table 19: What went well after the camps

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Categories | |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------|
| | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries |
| Camps create vibes in young people as they continue to call DSD to share experiences on what they have done after attending the camp | 1 | |
| Positive feedback from the young people on the success stories of how they benefitted from the camp | 1 | |
| Obtaining funding from DSD and commitments from other stakeholders | | 1 |
| Some young people obtained bursaries. | | 1 |
| Some trained mentors have initiated and/or coordinated projects after going back to their communities | 1 | |

7.4.3 How Camps Can become an Effective Mobilisation Tool for Youth

Responses from the stakeholders show that youth camps can be used as one of the mobilisation tools. As shown in Table 20, provincial officials and beneficiaries conceded that youth camps provide platforms for youth to be empowered and capacitated with leadership and team-building skills, ultimately contributing to social cohesion. Both respondents also acknowledged that youth camps could empower youth to initiate projects that benefit their communities. Similarly, they agreed that youth could be motivated into change agents for sustainable livelihoods and community development through youth camps. With a robust exit strategy, the national DSD respondents acknowledged that post-implementation plans could focus on providing tangible skills for youth development and that camps can act as springboards for communication driven by the youth.

Table 20: How Camps Can become an Effective Mobilisation Strategy for Youth

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Category | | |
|---|------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries |
| Young camps provide platforms for youth empowerment, leaders and skills development, social cohesion and team building. | | 2 | 3 |
| Youth camps empower the youth to start projects that benefit their communities. | | 2 | 2 |
| Youth camps mobilise youth as change agents for sustainable livelihoods and community development. | | 1 | 1 |
| Some provinces develop post-camp implementation plans focussing on exit strategies that offer tangible skills for youth development | 1 | | |
| Youth attending camps can be facilitated to access opportunities such as bursaries so that they can complete a whole cycle of development | 1 | | |
| Youth camps act as springboards for community action, especially with a good post-camp support strategy | 1 | | |
| Youth camps could provide opportunities for the youth to commercialise indigenous games. | | | 1 |
| Youth camps enable the youth to become role models in their communities. | | | 1 |
| Youth camps enable the youth to realise their strengths and start helping other children in the community. | | | 1 |
| Youth camps enable the youth to speak out on matters that affect their communities. | | | 1 |
| Youth camps enable youth to change their lives. | | | 1 |
| Youth camps have emboldened the youth to seek opportunities for themselves. | | | 1 |
| Youth camps should be conceptualised to help government understand the youth who have attained whole-cycle development | 1 | | |
| Youth camps should target the youth who are prepared and are already in the department's development programmes. | | 1 | |

7.4.4 How Youth Camps Have Influenced the Lives of Youth and Families

As shown in Table 21, youth camps have benefited those who returned and implemented what they learnt from the camps. According to the responses from the beneficiaries, the skills they learnt from the camps, especially on leadership and personal development, helped them to take on new roles and start new careers. Others indicated that they had formed new NPOs, started new businesses or initiated projects in their communities. Provincial officials acceded to these benefits, which the national DSD officials also acknowledged.

Table 21: How Youth camps have influenced the lives of youth and families

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Category | | | |
|---|------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| Started a new career | | 4 | 14 | |
| Formed their own organisations: businesses / NPOs | | 4 | 7 | 1 |
| Started their own projects in their communities | | 1 | 8 | |
| Acquired new skills | | 1 | 4 | |
| Got bursaries to continue with their education | 1 | 3 | 1 | |

7.4.5 Measurable Results of Youth Camps

Based on the survey, participants reported on the extent to which they had achieved personal development goals. These data are presented by year in which the camp took place and by province, as shown in Figures 10 and 11 below. As the sample sizes for 2012 to 2014 were very small, the findings reflected here may be skewed. It is encouraging to note that in the last three years (2017-2019), less than 10% of the respondents reported not having achieved their objectives. There seems to be minimal variation over the years in terms of those that reported that they had achieved all their objectives.

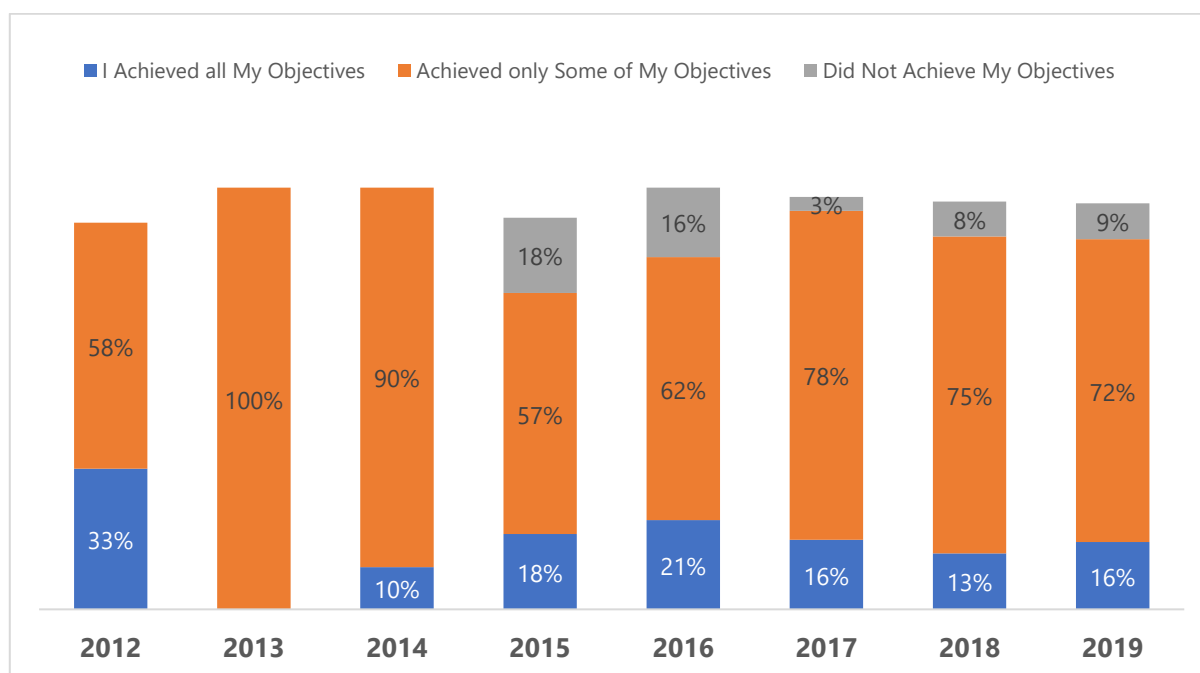


Figure 9: Participants' Feedback on Whether they Achieved their Objectives for Attending the Youth Camp by Year

Results across provinces reflect fairly similar results except for the Western Cape, where nearly 30% of respondents reported achieving all their objectives.

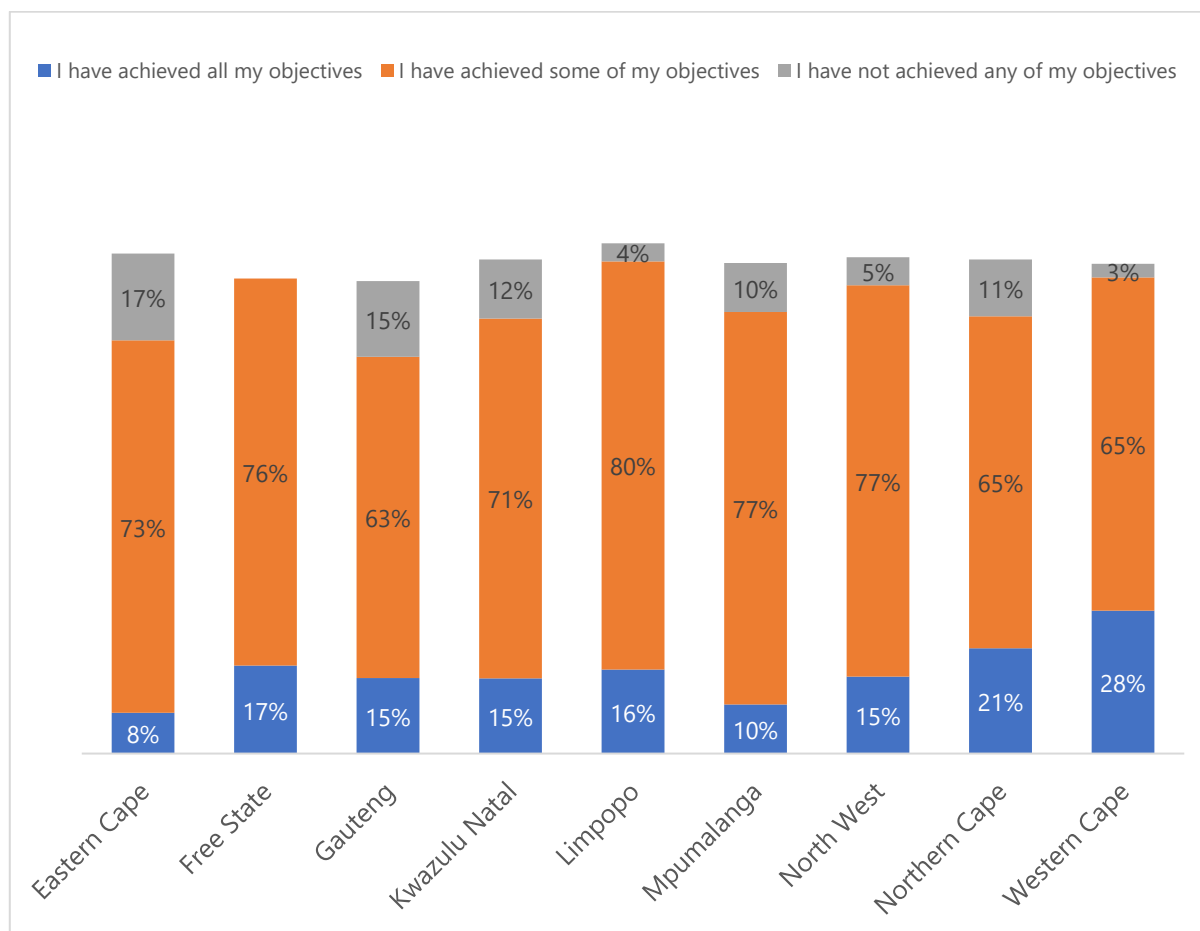


Figure 10: Extent to Which Participants' Objectives as Outlined in Their Personal Development Plan were Achieved

The results emanating from the camps based on the accounts of the youth who attended them have been documented to capture real stories of success from their achievements. The accounts demonstrate the actual impacts of applying what the youth learnt from the camps. While many accounts were documented, a few have been captured here below.

