social development

Department:
Social Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

# IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION OF THE TRAINING OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONERS ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE AND METHODOLOGIES

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## ACRONYMS

| | |
|---|---|
| ABCD | Asset-Based Community-Driven Development |
| ACDPs | Assistant Community Development Practitioners |
| AFCC | Association of Family and Conciliation Courts |
| APP | Annual Performance Plan |
| CBOs | Community-Based Organisations |
| CCE | Community Capacity Enhancement |
| CD | Community development |
| CDA | Community Development Agency |
| CDM | Community Development Managers |
| CDPs | Community Development Practitioners |
| CDPTP | Community Development Practitioners Training Programme |
| CNDC | Community Nutrition Development Centres |
| DPME | Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation |
| DSD | Department of Social Development |
| FGDs | Focus Group Discussions |
| HWSETA | Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority |
| IACD | International Association of Community Development |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| ICROP | Integrated Community Registration. Outreach Programme |
| ISRDP | Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme |
| KII | Key Informant Interview |
| KPA | Key Performance Areas |
| KPIs | Key Performance Indicators |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MTSF | Medium-Term Strategic Framework |
| NACS | Nutrition Assessment Counselling and Support |
| NDA | National Development Agency |
| NDP | National Development Plan 2030 Vision |

| | |
|---|---|
| NDSD | National Department of Social Development |
| NISSIS | National Integrated Social Information System |
| NPO | Non-Profit Organisation |
| NQF | National Qualification Framework |
| OCED | Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| OSD | Occupational Specific Dispensation |
| PMC | Project Management Committee |
| PRA | Participatory Rural Appraisals |
| POPIA | Protection of Personal Information Act |
| RPL | Recognition of Prior Learning |
| SAQA | South African Qualification Authority |
| SASSA | South African Social Security Agency |
| SLA | Service Level Agreement |
| SMART | Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Time bound |
| TOC | Theory of Change |
| URP | Urban Renewal Programme |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The implementation evaluation of the Community Development Practitioners Training Programme (CDPTP) was conducted to assess the extent to which the 2018 to 2023 CDPTP was implemented and whether it was relevant, coherent, effective, efficient, and impactful to Community Development Practitioners (CDPs) to acquire the skills needed to perform their duties. Since the training programme started no evaluations had been commissioned.

A mixed method approach was used to collect the data, (qualitative and quantitative data) were collected using key informant interviews (KII), focus group discussions and surveys. The data was triangulated to answer the key evaluation questions. Community Development Practitioners, Assistant Community Development Practitioners (ACDPs), managers, and supervisors, from Free State, Eastern Cape and Limpopo Province and the National Department of Social Development (NDSD) Community Development staff participated in the evaluation. The Theory of Change workshop was conducted to develop a roadmap for the CDPTP. Data was analysed and presented based on the evaluation criteria.

Key evaluation findings present the successes and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Community Development Practitioner Training Programme (CDPTP). The evaluation found that the CDPTP is relevant in building the capacity of Community Development Practitioners (CDPs) across provinces. The accredited and unaccredited training is related to the needs of CDPs at the provincial and local levels. The training contributed to CDPs gaining the skills and competencies needed to perform well (91%) of 278 interviewed CDPs. Various trainings were conducted including food security, financial management, project management, household profiling, etc.

Across the three provinces (Free State, Eastern Cape and Limpopo) CDPTP enabled CDPs/ACDPs with skills to facilitate community development. The training programme enabled CDPs and ACDPs to conduct household and community profiling, stakeholder engagements, monitoring and reporting in the districts.

The CDPTP was effective, and it increased awareness, competence, and application of skills. 93% of the CDPs in the three provinces stated that the programme was effective. There was an impact on the performance and upskilling of CDPs. CDPTP contributed to the establishment of four one-stop centres around Capricorn in Limpopo Province rated cost-effective. 2807 CDPs were trained from 2018 to 2023.

The CDPTP contributed to the training programme for communities accessing quality services. Training programmes contributed to improved service delivery. The consciousness and knowledge levels of the

community were raised to engage rather than protest. Training further made the communities accountable and able to participate in their development.

The training was partially integrated with institutions, such as the National Development Agency (NDA) and South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) but not integrated with other government departments that focus on community development and local municipalities.

The training was cost-effective because most of the training sessions were conducted by internal DSD staff, reducing the cost while achieving the intended target groups. Some of the training sessions were conducted in DSD centres and some were conducted virtually, saving cost and making the delivery cost-effective.

Lack of resources disenabled follow-up and reporting. The follow-ups and reporting on the results were limited post-training. The operational cost of implementing the programme from 2018 to 2023 varied from national, and provincial levels and from one directorate to the other. Resources were insufficient for all training (financial, human, infrastructure, etc.), leading reduced number of days for some training. Most of the training funding was from the national department, thus about R5 400 000 was spent for the CDPTP from 2018 to 2023.

The CDP training modules conceptualisation has largely been informed by policies and frameworks. The training modules were tailor-made and customised for the targeted CDPs. For instance, conceptualisations of the Food and Nutrition Security Training came from the identified gap to address Nutrition Assessment, and Counselling and Support within Community Nutrition Distribution Centres (CNDCs).

There was some level of alignment of new knowledge/systems to existing programmes, with the introduction of the Norms and Standards, which some CDPs and ACDPs still needed to comprehend going forward. CDPs and ACDPs were introduced to tools to familiarise themselves with the move towards professionalisation of the field. Norms and standards were introduced and aligned with the roles and responsibilities of CDPs but not implemented.

Coherence of the training programme across directorates/units remains a work in progress as directorates plan their budgets separately. The capacity of CDPs to deliver on the DSD mandate has increased. Evidence of best practice in implementing CDPTP has been recorded across provinces, and districts as communities were empowered by the CDPs.

There has been a notable improvement within CNDCs through stakeholder participation and involvement within CNDCs. Provinces were also reporting on initiatives taking place within the CNDCs. Due to the mobilisation and support of CDPs, there has been advocacy for nutrition initiatives within provinces.

Recognising the importance of community development practitioners by policymakers provides a platform for the continuity of CDPTP. Partnerships with academic institutions assisted in developing and customising training programmes for DSD and enabled the provision of accredited courses. The best practice for implementing training was execution by the National DSD supported by provinces.

Collaboration with the Department of Health magnified the impact of the CDPTP in contributing to communities accessing quality integrated government services in Nutrition Assessment Counselling and Support (NACS).

The Community Development Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) has facilitated better commitment for CDPs, using the skills gained by the CDPs and ACDPs is lifelong and has the potential to continue over the years to come. What is sustainable is the professionalisation of Community Development Practice and the sufficient political support and goodwill.

The planning and execution of the training were effective and efficient because the CDPs used the skills and knowledge acquired through the training to improve service delivery. However, the training programme and the CDPs encountered challenges. Follow-ups post-training to support the CDPs in effectively implementing the skills and knowledge gained remain a challenge.

Insufficient funding and resources impeded the development and delivery of comprehensive training programmes. This affected the quality and reach of the training, limiting the impact thereof. Lack of transportation and infrastructure also contributed to this challenge.

Community development is a multifaceted discipline needing integration among stakeholders during the planning and empowerment of CDPs. CDPs are a critical piece of the puzzle in community development and with adequate resources and skills can lead to achieving the desired outcomes.

**Conclusion**

From 2018 to 2023, the CDTP training interventions were based on the identified skills gap. The trainings were implemented across provinces including the sampled Free State, Limpopo and Eastern Cape. The National DSD committed itself to ensuring that CDPs and ACDPs were trained.

The CDPS acknowledged the effectiveness of the training and the skills acquired, which they have applied in the communities they serve. The relevance, and effectiveness of the programme were linked to the demand for training and the training executed over the years. The majority of the ACDPs and CDPs acknowledged that the training was relevant for their day-to-day responsibilities even though in different provinces and districts the inclusion and training were hindered by various factors, such as lack of adequate budgets and other resources to complete the training according to the required standards i.e. the number of days for the training. ACDPs and CDPs expressed their appreciation of the training but also recommended more training.

The capacity of CDPs to deliver on the DSD mandate has increased. CDPTP has been effective in achieving its intended objectives leading to most CDPs and ACDPs doing their work professionally based on their testimonies. Evidence of best practices in the implementation of CDPTP has been recorded, as communities were empowered by the CDPs. CDPTP was implemented as planned despite the challenges encountered across the provinces and districts and the budget constraint measures introduced. Benchmarking with other countries, such as Iceland and Australia, upskilling CDPs is important. The following recommendations were made:

**Development of an integrated training model for CDPs**: An integrated training road map should be developed including all directorates responsible for CDPTP. Post training support to CDPs must be included in the model and budgeted for to ensure implementation. Plan of action on how to create an enabling environment for CDPs to perform their duties should be included in the integrated training model. **Strengthen collaboration with research and training institutions including SETAs**. Identify stakeholders to partner with in the CDPTP. Development of partnership or collaboration model for accredited and non-accredited trainings. **Review of the ACDPs and CDPs Job Descriptions:** The ACDPs and CDPs job descriptions will need to be reviewed to harmonise the disparities that exist. National DSD in liaison with all relevant interested stakeholders embark on the review process. Workshop the supervisors and CDPs on the completed and approved JDs. **Conduct an outcome evaluation post implementation of the improvement plan.** The developed improvement plan with SMART targets must be evaluated after 1 or 2 years of implementation to assess the outcomes of the improved CDPTP.

**Strengthen Human Resource development for CDPs.** Review and align the CDPs' remuneration structure to the occupation specific dispensation addressing the challenges identified in the report. **Need for Resource mobilisation.** The distribution of the tools of trade to the respective CDPs within scope and time.

# 1 CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The following chapter highlights the background of community development globally, regionally and nationally. It also provides the South African perspective through the Department of Social Development (DSD), prioritised community development and the training of Community Development Practitioners (CDP).

## 1.1 Community Development in South Africa

Community and household vulnerability in developing countries has been rooted in socio-economic inequalities that have led to a high rate of poverty. However, many countries, including South Africa, have developed interventions to address the inequalities of the past, while adhering to the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (SDGs) of transforming and establishing sustainable communities. Sustainable community development moves beyond the imperatives or ideology of the capitalist economic market to include not only environmental concerns but also concerns for the social and cultural health that enhance the well-being of the entire "ecological" community. Such development must also devolve power and planning down to the community if the community is to become an active agent in programme development and management (Thornburg, 2017).

Community development plays a crucial role in promoting sustainable and inclusive socio-economic growth within societies. To achieve this, the Community Development Practitioners Training Programme (CDPTP) has been implemented to equip practitioners with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively address the diverse needs, and challenges faced by the communities. The rationale of the evaluation was to provide empirical evidence on the extent to which the community development practitioners training programme empowered communities to find sustainable solutions towards improving their quality of life.

The mandate of the Department of Social Development (DSD) has been to provide a caring and integrated system of social development services and programmes that facilitate human development and contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of citizens[1]. Community development is one component of the department that exists to promote the realisation of the department's vision to enable the realisation of empowered communities.

[1] Non-profit Organisations Act of 1997

1997 White Paper for Social Welfare

1998 White Paper on Population Policy for South Africa

The DSD has developed a range of policies, such as the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) and the White Paper on Families (2013), providing a framework and direction for social welfare services. More so, community development has been institutionalised in the DSD by enacting the White Paper on Welfare Services in 1997. The White Paper describes community development as a multisectoral and multidisciplinary approach, philosophy, process, methods, and skills to be used in strategies at the local level to meet the needs and inform the reorientation of social welfare programmes towards comprehensive integrated and developmental strategies.

Considering the seven priorities of the Medium-Term Strategic Framework 2019-2024 (MTSF), the department plays a central role towards the realisation of priority number three (3) of the seven (7), namely "Consolidating the Social Wage through Reliable and Quality Basic Services." By implementing the MTSF, the department expedited the absorption of trained but unemployed social work practitioners, including Community Development Practitioners.

However, there has been an increasing number of practitioners with limited skills performing various roles that substantially reduce the intensity and spread of social ills in our communities, most evident among these being, substance abuse, gender-based violence, hunger and distress. While the department continues to provide social security to those who need it the most, it has addressed income poverty issues.

The department shifted its programmatic focus towards the practical unlocking of human capabilities into actualities, driving sustainable livelihoods' supporting transversal partnerships, and taking stock of the people. Within that context, it has also been noted that the country's population has steadily increased, with the mid-year population estimated to have increased to 58,8 million in July 2019 from 57,73 million in July 2018. The proportion of the elderly and youth was seen on the increase, with implications for social welfare and development services.

Implementing community development programmes is geared towards empowering communities through capacity enhancement and the creation of structures. Such a programme ensures that vulnerable households and communities are profiled to determine their socio-economic needs. It would conduct community capacity enhancement in all nine provinces to bolster social cohesion. Functional community structures would be created to prevent and address the social ills of communities. These ambitious targets demand that the DSD strengthen its leadership and management capabilities, accelerate efforts in supporting women and people with disabilities in development efforts, and strengthen information and data systems and partnerships with civil society, the private sector, and the donor community.

The DSD noted that the social protection system is still not optimal, with critical breakdowns and inefficiencies undermining the delivery of quality social services. These inefficiencies continue to undermine the delivery of quality social services. A continuing, increased focus on social protection and notions around a basic citizen's income will become more urgent and must be reinvigorated. Social security has a long history and is established in developed and developing countries. In 2018 social assistance increased to 17.8 million beneficiaries, with a total expenditure of R107.6 million (SASSA, 2018).

Despite notable advances in gender equality and women's empowerment, most women and girls still suffer from multi-dimensional poverty, inequality and discrimination based on gender. This is compounded by deep-seated social problems such as gender-based violence. Almost 25 years into South Africa's democracy, women's empowerment and gender inequality remain elusive.

Many South Africans have been trapped in a cycle of poverty, unemployment, and inequality. Communities faced with complex social challenges due to rising levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality causing an increase in dependency on social grants; high levels of dependency on state support; discouraged and disempowered people with feelings of hopelessness; social ills, crime, abuse of alcohol and drugs; teenage pregnancy; school dropouts; and HIV/AIDS and fragile and disorganised families, frustrated people, particularly young people. While all these complex social challenges exist, CDPs, as change agents, service developers, access facilitators, capacity builders and monitoring agents, must have the competencies to address societal needs and promote community development. These include:

a) Identify contextual community concerns and gaps in services.

b) Seek capabilities and assets to develop innovative participatory practices.

c) Increase channels of communication between the community, stakeholders, and statutory authorities.

d) Integrate and coordinate interventions aimed at poverty alleviation and social inequity in an integrative and holistic manner towards achieving community well-being.

**1.2 Background to Community Development Practitioner Training Programme**

Prior years showed that the community development programme was implemented with personnel with limited skills. There were also inadequate resources and a lack of policy frameworks for implementing sustainable community development strategies. Hence, the capacity challenges

negatively affected the capacity of the programme to respond to the diverse and complex community development challenges.

To address these challenges, the department developed various documents to ensure standardisation and continuous capacity building of CDPs that include a toolkit for Community Development Practitioners in South Africa, Community Development Practice Policy (2017), Comprehensive Community Development Norms and Standards and Community Mobilisation and Empowerment Framework (2021). Various training programmes for CDPs on community development practice and methodologies aimed at improving their capacity to address several challenges experienced by communities were implemented.

The primary outcome of community development is an improved quality of life. Within that context, effective community development results in mutual benefit and shared responsibility among community members and recognises:

- the connection between social, cultural, environmental and economic matters;
- the diversity of interests within a community; and
- its relationship to building capacity.

While there is a wide variety of community development workers, and practitioners currently involved in community development work, they have different degrees of skills and expertise in community development with no shared vision and understanding of the concept and practice. Through the DSD strategic plan, the CDPTP empowers communities through capacitated and professional community development practitioners. Its outcomes, impacts, and definition, “medium-term results” and the “results of achieving specific outcomes” over the long-term are seen by the expected change in the mind-set, performance, commitment, professionalism, ethos and values improving the quality of life in communities. Essential basic skills and competencies for Community Development Practice have been identified as follows:

a) Good facilitation skills, including the ability to facilitate conflict resolution.

b) Problem-solving skills, including the ability to analyse situations and devise solutions.

c) The ability to build trust in people.

d) Team-building skills and an ability to work in a multidisciplinary way, promoting partnerships and networking.

e) Leadership skills, including the ability to plan, organise, monitor, lead, and communicate effectively.

f) An understanding of social responsibility and the ability to engender this feeling in others.

g) An understanding of the complexity of development and the need to consider social, economic, environmental, and institutional issues.

h) The ability to conduct basic social research (surveys, questionnaires, community, and household profiles, etc.).

i) The ability to write reports.

j) The ability to communicate effectively in the main local languages.

k) Basic computer skills.

The Community Development Practitioner is expected to embrace and apply the international standards (DSD A toolkit for CDPs in South Africa, 2009):

a) Understand the values, processes, and outcomes of community development and apply these to practice in the other key critical areas.

b) Understand and engage with communities, building and maintaining relationships with individuals and groups.

c) Understand, develop, and support collaborative working and community participation.

d) Enable communities to take collective action, increase their influence, access resources, and participate in managing and delivering services.

e) Support people and organisations to learn together for social change.

f) Design and deliver practices, policies, structures, and programmes that recognise and respect diversity and promote inclusion.

g) Facilitate and support organisational development and infrastructure for community development, promoting and providing empowering leadership.

h) Develop, evaluate, and inform practice and policy for community development, using participatory evaluation to inform strategic and operational practice.

### 1.3 Aims and Objectives of the Evaluation

The evaluation's purpose was to assess the extent to which the CDPTP contributed to achieving its intended objectives. Implementing the evaluation sought to provide lessons for future improvements in implementing the CDPs' training programme.