"During the camp, we formed friendships, relationships and associations of some sort with different people all over the country, and those relationships grew to an extent such that in 2016 we managed to form a cooperative made up of various young people who had been a part of the camps since 2012-2015. We formed a leadership of about 20 facilitators, bided for the camp, and got the contract. This is a good story to tell because one of our assertions when we attended, it was going to be nicer if it was going to be facilitated by people who had attended the camp before. So we got the contract to facilitate the camp, and all the facilitators from previous camps and I got the opportunity to coordinate the facilitators. I believe we managed to reach out to young people directly because we had the same experiences that they were going through, and we had been there and we had been running various organisations and youth clubs. In 2017 we again applied to facilitate the camp, and this time it was more special because we had many more interested youths in facilitating the camp, even from the

2016 group. They were more interested in giving back than in facilitating the camp. I believe they saw that because they had seen how we excelled at facilitating the camp and, secondly, how the camp had changed from a serious camp considering that it took place at a military base. The young people saw that they could relate to us; for them, it was more exciting and refreshing. I remember looking at the candidate facilitators, and they were mostly from the 2016 camp that was applying for the 2017 camp facilitators. 2017 was also a successful year. I am also a success story myself as I am the provincial Chairperson of the South African Youth Council in the ..., and none of that would have been possible had I not been given an opportunity to interact with youth organisations through the DSD national youth camps because there I was able to have relationships with youth organisations throughout the province and those organisations are the ones that elected me to be the Chairperson.” – As told by a youth camp beneficiary from the Western Cape Province.

“I think my first biggest achievement after the camp was being elected as the deputy chairperson in the committee in my community for a new big facility, so it was the greatest achievement for me because it led to me and the organisation I was working for as a facilitator to grow because through that partnership we were able to negotiate a partnership with the DoH whereby they gave us space to run the youth centre and help young people. So, it was just that achievement to say it didn’t only help me as a participant. Yes, most definitely! I don’t think I was seeing myself as a leader, but when I came back, I saw myself as one, but I then realised that it demanded action and not just seeing yourself as one. You need to act like one, think and treat people like one, so it changed my perspective on how I looked at leadership, and leadership resonated with me. I remember highlighting it in my manual ‘the traits of a leader’, and empathy which means putting yourself in someone else’s shoes, it helped me a lot, and I started seeing myself as a leader.” – As told by a youth camp beneficiary from KZN Province.

“Okay, firstly, when we were at the camp, I really didn’t know how to do things or behave in front of other people; that is self-actualisation and also leadership. I learned a lot because those soldiers that we interacted with made sure that they show us that this is the kind of leadership that we must have, and also, the mentors were showing all the characteristics of leadership. I feel like everyone I met there was showing that, and they taught me to be a person who is independent and not depend on other people. So after that, I started my own baking hustle. I am still studying, doing my third year at the University of Venda in Environmental Sciences, so on the other side, I am baking and also catering on weekends. Also, I instilled a mind like that to my own community because, in my community, I have an NPO which is called “...”, so I did that because I want to give people things they don’t have the ability to have. I also don’t have both parents, but I also depend on myself and do everything myself because I think it’s important to be like that. You cannot depend on a man or anyone else, especially if you are a woman. Women are undermined in this world. Men feel that we cannot do anything ourselves, so we have to believe that we can do anything we want. So, moving on, I also learnt that being a youth is something that comes with motive that you have to be active in everything that you do. When you first arrive at 7 SAI, you will feel like those people are abusing you. Still, as time goes on, you learn that those are mothers and fathers who want to instil something in our minds because they also came from poor backgrounds and they also have bad upbringings.” – As told by a youth camp beneficiary from Limpopo Province.

"I think I started the camp as a mentee, then a mentor and then a facilitator, and the first benefit I have received is being the best facilitator of the year 2017. Then, we hosted some camps. Before I changed my organisation to being a private company, with the group that I had, we got the opportunity to be funded to assist in data capturing, and we have worked with DSD, and there is a lot that we had. You had earlier on when they mentioned the new DSD policy. We were a part of crafting that policy. We were one of the young people that contributed a lot to policies and frameworks. Last week I was at the Presidential Sector Summit, where DSD took us to Jo'burg to engage on the new framework for civil society that has more opportunities for funding NPOs and NGO centres. That was part of us benefiting through DSD. The skills and credibility and leadership skills, we have been getting them through DSD, so that is why I feel we are also ready to host our provincial camp now because DSD has invested a lot in us." – As told by a youth camp beneficiary from KZN Province.

"In this camp, I have benefited a lot, I attended these camps with no knowledge of NPOs, but when I came back, we registered an NPO with other members who decided to join me, and after we registered, our first funder was Old Mutual in 2020 when we were still an NPC, but then we merged the NPC with the NPO, and around that year, we received a grant of R150 000 through Old Mutual and also this year we have received a DSD grant. We have many sponsors, and we also distribute food parcels in the area of the North Coast through the Solidarity Funds. We used the NPOs that met at the camps. In 2018, the NYDA came to our district to check our services. In 2018, we received funding from NYDA, which was R150 000, and National Lottery funded us this year with R350 000, which will be active in December. During the 2016 financial year, we got an award from DSD, which honoured us as the best implemented programme. In the same year, the former Premier, Mr Mchunu, also gave us a certificate recommending us to ICC, As a youth camp beneficiary from KZN Province told us.

"There is a young man who hails from Venda. He attended the camp for the first time in 2016 that we facilitated. In 2017 he was a facilitator with us. During the 2016 camp, he was one of the young people who had the opportunity to directly engage the then Minister of Small Business Development, Minister Zulu, now the Minister for Social Development. He engaged her in the programme he was running back home in Venda related to the green economy. The last I checked on the young man earlier this year, he manages the EPWP in Ekurhuleni, and his organisation is tasked with that. He attends international conferences and speaks on the environment and the importance of preserving the environment. He has received funding from the small business development before, and that opportunity was created by the national youth camp in 2016. In 2018 a young man was in Dubai addressing issues on the environment, and this is one such a story of a young person whose opportunity was directly presented by the national youth camp to him." – As related by one of the Implementers from Limpopo Province.

"I will just tell you a quick one of young girls who formed their own sisterhood, and the lady in charge of the group was actually part of our camp. They run programmes about GBV, distribute sanitary pads and do a lot of social mobilisation programmes around HIV&AIDS. They do this on their own without any funding. They also have beauty contests, and they invited the Premier and MEC, who promised them funding after being so impressed with their work. They got a gig with SABC, and they formed an NPO that we are going to fund. It is so wonderful to have such

people coming from the camps.” – As told by a provincial DSD official from the Eastern Cape Province.

7.4.6 Challenges and Barriers to Youth Camp Implementation

Despite the amazing stories of success, respondents noted some challenges that affected the effectiveness of the camps, as shown in Table 22. All respondents highlighted the lack of a fully resourced exit strategy as a major impedance towards the effectiveness of youth camps. The national and provincial officials noted the poor state of some of the DoD facilities where the camps were held. Both officials also decried the recruitment criteria, which sometimes brought back the youth who have attended previous camps and those who have not demonstrated any commitment to uplifting their communities, which was attributed to the pressure to achieve targets. Provincial officials also noted a lack of a tracking system for following up on the youth who have attended camps to establish the impact of the camps. Resource constraints and lack of alignment between national and provincial plans were also highlighted, especially by national officials, which had caused some provinces not to prioritise youth development. Provincial officials also noted weaknesses in the coordination with DoH, which has sometimes involved officers taking ill youth to health facilities at odd hours during emergencies and waiting long hours before being assisted. Importantly, the beneficiaries emphasised that camps being treated as events rather than a programme meant no follow-up activities after the camps. Beneficiaries also noted weak coordination structures for youth development activities at district and sub-district levels, which made it difficult for the government to support community-level initiatives implemented by the youth. Implementers highlighted a lack of role clarity from some of the officials, which caused confusion.

Table 22: Challenges and Barriers to Youth Camp Implementation

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Categories | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| No exit plan and budget for youth camp beneficiaries | 1 | 11 | 4 | |
| Poor and limited facilities in camp venues | 8 | 4 | | |
| Resources are not enough, especially at the provincial levels | 1 | 5 | 1 | |
| Poor alignment between national and provincial plans | 7 | | | |
| Weak mobilisation and recruitment criteria | 4 | 2 | | |
| Inadequate support and coordination with DoH | | 6 | | |
| Lack of a proper system for tracking camp beneficiaries | | 3 | | 1 |
| Last-minute planning and not enough commitment to ensuring the success of the camps | 3 | 1 | | |
| Emphasis on targets and not quality | 4 | | | |
| Poor coordination and teamwork among the officials | 1 | 1 | | 1 |

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Categories | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| Lack of role clarity among officials | | 1 | | 2 |
| Youth camps are considered an event, not a programme. | | | 3 | |
| Limited duration to cover all activities adequately | | 2 | | |
| Delayed disbursement of funds | | 1 | | |
| Lack of commitment from top officials | | 1 | | |
| Late disbursement of funds | 1 | | | |
| Mentors do not feel empowered to support camp activities fully | 1 | | | |
| No line budget for youth camps | | 1 | | |
| Poor discipline among the youth | | | | 1 |
| Some provinces are not prioritising youth development as a whole | 1 | | | |
| Some youth do not like to follow camp activities/instructions. | | 1 | | |
| Supply chain challenges | | 1 | | |
| Weak coordination criteria | | | | 1 |
| Weak coordination structures for youth development activities at district and sub-district levels | | | 1 | |
| Youth development does not trickle down to all departments and agencies | 1 | | | |
| Some youth do not disclose their health issues. | | 1 | | |

While there were not many challenges raised with regard to the planning of the youth camps, the main issue that was raised was that the planning lacked a serious focus on the outcomes that were intended to be achieved. One of the views expressed was that the planning process was largely activity and logistics oriented rather than on specific outcomes that were intended to be achieved. The following statements from three different provincial DSD officials underscore the importance of adopting outcome-based planning for youth camps:

"The first thing would be to start with the end in mind, about what it is we want to achieve as an outcome. Well, once we decide that we put processes that will lead us to achieving that, but of course, we also must look at the input and the staff, the youth development practitioners, on whether they are competent enough to take us through the process leading towards the intended outcome and if not, then there would have to be some reskilling and or capacity of some sort. It will be required that it's resourced differently."

"There should be standardisation, and the intended outcomes, and there should be a plan to follow through, to say they came out of here and after that, we place them there and there. We felt that we needed to put our young people in a programme so that we are able to yield benefits rather than be excited about this conference that happens at the end of the year that really doesn't yield any benefits..."

"The aim of the project should not be about numbers, but it should be the quality of young people that you want to influence so that they can go back and influence their community."

7.5 Efficiency

7.5.1 Organisation Design and Applied Delivery Model

The Youth Camp model that was implemented over the years focused on mobilising youth at different levels, from district to province and then national. While there was a significant effort made to coordinate activities across these levels, one lingering question is whether the approach is not somewhat duplicative, especially with regard to the value of replicating some of the same things at the province and national level where the same participants attend both.

With regard to the content covered during the camp, the feedback from participants indicates that some aspects were much more valuable than others. As such, it is worth reflecting on areas rated less favourably to determine if the time invested in covering those elements is worthwhile.

Furthermore, data show that 35% of respondents in the survey attended for seven days, while another 24% attended for five to six days. Only 29% of respondents reported having attended for all ten days. These results indicate that the camp's duration should be reconsidered and cut down to no more than seven days to contain costs and focus the camp content on the most useful aspects.

7.5.2 Core Businesses Processes Used

One aspect that comes through as positive is the collaboration between the government departments in planning and delivering the youth camp programme. This is clearly reflected in the role that DSD, DoD and DoH played in supporting the camp processes. DOD's hosting of the camps at their different locations provided a cost-saving opportunity given the cost per participant, as reflected in the section below on value for money. However, analysis of the other expenses incurred in the delivery of the national youth camps reveals possible inefficiencies, especially concerning procurement processes. It is not clear why multiple vendors would have been used to supply promotional materials for the same event; neither is it clear why these were all necessary.

7.5.3 Management and Administration, Including Record Keeping

Based on the available records in physical and soft copies, it is clear that the quality of record keeping was far from what would be desirable, especially with regard to the quality of the data. The evaluation team struggled to find all the relevant information, resulting in gaps related to key data, such as the cost of delivery of the different youth camps and confirmation of the total reach of these activities. It is clear that the M&E processes pertaining to these activities require substantive strengthening to

ensure effective documentation and reporting of the investments, the outputs and the outcome of youth camps.

7.5.4 Value for Money Analysis

The value-for-money analysis of the youth camps involved a review of expenditure data provided by the project team compared to the number of participants reached. The evaluation team considered data between 2014 and 2018 sourced from provincial reports as this was the data that was more or less complete (see *Table 23 below*).

Table 23: Summary of the expenditure over the period 2014-2018

| Expenditure Items | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Medical | R133 895,00 | R214 200,17 | | R300 759,08 | R381 817,25 |
| Accommodation (DoD) | R4 008 517,00 | R3 176 029,00 | R2 598 144,00 | R2 912 500,00 | R7 077 398,00 |
| Promotional material | R3 581 926,00 | R3 181 185,64 | R5 103 217,91 | R3 765 679,42 | |
| Facilitators | R551 088,00 | R736 856,00 | R250 000,00 | R479 000,00 | R499 901,00 |
| Transport | R1 500 000,00 | R855 948,10 | R500 100,00 | R699 878,50 | |
| Meetings | | R20 380,11 | | | |
| Training materials | R161 186,00 | R830 973,36 | R81 510,00 | R328 508,82 | R924 980,00 |
| Entertainment | | R140 830,00 | | | |
| Sound system | | R450 460,16 | R238 000,00 | R158 000,00 | |
| Catering | | R12 500,00 | R105 708,00 | R226 055,00 | R54 000,00 |
| Mentor fee | | R206 000,00 | R206 000,00 | R48 028,50 | |
| Goods & services | | R641 528,10 | | | |
| Venue | | | R293 046,00 | | |
| Grand Total | R9 936 612,00 | R10 467 718,64 | R9 376 710,91 | R8 918 409,32 | R8 940 689,25 |

Table 24 summarises how mentors were distributed to support the participants across the provinces for 2014-2018. Note that 2017 was not considered as the source document (2017 Report) was unavailable to confirm the data. The evaluation team used programme reports other than the attendance registers, which were considered incomplete.

Table 24: Distribution of Mentors by Participants between 2014-2018

| Key participants | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2018 |
|--------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Youth participants | 846 | 728 | 888 | 2322 |
| Mentor participants | 101 | 100 | 97 | 271 |
| Ratio: Participants per mentor | 8 | 7 | 9 | 9 |

Table 25 provides a summary analysis of how funds were spent to reach the youth camp outputs.

Table 25: Expenditure Analysis – 2014-2018

| Expenditure Indicator(s) | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | Average |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------|----------|------------|
| % Promotional material | 36,0% | 30,4% | 54,4% | 42,2% | 0,0% | 32.6% |
| % Accommodation | 40,3% | 30,3% | 27,7% | 32,7% | 79,2% | 42.0% |
| % Facilitating and mentoring | 5,5% | 9,0% | 4,9% | 5,9% | 5,6% | 6.2% |
| Expenditure/participant | R11 747 | R14 379 | R10 043 | - | R3 850 | R10,004.73 |
| DoD Cost per Participant | R4232.86 | R3835.78 | R2637.71 | - | R2729.42 | R3,358.94 |

According to Table 25, the project, on average, 32.6% of the total expenditure on promotional materials and 42.0% on accommodation. The data shows that in 2018 no funds were spent on promotional materials. However, a significant amount (79%) was spent on accommodation, most likely because the project hosted over 2300 participants. Moreover, the project did not spend significantly higher total amounts than the other years. In fact, in 2018, the expenditure per person (R3,850) was way less than in the other years, with the highest being R14,379 in 2015. On average, the project spent 6.2% of expenses on facilitation and mentoring costs. These costs included training materials and fees for facilitators and mentors. There was a spike in this line item in 2015 from an average of 5.5% in the other years to 9%.

Findings from this analysis show that besides the promotion materials, the costs related to hosting the youth camps were generally consistent and reasonable, perhaps because a fellow government department, DoD, hosted them. It is unclear why so much was spent on promotion materials each year, except for 2018, where funds were not allocated to this line item.

Assuming that promotional funds are spent on mobilising participants and purchasing T-shirts, caps, bags and other materials, we have assumed that the amount spent is directly related to the number of youth attending the camps. Based on this assumption, we conducted an analysis for the period between 2014 and 2018, comparing the amounts spent on promotional material versus the number of youth attending the camps – *See Table 26 below*. We notice that the largest amount spent on promotional materials was in 2016, the year where the attendance was lowest among the years being considered (2014 to 2018). While we do not have the reasons to explain this anomaly, we suggest reviewing promotional costs.

Table 26: Comparison between promotional costs and camp attendance

| Expenditure Items versus Attendance | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------|
| Promotional material | R3,581,926.00 | R3,181,185.64 | R5,103,217.91 | R3,765,679.42 | - |
| Number of participants attending the camps | 1283 | 997 | 329 | 795 | 829 |
| Promotional spend per participant | R2,791.84 | R3,190.76 | R15,511.30 | R4,736.70 | - |

7.6 Sustainability

This criterion examines whether the benefits of any activity are likely to continue after the funding has been withdrawn. The evaluation question specifically asked how the youth camp model can be improved and sustained. Responses from the different stakeholders cut across different aspects of the youth camp implementation, from planning to post-camp phases. Consequently, the responses were broken down into the following sub-themes:

- ◆ Pre-implementation phase: conceptualisation, planning, budgeting and content development.
- ◆ Stakeholder involvement and management.
- ◆ Delivery/implementation of the youth camps.
- ◆ Mobilisation of participants; and
- ◆ Post-camp phase.

7.6.1 Conceptualisation, Planning and Budgeting

According to Table 27, national and provincial officials and beneficiaries noted that youth camps could be more sustainable if the conceptualisation, planning, resourcing, and delivery processes focussed on achieving outcomes directly related to issues that affect the youth the most: jobs, decent lives, housing, and income generation. According to the respondents, this could be achieved through transforming and rebranding youth camps into a well-resourced youth development programme. Beneficiaries also felt that the duration of the camps should be reviewed so that the activities could be allocated sufficient time without overloading them up to late hours. Both national and provincial officials highlighted the need to improve alignment between national and provincial planning processes, which would lead to harmonising plans and budgets for youth development. Provincial officials also requested that the national develop standard operating procedures (SoPs) for camp processes to implement camps in a standardised manner across all provinces. They also added that the youth camp model should reflect programmes implemented across DSD, not just the youth directorate. Provincial officials and the beneficiaries also suggested that DSD considers hosting post camps to take stock of achievements, challenges and learnings from previous camps.

The beneficiaries requested that the national DSD consider the possibility of decentralising the youth directorate from the province to sub-districts to focus attention on youth development. Another recommendation from the beneficiaries was that the camp be divided into two parts: the theory part, which would constitute speeches and presentations, and the practical part, where they would focus on creating, presenting and refining their projects. Beneficiaries also advised that people selected as service providers/facilitators should demonstrate patience, innovation, and creativity in dealing with young people.

Implementers suggested that mentors be allocated airtime so youth participants could call their families, as the blackout caused by phones being taken away affected some of them. Another recommendation from the implementers was to review the age group of the participants, as the 18-34 age band was so wide that the disparity of common interests made it a challenge for the youth to bond.