The objective of the evaluation is to provide empirical evidence on the extent to which the CDPTP empowered practitioners to transform communities using the skills gained to find sustainable solutions towards community development. The following specific objectives were pursued in this evaluation.

a) To assess programme delivery, strategies, procedures and processes of CDPTP.

b) To evaluate the actual implementation of implementing CDPTP.

c) To analyse partnerships developed and best practices in the CDPTP.

d) Make recommendations for improving the implementation of CDPTP.

#### 1.3.1 Key Evaluation Questions

The following evaluation questions were pursued in this evaluation.

a) To what extent is the implementation of the CDPTP relevant in building the capacity of CDPs?

b) To what extent is the CDPTP implemented in a coherent and standardised manner?

c) To what extent is the CDPTP implemented as intended?

d) To what extent has the CDPTP been efficient and cost-effective regarding value for money? What is the operational cost of implementing the programme?

e) How sustainable is the implementation of the CDPTP in terms of continuity to build the capacity of Community Development Practitioners?

f) What are the best practices elsewhere in implementing similar programmes?

g) What lessons can be learnt, what are the challenges, and what are the recommendations to strengthen the implementation of the CDPTP?

# 2. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Chapter 2 outlines the evaluation methodology used for data collection and how data was analysed.

## 2.1 Evaluation Design

The evaluation used the mixed methods approach for an in-depth understanding of the training programme. The evaluators collected and analysed quantitative and qualitative data to triangulate findings to answer the key evaluation questions. The qualitative approach employed in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) with community development practitioners who have participated in the CDPTP and the DSD Community Development programme staff at national and provincial levels from the three provinces selected (Free State, Eastern Cape, and Limpopo). These methods allowed a deeper understanding of CDPs and Assistant Community Development Practitioners' (ACDPs) experiences, perceptions, and the practical application, implementation, and impact of the capacity building from 2018 to 2023. Through purposive sampling, participants were selected from managers, supervisors, CDPs and ACDPs who formed part of the programme's target. The evaluation followed the process flow shown in Figure 2.1 below.

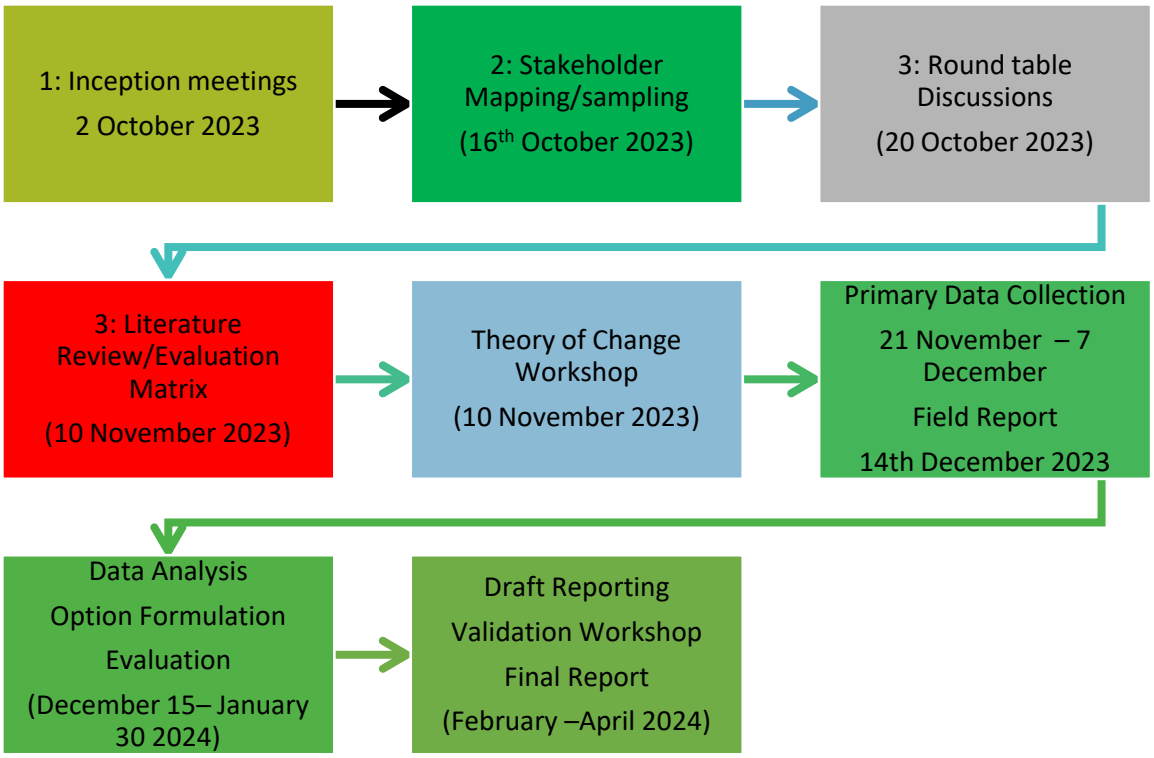



**Figure 2. 1 The evaluation process**

### 2.2 Primary data collection

#### 2.2.1 Data Collection Methods

The combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies comprehensively evaluated the CDPTP. The qualitative approach generated detailed narratives and contextual understanding, allowing a deeper exploration of participants' experiences and perceptions. The quantitative approach provided numerical data from the CDPs and ACDPs, enabling the measurement of key indicators and the identification of trends and patterns. Integrating both methodologies strengthened the validity and reliability of the evaluation, providing a holistic assessment of the training programme's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact on individuals and the programme.

#### 2.2.2 Sampling and sample sizes

The evaluation applied purposive sampling in selecting the national, and provincial staff for qualitative and quantitative techniques. The sample targeted CDPs and ACDPs as they were the beneficiaries of the training programme. Table 2.1 below provides the breakdown of the sample reached in the three provinces.

The breakdown in Table 2.1 analyses the managers, supervisors, CDPs and ACDPs that participated in the evaluation of FGDs, surveys and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). There were more participants than planned in the survey; FGDs and Key informants interviews.

**Table 2. 1 Data collection per province**

| Area/Province | Date | District | KIIs supervisors | | KIIs CDPS | | FGDS and Survey participants | | Number of FGDs conducted | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Planned | Actual | Planned | Actual | Planned | Actual | Planned | Actual | **TOTAL** |
| National | | | 5 | 5 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5 |
| Gauteng pilot | | | 10 | 15 | 10 | 15 | 1 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 42 |
| Free State | 21-23 Nov 2023 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bethlehem | | Thabo Mofutsanyana | 2 | 3 | 16 | 15 | 7 | 26 | 1 | 2 | 44 |
| Botshabelo | | Mangaung Xhariep | 4 | 6 | 14 | 14 | 7 | 21 | 1 | 1 | 41 |
| Kroonstad | | Fezile Dabi Lejweleputswa | 1 | 1 | 10 | 12 | 7 | 22 | 1 | 1 | 35 |
| Eastern Cape | 27-30 Nov 2023 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mthatha | | Alfred Nzo OR Tambo | 10 | 12 | 15 | 15 | 7 | 15 | 1 | 1 | 52 |
| Queenstown | | Joe Gqabi | 2 | 3 | 15 | 22 | 7 | 53 | 1 | 2 | 75 |
| East London | | Buffalo City metro Amathole | 2 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 10 |
| Port Elizabeth | | Nelson Mandela Metro Sarah Baartman | 2 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 7 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 23 |
| Limpopo | 4-7 Dec 2023 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Makhado | | Mopani Capricorn | 5 | 14 | 18 | 44 | 7 | 40 | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| Polokwane | | Sekhukhune Vhembe | 5 | 7 | 18 | 42 | 7 | 39 | 1 | 2 | 88 |
| Mokopane | | Waterberg | 5 | 12 | 14 | 43 | 7 | 36 | 1 | 2 | 91 |
| **Total Participants** | | | **53** | **72** | **130** | **237** | **71** | **278** | **13 FGDs** | **16 FGDs** | **587** |

The evaluation process started with piloting the instruments with stakeholders from Gauteng Province DSD, CDPs and ACDPs. They participated in the process at the DSD National Office in Pretoria. The pilot assisted in validating the instruments and adjusting where necessary. It is essential to highlight that few adjustments were made to the instruments.

Post-pilot, the tools were finalised, and fieldwork dates were also finalised to engage CDPs, ACDPs and supervisors in the three provinces starting with fieldwork in the Free State, and Eastern Cape, and finalising with Limpopo.

The qualitative and quantitative data collected included KII, FGDs, surveys and case studies. For each data set for data collection in a province, the DSD officials were ferried from sampled districts to DSD district offices closer to them thus: Free State (Botshabelo, Kroonstad and Bethlehem); Eastern Cape (Mthatha, Queenstown, East London and Gqeberha); Limpopo (Louis Trichardt, Polokwane, and Mokopane).

At the national office, the identified officials in the Community Development Branch, the policy planning, the Household Food and Nutrition Security Programme were interviewed.

The evaluation team conducted key informant and focus group interviews with district officials. Face-to-face interviews were conducted based on the provincial breakdown, the provinces sent supervisors, CDPs and ACDPs to district offices where interviews were conducted.

For conducting interviews, the Community Development Policy and Service Standards Directorate organised with provincial counterparts for the dates and the list of participants needed. The participants were then invited to a central point for the districts closer together to cut costs. Participants travelled from their districts, attended the interviews, and returned to their districts on the same day.

A systematic process was applied across the three provinces. The FGDs were conducted in all provinces with CDPs and ACDPs. In the case of Limpopo, where there are no ACDPs, only CDPs participated. Surveys were conducted with ACDPs and CDPs, and the numbers varied from 10 to 14 members per group. As outlined in Table 2.1 above, 278 CDPS took part in FGDs and surveys. Another 237 participated in KII. Sixteen FGDs were conducted in the three provinces.

Through collaboration with provincial and district officials, the FGDs were conducted with CDPs and ACDPs from where they existed and based on the local dynamics. FGDs for CDPs and ACDPs in some districts were mixed or conducted separately. The FGD was facilitated by the evaluator, and every participant was given the platform to engage.

KII were conducted with managers, supervisors and some CDPs. These KIIs were facilitated by the evaluator or the participants were asked to self-administer and complete the interview questions.

Surveys were conducted with the CDPs and ACDPs face-to-face in all districts sampled. The participants completed the survey facilitated by the evaluator and submitted it at the end. This allowed confidentiality and adherence to the POPIA.

**2.3 Quality Assurance**

To ensure the accuracy and quality of the evaluation process, an internal expert review was conducted with the support of the National DSD team, which comprised the technical Monitoring and Evaluation (M and E) and the programme experts. This involved engaging experts during the fieldwork and from inception on the process and community development practices and methodologies. These experts reviewed the data collection instruments and made suggestions for improvement.

The evaluation team took input and feedback from the PMC's support team. Their perspectives and insights assisted the process and were considered during the data analysis and report writing phases to ensure that the evaluation accurately reflects the objectives of the evaluation.

**2.4 Data analysis**

After data collection, the evaluation matrix was updated, and the collected information was linked to each evaluation question. This process consisted of the following steps:

a) Review all the collected data and assess what information was: (a) necessary; and (b) of sufficient quality to inform each evaluation question per evaluation criteria.

b) Ensuring that the findings logically flow from the information related to themes/categories.

c) Constructing complete chains of reasoning: from evidence to findings to answers to the evaluation questions.

Figure 2.2 below outlines how the collected data was analysed based on the methodology. Quantitative data was coded statistically while qualitative data was coded thematically using the evaluation criteria. Figure 2.2 depicts the data analysis process flow from the literature reviewed, data collected, coded, development of thematic areas, answering of evaluation key questions and data interpretation.

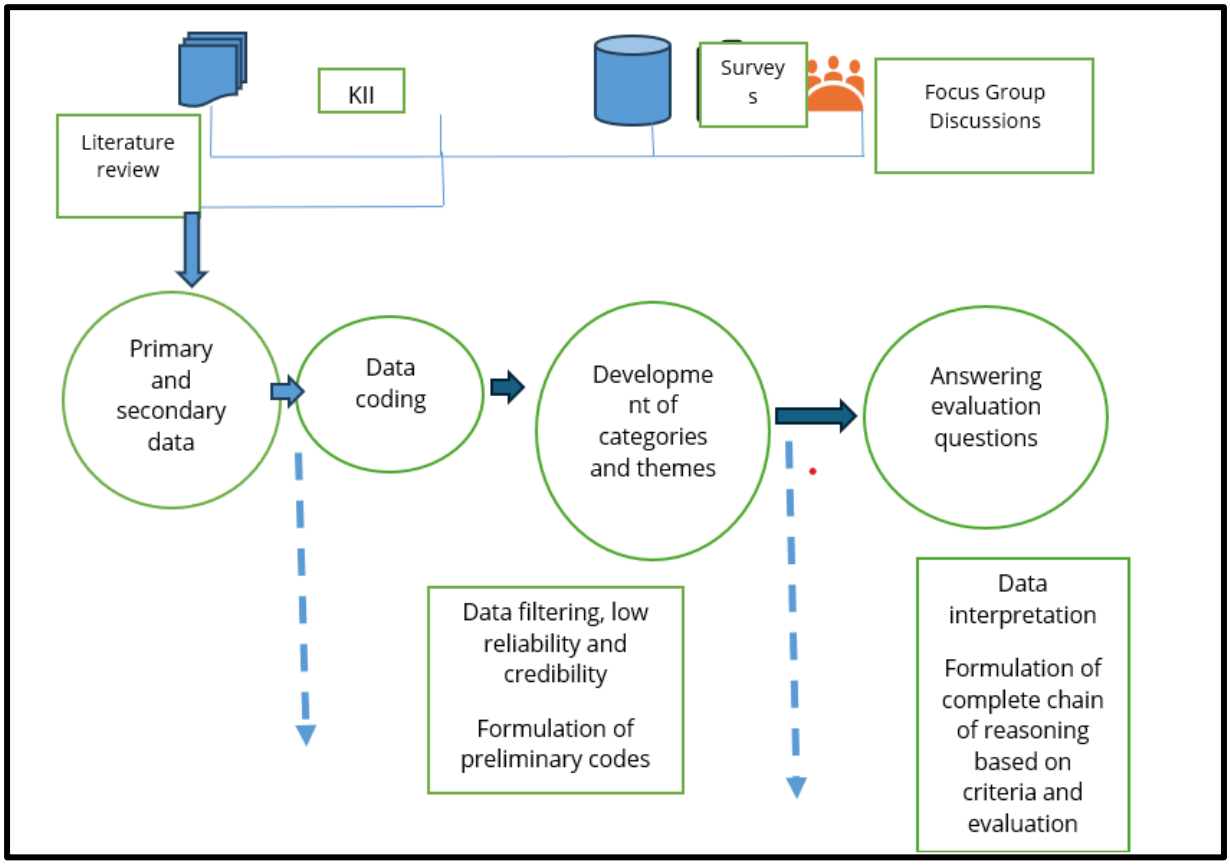



**Figure 2. 2 Data analysis process**

### 2.5 Limitation of the evaluation

All research methodologies have their intrinsic limitations impacted by various factors, some related to the resources allocated, including financial and time constraints. The evaluation was limited to three provinces, out of nine, due to budget constraints. However, the findings provide the true picture of how the training has related to CDPs.

The field limitation included interviewing a sample only from the invited CDPs rather than having a pool of CDPs and ACDPs that evaluators could choose from.

The following chapter outlines the literature review on community development.

# 3 LITERATURE REVIEW

## 3.1 Introduction

This literature review was prepared as a data collection tool to aid as a valuable input into key project deliverables. It was designed to broadly highlight some key outcomes of community development within South Africa. The review of the literature has been an ongoing process. This included the best practices from other countries in the continent and beyond. The evaluation matrix was developed and presented as part of the inception report.

## 3.2 Legal framework and policies

The legal frameworks and documents presented below play a vital role in shaping social development, strengthening the capacity of CDPs, and addressing the challenges faced by communities in South Africa. They provide guidance, strategies, and resources to promote community empowerment, sustainable livelihoods, child protection, and overall social well-being. By aligning their work with these frameworks, practitioners, policymakers, and stakeholders can contribute to advancing social development and improving the quality of life for communities in South Africa.

The White Paper on Welfare Services in South Africa, 1997, provides a comprehensive framework for social development and welfare services. This has been the key policy document outlining South Africa's approach to social welfare in the post-apartheid era. It emphasises developmental welfare services and the role of communities in shaping their development trajectories. It emphasises the importance of community participation, empowerment, and the development of sustainable social support systems.

The White Paper further outlines the government's commitment to addressing social challenges through providing quality social services and promoting social development. It mentions the necessity to "promote the training of human resource personnel at all levels' and discusses the importance of community-based and community-driven initiatives. The policy document is linked to the National Development plan's agenda and pillars.

The National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 emphasises the significance of building cohesive communities that are inclusive and diverse. It envisions communities where residents actively participate in shaping their lives, emphasising social cohesion and nation-building to address the scars of apartheid and other divisions. This has been driven through community development programmes.

In South Africa, community development has offered power to communities to initiate and manage change. Within DSD, Community Development Managers and CDPs have facilitated development. They have ensured the effective coordination of the identified, planned niche areas and implemented integrated and transformative social development programmes. This is done in partnership with key stakeholders to effectively empower human and social capital through a community development approach towards sustainable livelihoods (DSD Job description for Assistant Manager Community Development, 2019). In this context, DSD has used several community development approaches, and methodologies to train the CDPs, who then work with various communities for different community interventions and initiatives. The partnerships include local authorities, local government, and civil society. This strengthens local development and infrastructure.