Table 27: How youth camps can be sustained during conceptualisation, planning and budgeting

| Coded Segment | Tally by Respondent Categories | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| Improve the planning of the youth camps to focus on expected outcomes and then develop processes and resources to achieve those outcomes, drawing on lessons learnt | 2 | 11 | 2 | |
| Review the duration of youth camps to accommodate all activities adequately. | | 2 | 9 | |
| Elevate, resource and rebrand the camp from an event to a programme on youth development | 2 | 3 | | 1 |
| Allocate some airtime to mentors so that participants can use it to call their families. | | 2 | | 3 |
| Develop contingency plans to deal with emergencies | 1 | 4 | | |
| Improve coordination between national and provinces so that work plans and budgets are harmonised and resources are disbursed on time | 1 | 3 | | |
| Review the age limits of youth camp participants and mentors. | | | 2 | 2 |
| National DSD should ensure that there is standardisation across all national and provincial youth camps by developing SoPs and standardising promotional materials. | | 4 | | |
| Consider the possibility of hosting post camps to take stock of achievements, challenges and learnings. | | 1 | 1 | |
| Consider the possibility of decentralising the youth directorate from the province to sub-districts to focus attention on youth development. | | | 2 | |
| Consider breaking the youth camps into two parts: the theory part and the practical part, where youth can present their projects. | | | 1 | |
| Promote ownership of camps by the youth themselves so that it is not like DSD says this and this. | | 1 | | |
| Select facilitators who demonstrate patience, innovation, and creativity in dealing with young people. | | | 1 | |

| Coded Segment | Tally by Respondent Categories | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| The youth camp model should reflect programmes implemented across DSD, not just the youth directorate. | | 1 | | |
| Translate training materials into Braille so that the disabled (blind) youth can also follow. | | 1 | | |
| Ensure that facilities hosting the camps are properly inspected and things that require fixing are dealt with | 1 | | | |

7.6.2 Content Development

Suggestions on how to improve and make youth camps sustainable during content development are contained in Table 28. National and provincial officials and the beneficiaries noted that content, especially for lectures and presentations, should be few, brief, vibrant and engaging. This would enable the youth to stay engaged and interested rather than getting bored. Such content should be implemented via learning activities and focus on career expos, dialogues, leadership development, teamwork, patriotism, and respect for others. Provincial officials, beneficiaries and implementers recommended that content be practical and impart skills to enable the youth to deal with pertinent issues in their communities and empower them to set up sustainable NPOs or businesses. Provincial officials and beneficiaries also recommended that content be up-to-date, brief and factual and focus on social and behavioural change, technology, and social entrepreneurship to empower youth to contribute to the economy. They advised that content should include outreaches and allow youth to find themselves and present their thoughts and ideas on what they want to do in their personal development plans. Regarding the camp manual, beneficiaries requested that they be given soft copies. At the same time, the provincial officials recommended that the manuals be translated into Braille for the benefit of blind youths.

Table 28: How youth camps can be sustained during content development

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Categories | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| Content should include career expos, dialogues, leadership development, teamwork, patriotism, respect for others, practical activities, and a few vibrant and engaging lectures and presentations to help youth stay engaged and interested | 4 | 13 | 2 | |
| Content should include practical skills which are relevant in communities and help youth deal with unemployment, and should empower them to sustain their NPOs or businesses. | | 5 | 3 | 3 |

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Categories | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| Content should be up-to-date, brief and factual and should focus on social and behavioural change and equip youth on areas such as 4IR, use of gadgets, online trading, recycling, and social entrepreneurship so that they can contribute to the economy. | | 6 | 2 | |
| Content should give youth a chance to find themselves, be involved in community outreaches, and present their thoughts and ideas on what they want to do in their personal development plans. | | 2 | 2 | |
| National DSD should ensure that there is standardisation across all national and provincial youth camps by developing SoPs and standardising promotional materials. | | 4 | | |
| Make the training manuals appealing to young people, if possible digitise them, they should speak to them in a way they understand | | 1 | 1 | |
| Content should incorporate work done by the different directorates within DSD | 1 | | | |
| Provide soft copies of the training manuals to the participants. | | | 1 | |
| Translate training materials into Braille so that the disabled (blind) youth can also follow. | | 1 | | |

7.6.3 Stakeholder Involvement and Management

How youth camps can be improved and sustained through better stakeholder involvement and management is contained in Table 29. It emerged from provincial officials, beneficiaries and implementers that more stakeholders need to be actively involved in the planning processes and post-camp support. Such stakeholders include the Department of Arts and Culture, the private sector, municipalities, Sector Education and Training Authority (SETAs), the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), Nonprofit Organisations (NPOs), youth associations, the Department of Public Works, universities and youth associations. By widening the array of stakeholders involved, more opportunities will become available to young people, especially with regard to the provision of exit/start-up packages for youth who have attended the camps. National respondents emphasised the need to ensure that all stakeholders understand their assigned roles and are committed to fulfilling them. Improving coordination with the DoH was also highlighted to ensure that health officials stay on even after the screening of participants has been completed so that they can help take care of health emergencies that arise with participants.

Table 29: How youth camps can be sustained through effective Stakeholder Involvement And Management

| Coded Segment | Tally by Respondent Categories | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| Include more stakeholders like DoH, the Department of Arts and Culture, the private sector, municipalities, SETAs, NYDA, NPOs, youth associations, Department of Public Works, universities and youth associations during the planning processes and post-camp support. | | 14 | 3 | 5 |
| Involve more stakeholders / strategic partners to support the provision of exit/start-up packages for youth who have attended the camps | 1 | 8 | 2 | |
| Ensure that everybody understands their assigned roles according to the camp implementation structure and desired outcomes and are committed to fulfilling these roles | 8 | | 1 | |
| Provide the right equipment for youth with disabilities to participate in the activities. | | | 2 | |
| Improve coordination with the DoH to be present throughout the camp duration and assist participants who fall sick. | | 2 | | |
| Involve the youth who have previously attended youth camps in the planning of future camps. | | | 1 | |
| Make youth camp venues conducive for people with disabilities. | | | 1 | |

| Coded Segment | Tally by Respondent Categories | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| Negotiations should be held with DoD to ensure that the facilities hosting the camps and user friendly and conducive to the purpose of the camps | 1 | 1 | | |
| Select facilitators who demonstrate patience, innovation, and creativity in dealing with young people. | | | 1 | |

7.6.4 During the Delivery of Youth Camps

The need for better delivery of content during the camps as a way of sustaining them was emphasised by respondents, as shown in Table 30. The provincial officials emphasised the importance of assigning officials with good morals, who love people, can engage with young people and are committed to their job in the youth camps. They said this is important because the youth look up to these people and are demoralised when officials show poor moral behaviour.

Table 30: How youth camps can be sustained through effective delivery of youth camps

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Categories | | |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries |
| Involve officials with good morals, who love people, can engage with young people, and are committed to their job in the youth camps. | | 8 | |
| Youth should be guided to develop personal development plans that reflect what they will go back and do in their communities | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Ensure that grouping youth into companies should be based on their interests and career ambitions. | | 2 | 1 |
| Camp activities should be implemented to ensure that participants are out of their comfort zones and be trained to be adaptable. | | | 2 |
| Confidentiality should be maintained, especially when the youth are relating personal experiences. | | | 2 |
| Provide the right equipment for youth with disabilities to participate in the activities. | | | 2 |
| Conduct meaningful round table discussions with young people to develop their leadership potential. | | | 1 |
| DSD should set up a desk in the camps to assist youth who wish to register their NPOs | | | |
| Ensure that time is properly managed for all the activities, including the breaks in between | 1 | | |
| Facilitate skills development training in an environment that is conducive for learning. | | 1 | |
| Invite celebrities and successful people to engage with the youth and share their experiences Invite youth role models who can come and share their stories of success to motivate other youth to do the same. | | | 1 |
| Make youth camp venues conducive for people with disabilities. | | | 1 |
| Put emphasis on the discipline of the youths. | | | 1 |

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Categories | | |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries |
| Treat the youth participants with respect. | | 1 | |

Another aspect emphasised by the beneficiaries and provincial officials was ensuring that the youth are guided to develop meaningful personal action plans reflecting what they will return to do when they return to their communities. Beneficiaries added that participants should be removed from their comfort zones to inculcate resilience and adaptability. Similarly, they also noted that when participants open up, especially during the male-to-male or female-to-female dialogues, personal information that has been revealed should be kept confidential. Speaking on behalf of youth with disabilities, beneficiaries noted that suitable venues and equipment should be provided to enable them to participate in camp activities. Beneficiaries also recommended using round table discussions with the youth to develop their leadership potential.

Additionally, beneficiaries recommended that more celebrities and successful people who are still youth should be invited to share their experiences with the participants so as motivate them and share lessons for success. The provincial officials also advised that when participants are grouped in companies on arrival, it should be done based on their interests and career ambitions, not randomly. The national DSD officials emphasised allocating sufficient time to each activity and ensuring that the facilitators manage their time effectively.

7.6.5 During the Mobilisation of Participants

As shown in Table 31, mobilising participants is an important process critical for the sustainability of youth camps. All respondents agreed that participants should be screened for eligibility during mobilisation to ensure that those who attended previously should not attend again and that only those actively involved in community programmes should be invited to attend the camps. They also added that during mobilisation, the youth should be informed about the activities taking place in the camps to clarify expectations and ensure that those selected know what to expect when they get there. Provincial officials, beneficiaries and implementers also agreed that those who have attended the camps could be used to assist in mobilising the participants for the camps. Both provincial and beneficiaries also noted that issues affecting youth revealed during mobilisation meetings should be escalated to the national so that they inform the content of the camps. Similarly, both respondents added that parents should sign consent forms to know their children have been invited to the camps. They also noted that supportive arrangements through interpreters, family members and conducive venues should be made available to youth with disabilities to encourage their participation in the camps.

Table 31: How youth camps can be sustained through effective mobilisation of participants

| Coded Segments | Tally by Respondent Categories | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| During mobilisation, profile and screen participants for eligibility, incorporate all races, remove previous attendees, include youth active in community programmes, discuss topics to be covered in the camp and clarify expectations | 4 | 10 | 12 | 2 |
| Utilise qualified and suitable youth camp alumni and mentors to assist in the mobilisation, recruitment and facilitation of the camps and as other service providers | | 3 | 10 | 1 |
| Dialogues should be used to understand the needs and interests of young people and screen out those who attended before | | 2 | 2 | |
| Ensure that parents sign consent forms to allow their children to attend the camps. | | 1 | 2 | |
| Increase the number of disabled youth attending the camps, arrange for interpreters and make facilities conducive to them. | | 1 | 2 | |
| Recruitment of youth for camps should be done to understand what young people are going through | | | 1 | |

7.6.6 During Post Camps

As shown in Table 32, respondents emphasised that post-camp support is critical for the sustainability of youth camps. All respondents acknowledged the need for an effective system for tracking and following up with all those who have attended the camps to get a sense of where they are, what they are doing and what additional support they require to sustain their initiatives. Similarly, all the respondents noted the need to bring on board more stakeholders to provide post-camp support to the youth. Additionally, all the respondents emphasised the need to strengthen the referral system where youth can be linked to opportunities such as jobs, bursaries, entrepreneurship, and skills development. Respondents noted that establishing decentralised skills centres in provinces and districts can go a long way toward facilitating the continuous capacitation of young people. Provincial officials and beneficiaries also recommended hosting post camps to take stock of the previous camps, establish achievements and document lessons learnt. Beneficiaries suggested that the youth directorate should be decentralised from the province to sub-districts to give proper attention and focus to youth development. Provincial officials recommended that the national consider facilitating benchmarking visits to other provinces to learn from their experiences, especially in mobilisation and post-camp support.

Table 32: How youth camps can be sustained through effective post-camp support

| Coded Segment | Tally by Respondent Categories | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | National DSD | Provincial DSD | Beneficiaries | Implementers |
| Implement a system for tracking and following up with the youth who have attended the camps | 2 | 7 | 12 | 1 |
| Involve more stakeholders / strategic partners to support the provision of exit/start-up packages for youth who have attended the camps | 1 | 8 | 2 | |
| Strengthen referral systems to link young people who have attended camps to opportunities such as jobs, bursaries, entrepreneurship, skills development | 1 | 3 | 2 | |
| Establish skills centres where young people can be continuously capacitated | 1 | 2 | 1 | |
| Consider the possibility of hosting post camps to take stock of achievements, challenges and learnings. | | 1 | 1 | |
| Consider the possibility of decentralising the youth directorate from the province to sub-districts to focus attention on youth development. | | | 2 | |
| Camps should be used to revive youth centres as part of the implementation of post-camp activities. | | | 1 | |
| Facilitate benchmarking among provinces to learn how they organise and implement provincial youth camps. | | 1 | | |
| Provinces should assist youth in mobilising resources for the implementation of their community projects. | | | 1 | |

7.6.7 Achievements of Youth After Attending the Camps

From the survey data, Table 33 shows the number and proportion of the youth who were able to either participate in development activities in their communities (60%), take up a leadership position in their community (34%), find a job (31%), start their own business (37%), go back to school (24%) or get a promotion at work (5%) after attending the youth camp. It is important to note that some youths reported more than one achievement; hence the percentages do not add up to 100% because of multiple responses.

Table 33: Achievements after attending the youth camps

| Achievements after attending the camp | Number | Percentage |
|--|--------|------------|
| Participated in development activities in my community | 378 | 60% |
| Took up a leadership position | 216 | 34% |
| Found a job | 200 | 31% |
| Started my own business | 172 | 27% |
| Went back to school | 150 | 24% |
| Got a promotion at work | 32 | 5% |

Because these were the actual outcomes that DSD intended to achieve by bringing the youth to the camps, we were interested in understanding the experiences of those who reported the achievements shown in Table 33 above. Unfortunately, we could not see any distinguishable patterns in their responses, which were markedly different from those who had not made these achievements. Nevertheless, we thought that profiling them would assist DSD in sharpening its mobilisation and recruitment strategy to attract those youth who are more likely to achieve the desired outcomes. In Table 34 below, we provide the details of the youth who reported the achievements indicated in Table 33.

Table 34: demographic characteristics of the youth who reported achievements after attending the youth camp.

| Demographic Characteristics | Started my own business | | Participated in development activities in my community | | Went back to school | | Took up a leadership position | | Found a job | | Got a promotion at work | |
|--|-------------------------|------|--|------|---------------------|------|-------------------------------|------|-------------|------|-------------------------|------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Age Group: | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| < 15 | 1 | 1% | 1 | 0% | 1 | 1% | 1 | 0% | 1 | 1% | - | - |
| > 30 | 6 | 3% | 9 | 2% | 2 | 1% | 7 | 3% | 3 | 2% | 1 | 3% |
| 15 - 19 | 24 | 14% | 51 | 13% | 29 | 19% | 24 | 11% | 28 | 14% | 3 | 9% |
| 20 - 24 | 116 | 67% | 243 | 64% | 96 | 64% | 139 | 64% | 143 | 72% | 23 | 72% |
| 25 - 29 | 19 | 11% | 60 | 16% | 20 | 13% | 33 | 15% | 23 | 12% | 3 | 9% |
| DOB missing | 6 | 3% | 14 | 4% | 2 | 1% | 12 | 6% | 2 | 1% | 2 | 6% |
| Total | 172 | 100% | 378 | 100% | 150 | 100% | 216 | 100% | 200 | 100% | 32 | 100% |
| Gender: | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Female | 69 | 40% | 171 | 45% | 79 | 53% | 86 | 40% | 79 | 40% | 15 | 47% |
| LGBTQIA+ person | 9 | 5% | 16 | 4% | 6 | 4% | 6 | 3% | 14 | 7% | 1 | 3% |
| Male | 94 | 55% | 191 | 51% | 65 | 43% | 124 | 57% | 107 | 54% | 16 | 50% |
| Total | 172 | 100% | 378 | 100% | 150 | 100% | 216 | 100% | 200 | 100% | 32 | 100% |
| Highest Education Qualifications: | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Primary | 2 | 1% | 2 | 1% | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1% | - | - |
| Professional training | 23 | 13% | 61 | 16% | 27 | 18% | 26 | 12% | 47 | 24% | 3 | 9% |
| Secondary (high school) | 97 | 56% | 216 | 57% | 53 | 35% | 123 | 57% | 98 | 49% | 18 | 56% |
| Tertiary | 50 | 29% | 99 | 26% | 70 | 47% | 67 | 31% | 54 | 27% | 11 | 34% |

| Demographic Characteristics | Started my own business | | Participated in development activities in my community | | Went back to school | | Took up a leadership position | | Found a job | | Got a promotion at work | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|------|--|------|---------------------|------|-------------------------------|------|-------------|------|-------------------------|------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Total | 172 | 100% | 378 | 100% | 150 | 100% | 216 | 100% | 200 | 100% | 32 | 100% |
| Where You Live / Work: | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Eastern Cape | 20 | 12% | 46 | 12% | 18 | 12% | 20 | 9% | 26 | 13% | 3 | 9% |
| Free State | 8 | 5% | 23 | 6% | 4 | 3% | 15 | 7% | 7 | 4% | 1 | 3% |
| Gauteng | 16 | 9% | 33 | 9% | 22 | 15% | 22 | 10% | 11 | 6% | 1 | 3% |
| KwaZulu-Natal | 30 | 17% | 61 | 16% | 17 | 11% | 35 | 16% | 16 | 8% | 2 | 6% |
| Limpopo | 29 | 17% | 50 | 13% | 25 | 17% | 41 | 19% | 20 | 10% | 10 | 31% |
| Mpumalanga | 19 | 11% | 36 | 10% | 15 | 10% | 24 | 11% | 13 | 7% | 3 | 9% |
| Northern Cape | 11 | 6% | 28 | 7% | 7 | 5% | 21 | 10% | 26 | 13% | 4 | 13% |
| Northwest | 21 | 12% | 45 | 12% | 21 | 14% | 21 | 10% | 17 | 9% | - | - |
| Not indicated | - | - | 2 | 1% | - | - | 1 | 0% | - | - | - | - |
| Western Cape | 18 | 10% | 54 | 14% | 21 | 14% | 16 | 7% | 64 | 32% | 8 | 25% |
| Total | 172 | 100% | 378 | 100% | 150 | 100% | 216 | 100% | 200 | 100% | 32 | 100% |

Table 34 shows interesting characteristics of youth who reported achievements after attending the camps. These can be summarised as follows:

- ◆ The age group 20-24 years reported achievements in all six areas, followed by the 15-19 who said they had started their own business, the 25–29-year-olds who reported having participated in development activities in their communities, the 15-19-year-olds who went to school, the 25–29-year-olds who took up leadership positions, and the 15-19 who found jobs;
- ◆ In terms of gender, more males reported starting their businesses and participating in development activities in their communities, more females reported going back to school; more males took up leadership positions and found jobs and got promotions than their female counterparts.
- ◆ In terms of educational qualifications, those who had completed high school (matric) reported achievements in all areas except going back to school, which was attained more by those who had completed tertiary education.
- ◆ Regarding where these youth live or work, those based in the provinces of Limpopo, followed by KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape, came either top or second across all the six areas of achievement. Very few of the Free State and Northwest-based youth reported having made any achievements, an issue that may call for further investigation to understand the underlying causes.

While the above table may not show the relationship between the demographic factors and the ability to do something after leaving the camp, they do provide insights into the characteristics of the youth that DSD should mobilise to attend future camps. This is especially in areas such as age, where 20-24 would be the most appropriate. For the education level, those who have completed matric would be quite suitable, even though those with tertiary qualifications would be welcome. With regard to gender, it would be appropriate to maintain balanced proportions between males

and females, as the results show that they tend to select different career paths. Regarding provinces, DSD may require a serious conversation on the post-camp support and opportunities that the provinces provide and/or expose and link the youth to after they have attended the camps.

7.7. Lessons from Other Countries and other South African youth camp programmes

Given the social development, leadership, and citizenship-building aims of the DSD national youth camps, the following are a few key lessons we have drawn from the literature on camps in the USA²⁰, Israel²¹, Lebanon²² and South Africa²³, including:

- ◆ **Opportunity to apply knowledge:** Whatever content is being taught, camps give participants a unique opportunity to apply the knowledge they learn. Every effort must be made to allow youth to apply recently learned knowledge. One way of achieving this is to provide opportunities for participants to interact with experts in various fields of interest relevant to the outcomes of the camp and participate in thinking through real-world examples of what they are learning.
- ◆ **Build positive relationships:** A key element of the value of camps is the opportunity they provide for forming relationships with peers and adults. Staff need to be well-trained to model positive relationships with participants. A safe emotional and psychosocial space needs to be created so that participants feel comfortable being themselves.
- ◆ **A sense of fun:** Recreational activities are important to building leadership and social skills and breaking down social barriers between participants. A sense of fun and the opportunity to play is key to allowing youth to engage in the activities fully and encourages youth who may be reluctant initially to get involved.
- ◆ **Encourage autonomy:** Activities at the camp need to encourage independent learning alone or with peers. This will help increase participants' perception of their abilities and skill level.