The plan underscores the importance of spatial planning and the need for well-located and affordable housing, and infrastructure, such as public transport. These elements are crucial for community development as they determine how communities access opportunities, services, and amenities. The empowerment of communities to access services necessitates empowerment through education and training. At the heart of community development is the empowerment of its members. The NDP 2030 prioritises education and training, ensuring people have the skills and knowledge needed to improve their lives and contribute to their communities.

### 3.2.1 DSD Community Development Frameworks

This toolkit, developed in 2009, focuses on building the capacity of CDPs in South Africa. It provides guidance and resources for CDPs to promote sustainable livelihoods within communities. The toolkit emphasises participatory approaches, community empowerment, and integrating social, economic, and environmental dimensions in community development initiatives (Toolkit for CDPs in South Africa, 2009).

### 3.2.2 DSD: Community Mobilisation and Empowerment Framework 2021

The Community Mobilisation and Empowerment Framework, introduced by the DSD in 2021, aims to enhance community participation and empowerment in social development processes. The framework emphasises the importance of collaboration between government, civil society, and communities to address social challenges, promote social cohesion, and improve community well-being (DSD Community Mobilisation and Empowerment Framework, 2021).

The Capacity Building Strategy for Social Services Practitioners in Child Protection, developed in 2019, focuses on enhancing the skills and knowledge of social services practitioners working in

child protection. The strategy aims to strengthen the capacity of practitioners to effectively respond to child protection issues, including prevention, intervention, and support services (Capacity Building Strategy for Social Services Practitioners in Child Protection, 2009).

The official guide to South Africa provides information on various aspects of social development in the country. It summarises social development policies, programmes, and services, including child and family welfare, disability services, social grants, and community development initiatives. The guide serves as a resource for practitioners, policymakers, and the public interested in social development in South Africa (Official Guide to South Africa 2019/20, 2019).

The DSD Annual Report provides a comprehensive overview of the department's activities, achievements, and challenges in a specific year. It highlights the department's efforts in implementing social development policies, programmes, and services. The report presents key performance indicators, financial information, and plans, providing insights into the department's activities and their impact on communities (DSD Annual Report 2022, 2022).

### 3.2.3 Department of Social Development Institutional Capacity Building

The DSD Institutional Capacity Building Concept Paper, published in 2008, outlined the department's approach to enhancing its institutional capacity. It addressed key areas, such as leadership and governance, human resources, infrastructure, and information management. The concept paper emphasises the importance of building a capable and responsive institution to effectively deliver social development services and programmes (Hendricks et. al, 2008).

The DSD undertook a research project on Building Sustainable Livelihoods, a comprehensive study in 22 ISRDP and URP nodes. The recommendation was that DSD should promote sustainable livelihoods programmes and improve coordination and service delivery improvement at the community level. Out of the recommendations, the social development sector conducted a skills audit to determine the skills of CDPs. Following the skills audit, a comprehensive report was developed with a key recommendation for improving the capacity of CDPs. This would include the accredited university’s courses at the University of Pretoria on Food Security and Nutrition, and non-accredited training was planned.

The NQF Level 5 qualification was designed to empower people already working or intending to work in any setting relevant to community development. It provides learners with the competencies needed for them to act as change agents, by adding value to the practice of community development. Learners acquiring this qualification can demonstrate knowledge and skills to operate effectively in the community development environment. The Bachelor of

Community Development, NQF Level 8, is an Exit Outcome-based professional qualification. The qualification is described as a Level 8 professional degree, a Level Outcomes-based qualification specifically focussing on Community Development. The focus of the programme is to:

a) Ensure that CDPs can facilitate collective processes in a community to effect psycho-social and economic development.

b) Educate CDPs with the required theoretical knowledge and practical skills to facilitate activities that enable households and communities to manage their development to achieve sustainable livelihoods.

c) Produce CDPs who can facilitate the collective actions needed to build and empower communities, including, but not limited to, people experiencing poverty.

d) Communicate community development-related information verbally, and in writing to a range of audiences, with due regard for the communication and the ethical value system of the specific context.

e) Analyse, synthesise, evaluate, and review complex community development-related information to conceptualise a problem and produce an evidence-based argument or solution to an authentic community development situation.

f) Apply the ethics, principles, values, and community development processes to a specific context Community Development Practice Policy (2017).

To address skills challenges, the department developed various documents to ensure standardisation and continuous capacity building of CDPs that include a toolkit for Community Development Practitioners in South Africa, Community Development Practice Policy (2017), Comprehensive Community Development Norms and Standards and Community Mobilisation and Empowerment Framework (2021).

Various training programmes for CDPs on Community Development Practice and Methodologies aimed at improving their capacity to address several challenges experienced by communities were implemented. The training programmes and methodologies for community development practitioners were also intended to enhance the capacity of CDPs to address several challenges experienced by communities. Since the implementation of the various CDP training programmes, there has never been a formal assessment, as an evaluation undertaken to understand whether the CDP training has been effective in understanding and implementing the programmes.

Community development has been applied globally and some examples are provided below.

**3.3 International Benchmarking**

In an era marked by rapid social, technological, and environmental changes, the field of community development faces various challenges and opportunities. The benchmarking of CDP training programmes across Latin America, Europe, Africa, and the Asia-Pacific region reveals a rich tapestry of strategies and practices South Africa can draw upon to enhance its community development initiatives. From the participatory approaches and social justice emphasis in Latin America to the comprehensive, multidisciplinary frameworks in Europe, from the cultural competence and contextual adaptability found in African programmes to the innovation and technological prowess of the Asia-Pacific. Each region contributes valuable insights into the crafting of effective community development training.

The Latin American programmes emphasise participatory approaches and social justice, drawing on the region's rich history of community mobilisation. For instance, Brazil's approach integrates community participation with social action, focussing on empowering marginalised communities through collective action (Martins et al., 2021).

In the field of community development, the comparison between practices in South Africa and Latin America can yield significant insights, particularly regarding the latter's emphasis on participatory approaches and social justice. Latin American community development programmes are renowned for their deep-rooted commitment to these principles, leveraging the region's extensive history of community mobilisation to foster development initiatives that are not only inclusive but also equitable (Maldonado et al., 2022). Brazil is a prime example of Latin America's participatory model, where community development is intertwined with social action. This approach is grounded in the belief that empowering marginalised communities through collective action is crucial for sustainable development. By actively involving community members in the decision-making process, Brazil's strategy ensures that development efforts are directly aligned with the community's needs and aspirations, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of these initiatives (Irazabal and Jiron 2021).

This participatory methodology starkly contrasts with more traditional, top-down approaches to development, often failing to account for the unique contexts, and challenges local communities face. The key learning for South African CDPs is the profound impact that incorporating participatory methodologies into training and development efforts can have. By prioritising community engagement, and leadership in development projects, practitioners can ensure these

initiatives respond to the needs of the community but are also more likely to be embraced and sustained by the community members themselves. The essence of participatory approaches lies in the CDPs' ability to democratise the development process, ensuring that it is accessible and accountable to all members of the community, particularly the most marginalised (Matarrita-Cascante, Lee and Nam 2020). This is achieved by fostering an environment where community members feel valued and empowered to contribute to the development discourse, facilitating a more inclusive and equitable process.

For South African CDPs, adopting participatory methodologies inspired by Latin American practices can enhance the effectiveness of their work. By fostering a more engaged and empowered community, practitioners can ensure that development efforts are truly community-led, achieving sustainable outcomes that reflect the community's collective vision and aspirations. This benchmarking with Latin America's focus on participatory approaches and social justice provides a valuable framework for rethinking and enriching community development practices in South Africa, emphasising the importance of community engagement and empowerment in achieving meaningful and lasting development outcomes.

European models, such as those in Scandinavia, Ireland, and Sweden for example, offer comprehensive frameworks that integrate social, economic, and environmental aspects of community development. The multidisciplinary nature of these programmes equips practitioners with a broad skill set. In the pursuit of enhancing community development practices within South Africa, benchmarking against European models, particularly those from Scandinavia, reveals the significant benefits of comprehensive frameworks and multidisciplinary integration. European approaches to community development are characterised by their holistic nature, seamlessly blending social, economic, and environmental considerations into a unified strategy. This multi-dimensional perspective is crucial in addressing the communities' complex and interconnected challenges (Bazzana et al., 2022).

The Scandinavian model stands out for its emphasis on sustainability and inclusivity, underpinned by robust social welfare systems and a solid commitment to environmental stewardship. Community development programmes in this region are designed to foster equitable growth, ensuring that economic advancements do not come at the expense of social equity or environmental sustainability (McConnell, Muia, Clarke 2021). By integrating diverse disciplines, these programmes equip CDPs with a versatile skill set essential for navigating modern community development complexities.

The need for constructive and effective community development in South Africa is recognised as a cornerstone of national development. The debate on implementation and structuring community development in South Africa is informed by the global debate on community development among socially aware democracies.

Participating countries, such as Australia, South Africa and Ireland, are at various stages of, professionalisation and professionalism of community development in particular for CDPs.

Like Ireland and other European countries and Kenya in Africa, the role of the state is transformed from a 'needs satisfying' state to that of a 'facilitating state', that is, based on partnerships between the state and communities, with empowerment and participation strategies towards achieving sustainable community well-being facilitated by development practitioners is the journey DSD across provinces have embarked on.

People's skills have contributed to Ireland's well-being and strong economic performance and continue to be an important driver of continued improvement in the future of community development.

CDPs get opportunities to upskill and reskill to perform new tasks in their existing jobs, assume the duties of new jobs and adapt to new modes of work, behaviour, consumption and participation in society. The following chapter outlines the CDPTP theory of change.

# 4 THEORY OF CHANGE

### 4.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 of the report outlines the theory of change developed and how it elaborates on the inputs, outputs and outcomes of the CDPTP. The chapter outlines the road map to CDPs' training programme linked to policy frameworks. The Theory of Change (TOC) forms a conceptual framework for CDP training.

The National Evaluation Policy Framework 2019 highlights the need for an effective TOC in government interventions. The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) guideline for implementing new programmes, emphasise the requirements to have a defined TOC and a Logical Framework (Log Frame). TOC identifies the specific goals of the programme and connects those goals with specific interventions. The TOC focuses on mapping out or "filling in" what has been described as the "missing middle" between what a programme or change initiative does (its activities or interventions) and how these lead to desired goals being achieved.

The TOC is a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired outcome is expected in a particular context. The TOC is a road map that provides an understanding of the landscape and the routes and distances that must be travelled to the desired destination. It is a participatory process whereby stakeholders in a planning process articulate long-term goals and identify conditions for the goals to be met.

The CDPTP TOC was developed to provide a higher-level pathway for addressing national societal problems in communities. The CDPTP TOC bridges operational activities with strategic goals, serving as a roadmap for achieving impactful community development[2]. It emphasises a collaborative, evidence-based approach to align with National Development Plan priorities, enhancing programme effectiveness. This resulted in addressing the root cause of the problem. This has been prioritised through the National Development Plan (2030) priorities cascaded down to DSD mandates and the Community Development directorate focus areas.

Figure 1.1 outlines the DSD CDPTP TOC. The CDPTP TOC was developed after engaging with various national and provincial stakeholders through a hybrid workshop. All participants expressed their expectations of how the TOC would benefit and enhance community development.

[2] For more detailed information that support the theory of change see Annexure 2.

During the TOC workshop, national mandates linked to DSD's CDPTP were identified as follows:

The contribution of CDPTP to national mandates within DSD in the following focus areas**:** Consolidating the social wage through reliable and quality basic services; Economic transformation and job creation and social cohesion and safe communities.

DSD CDP interventions were identified as follows: Institutionalisation of Community Mobilisation Empowerment; Enabling environment for Community Development Practice; and Professionalisation of Community Development Practice. Other interventions include human resource development; Effective and efficient supervision in Community Development Practice; Effective and efficient management in community development and transformation of the Community Development Practice.

The interventions need a Logical Framework with clear SMART indicators at outputs and outcomes levels. These indicators will then be defined, with targets set. The outcomes are immediate, intermediate and long-term as shown in Figure 4.1. Indicators will measure progress and success at all levels.

The identified outputs include CDP Training programme development and strengthened community development approaches supporting the CDP application of the skills acquired (see Figure 4.1).

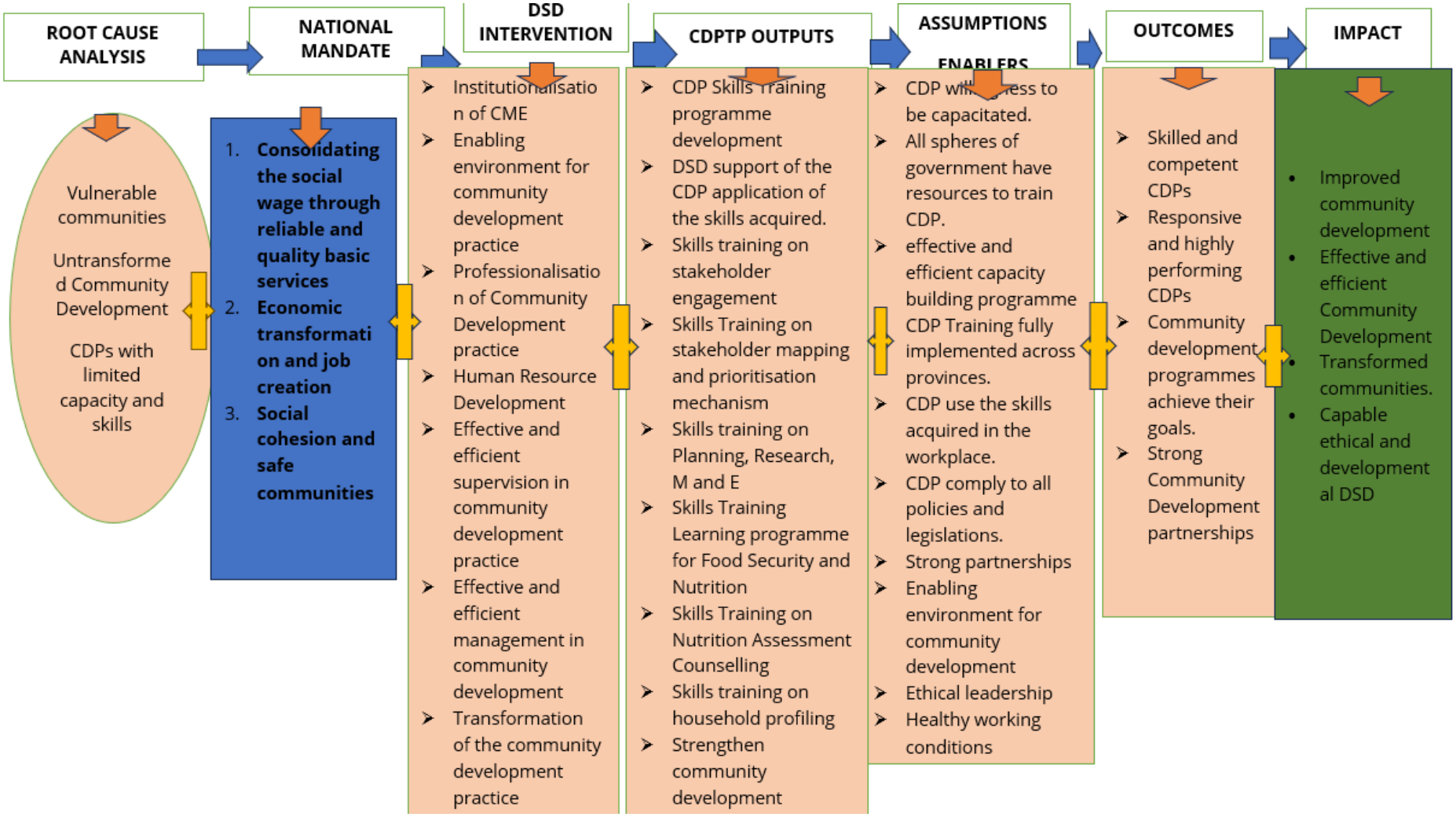



**Figure 4. 1 DSD Community Development Practitioner Training Programme Theory of Change**

### 4.2 Assumptions and Enablers of the CDPTP

During the workshop, key assumptions were identified. Assumptions were made based on the context or environment within which the different CDPTP initiatives operated. The following assumptions were identified: CDP willingness to be capacitated; all spheres of government have resources to train CDP; effective and efficient capacity building programme; CDP Training implemented across provinces; CDP use the skills acquired in the workplace; CDP complies with all policies and legislation; has strong partnerships; enabling environment for community development; ethical leadership; and healthy working conditions. These assumptions will be managed through a risk management plan for the outcomes to be achieved.

***Identified Outcomes***

The identified outcomes (immediate, intermediate and long-term) that can be tracked during and after implementation included the following:

a) Skilled and competent CDP cadre

b) Responsive and highly performing CDPs

c) Community development programmes achieve the set goals.

d) Strong Community Development partnerships

Below are the impact statements defined during the design of the TOC: Improved community development; Effective and efficient community development; Transformed communities; and Capable ethical and developmental DSD.

### 4.3 Stakeholder mapping

Through the workshop, the following stakeholders were identified to be of high influence and importance to the CDPTP as outlined in Table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1 Stakeholder analysis**

| ***Stakeholders with high influence and high importance in CDPTP*** | ***High influence, low importance*** |
|---|---|
| • DSD National, Provincial, and local<br>• CDPs and ACDPs<br>• Civil Society organisations<br>• Institutes of Higher Education<br>• District and Local Municipalities<br>• Provincial governments<br>• Community-based organisations<br>• SASSA<br>• NDA<br>• Traditional authorities<br>• Communities<br>• DSD Community Development directorates at National, Provincial and District levels | • Private companies<br>• TVET colleges |
| Low influence and Low Importance<br>None | High importance Low influence<br>• None |

### 4.4 Conclusions

The TOC developed, illustrates the pathways the training programme needs to upskill the CDPs and transform communities. The TOC is important to provide the guiding framework during the planning and implementation of the CDPTP, and it is also the conceptual framework for the study. The following chapter provides the evaluation findings categorised based on the evaluation key questions and criteria.