²⁰ Frey, S.N. & Parent, V. (2019). A Residential Camp's Impact on Youths' Leadership Skills and Natural Resource Knowledge. *JYD* 14, 101–121. <https://doi.org/10.5195/jyd.2019.792>

Martin, K. (2018). Summer Camp Youth Leadership Development: An Investigation of Adolescents' Perceptions of Best Practices. *JYD* 13, 161–182. <https://doi.org/10.5195/JYD.2018.536>

Patel, M., Liddell, J., & Ferreira, R. (2018). An Evaluation of the Positive Action Program for Youth Violence Prevention: From Schools to Summer Camps. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal* 35. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-018-0536-6>

²¹ Schulenkorf, N. & Sugden, J. (2011). Sport for Development and Peace in Divided Societies: Cooperating for Inter-Community Empowerment in Israel. *European Journal for Sport and Society* 8, 235–256. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16138171.2011.11687881>

²² El-Jor, C., Rahi, B., El Khoury Malhame, M., Mattar, L., Moussa, S., & Zeeni, N. (2021). Assessment of the World Food Programme summer camps in Lebanon: a model of effective interventions for vulnerable adolescents. *Br J Nutr* 125, 1416–1426. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007114520003682>

²³ de Jongh, J.-C., Ot, B., Phil, M., & Wegner, L. (2014). Developing capacity amongst adolescents attending a leadership camp. *South African Journal of Occupational Therapy* 44, 5.

Mentors and facilitators need to support participants' agency and autonomy and encourage them to find the motivation to participate in activities that do not come from outside of them (from orders or commands) but rather from within. Participants need to be encouraged to make their own choices and bear the responsibility for these choices. If participants are to grow, they need to be challenged, but they need to feel in control of which challenges to undertake.

- ◆ **Involve participants in in-camp decision-making:** Participants need to be encouraged to take the initiative, take ownership of the programme and be allowed to be enthusiastic about the activities. One important way this can be done is to give participants the ability to exercise choice over their activities and how they participate. According to Martin (2018), choice, not control, fosters the pursuit of long term goals. This involvement in in-camp decision-making prepares participants for future work in their communities and builds their decision-making and action-taking competence (de Jongh et al., 2014).
- ◆ **Sports can be used effectively to support internal growth:** Physical body confidence and the ability to be a team player and a leader make sports a particularly good way of increasing self-confidence. The same is true for outdoor activities such as hiking.
- ◆ **Encourage reflection:** Participants need time to reflect on what they have learned at the camp each day to incorporate the lessons into their worldview. This can be achieved through periods set aside for journaling.
- ◆ **Engagement after the camp:** Whatever the length of the camp, engagement with participants should continue after the camp has ended. The most effective behaviour change and empowerment programmes happen over longer periods.

From South Africa, here below are some lessons drawn from government Institutions and non-profit organisations that host camps:

National Rural Youth Service Corps (NARYSEC) Programme: NARYSEC programme is a 24-month skills development programme within the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development which targets unemployed rural youth aged between 18 – 25 in possession of Grade 12 (Standard 10) as part of the rural economy transformation strategy from poor rural wards. Since its inception in 2010, NARYSEC has recruited 16,178 rural youth in all nine Provinces. The programme aims to capacitate unemployed rural youth in various skills and facilitate their transition to contribute meaningfully to vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural economies. The programme objectives include: (1) Recruiting unemployed rural youth as part of the District Development Model (DDM) and other approved government programmes and initiatives working with provinces, the private sector, municipalities and local traditional councils; (2) Building capacity of rural youth through various skills development interventions; (3) Facilitate the transitioning of recruited youth to participate in economic activities; and (4) Provide post programme support to the youth that have exited the programme and link them to economic opportunities.

Some of the lessons that can be drawn from NARYSEC include:

- ◆ The camps form part of a comprehensive programme and are not implemented in isolation. The camps form part of Phase 2 of the programme, with Phase 1 being the recruitment and

profiling, while Phase 3 focuses on skills building and Phase 4 on job creation and linkages to economic opportunities.

- ◆ The programme targets youth that is similar to the DSD youth camps targets. However, the recruitment and profiling ensures that all recruits are formally contracted by the department and commit to participate fully. Youth are required to sign a contract and be registered on departmental PERSAL; their details are uploaded on the NARYSEC Information Management System. As such, engagements are much more formal, and youth cannot drop out of the programme easily. The less formal process of onboarding participants in the DSD youth camps makes it easier for young people to drop out.
- ◆ The NARYSEC programme stipends provide further incentives for full participation in the youth development programme (the camps), which much be completed before participants become eligible to receive a stipend.
- ◆ The much-needed skills development interventions are packaged and implemented in accordance with identified economic opportunities and may include accredited occupational, artisanal or non-accredited skills programmes.
- ◆ Job creation and linkages to economic opportunities is the fourth and last phase of the program. Through targeted recruitment, the programme intentionally links NARYSEC youth to employment and enterprise development opportunities within all spheres of government, social and private sectors. This makes the program highly responsive to the needs of young people.

While **Camp South Africa**²⁴ is a private paid-for facility where guests can come and enjoy the camping site, there is much to learn from both the philosophy and how the activities are designed and implemented. Here are some of the lessons:

- ◆ The facility offers adventure for people with a positive attitude who desire to make a difference in local communities. DSD can learn from this and include this in the criteria for selecting the youth who want to participate in the youth camps. Prospective participants can be requested to motivate why they want to attend the camp and indicate their desire to use the skills they acquire to benefit their communities.
- ◆ Camp South Africa perfectly balances working hard, playing hard, and making an impact. DSD can learn from this by making a programme for youth camps that makes participants work hard while at the same time having fun and also embedding community activities where participants can go out to nearby communities that do something that helps these communities.
- ◆ Camp South Africa offers participants the opportunity to pursue careers in sports coaching and animal conservation. DSD can also arrange with stakeholders to open opportunities for young people interested in pursuing careers outside of the activities implemented in the camps.

²⁴ See <https://campsouthafrica.com/>

While **Em'seni**²⁵ strongly focuses on spiritual development, there are lessons to be learned on how to design and implement their programmes:

- ◆ Em'seni promotes a team-building facilitation approach that promotes trust, teamwork and collaboration among the participants. DSD could incorporate team building in the youth camp programme to enable young people to develop trust in their colleagues and work collaboratively on joint projects towards shared goals.
- ◆ While Em'seni has a Christian orientation that everyone may not share, their focus on promoting principles and values for the common good is something that DSD could learn from. Em'seni encourages participants to open up and learn from each other, which builds trust and deeper relationships. Participants share personal stories and experiences from which lessons and principles can be gleaned. DSD can include in the programme sessions where participants who share common ideals can come together, engage meaningfully and learn from each other. Emphasis should be placed on helping young people to develop trusting relationships based on shared values and ideals.
- ◆ Em'seni's programme also includes a community outreach component that attracts young children from the local community to come to the camp and share a meal with the participants. DSD can learn from this by incorporating a community outreach component where the youth camp participants can engage in an activity that directly benefits nearby communities where the camps are held. This will give a sense of fulfilment to the young people that they can make a difference in the local communities in whichever small way.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the evaluation findings, it is evident that several aspects of implementing youth camps were done well. However, some areas need improvements and others where there is a need to do things differently or introduce other initiatives. Below is a summary of the key elements that emerged from the data.

²⁵ See <http://emsenicamp.co.za/>

Relevance

With regard to whether youth camps were suited to the priorities and policies of DSD, respondents indicated that youth camps made it possible for the department to engage directly with youth and obtain first-hand insights into what they are going through. With this understanding, youth camps enable the department to design interventions to respond to the challenges facing the youths from an informed point of view. Additionally, youth camps can be used as platforms to mobilise youth as agents of change to promote the youth agenda for community action. From the perspective of the beneficiaries, the youth camps enabled the youth to feel the hand of government support in improving their self-esteem, confidence and leadership skills, qualities that they have used to exploit opportunities for career growth.

However, it became clear that youth camps would have been more impactful if they were conceptualised as a programme on youth development rather than an event. As it is now, apart from a few who have made a breakthrough, most youth who have attended youth camps have not done much to improve their situation because of limited post-camp support. Had the camps been conceptualised as a programme, several initiatives would have been implemented over time, culminating in most youth accessing opportunities such as bursaries, starter packs for businesses and NPOs, skills development and additional resources for career development.

Similarly, because camps are treated as an event, the recruitment criteria have been focussed more on meeting targets rather than attracting the youth with the potential, mindset, interest and commitment to cause change for themselves and their communities. Perhaps one of the reasons why camps are treated as an event and not a programme is that they are not reflected in the national and provincial APPs. Another challenge raised with implementing youth camps is the absence of a comprehensive and well-resourced exit strategy that includes a robust system for tracking, following up and providing post-camp support to youth camp beneficiaries.

Effectiveness

The effectiveness of youth camps can be seen from how the three phases of pre-implementation, during implementation and post-implementation, were planned, organised and executed.

Pre-implementation Phase

The data shows that at the national level, the responsibility for the planning was handled by several committees involved in different aspects. The content development process rested in the hands of the Content, Report Writing and Communication Committee. At the provincial level, the camp commander mainly spearheaded the responsibility.

Another positive aspect of the pre-implementation processes was identifying, training and deploying mentors. Respondents agreed that mentors added value to the camps because they acted as a first line of support to the youth, supported and participated in facilitating different sessions, and helped keep the youth together to participate in planned activities actively. It was also revealed that, by and large, the quality of facilitators was good. Additionally, a good working relationship between national and provincial officials and the mentors was evident, especially since everyone seemed to know what they were meant to do.

While there were not many challenges raised with regard to the planning of the youth camps, the main issue that was raised was that the planning lacked a serious focus on the outcomes that were intended to be achieved. One of the views expressed was that the planning process was largely activity and logistics oriented rather than on specific outcomes that were intended to be achieved. Another challenge related to planning was the limited alignment between the provincial and national plans for youth development. Because of this, it was reported that not all provinces equally prioritised youth development. This perhaps explains why the positive impact of youth camps was more evident in some provinces than others. Similarly, it was noted that there was a lack of uniformity in how different provinces implemented the camps. This is especially evident in some camps lasting between seven to 10 days.

In the same vein, it was noted that the youth camps seemed only to reflect the programmes of the youth directorate and not those from other directorates, hence denying the youth the benefits offered by those directorates. While the department did its best to co-opt other departments and stakeholders in the planning and implementation of youth camps, respondents noted that some critical stakeholders, particularly those who would help unlock opportunities for young people, were missing. Stakeholders such as the Departments of Arts and Culture, Public Works, the SETAs and the private sector were conspicuously missing.

Both national and provincial officials highlighted the need to improve alignment between national and provincial planning processes, which would lead to harmonising plans and budgets for youth development. Provincial officials also requested that the national develop standard operating procedures (SoPs) for camp processes to implement camps in a standardised manner across all provinces. They also added that the youth camp model should reflect programmes implemented across DSD, not just the youth directorate.

On content, the beneficiaries appreciated the value of the topics such as leadership development, personal development, and experiences shared by celebrities and successful people. However, the content that seemed to have benefitted the youth most were those that were activity-oriented, such as cultural nights, debates, drama and music, and dialogues between males and males and females and females. The youth indicated that these activity-based programmes enabled them to showcase their talent and acquire other qualities, such as self-confidence. There was a feeling that speeches and presentations though important, needed to be few, short, vibrant and engaging.

Implementation Phase

During the implementation phase of youth camps, participants lauded the discipline inculcated by the military personnel from DoD. They noted that it taught them to be organised, keep time and take personal responsibility. Additionally, the camps took them out of their comfort zones, hence teaching them lessons on resilience and adaptability.

However, one of the issues raised was the poor morality of some of the officials assigned to youth camps. Officials, especially from the provinces, complained that this set a bad example for the youth, who looked up to the officials as elders and role models. Additionally, while all the youth were tasked to develop personal development plans, some respondents believed that some did not adequately capture what they would do when they returned to their communities.

While the issue of content was discussed in the preceding section, it needs to be emphasised that it is not the development of the content that should be practical and action-oriented, but the same also applies to how it is delivered to the camp participants. While it was acknowledged that the quality of the facilitators was good, perhaps in terms of their knowledge and expertise on the content, it was felt that some of them did not have the experience and the qualities to engage with young people. It was reported that some facilitators demonstrated a lack of patience and did not find creative ways of dealing with the youth.

Post Implementation Phase

This is perhaps the greatest area where the respondents noted the greatest gap in implementing youth camps. All respondents decried a lack of an exit strategy, including a robust system for tracking and following up on those who previously attended the camps. With such a system in place, it would be possible for DSD to know where everybody who previously attended the camps is currently, how far they have developed in their careers, the kind of initiatives they initiated and what the impact of these initiatives has been. This would also help to establish the actual impact of youth camps and, most importantly, to understand the support needs of these youth so that they can be capacitated further to play more active and developmental roles in their communities. Such a system would also be supported by a referral system where the youth attending youth camps would be directed to where they can access opportunities for career growth, skills development and resources. In the absence of such a system, many youth who attended the camps have been left sitting, wondering how they could apply what they learnt. Only a few who became mentors are those who succeeded in unlocking opportunities for themselves. Understandably, DSD and the youth directorate, in particular, on its own, would not be able to support and resource a robust exit strategy as expected by the camp attendees. Herein comes the need for the directorate to co-opt other partners that can lend a hand to support specific aspects of the post-camp support needs of the camp attendees.

Efficiency

Organisation Design and Applied Delivery Model

The youth camp model implemented over the years focused on mobilising youth at different levels, from district to province and then national. While a significant effort was made to coordinate activities across these levels, one issue that requires reflection is whether the approach is not somewhat duplicative, especially regarding the value of replicating some of the same things at the province and national levels where the same participants attend both.

On the content covered during the camp, the feedback from participants indicates that some aspects were much more valuable than others. As such, it is worth reflecting on areas rated less favourably to determine if the time invested in covering those elements is worthwhile.

Core Businesses Processes Used

One aspect that comes through as positive is the collaboration between the government departments in planning and delivering the youth camp programme. This is clearly reflected in the role that DSD, DoD and DoH played in supporting the camp processes. DoD's hosting of the camps at their different locations provided a cost-saving opportunity given the cost per participant, as reflected in the section below on value for money. However, analysis of the other expenses incurred in the delivery of the national youth camps reveals possible inefficiencies, especially concerning procurement processes. It is unclear why multiple vendors would have been used to supply promotional materials for the same event; neither is it clear why these were all necessary.

Management and Administration, Including Record Keeping

Based on the available records in physical and soft copies, it is clear that the quality of record keeping was far from what would be desirable, especially with regard to the quality of the data. The evaluation team struggled to find all the relevant information, resulting in gaps related to key data, such as the cost of delivery of the different youth camps and confirmation of the total reach of these activities. It is clear that the M&E processes pertaining to these activities require substantive strengthening to ensure effective documentation and reporting of the investments, the outputs and the outcome of youth camps.

Value for Money Analysis

Findings from this analysis show that besides the promotion materials, the costs related to hosting the youth camps were generally consistent and reasonable, perhaps because a fellow government department, DoD, hosted them. It is unclear why so much was spent on promotion materials each year, except for 2018, where funds were not allocated to this line item.

Assuming that promotional funds are spent on mobilising participants and purchasing T-shirts, caps, bags and other materials, we have assumed that the amount spent is directly related to the number of youth attending the camps. Based on this assumption, we conducted an analysis for the period between 2014 and 2018, comparing the amounts spent on promotional material versus the number of youth attending the camps. We notice that the largest amount spent on promotional materials

was in 2016 when attendance was the lowest among the years considered (2014 to 2018). While we do not have the reasons to explain this anomaly, we suggest reviewing promotional costs.

Sustainability

Based on the data from the respondents, there is no doubt that elements for the sustainability of the youth camps exist. The demographic profiles of the youth who went back to communities and made significant achievements provide insights into the characteristics of the youth that DSD should mobilise to attend future camps to make them sustainable. This is especially in areas such as age, where 20-24 would be the most appropriate. With regard to gender, it would be appropriate to maintain balanced proportions between males and females, as the results show that they tend to select different career paths. For the education level, those who have completed matric would be quite suitable, even though those with tertiary qualifications would be welcome. Regarding provinces, DSD may require a serious conversation on the post-camp support and opportunities that the provinces provide and/or expose and link the youth to after they have attended the camps.

Lessons from Other Countries and other South African Youth Camp programmes

Some of the lessons where youth camps have been applied include:

- ◆ Opportunity to apply knowledge
- ◆ Build positive relationships by promoting a team-building facilitation approach that promotes trust, teamwork and collaboration among the participants.
- ◆ A sense of fun by offering a perfect balance between working hard, playing hard, and making an impact
- ◆ Encourage autonomy.
- ◆ Involve participants in in-camp decision-making.
- ◆ Sports can be used effectively to support internal growth.
- ◆ Encourage reflection.
- ◆ Engagement after the camp
- ◆ Offering adventure for people with a positive attitude who desire to make a difference in local communities by including this in the criteria for selecting the youth who want to participate in the youth camps.
- ◆ Promoting principles and values for the common good and encouraging participants to open up and learn from each other builds trust and deeper relationships.
- ◆ Incorporating a community outreach component where the youth camp participants can engage in an activity that directly benefits nearby communities where the camps are held.
- ◆ Building youth camps into more comprehensive programmes supporting youth economic empowerment.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Recommendations on relevance

To keep youth camps relevant to the needs of the youth and in line with the goals and objectives of the department, we recommend as follows:

- ◆ **Design:** Redesign and elevate youth camps as a youth development programme using the recently developed Theory of Change (ToC) so that it can feature prominently in the national and provincial APPs and have sufficient resources allocated to it.
- ◆ **Recruitment:** Develop recruitment criteria that enable the department to target youth who have demonstrated commitment to personal growth and causing change for themselves and their communities. The criteria should screen out those who have previously attended the camps. The eligible youth will include those already involved in several programmes implemented by DSD-funded NPOs.

9.2 Recommendations on effectiveness

To ensure that correct processes are applied across all levels of implementation to realise desired outcomes for the youth camp beneficiaries, we recommend the following:

Planning:

- ◆ Adopt a result-based planning approach based on the recently developed ToC so that all efforts become targeted at achieving these results.
- ◆ Align national and provincial planning processes for youth development.
- ◆ Identify and engage stakeholders whose mandates and roles are critical to youth development.
- ◆ Select service providers/facilitators who demonstrate patience, innovation, and creativity in dealing with young people.
- ◆ Develop a comprehensive and well-resourced exit strategy that provides post-camp support to youth camp attendees. The strategy should be inclusive of the following:
 - Supportive interventions that enable the youth to fulfil their personal development plans.
 - Comprehensive tracking and follow-up system for those who have previously attended the youth camps.
 - A referral system that links the youth to unlock opportunities for their career growth, skills development and resources.

Content development:

- ◆ Translate all youth camp content into activity-based learning.
- ◆ Adopt an action-oriented and practical approach to content delivery focused on imparting practical skills to the camp participants.

Implementation:

- ◆ Develop a youth camp Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) to standardise implementation processes across provinces.
- ◆ Officials to be assigned to youth camps should first be vetted for suitability, and those found wanting should not be allowed in the camps again.
- ◆ Provide more guidance and support towards the development of personal development plans so that they can reflect proposed takeaways and specific actions to be implemented when the youth returns to their community.

9.3 Recommendations on efficiency

To ensure that resources allocated to youth camps are put to good use to the benefit of youth camp beneficiaries, we recommend the following:

Planning:

- ◆ Review the camp approach and eliminate duplication between provincial and national camps.
- ◆ Reflect on areas where participants rated less favourably and review the time allocated to those activities.