# 5 EVALUATION FINDINGS

## 5.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 highlights the evaluation findings presented based on the evaluation criteria. It outlines the key evaluation question for each criterion and the quantitative and qualitative findings under relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and impact of the training programme. The chapter also provides the challenges, lessons learnt, conclusion and recommendations.

The following evaluation criteria are defined: **Relevance:** The extent to which the intervention's (CDPTP) objectives and design respond to CDP needs, policies, and priorities. **Coherence:** The extent to which CDPTP training policies support the intervention and internal and external coherence. The synergies and interlinkages between the CDPTP and other interventions carried out in the department and by other government departments and international Norms and Standards to community development. **Effectiveness:** The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results. **Efficiency:** The extent to which the CDPTP intervention delivers, results in an economic and timely way. Economic means conversion of inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) into outputs, outcomes and impacts, in the most cost-effective way (OCED evaluation guide, 2023). **Impact:** The extent to which the CDPTP intervention has generated significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects. **Sustainability:** The extent to which the net benefits of the CDP interventions will continue (OECD evaluation guide, 2023).

The following evaluation questions have guided the evaluation findings:

a) To what extent is the implementation of the CDPTP relevant in building capacity of the community development practitioners? **(Relevance).**

b) To what extent is the CDPTP implemented in a coherent and standardised manner? **(Coherence).**

c) To what extent is the CDPTP implemented as intended? **(Effectiveness).**

d) To what extent has the CDPTP been efficient and cost-effective regarding money? What is the operational cost of implementing the programme? **(Efficiency).**

e) How sustainable is the implementation of the CDPTP in terms of continuity to build the capacity of Community Development Practitioners? **(Impact and sustainability).**

**f)** What are the best practices elsewhere in implementing similar programmes? (**Best practices).**

**g)** What lessons can be learnt, challenges and recommendations to strengthen the implementation of the CDPTP? **(Lessons Learnt).**

The evaluation findings are presented in a higher-level summary of each criterion. This also provides the demography of the participants from the three provinces and high-level findings on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, impact and sustainability with quantitative and qualitative data (Figure 5.1). The findings show that 99% of the CDPs were Black Africans. About 56% of the CDPs stated that the training enabled them to meet only community development objectives. Only 36% of the CDPs said the CDPTP was coherent while 42% said it was somewhat coherent. 78% of the CDPs said the CDPTP was relevant and 92% of the CDPs said they got the competent skills from the training. While they got the skills, the CDPs (93%) stated that more resources were needed to enhance CDPTP (see Figure 5.1).

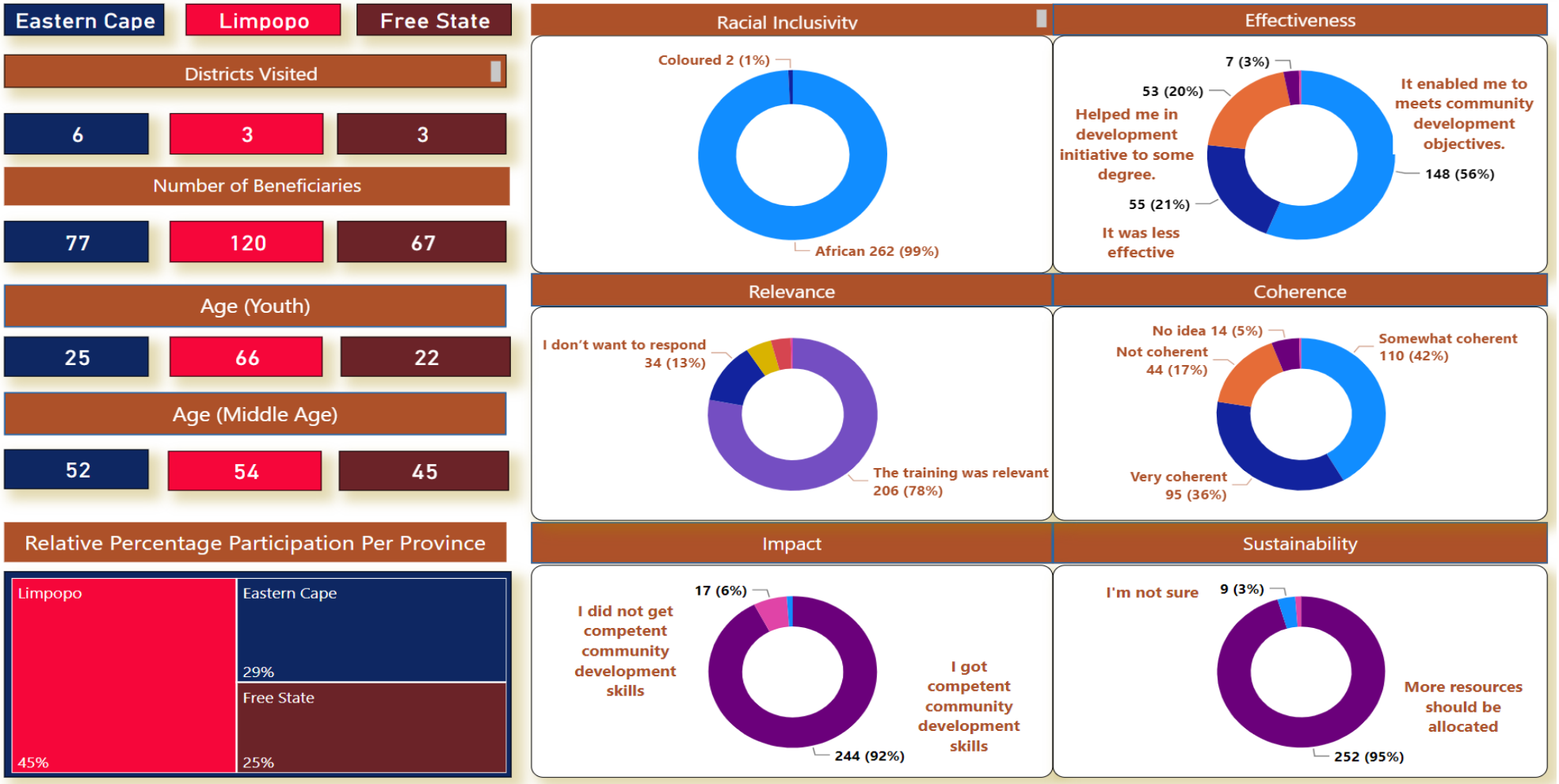



**Figure 5. 1 Summary Evaluation findings**

### 5.2 Relevance of the training programme

This section relates to the evaluation question as: To what extent is the implementation of the CDPTP relevant in building capacity of the community development practitioners? The extent to which the programme objectives responded to the needs of CDPs is presented below with quantitative and qualitative data.

The findings from the 264 CDPs, Managers and supervisors from the Free State, Limpopo and Eastern Cape as well as DSD National staff, who participated in the survey painted a positive picture of the relevance of the programme. This is a positive change in the main objective to empower CDPs with relevant skills. A provincial analysis showcased that 93% of CDPs from the Free State, 71% in Limpopo province, and 77% in the Eastern Cape said the training was relevant. This was supported by findings from the FGDs and KII analysed in the table.

The survey findings illustrate that the trainings were accredited included (56%) from the Eastern Cape, 25% from Free State, and 17% in Limpopo (See Figure 5.2).

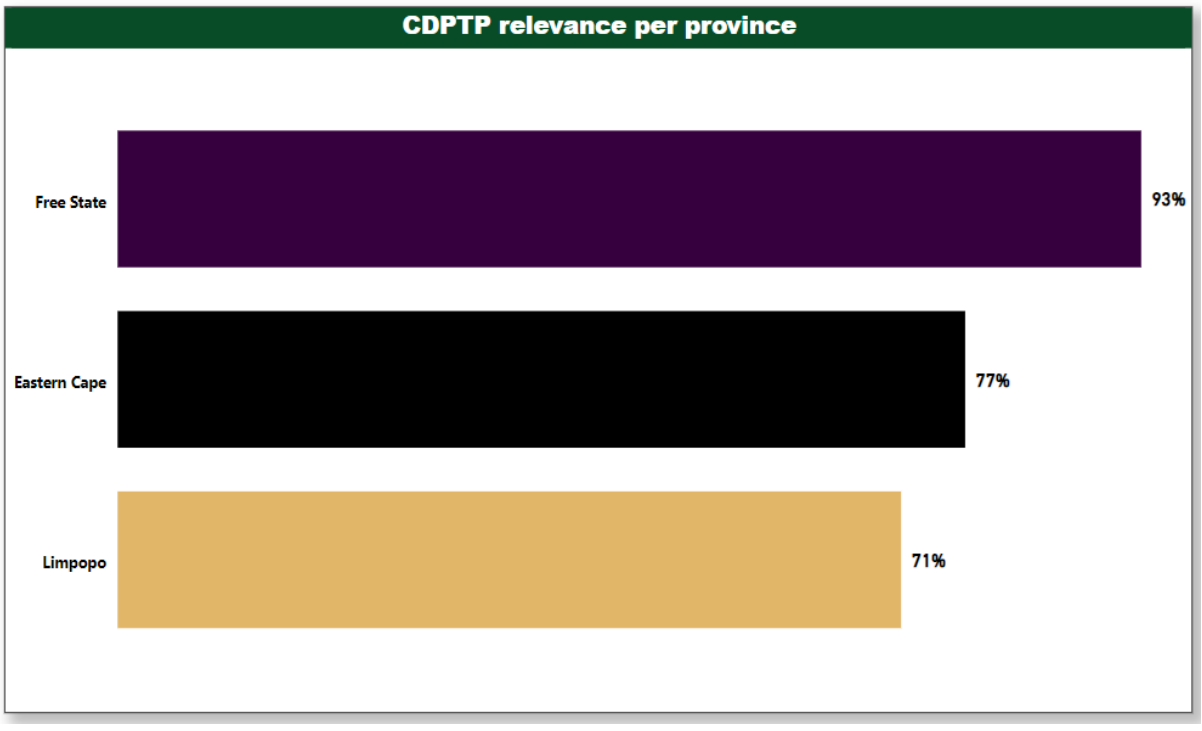
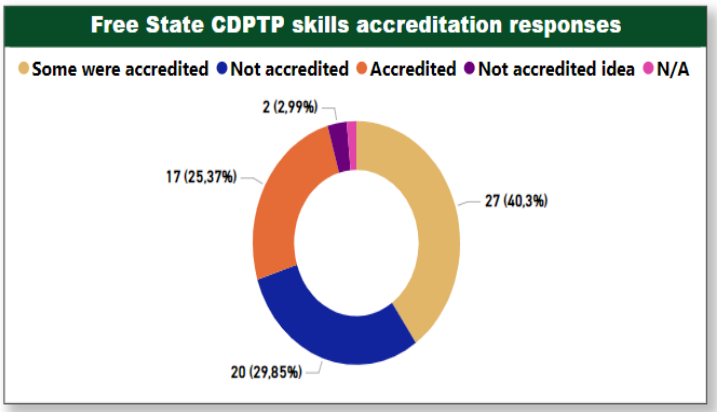
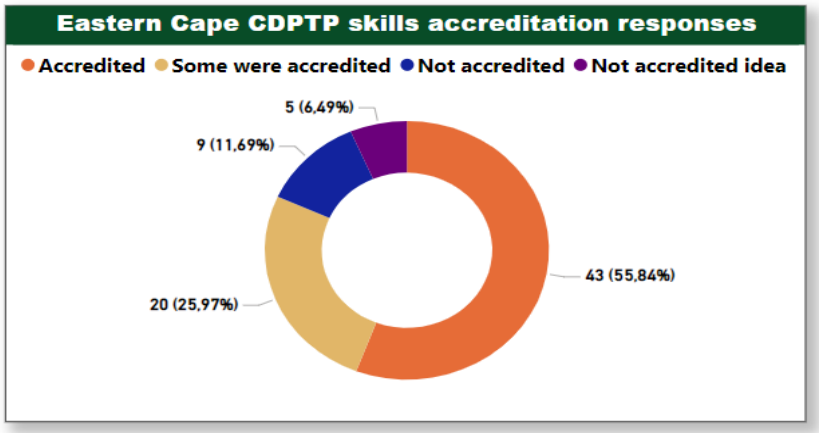



**Figure 5. 2 Relevance of the CDPTP per province**

Figure 5.2 highlights the responses from the three provinces where 93% of CDPs from the Free State, 77% from the Eastern Cape and 71% said the training programme was relevant.



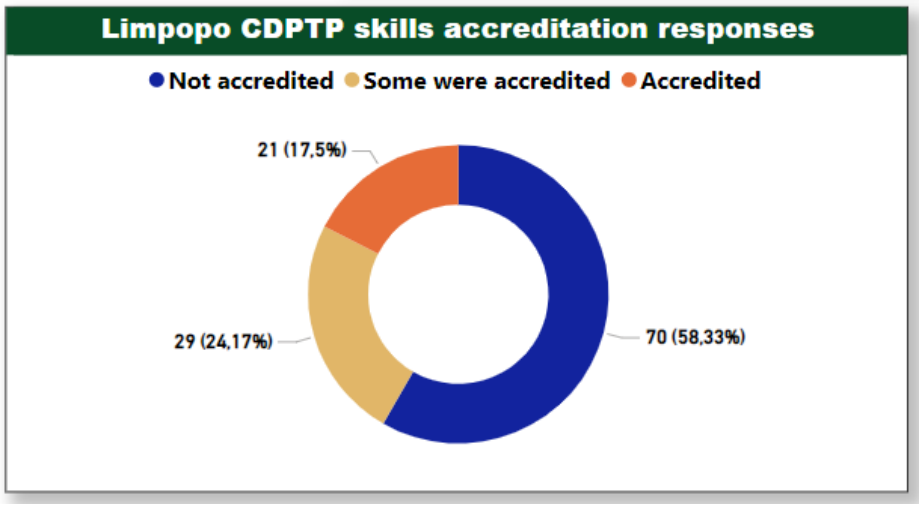




**Figure 5.3 CDTP skills accreditation**

Figure 5.3 above shows that not all trainings were accredited and not all participants knew which trainings were and were not accredited. 55.84% Eastern Cape, 25.37% Free State and 17.5% Limpopo said the trainings were accredited while 25.97% Eastern Cape, 40.3% Free State and 24.7% said some were accredited. Overall, 30.68% said they were accredited, 37.5% said they were not accredited, and 28.79% said some were accredited.

The quantitative data is supported and augmented by the KII and focus group discussion testimonials from CDPs, ACPs, managers and supervisors in the table below.

### 5.2.1 Narratives from Focus Group Discussions

The narratives below respond to the relevance of the programme to the needs of the CDPs. They had this to say:

**Table 5.1 General comments on CDPTP from FGD**

| | |
|---|---|
| General comments on CDPTP | *"DSD has promoted community development where there was poverty it established CNDC, sustainable livelihoods, long-term gardening, sewing, CBCs, recycling projects women empowerment, poultry, and youth projects" (verbatim from CDPs).* |
| | *"DSD promoted community development by empowering people and supporting them and facilitating poverty alleviation programme (alleviate poverty)" (verbatim from CDPs).* |
| Effectiveness | *"The training promoted capacity building and partnership with community members and stakeholders through the trained CDPs and ACDPs" (verbatim from CDPs).*<br><br>*"We have also been able to navigate regulatory frameworks, this has helped to ensure that community development initiatives operate within the boundaries of established norms" (verbatim from CDPs).* |
| Impact | *"CDPs were involved in securing grants and funding, the training helped practitioners develop the skills needed to write compelling grant proposals, create accurate budgets, and comply with financial reporting requirements".*<br><br>*"Training on M&E enabled CDPs to use financial data to track project performance, assess the impact of the intervention and make informed decisions for continuous improvement" (verbatim from CDPs).* |
| | *"Through social mobilisation CDPs were able to go and assess needs of different communities. The data collected empowered communities" (verbatim from CDPs).*<br><br>*"As CDPs we work with various groups of people including children, women, youth. From the CDP perspective unlike as in other departments DSDs tried to give power and sense of ownership to the community by letting them decide what they need to solve the challenges each community had" (verbatim from CDPs)* |
| | *"Finance management was relevant in assisting communities design their business plans and in resource allocation and budgeting of community initiatives" (verbatim from CDPs).*<br><br>*"Understanding financial management helped CDPs to create long-term financial plans, identify funding sources, and establish financial sustainability models for ongoing community development initiatives" (verbatim from CDPs).* |
| Sustainability | "*Facilitation has enabled us as CDPs to empower community members to understand and participate in financial decision-making processes. This has led to greater community engagements, as individuals are better equipped to advocate for their needs and contribute to the success of development initiatives.*" (verbatim from CDPs).<br><br>*"The Monitoring and Evaluation of the project management skills helped practitioners establish robust Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms,* |

| | |
|---|---|
| | *allowing them to assess project progress, identify areas for improvement, and demonstrate the impact of their interventions" (verbatim from CDPs)*.<br><br>*"Quality Assurance and training on Norms and Standards ensured that CDPs understand and adhere to established quality benchmarks. This has contributed to the delivery of high-quality services and interventions to the community" (verbatim from CDPs)*.<br><br>*"The sustainability was affected by the challenges faced by CDPs that disenabled the to use the skills and perform optimally until the challenges are address fully" (verbatim from CDPs)*. |

*"So, our job mainly involves capacitating and empowering communities on various initiatives that could sustain them" (CDP Free State)*.

The above narratives link to the evaluation criteria analysed below. The following table analyses the qualitative responses for each sub question linked to relevance (Table 5.1).

### 5.3 Relevance of the CDPTP from Key Informant Interviews

This section presents the responses linked to the key and sub questions on relevance. The key question was: To what extent is the implementation of the CDPTP relevant in building capacity of the community development practitioners? The data is categorised by province. Table 5.3 below highlights the narratives from the KII held per province on the relevance of CDPTP. The perception and responses below are from CDPs, Managers and supervisors from Free State, Eastern Cape and Limpopo. It also includes the national staff's views on each category. A total of 2807 CDPs were trained from 2018 to 2023 as illustrated in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2 Trainings conducted from 2018-2023**

| **Training Type 2018-2023** | **Total Numbers** |
|---|---|
| Nutrition Assessment Counselling Support | 247 |
| Comprehensive Norms and Standards | 1993 |
| Covid-19 Training for feeding schemes | 827 |
| Community Mobilisation Empowerment | 38 |
| Sustainable Livelihoods Framework | 396 |
| Community Capacity Enhancement | 92 |
| Community Development Practice Policy | 214 |
| **Total** | **2807** |

**Table 5.3 Qualitative responses to relevance**

| Category | Free State | Eastern Cape | Limpopo |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Survey Findings** | 93% | 77% | 71% |
| CDPTP was relevant in building the capacity of community development practitioners. | The programme was deemed relevant by national and provincial supervisors, district managers, ACDPs and CDPs. However, the participants viewed some training as irrelevant per the Norms and Standards. The training programme has been appropriate to the work done and the skills needed by CDPs. Different skills were acquired: Project management, stakeholder management, reporting writing, and facilitation.<br><br>*"The programme has been helpful because it assisted me to perform my duties well, and it has been relevant that the training happens with the information that can assist the community".*<br><br>*"The training have been very relevant in the sense that they helped me facilitate development of community members and allow community members to drive their development, to recognise* | The programme was relevant to ACDPs and CDPs by national and provincial supervisors, district managers, ACDPs and CDPs. It enabled CDPs to respond to the needs of communities and be recognised by other departments and units.<br><br>*"It was relevant, assisted in the work being done and enhanced efficiency: empowered CDPs towards better service delivery".*<br><br>There were improvements in the training needs. However, others argued that there were no proper/tailor-made training or community development programmes. | The training related to the day-to-day implementation of KPA stipulated in the operational plan.<br><br>The training was viewed to have achieved the practical purpose.<br><br>CDPTP was relevant because CDPs were capacitated on how to enter the community and engage stakeholders, how to apply household profiling tool, and how to analyse acquired information, enhancing, and extending their scope of job, individual qualities and experience.<br><br>It motivated CDPs to work with different communities sharing the dynamics of various communities and how to deal with them. |

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| | *assets that they have within the community to help come up with solutions to alleviate poverty within communities."* | | |
| Training relevant to the needs of CDPs from 2018-2023 at the provincial and local level. | The training from 2018-2023 allowed CDPs to apply themselves in implementing the CD tools and driving effective and efficient interventions.<br><br>"*We have learned how to work better with communities; we can now implement programmes effectively understanding diversity among communities"*.<br><br>*"I have just obtained my Bachelor of Community Development Degree in 2022. Therefore, I have not been part of the training." It formed part of the APP. "You cannot do community dialogue if you do not know how to facilitate/have knowledge and skills"*.<br>*"Stakeholders relationships and networking has improved. It made it easy to refer a client from one department to another. "Yes, it made me a better person and has boosted my capacity to initiate* | Trainings were relevant from 2018-2023. The training helped people to share ideas and be open-minded.<br><br>*"Yes, the trainings have been relevant since 2018, because I achieved the objectives of my work, managed to reach my annual targets and changed the lives of the communities that I am serving more responsively and professionally. Of course, some of them were not relevant, but overall, they were positive"*.<br><br>The lack of awareness campaigns hindered others from participating in the training or participating partially leading to some training being irrelevant. Training was positive. They helped deal with the project members when they conflict with each other. | The training related to CDPs because they could conduct household profiling, community profiling, and community-based planning, Community profiling community capacity, enhancement and Norms and Standards. The training on norms outlined the question of the relevant staffing ratio in relation to population size. CCE training assisted in engaging with stakeholders and headmen around communities, especially in conducting community profiling and household profiling.<br><br>*"The trainings were relevant because CDPs would gain clarity on the programmes that they are implementing and how best to enter the communities and engage stakeholders"*. |

| | | | |
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| | *the processes from the beginning ”*. | | |
| Training contribution to CDPs gaining the skills and competencies needed to perform well. | The training equipped CDPs and ACDPs with skills and competencies. Their reports showed that they were in the right direction. Others struggled and continued doing things the older way because of the attitude.<br><br>*"The training was relevant and beneficial to me as it was conducted when I had just started working at DSD”*.<br><br>*"I got to learn about DSD CDP tools. The training benefited the community as it was an evaluation and planning session of current tools"*. | The training contributed a lot to the CDP development. CDPs and ACDPs are now competent enough and are in demand by other government departments.<br><br>They were more relevant as some trainings boosted the morale of CDPs and exposed them to new ways of doing community development.<br><br>“*Most of us were employed without the proper qualifications so the trainings have provided the much-needed skills and knowledge*”. | The training contributed positively towards equipping CDPs they have improved in data capturing, presentation, problem-solving and conflict management skills. Now, there is an improvement in certification capturing.<br><br>CDPs mobilised communities and stakeholders, e.g., arrange and conduct events and campaigns such as the International Day for Eradicating Poverty, and mobilise youth to participate during July Mandela Month activities/celebrations. |
| Frameworks developed and training conducted linked to the CD framework. | The frameworks for community development and training linked well to the CD frameworks. | Frameworks linked to community development. An example was the Sustainable Livelihood Framework – it has all elements of development; Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) Approach and Family-Based Approach – which involves household profiling to help communities based on the needs of specific families. Women Development Framework linked to women | Practise policy framework planning, mobilising, and resource mobilisation were linked. |

| | | | |
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| | | empowerment, and Youth development programmes. | |
| Training conducted for CDPs from 2018-2023. | Norms & Standards, SLA, ABCD approach, community mobilisation, Household Profiting, Women empowerment framework, CNDC framework, Facilitation<br><br>Mobilisation of resources, Report Writing<br><br>Community-Based Planning, OHS, Community Development. | Conflict management, project management, financial management, Norms and Standards, Sustainable Livelihood Framework refresher workshop, Supervisors' Framework, Collaboration stakeholder management, report writing, and monitoring of projects. Community Capacity Enhancement, Food security, Household profiling. | Partnership model, planning mobilisation, planning and resource mobilisation, transport management, ABCD, Sustainable livelihoods approach, training of trainer's workshop.<br><br>Norms and Standards, Financial Management, ABCD approach, community dialogue, project management, conducting NPO registration, workshops and reporting, HIV and AIDS. |

### 5.4 Effectiveness of CDPTP Training

This section presents the responses linked to the key and sub questions on effectiveness. The key question was: To what extent is the CDPTP implemented as intended? The data is categorised by province. Quantitative data triangulated by qualitative data provides the depth of how CDPs responded to each question.

The survey results from the three provinces illustrated that 99% of the respondents in Limpopo, 97% in the Eastern Cape and 93% in the Free State stated that the training was effective (Figure 5.4).

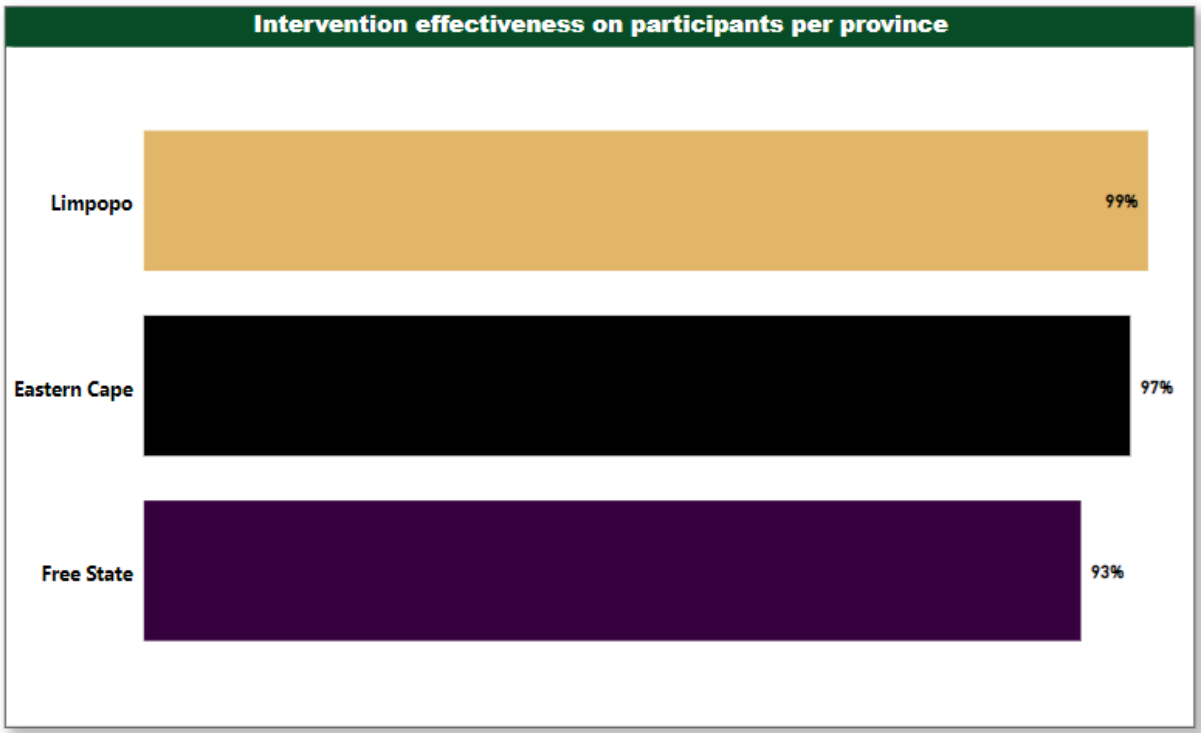


**Figure 5. 4 Perceptions of effectiveness**

The overall response on the effectiveness of the training shows that 56.06% of the CDPs said it enabled community development to meet its intended needs, 20.83% said it was less effective and 20.83% said it was effective. Only 2.65% said it was not effective illustrated in Figure 5.5 below.

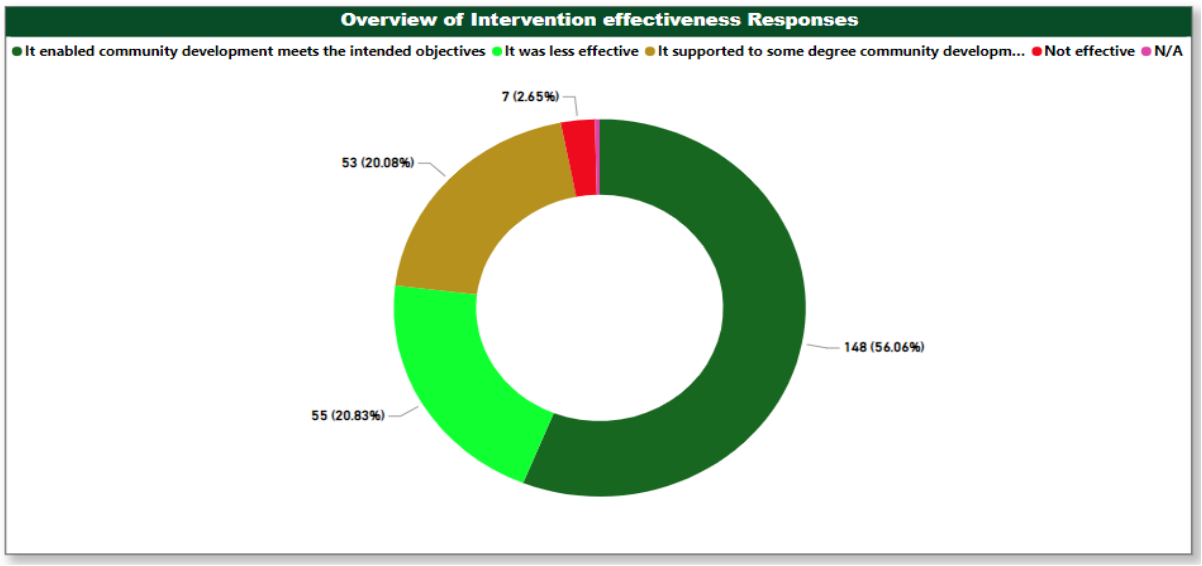


**Figure 5. 5 Overview of effectiveness**

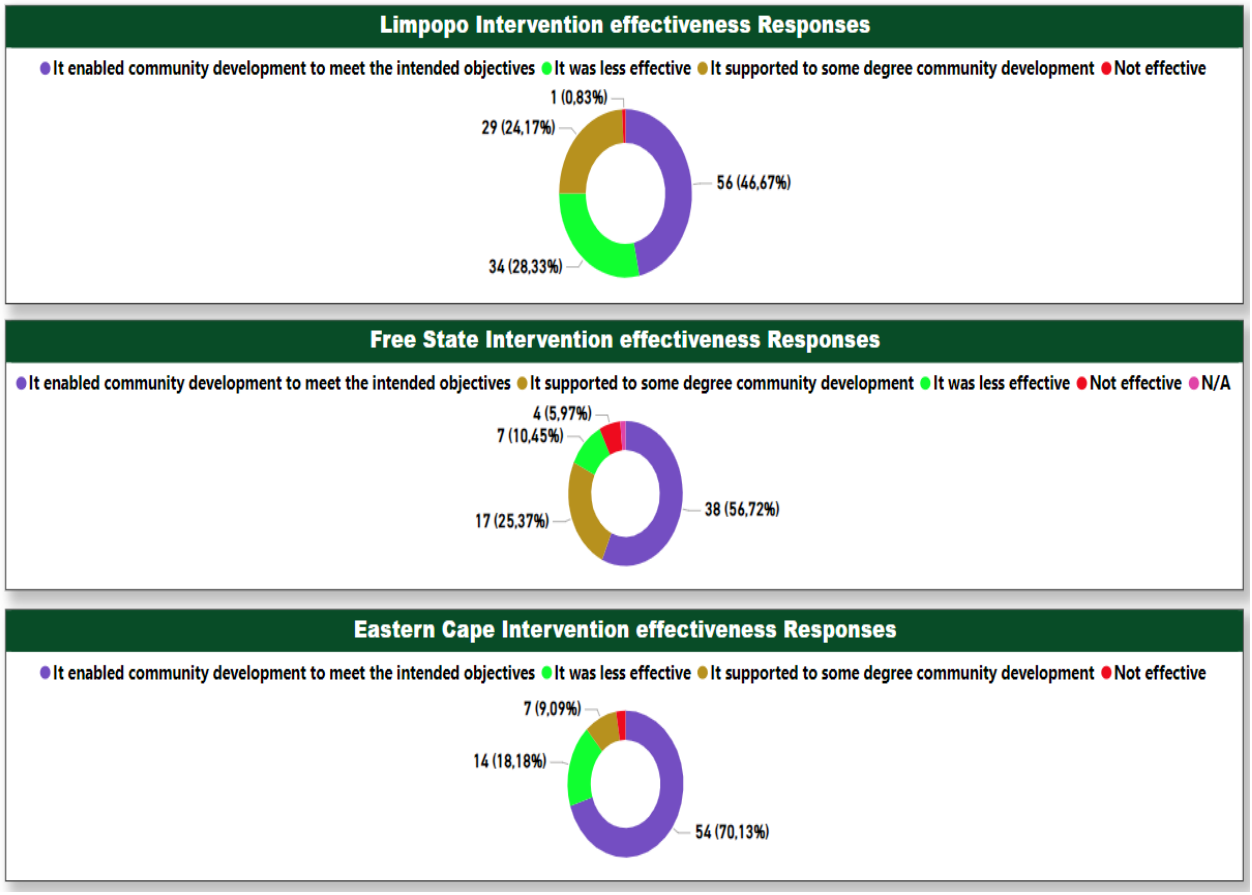


**Figure 5. 6 Effectiveness of CDTP by province**

Figure 5.6 demonstrates that the participants in the EC (70%), Limpopo (46.6%) and Free State (56.72%) stated that the training was effective because it enabled community development to

meet the intended objectives. The CDPs that outlined that it was less effective were, 18.2% Eastern Cape, 10.45% Free State and 28.33% Limpopo. Limpopo and Free State had more participants who stated that the programme supported community development (24% and 25%).

The narratives below in Table 5.4 from the FGDs support the quantitative data presented above, on the extent to which the CDPTP was effective.

**Table 5.4 Effectiveness of FGD narrative**

| | |
|---|---|
| Effectiveness | *"The training contributed to direct positive outcomes in community development projects including stakeholder analysis"*. (verbatim from the CDPs) |
| | *"The training contributed to equipping CDPs with the knowledge, skills and competencies required for their jobs. Since the introduction of training, the quality of reports has improved. There has been no hesitation when CDPs and ACDPs enter a programme. There is a tool kit and step-by-step guide on how to do their work outlining the roles and responsibilities. However, the lack of adequate staff prevails"* (verbatim from the CDPs). |
| | Across all three provinces selected for the fieldwork, most participants found the training skills were effective in their day-to-day work. The Eastern Cape province has the highest number of participants (54) who perceived the training was effective, constituting 70.1% of participants in the province. |
| | *"Training in conflict management has improved collaborations, we were equipped with skills to handle interpersonal and group conflicts. This has fostered a positive working environment, enhanced collaborations amongst stakeholders and has minimised. Furthermore, training has also enhanced communication, practitioners learn effective communication strategies to prevent and resolve conflict. Clear communication reduces misunderstandings and promotes a culture of openness and trust within the workplace" (Verbatim from CDPs)*.<br><br>CDPs' capacity to conduct research and report on community development initiatives has improved. They now conduct research, analyse data, and give reports to the stakeholders.<br><br>The training has strengthened the capacity of communities to formulate community-based plans. |
| | *"Interpersonal communication skills were promoted for CDPs as they worked with different people. Advanced project management skills, teamwork, Problem-solving, Being creative and innovative, and Conflict management"*.<br><br>*"The majority of CDPs improved in different skill sets: communication, how to write reports, stakeholder engagement, financial management, project management, Monitoring and Evaluation and computer" "(CDPs voices)*. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | *"All Supervisors from Limpopo, EC and FS stated the training was relevant despite resource shortages"* |

The focus group discussion findings highlighted the responses from CDPs, and the table provides in-depth findings for the sub questions on effectiveness.