Costing:

- ◆ Review the costing of camps and deal with inefficiencies, especially the procurement processes.
- ◆ Review costing and expenditure for promotional materials.

Data management and monitoring and evaluation systems:

- ◆ Improve data management and monitoring and evaluation systems for the youth camp programme to facilitate tracking of participants who attended the youth camps.

9.4 Recommendations on sustainability

To make the youth camp model sustainable so that it continues to offer tangible benefits to the youth camp beneficiaries, we recommend the following:

Planning:

- ◆ During the planning processes of youth camps, incorporate other programmes implemented across DSD in addition to those implemented by the youth directorate.

- ◆ Consider dividing youth camps into two parts: the theory part, which would constitute speeches and presentations, and the practical part, where the youth are guided to create, present and refine their projects.
- ◆ Review the age group of the participants to reduce the disparity of common interests and facilitate closer bonding of the youth.
- ◆ Make arrangements for a support structure and conducive venues for youth with disabilities to encourage their participation in the camps.

Post-Implementation:

- ◆ Consider hosting post-camps to take stock of achievements, challenges and learnings from previous camps.
- ◆ Consider facilitating benchmarking visits to other provinces to learn from their experiences, especially in mobilisation and post-camp support.

Oversight and management:

- ◆ Consider the possibility of decentralising the youth directorate from the province to sub-districts to focus attention on youth development.
- ◆ Consider decentralising the youth directorate from the province to sub-districts to give proper attention and focus to youth development.
- ◆ Allocate mentors airtime so youth participants can call their families.

Content development:

- ◆ Develop and deliver up-to-date, brief and factual content that focuses on social and behavioural change, technology, and social entrepreneurship to empower youth to contribute to the economy.
- ◆ Translate manuals into Braille for the benefit of blind youths.

Implementation:

- ◆ Include outreaches and allow youth to find themselves and present their thoughts and ideas on what they want to do in their personal development plans.
- ◆ Provide soft copy manuals to participants.
- ◆ Upon arrival, group participants into companies based on their interests and career ambitions.
- ◆ Parents should be made to sign consent forms so that they can know that their children have been invited to the camps.

9.5 Proposed youth camp model informed by evaluation findings and recommendations

Considering the responses from national and provincial officials, the beneficiaries and implementers, and the above recommendations, we have proposed a camp model, which we have elevated into a

youth development programme model – *see the diagram below*. The model outlines the key processes within the three phases of pre-implementation, implementation, and post-implementation, which are critical for the sustainability of the youth camps.

Design and Implementation Principles: these outline the key principles that need to be considered during the design and implementation of the youth camps. They include:

- ◆ Timely identification and engagement of stakeholders within the state and non-state actors who play critical roles in youth development. These stakeholders must be identified and engaged during the planning processes so that their role in the youth camp implementation is identified.
- ◆ Programme development of the youth camp model should be targeted such that all activities are aimed at achieving the results outlined in the ToC. These processes should be participatory to ensure that critical stakeholder input is sought in the programme development process.
- ◆ Youth mobilisation and recruitment should be targeted at selecting youth who have demonstrated the propensity and commitment to personal growth and community development. Many of these youth are already involved in community programmes implemented by the Department and other organisations operating at grassroots levels.
- ◆ Implementation planning and content development should be implemented to achieve three objectives. First is to identify programme activities aligned to achieving specific outcomes in the ToC; second is to develop vibrant, engaging and practical content on areas such as personal development, leadership development, project management, technology and entrepreneurship; and third is the planning and mobilisation of the resources to implement planned activities.
- ◆ Programme activities should be implemented in a coordinated manner between national, province and district stakeholders.
- ◆ An exit strategy outlining the post-implementation support for the youth attending the youth camps should be planned for and embedded in the design and planning processes so that it is clear beforehand how they will be supported when they return to their communities. Different pathways should be identified for each youth based on their personal development plan, and stakeholders who can contribute towards achieving these pathways should be identified.

Critical Outputs: if the above design principles for the youth development programme are implemented effectively, the following outputs should ensure:

- ◆ A youth programme that empowers and equips youth to actively participate in addressing social ills and developing their communities. This is a programme whose content and activities are designed to achieve specific outcomes for the youth participants.

- ◆ Implementation plans are developed at provincial and national levels that contain programme activities, relevant content, budgets, service providers, promotional activities, and logistical arrangements. These implementation plans are developed in close collaboration between national, provincial and district levels.
- ◆ Programme activities are implemented at provincial and national levels to empower and equip youth to actively participate in addressing social ills and developing their communities. These activities emanate from well developed and coordinated implementation plans.
- ◆ Post implementation activities are guided by an exit strategy implemented to follow up, track and support youth with starter packs, skills development and access to opportunities and resources.

Desired Results: if the design principles outlined above are followed, they will result in the above outputs, ultimately leading to the realisation of the desired results of the youth development programme. The following results are expected to emanate from a well planned and implemented youth development programme:

- ◆ A responsive national and provincial programme comprising interventions to empower and equip youth to create jobs, live decent lives, acquire decent housing, and generate income.
- ◆ Implementation of interventions at provincial and national levels to empower and equip youth with skills to create projects, NPOs and businesses in response to social ills, challenges and opportunities in their communities.
- ◆ Implement supportive interventions to enable youth to unlock opportunities for career development, skills enhancement, and resources to become springboards for socio-economic development in their communities.

The model below, presented as a one-page document, is a quick reference sheet for youth camp planners and implementers because it contains all the critical elements required for planning, implementation and post camp follow up activities.

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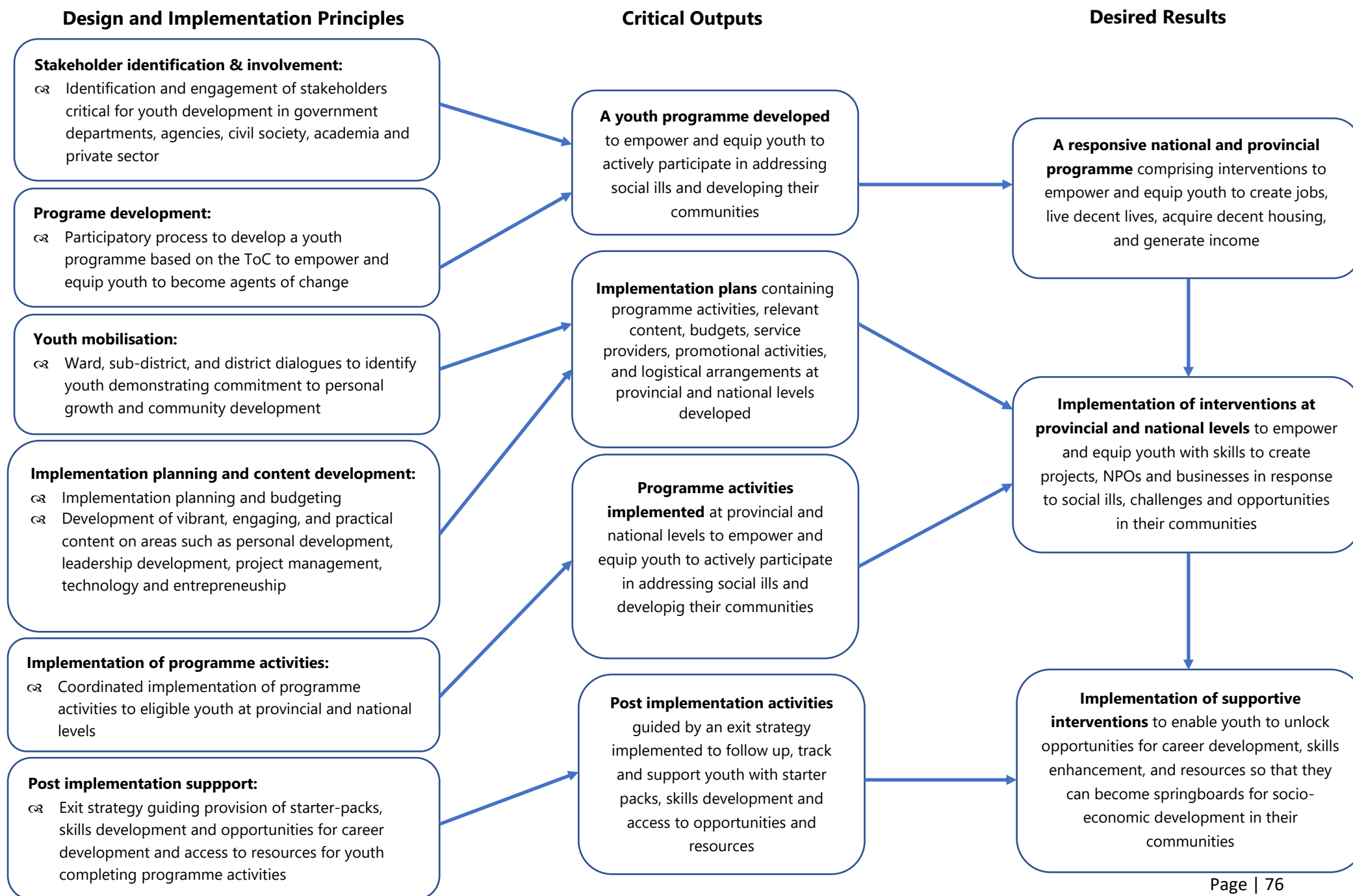
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11. ANNEXURES

Appendix 1: Youth Camp Daily Activities



Appendix 1 Youth
Camp Daily Activities

Appendix 2: Ethics Approval Letter



Application_queries
_Ethics.pdf



Declaration by
Principal Investigator

Appendix 3: Workshop report on the TOC and Design of the model



Draft Report on the Draft Youth Camps
Design of DSD ModTheory of Change R



TOC Draft 3
(2).pptx

Appendix 4: Data Collection Tools, Info Sheet, and Consent Forms



Appendix 1 - Survey
Questionnaire for S



Appendix 2 -
Information Sheet a



Appendix 3 -
Information Sheet a



Appendix 4 - Focus
Group Discussion G



Appendix 5 - Focus
Group Discussion G



Appendix 6 - Key
Informant Discussio



Appendix 7 - Key
Informant Interview



Appendix 8 - Case
Study Guide for the