### 5.5 Effectiveness of CDPTP Key Informant Interviews

This section analyses the narratives on the effectiveness of the training programme based on the programme objectives. The effectiveness guiding key question was: To what extent is the CDPTP implemented as intended? The data is presented per each sub question with province-specific responses (Table 5.5). The findings are views and perceptions of the CDPs, the managers and supervisors from Free State, Limpopo and Eastern Cape as well as the DSD National staff.

**Table 5.5 Effectiveness**

| Category | Free State | Eastern Cape | Limpopo |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Survey Findings** | 93% | 97% | 99% |
| CDPTP has been effective in achieving its intended objectives. | CDPTP has been effective in achieving the intended objectives. CDPs use approaches like SLA and others in their daily work. It has worked well because the training provided practical parts that could facilitate programmes in the community.<br><br>CDPs complained that the environment did not allow them to use the skills they acquired. Information has been shared with communities through workshops and training.<br><br>*"I have learned to be a good listener and impartial, having good interpersonal skills has become handy and dealing with communities because people are unique and come from different cultural backgrounds and have different beliefs"*. | The DSD capacitated CDPs and ACDPs to the extent that they knew and understood development far better than before, although other things continued to frustrate them. Most of the intended objectives were being achieved.<br><br>CDPs did their work professionally despite all the odds of a lack of resources and frustrations with job descriptions for ACDPs.<br><br>The CDPTP was adequate but did not reach many CDPs due to budgeting constraints in the province. This meant training of five days was reduced to two or three days. | CDPTP has been effective in achieving the intended objectives. The DSD has capacitated CDPs, and the majority performed as expected, leading to most of the intended objectives being achieved. |
| CDPTP implemented as | CDPTP was implemented as planned, with training being affected by budget constraints | Trainings were not implemented as planned partly due to the non- | The implementation process from national to province was |

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| planned from 2018-2023. | because the training was reduced to two or three days instead of five. | availability of resources, for example, transport to ferry plus or minus 20 CDPs to a workshop in East London in one vehicle. Mostly it does happen as planned.<br><br>*"At times, it was not executed as per the national plan sometimes due to lack of budget. For example, even if the national may suggest the dates, the training will be postponed if the province has no money".*<br><br>*"Not comfortable with how some of the training is done, especially those done on hybrid (avoiding contact session)".*<br><br>*"In our area, we experienced the challenge of network and were unable to attend some of those trainings. Some were effectively implemented per plan, but with budget constraints as stumbling blocks several attendees could not participate".* | appropriately done but later was diverted to the district.<br><br>*"It has not been implemented properly as planned because Limpopo is always behind in everything".* |
| CDPs' Capacity to perform their duties. | CDPs and ACDPs had different capacities to perform their duties. However, they lacked tools of trade. They needed gadgets to help them work faster while out of the office e.g. for household profiling.<br><br>"We need training that will assist us to grow and move with the times". | The skills gained made them perform the job, such as project management and assisting them in dealing with the community.<br><br>The training empowered the CDPs and ACDPs to be more effective but did not | Despite the shortage of tools of trade, the CDPs increased their capacity to perform their duties. |

| | | | |
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| | | reach the large number of CDPs due to budgeting constraints in the province. | |
| CDPTP enabled CDPs/ACDPs to facilitate community development. | CDPTP enabled CDPs/ACDPs to facilitate community development. It enhanced CDPs and ACDPs' capabilities to implement theoretical skills into practice. Testimonies were given:<br><br>*"I have used for example, project management skills to manage community initiatives and facilitation skills to facilitate dialogues"*.<br><br>*"We are now planning together with the community and other stakeholders, and this has helped honouring events and they become successful"*. | It enabled CDPs and ACDPs to organise communities and facilitate community development.<br><br>There has been more trust between the office and the community, as the leaders even requested me to bring other departments. It has made it easier for the different communities to interact with each other, and I can also handle the most difficult communities.<br><br>*"The training has assisted me in implementing the community development programmes effectively and efficiently"*. | It enabled CDPs to conduct community mobilisation and monitor CBOs. The asset-based approach was used during community dialogue. |
| CDPTP enabled CDPs/ACDPs to conduct household and community profiling. | Community Development Practice provided steps for implementation and outlined the purpose of the community profile.<br><br>Training played an important role because it developed the information knowledge and implemented the skills to achieve better goals/results.<br><br>Some rated the training as unbeneficial, primarily the household profiling tool. It assisted in conducting household profiling as the tool allowed one to apply themselves and bring relevant interventions to youth. | It helped CDPs and ACDPs identify challenges that needed attention and refer them to relevant stakeholders.<br><br>*"We conducted household profiling to assist households with their needs. I know what to do now community profiling. Yes, it has helped me as I can identify the relevant stakeholders in a particular community"*. | CDPTP enabled CDPs to conduct household and community profiling.<br><br>*"Yes, because I am now able to meet my deadlines. Accessing communities have been easy since I have been trained in conflict management"*. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CDPTP enabled CDPs/ACDPs to conduct stakeholder engagements. | CDPTP enabled CDPs/ACDPs to conduct stakeholder engagements.<br><br>*"We now have better relationships with stakeholders and can now respect the boundaries and allow departments to play their role"*.<br><br>Stakeholder management skills training was not provided to some CDPs, but in community mobilisation, it gave a platform to know where to start when building stakeholder relationships. | ICDPTP enabled CDPs/ACDPs to conduct stakeholder engagement.<br><br>"It has helped me to be able to engage other stakeholders". | CDPTP enabled CDPs to conduct stakeholder engagements. |
| CDPTP enabled CDPS/ACDPs to empower individuals, households, and communities in ME processes. | Most ACDPs and CDPs were empowered to know both the individuals and communities at large to bring forth relevant interventions. The training programme enabled CDPs to be aware of the community development environment. Some CDPs believed they were not empowered enough.<br><br>*"We have been empowered to help communities and stakeholders care for themselves. We empowered both individuals and stakeholders in the communities"*. However, CDP said,<br><br>"Training did not help me". | Most ACDPs and CDPs were empowered to know both the individuals and communities at large to bring forth relevant interventions. The Training programme enabled CDPs to be aware of the community development environment. | It helped CDPs know the steps to take before entering the community.<br><br>Training enabled CDPs to facilitate developmental programmes. This included an assets-based approach that allows communities to look at their assets.<br><br>It enabled good communication with the communication. |

### 5.6 Efficiency

This section deals with the efficiency of CDPTP. The evaluation key question was: To what extent has the CDPTP been efficient and cost-effective regarding money? What is the operational cost of implementing the programme? The data is presented according to the sub questions as shown in Table 5.6 for FGDs and Table 5.5 for KII.

**Table 5. 6 Efficiency FGD responses**

| | |
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| Efficiency | The DSD's funding of communities helped promote CDP work. Communities have become partners with the government in job creation. |
| | *"CDPs provided their learning needs through the work plans"*. |
| | *"For every provincial training workshop, they got all the resources needed to facilitate stakeholder engagement excluding catering. When it was a national-led training, catering was provided and other resources. For household profiling, the CDPs used their own resources including money to ensure the work was completed". (CDPs voices)* |

The narratives from CDPs and ACDPs, their perception during FGDs and answers in the survey augment how they benefited from the programme and how efficient. This is further supported by the KII narratives in the Table 5.5.

### 5.7 Efficiency of the CDPTP Key Informant Interviews

The section analyses responses per province on the sub questions on efficiency from KIIs. The findings are views and perceptions of the CDPs, the managers and supervisors from Free State, Limpopo and Eastern Cape as well as the DSD National staff. Table 5.7 highlights the findings across Eastern Cape, Limpopo and Free State.

**Table 5.7 Efficiency**

| Category | Free State | Eastern Cape | Limpopo |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Survey Findings** | 53% | 55% | 55% |
| Efficiency and cost-effectiveness of implementing CDPTP. | It was efficient and effective. The lack of resources hindered efficiency. | The training was not based on needs analysis and was not aligned, compromising the value for money. It was argued that there was no integration of services within the department. There was no transparency in terms of cost-effectiveness. | The trainings were partially efficient and cost-effective. The establishment of four one-stop centres around Capricorn was cost-effective but one in Bufellshoek was ineffective as the climate B ATM, disposal of five cars and purchasing one vehicle.<br><br>Not all CDPs received scheme A & B vehicle subsidies. CDPs were encouraged to utilise their vehicles and paid for kilometres travelled.<br><br>The train-the-trainer process was supportive and a cost saver, but attendees were not free to attend long trainings. |
| The operational cost of implementing the programme from 2018-2023. | No one was involved in the budget unless one wanted to train people in the community. There has been a misrepresentation of funds from the province. | Operational costs for the training were managed at national and provincial. CDPs and ACDPs did not know the operational costs. | Most districts did not know the budget costs for implementing programmes. Budgeting and financing of programmes were centralised at the district and provincial offices. Some were aware of around R500 000 to R1M. |

| | | | |
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| | | *"Not sure, difficult to tell as we are not in the finance office or managers or procurement to give figures"*. | |
| Sufficiency of resources (financial, human, infrastructure, etc.) needed. | Not sufficient resources were available for the training due to constraint measures. There was a shortage of CDPs and ACDPs. Supervisors had to do the jobs of CDPs.<br><br>During planning the national and provincial did not include districts in drawing up their plans and budgets. | Resources were not sufficient. The lack of laptops, gadgets, papers, and cell phones hindered community development, etc. Supervisors were not involved in drawing up budgets. Regarding human resources, a lot needs to be done when considering the implementation of Norms and Standards (the ratio is out).<br><br>*"We normally share one office with more than two CDPs. Transport is a critical challenge that makes us fight for a vehicle"*.<br><br>*"Financially, as CDP Supervisors, we are unable to get OSD, and this affected the morale of our team"*. | Financial resources were not aligned as well as human resources.<br><br>Posts have never been filled. Staff shortage and lack of budget persists.<br><br>Cost containment measures led to limited programme activities.<br><br>*"The budget was only enough for the first quarter of the financial year after that, from second, third and fourth quarter we struggled to reach the target"*.<br><br>*"Sometimes government vehicles were not fixed in time so we can perform our daily activities"*. |
| Follow-ups and reporting the results. | Limited follow-ups and reporting post-training. | There was a misalignment of the training to the CDP needs; hence, CDPs cannot conduct research. Community- Based Plans (CBP) and Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) did not produce valid and reliable findings. Therefore, the training was not assisting CDPs. | Lack of resources disenabled follow-up and reporting.<br><br>The reporting templates needed review as information obtained from community mobilisation was sensitive, and communities were uncomfortable sharing. |

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| Integrated implementation of the CDPTP. | CDPs were working with SASSA and NDA. There were integrated services and contributions towards achieving and reporting.<br><br>Social services within DSD were prioritised over community development.<br><br>At the community level, there was some integration. | Integration with other stakeholders-was not strong as CDPs and ACDPs attended training separately from different government departments. This made it difficult to address critical issues that should be handled under one roof.<br><br>Internal integration was lacking as only CDPs could attend without bringing along social workers. No integration as programmes were working in silos. | At the district level, not that integrated as it only affected the core function of DSD, which is community development.<br><br>Assisted me in knowing how best we can enter the community without chaos, as we know it is difficult to work with a community.<br><br>Community capacity enhancement promoted the relationship between DSD and the community.<br><br>DSD did not give opportunities to enable the CDPs to engage and apply them in their working environment. |
| Contribution of the training programme to communities' accessing quality services. | CDPs have improved on issues of research. The way they do community profiling has improved, and they can use other stakeholders to get the information they need and implement the programme. | The service provided to the communities is up to standard. The level of knowledge and consciousness was raised, and CDPs and communities were more versed on their rights and how to report issues around gender-based violence and femicide. The communities now acknowledge the caring department. | NDA was responsible for capacitating CBOs and NPOs on financial management, conflict management and computer literacy. SASSA facilitated ICROP for social development and hosted several roadshows to cooperate with people on new applications, but the tools of track were not enough. Training did not assist. |
| Training programme contribution to improved service delivery. | It has helped because the communities can make decisions and do projects, they want, though funding is a challenge. Communities were engaged to use the available resources to start the community projects. | The consciousness and knowledge levels of the community were raised because of fewer protests and vandalism of community properties. Training further made the communities accountable and able to participate in their development. | Introducing the partnership model helped to integrate service delivery, which includes many stakeholders targeting different communities. |

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| | There was coaching and mentoring for NPOs. | | |
| Training programmes contributed to strengthening the capacity of communities. | Community members took responsibility for their development.<br><br>Communities identify needs and understand the community.<br>Multiple partnerships were created with youth organisations. | Due to limited resources, there was no quality in the development of CBPs. The priority was capacitating communities. Due to limited resources, some training programmes were reduced from three days to 2 hours.<br><br>Communities were encouraged to speak and voice through Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) and Community-Based Plans (CBPs). | Communities were now self-reliant and self-worth. With the strengthening of communities, we care for and serve the community.<br><br>*"It helped me to know the channels on steps to conduct stakeholder engagement"*. |
| Post-training support to CDPs to use the skills. | Post-training support was not visible across districts. | Post-training support was not visible across districts. | Post-training support was not visible across districts. |
| Creation of systems for the CDPs to use the skills acquired. | Some systems were created for the CDPs to use the skills acquired. | Some systems were created for the CDPs to use the skills acquired. | Some systems were created for the CDPs to use the skills acquired.<br><br>Introducing individual CDP plans at the local municipality, the strengthening of weekly plans, monthly reporting and quarterly and annual systems assisted the process. |

### 5.8 Coherence of the CDPTP

The following section presents data analysis on the coherence of the CDPTP. The evaluation guiding question was: To what extent is the CDPTP implemented in a coherent and standardised manner? The data is presented by quantitative and qualitative data. The qualitative data is presented with narratives from FGDs and KIIs.

The training programme was deemed coherent with the NDP, MTSF, DSD Norms and Standards, the White Paper and the sixth administration professionalisation of the public service. Figure 5.7 illustrates that 87% of respondents from Free State, 81% from Eastern Cape and 71% from Limpopo said the CDPTP was coherent. Figure 5.7 below.

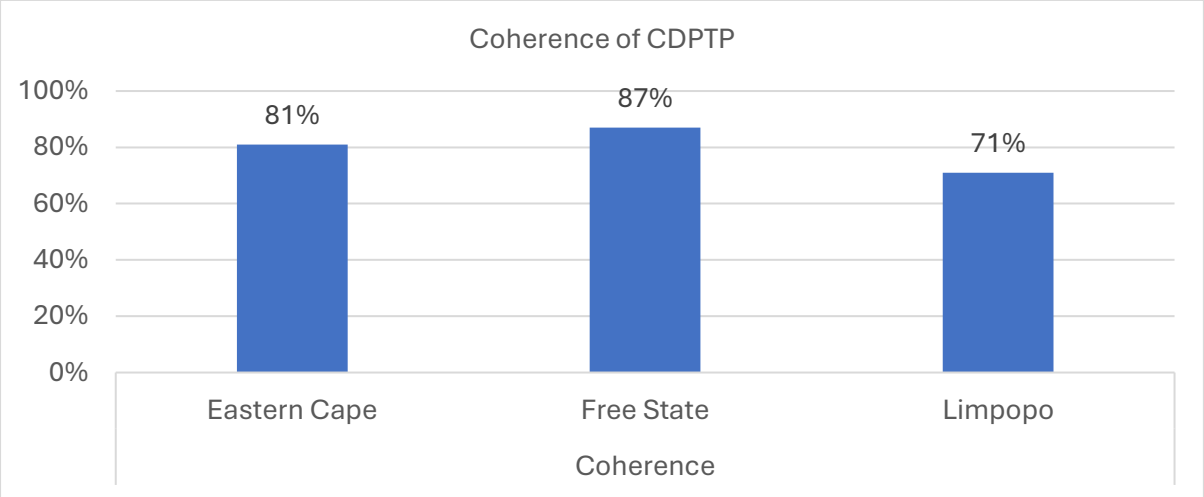


**Figure 5. 7 Coherence of CDPTP across the provinces**

In various provinces, CDP responses show positive response trends. Figure 5.8 shows that 62/77 in the Eastern Cape; 58/67 in the Free State and 85/115 in Limpopo stated that the CDPTP was coherent.

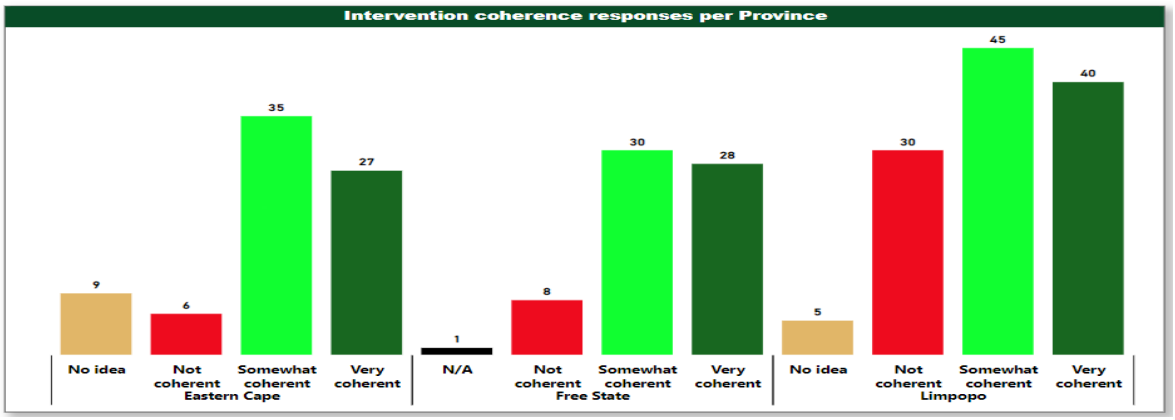


**Figure 5. 8 Perceptions of coherence of interventions across provinces**

6/77 in the Eastern Cape, 8/67 in the Free State and 30/115 in Limpopo stated that the programme was not coherent. Only 9/77 in the Eastern Cape and 5/115 had no idea.

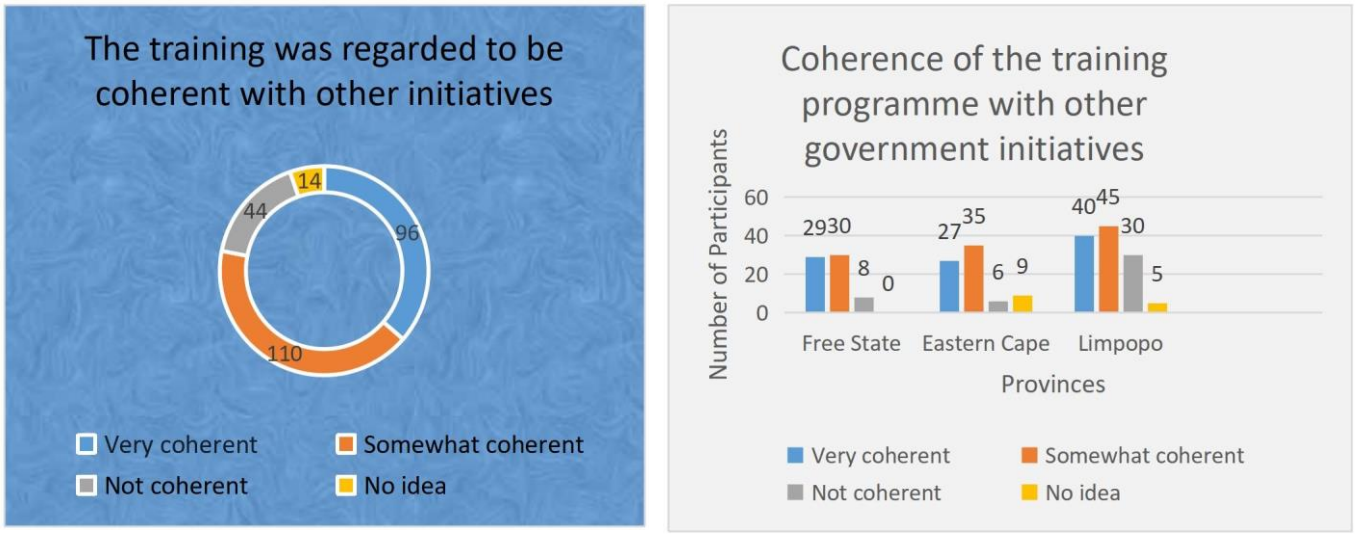


**Figure 5. 9 CDPTP coherence of the programme**

From the three provinces, 96/264 said it was coherent while 110/264 said it was somewhat coherent. Only 44/264 said it was not coherent with 14/264 with no idea.

In detail, 29/67 in the Eastern Cape, 27/77 and 40/115 in Limpopo stated that the programme was coherent while 30/67 in the Eastern Cape, 35/77 in the Free State and 45/115 in Limpopo stated that the programme was somewhat coherent (Figure 5.9).

The narratives from the FGDs augment the findings in Table 5.8.

**Table 5. 8 Focus group narratives from CDPs**

| Coherence | **Focus group narratives from CDPs** |
|---|---|
| | The majority of CDPs actively contributed to setting personal and professional development goals by identifying areas they needed new skills. They played a role in shaping the objectives of the training programmes. |
| | The majority of CDPs were engaged in the training process by participating in needs assessment. |
| | In most training CDPs were engaged in participatory learning activities, by contributing their experiences in discussions, and group exercises. This approach fostered a collaborative learning environment. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | *"Peer-to-peer learning allowed CDPs and ACDPs to learn from each other through peer-to-peer interactions"*. (CDPs verbatim) |
| | The training programmes provided networking opportunities where CDPs connected with colleagues, mentors, and experts in the field. Networking enhanced collaboration and facilitated knowledge-sharing. |

The focus group narratives are supported by the key informant interview responses for each sub question linked to coherence expressed below in table 5.9.

### 5.9 Coherence of the CDPTP Key Informant Interviews

This section deals with the analysis of qualitative data linked to coherence per province and attempts to provide answers to the guiding key question: To what extent is the CDPTP implemented in a coherent and standardised manner? Table 5.9 highlights the findings from the KII per province. The findings are views and perceptions of the CDPs, the managers and supervisors from Free State, Limpopo and Eastern Cape as well as the DSD National staff.

**Table 5.9 Coherence of CDPTP**

| Category | Free State | Eastern Cape | Limpopo |
|---|---|---|---|
| Coherence | 87% | 81% | 71% |
| Coherence of the training programme across directorates/units. | Training was provided by different directorates based on their budgets. This showcased a lack of coherence. | The training was provided by different directorates at the national based on their budgets. This showcased a lack of coherence.<br><br>*"Some trainings were provided under one roof for CDPs as we are not like social workers who were specialising".* | The training was provided by different directorates at the national based on their budgets. This showcased a lack of coherence.<br><br>*"Monthly meetings were conducted to check progress. Trainings were not aligned, and Limpopo is not doing the same as other provinces".* |
| Alignment of New knowledge/systems to existing programmes. | There was some alignment. The province sent CDPs different templates for reporting, and they created ones for their needs at the district level.<br><br>Identification and listing of stakeholders were in war rooms at round tables. Relationships have | The online database system was used to capture the profiled information.<br><br>CDPs and ACDPs were introduced to tools to familiarise themselves with the move towards professionalisation of the field. CDPTP has brought new knowledge. There were new | Norms and standards were introduced and aligned with the roles and responsibilities of CDPs but not implemented. This was to adhere to the rules and regulations of the DSD.<br><br>The tool kit was not used.<br><br>*"In Limpopo, we still use the old profiling system".* |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | been built, and support received from stakeholders. | concepts introduced, such as community capacity enhancement, and leaking buckets - sustainable livelihoods approach, which encouraged communities to participate in livelihood programmes, such as poverty alleviation. | |
| Challenges/barriers encountered in implementing the CDP Training programme. | Stakeholders were not integrated, and there was a commitment to support the community. The Norms and Standards were not applicable due to the outstanding resources (both human and equipment).<br>Some of the community development indicators do not effectively respond to community development interventions and do not address the challenges of the CDPs. Mobilising community members was difficult as people were demoralised.<br>It was challenging to implement training because of the vast areas served. Not enough time was spent with communities.<br>The training was acquired but challenging to implement because stakeholders lost interest in | The political landscape was not conducive for CDPs to get trained and apply their skills.<br><br>Lack of sufficient transport to be there on time. The lack of tools for trade was also a challenge. No recognition of CDPs by their counterparts (social workers). Delays on the upgrade of NISSIS by the National Department. | Resources, such as vehicles, stationary, lack of water and load-shedding, tools of trade, contributed to the frustrations of the CDPs and from 2018-2023. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | engagement.<br>Lack of support from management.<br><br>Lack of strategy and all the resources. Not enough support.<br><br>Lack of tools for trade. | | |
| Lessons learnt from these interventions compared to other provinces/countries. | Unless CDPs become a priority and are provided with all relevant resources and skills, community development remains a dream.<br><br>Professionalisation through RPL is a journey that needs more than just having resources for training but the application of the TOC. | Community development is a multifaceted discipline which needs integration among stakeholders and planning under one roof while empowering CDPs.<br><br>Development is ever-changing and interventions are unique to each province, looking at the economy and level of poverty for each province. Professionalisation of CDP and vehicle subsidy. | Resource mobilisation, alignment of the budget to the operational planning and enough support are key.<br><br>Through community capacity enhancement communities can deal with their issues. |

### 5.10 Impact of CDPTP

This section outlines the evaluation findings linked to the impact of the CDPTP. The evaluation guiding question was: How sustainable is the implementation of the CDPTP in terms of continuity to build the capacity of Community Development Practitioners? The quantitative data analyses the survey and the focus group discussion and KII narratives support the statistical findings.

The 264 CDPs stated that the CDPTP significantly changed their lives professionally. Figure 5.10 outlines that overall, 92 % of CDPs stated the positive impact of the intervention on their lives. The Eastern Cape had 96%, the Free State 95% and Limpopo 88%.

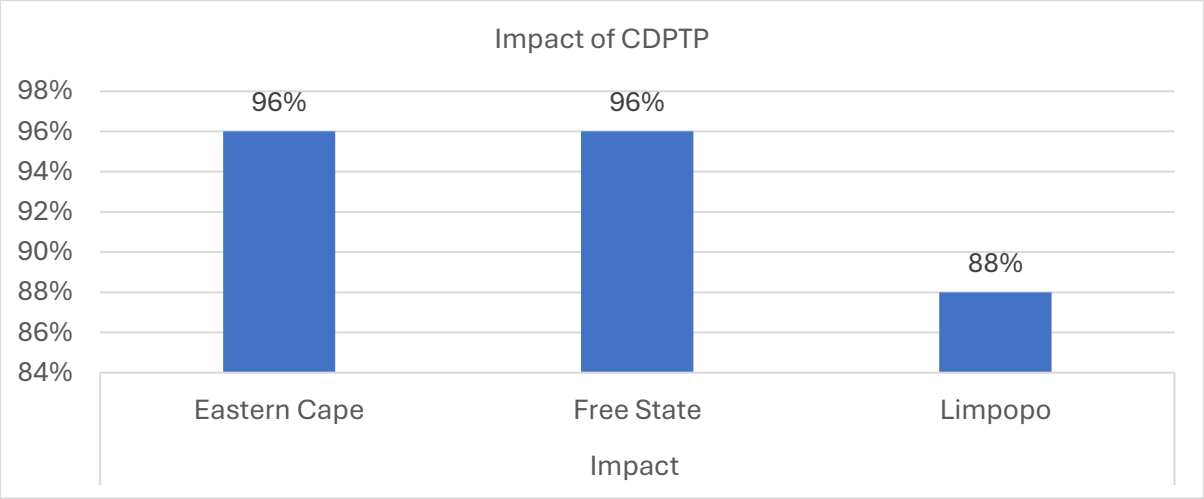


**Figure 5. 10 Impact of CDPTP**

Figure 5.11 below shows the actual number of responses per province. The data paints a positive picture of how impactful the CDPTP was.

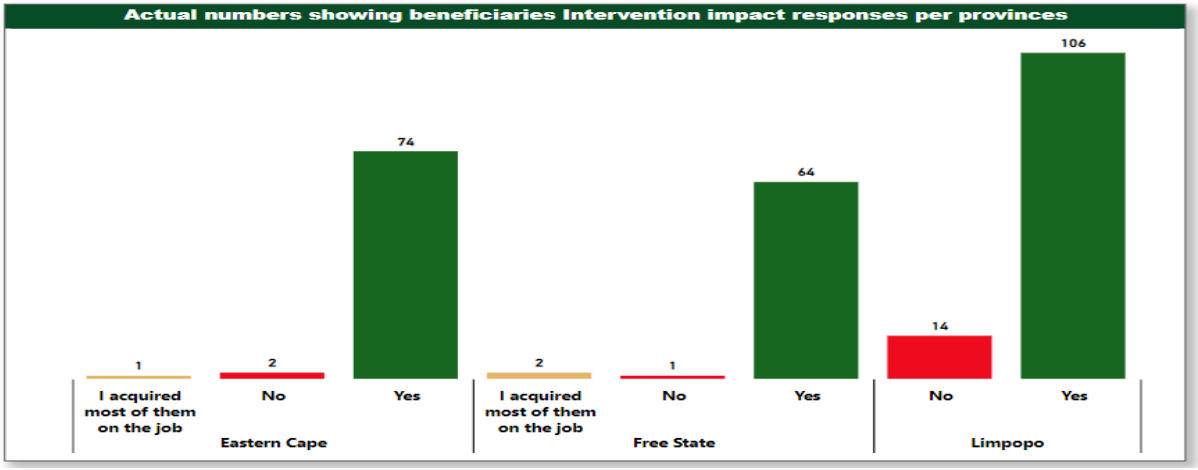


**Figure 5. 11 Beneficiary perceptions of impact**

However, the negative responses that CDPTP did not make an impact stood at 12% in Limpopo, 3% in Free State and 3% in Eastern Cape. The majority of CDPs who participated were Black Africans comprising 99% and 1% Coloured (Figure 5.11). The quantitative findings were supported by the narratives from the FGDs outlined in Table 5.10 below.

**Table 5.10 Coherence of CDPTP**

| | |
|---|---|
| Impact | Focus group narratives. |
| | The current train-the-trainer model enabled CDPs to continue the training locally even after external support diminished. |
| | *"The training programme contributed to communities accessing a portfolio of services including SASSA and NDA services within the expected timeframe as the CDPs linked communities with SASSA and NDA with required information. CDPs shared a database of beneficiaries within their communities with NDA and SASSA"*. (CDPs voices) |
| | Committees participated and shared community mobilisation reports. |

The focus group narratives showcased the impact of CDPTP and the KII provided an in-depth analysis of each sub question per province as shown in Table 5.11.

### 5.10.1 Impact of CDPTP Key Informant Interviews

This section provides the evaluation findings linked to the impact sub questions analysed per province guided by the key question: How sustainable is the implementation of the CDPTP in terms of continuity to build the capacity of Community Development Practitioners? Table 5.11 below highlights the narratives from the KII conducted in the three provinces.

The table 5.11 below highlights the narratives from the participants from the three provinces in terms of the perceived impact of CDPTP. The findings are views and perceptions of the CDPs, the managers and supervisors from Free State, Limpopo and Eastern Cape as well as the DSD National staff. The 2018-2019 trainings are listed below.

**Table 5. 11 Key informant perceptions of CDPs**

| Category | Free State | Eastern Cape | Limpopo |
|---|---|---|---|
| Survey Impact | 96% | 96% | 88% |
| Skills acquired 2018-2023. | • M and E, Finance management, Project management, ABCD, CDP Empowerment workshop and Household profiling training.<br>• Accredited RPL.<br>• Norms and Standards.<br>• CCE/Mobilisation.<br>• Sustainable livelihood approach NPO partnership model.<br>• Community mobilisation and empowerment.<br>• Training for cooperatives.<br>• HIV and AIDS and food and nutrition. | • Conflict management, project management, financial management, Norms and Standards, RPL.<br>• Capacity building on NPO (Non – Profit Organisation).<br>• Money laundering in NPO.<br>• Co-operative.<br>• NISIS System.<br>• Community Capacity Enhancement. | • Stakeholder mapping and ranking project management and facilitating skills.<br>• NPO registration and compliance of NPOs. Communicate with community efficiency.<br>• Report writing.<br>• Moderation assessment skills, and impact analysis skills.<br>• M&E capturing system Community capacity enhancement.<br>• Work-integrated learning (supervision).<br>• Anti-corruption.<br>• Youth pitching business training. |
| The capacity of CDPs to deliver on the DSD mandate. | Training was provided, but no funding was provided to implement it. | CDPs and ACDPs were capacitated to deliver on the DSD mandate. However, the | It helped CDPs do proper community development planning and implement the establishment of community initiatives. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *"Yes, I can do my job easily even if it is difficult to go to small communities due to lack of resources."* | dynamics and complexities at the district level varied. | Initiatives were designed and implemented at the lower level. |
| Evidence of best practice in the implementation of CDPTP. | Evidence is that some of our communities are now at a point where they use what they have to practice development.<br>Planning and identifying needs in amalgamation with gatekeepers has made it possible. | Involvement of communities and innovation among CDPs to try and deliver even with limited resources. | Involvement of communities and innovation among CDPs to try and deliver even with limited resources.<br><br>Gauteng CDPs were believed to have more effect because they were given the platform to work and receive support from management. Gauteng has a food bank where all CDPs have uniforms when conducting door-to-door household profiling. |
| Contribution of CDPS to improved Community development in communities. | Despite all odds, the CDPs and ACDPs have gradually contributed to improved community development. CDPs promoted partnership in communities as communities welcomed the CDPs' work ethics.<br><br>It was tough because CDPs did not have gadgets. The training helped them focus on relevant and vital information and prioritise and respond effectively to the needs of communities and households. *"At present, l am confident in my work, and l can stand in front of the community and do what l am supposed to do. The community also* | CDPs and ACDPs contributed to improved community development in various forms.<br><br>CDPs and ACDPs, despite a lack of resources, gained confidence and commitment to improved community development.<br><br>However, some ACDPs and CDPs could not apply the skills despite the working relationship between the CDPs and the communities. *"I have not been able to empower them because the training and the tools do not speak to each other (old tools). The tools are not even speaking* | CDPs could organise communities and facilitate. There was more trust between the office and the community with the involvement of other departments. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *has the trust that what l am facilitating to them is the best quality"*. | *to social development work for profiling"*. | |
| Application of skills gained in community development. | While the communities were different, different CDPTPs have been relevant for such differences. ACDPs and CDPs applied the skills gained to the best of their ability.<br><br>Communities owned their development. This is despite the lack of an enabling environment for CDPs and ACDPs to excel.<br><br>Community Development Practice, community mobilisation and project development played a role in providing a basic understanding of what is expected from a CDP and the community to achieve common goals.<br><br>*"Yes, big one, it has made it easier have/know different approaches when facilitating to different communities as communities are different. l no longer apply a blanket approach to all communities"*. | ACDPs and CDPs applied the skills they gained and were confident in their communities using their acquired skills. They empowered communities using the skills acquired.<br><br>However, some CDPs outlined that they could not apply the skills due to a lack of prioritisation and the rush to meet targets. | CDPs applied the skills they gained and were confident in their communities using the skills they acquired. They empowered communities using the skills acquired.<br><br>*"I was able to impact the knowledge that I have gained, for example, encouraging NPOs to create a food garden and using the produce to feed their families"*.<br><br>*"We practice what we learnt from the workshop. We plan and stick to our APPs and follow the activities. We refer to the tool kit"*. |

### 5.11 Sustainability

This section provides the data analysis on the sustainability of the CDPTP with quantitative and qualitative data presented in graphs and narratives guided by the key evaluation question and sub questions. The key evaluation question was: How sustainable is the implementation of the CDPTP in terms of continuity to build the capacity of Community Development Practitioners?

The evaluation sustainability was measured around, ownership, continuity, partnership development, ability to continue applying the skills beyond the training, creation of an enabling environment for CDPs to perform their duties, CDPs' embracement of the training, CDPs use of the skills gained to perform their jobs as expected in their communities, and future skills needed for CDPs to perform optimally.

Important to note that the evaluation triangulated the data from key informants, FGDs and survey. Based on the qualitative data, there were perceptions from participants across the three provinces of EC, FS and L, that the CDPTP was sustainable in some form in terms of ownership, continuity, partnership development, ability to continue applying the skills beyond the training, creation of an enabling environment for CDPs to perform their duties, CDPs' embracement of the training, CDPs use of the skills gained to perform their jobs as expected in their communities, and future skills needed for CDPs to perform optimally.

However, the identified challenges hampered sustainability and that was supported by the low percentages scored in the three provinces. This has informed the evaluation in the proposed recommendations to address the challenges and improve the programme in the future.

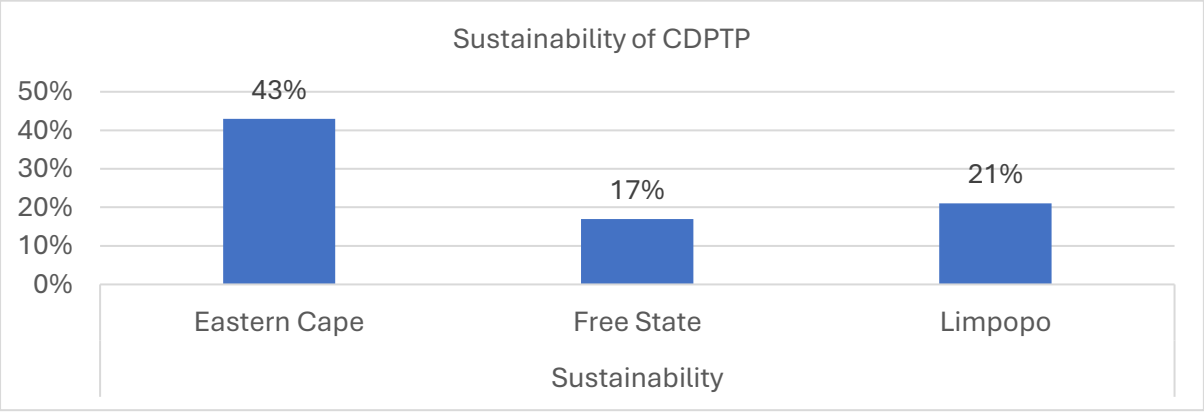


**Figure 5.12 Sustainability of CDPTP**

The sustainability of the CDPTP is work in progress due to existing challenges stipulated below. This led to some CDPs and managers stating that it was sustainable in some areas but

unsustainable due to existing challenges hence the low scores in the Free State, Limpopo and Eastern Cape statistically (Figure 12).

The statistics presented below indicate that in terms of accreditation 5/77 (6.5%) of CDPs from Eastern Cape, 2/67 (3%) from Free State had no idea whether the training was accredited while, 9/77 (11.6%) from Eastern Cape, 20/67 (29.8%) from Free State and 70/120 (58%) from Limpopo said the training was not accredited. Another 29/120 (24%) of CDPs from Limpopo, 27/67 (40%) from Free State and 20/77 (25.9%) from Eastern Cape said their trainings were somewhat accredited. Only 43/77 (55.8%) from Eastern Cape, 17/67 (25%) from Free State and 21/120 (17.5%) from Limpopo stated that the training was accredited (Figure 5.13).

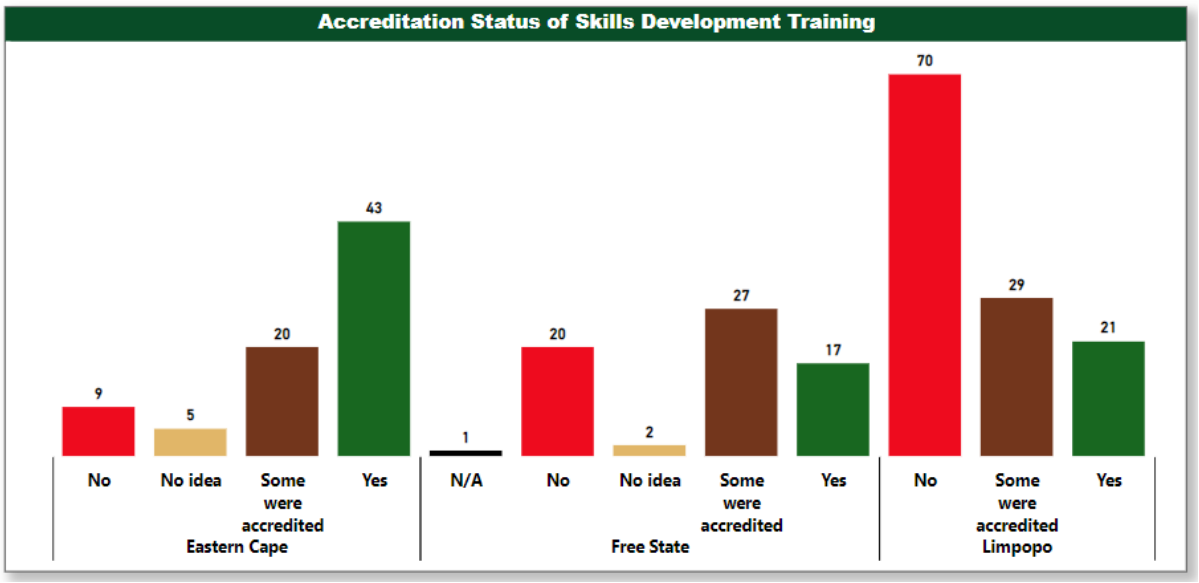


**Figure 5. 13 Accreditation status of the skills development Training**

From the survey data, 54% of CDPs stated that they were using the skills gained in planning and implementation of community development, while 30% said they partially used their skills.

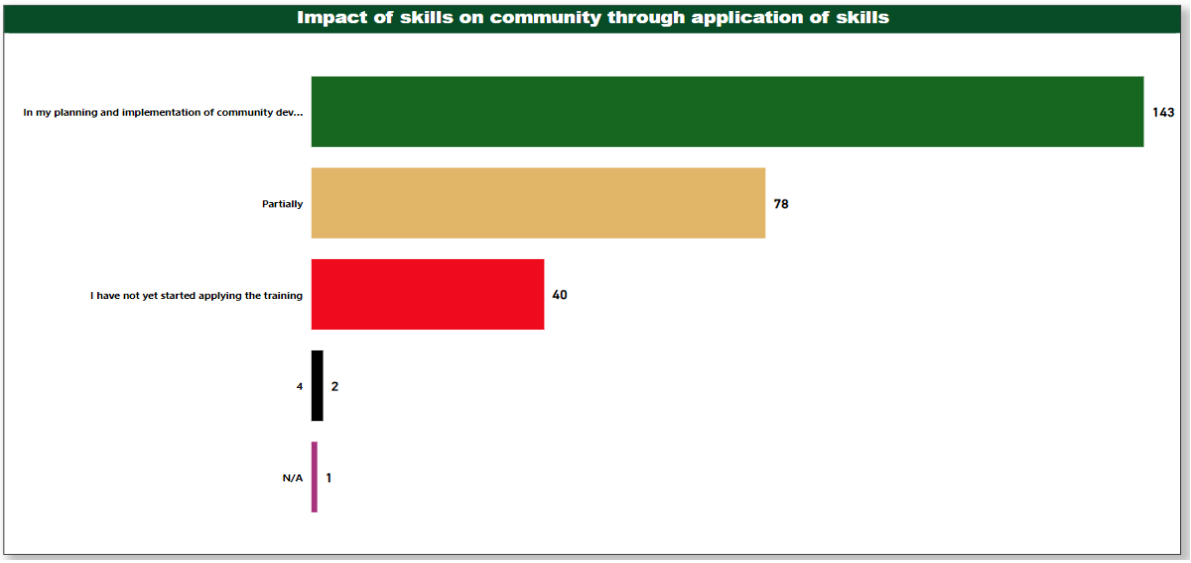


**Figure 5. 14 Impact of CDPTP on community**

Figure 5.14: Impact of CDPTP on community highlights that 143/246 CDPs used the skills in their planning and implementation of community development. 78/246 said they partially used the skills, while 40/246 said they had not started using the skills.

The age group of the CDPs comprise middle and old age staff. This comprises 150/264 (61%) of CDPS above 40 years of age, while 59/264 (23.9%) were below 40 years of age. Another 15.1% did not provide their age group (Figure 5.15). The current demography of South Africa outlines that only 28% of staff are below the age of 40 years (Department of Public Service and Administration Annual Report 2021/2022).

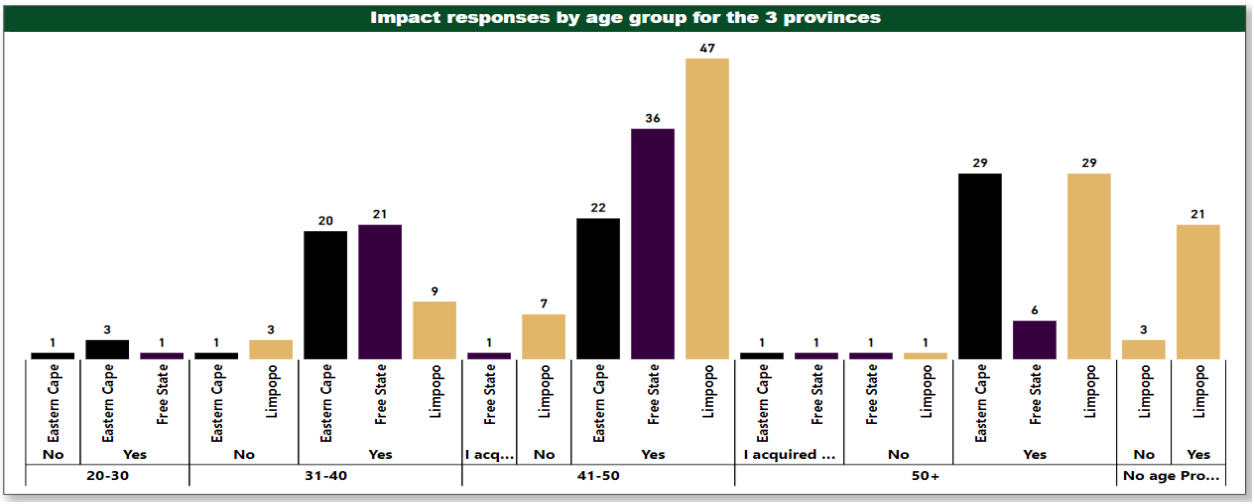


**Figure 5. 15 Impact response by age of CDPs**

The following focus group narratives support the quantitative data presented above on sustainability (Table 5.12).

**Table 5.12 Sustainability Focus group narratives**

| Sustainability | Focus group narratives. |
|---|---|
| | CDPs used the participatory approach to apply their skills involving community members in the planning and implementation of training programmes. This fostered a sense of ownership, making it more likely that the community would sustain the initiatives. |
| | CDPs used stakeholder engagement skills to address specific needs and challenges identified within the community. |
| | There was an integration through forums, coordinating committees at the district level, sharing reports and giving inputs e.g. AFCC meetings. |

### 5.11.1 Sustainability of CDPTP KII

This section on the sustainability of the CDPTP is guided by the key evaluation mentioned above and the sub questions that have been analysed per province triangulated to the quantitative statistics and focus group discussion answers. Table 5.13 highlights the findings from the KII on sustainability from the Free State, Limpopo and Eastern Cape.

The findings are views and perceptions of the CDPs, the managers and supervisors from Free State, Limpopo and Eastern Cape as well as the DSD National staff.

**Table 5.13 Sustainability Focus group narratives**

| Category | Free State | Eastern Cape | Limpopo |
|---|---|---|---|
| Survey Findings | 17% | 43% | 21% |
| Creation of an enabling environment for CDPs to perform their duties. | All CDPs and ACDPs outlined that the enabling environment has not yet been created for them to optimally perform their duties. The offices were considered rigid and not open to change and new ideas.<br><br>CDPs were not given the platform to conduct or implement work without supervision or political interference.<br><br>The unaddressed issue of ACDPs being regarded as messengers and viewed as Level 3, not as Level 5, despite years of experience and qualification, frustrated ACDPs. | Some CDPs argued that the systems were supportive and ensured CDPs were doing things systematically guided by prescripts and policies.<br><br>The DSD created an enabling environment by availing resources that made the communication flow.<br><br>However, some said the environment was not conducive to performing due to a lack of support to exercise what they learnt.<br><br>*"For me, yes, the DSD gives us ample time to complete our programmes so as not to clash with monthly and quarterly reports. Ability to monitor the finances of the projects"*. | The CDPs outlined that the training related to their work. However, the environment was not enabled due to a lack of resources.<br><br>*"As long as they don't provide us with recourse like laptops, vehicles we may not be able to perform"*. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *"It is difficult to apply many skills as the environment is hostile"*. | | |
| CDPs' embracement of the training. | CDPs embraced the training despite existing challenges that hindered them. *"It is not very sustainable because of the challenges we face as CDPs in the department"*. | CDPs embraced the training despite existing challenges that hindered them.<br><br>*"We are not yet fully recognised as ACDPs, and our programmes are compromised"*. | CDPs embraced the training despite existing challenges that hindered them. |
| CDPs use the skills gained to perform as expected in their communities. | It has helped ACDPs and CDPs work with different stakeholders. The training has helped CDPs be flexible and come up with creative ideas in giving appropriate and relevant responses to the needs of the communities they work with. Existing challenges limit them to use the skills gained. | CDPs used the skills gained to perform as expected in their communities.<br><br>CDPs had to find means to ensure the tasks were done satisfactorily due to challenges experienced with a shortage of resources, conflicting priorities with social welfare and political mandates from the province. | It has helped CDPs work with different stakeholders. The training has helped CDPs be flexible and come up with creative ideas to give appropriate and relevant responses to the needs of the communities they work with. Existing challenges limit them to use the skills gained. |
| Future skills needed for CDPs to perform optimally. | In-depth training on Stress management, adjusting to unfavourable changes, patience, redressing the community, anger management, and emotional intelligence. Impact analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation, | Project Management, advanced computer skills, risk management, strategic planning, Communication skills, Reporting skills, Conflict Management, Presentation skills, Financial management skills, and sign language. | Project Management, advanced computer skills, risk management, strategic planning, Communication skills, Reporting skills, Conflict Management, Presentation skills, Financial management skills, sign language. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Project management and report writing. | | |
| Partnerships. | Partnerships were established at the district and local level with different stakeholders. The CDPs and ACDPs continued to work together but varied from one district level to the other.<br><br>Partnerships with other government departments, local municipalities, and political and traditional leadership existed but varied from one district to the other. This was enhanced through training, but it is a work in progress. | The training promoted partnerships in the communities.<br><br>Encourage communities to work as a group to achieve community development. Training promoted partnership through mobilisation starting from traditional leaders, and political leaders. | Training has promoted partnerships with internal and external stakeholders in our communities. For example, there are now strong partnerships with political, traditional and community leaders.<br><br>The training promoted collaboration at the community level so I can organise, and invite, the relevant partners to come and support the communities. Our communities know where they will get the help, they need. |

The data presented have provided an outline of how the CDPTP has been implemented from 2018 to 2023 and the outcome of the key evaluation questions, on how CDPTP was relevant, effective, efficient, coherent, impactful and sustainable. Below is the benchmarking with best practices from other countries globally.

**6. Benchmarking best practices on community development**

This section highlights best practices across the globe on Community Development Practitioner training programmes. It provides the approaches and models used in developed and developing countries. The key evaluation question addressed is: What are the best practices elsewhere in implementing similar programmes?

The critical learning for South African CDPs from the European model is the importance of adopting a multidisciplinary approach in their training and practice. This approach prepares CDPs to tackle the multifaceted challenges of community development effectively, from economic disparities and social injustices to environmental degradation (McConnell, Muia, Clarke 2021). By embracing a holistic perspective, CDPs can devise strategies that are not only sustainable in the long-term but also inclusive, ensuring that all members of the community, particularly the most marginalised, are afforded the opportunities to thrive.

Adopting a multidisciplinary approach necessitates a shift in the traditional training and operational frameworks within which South African CDPs operate. It calls for an educational curriculum that spans across disciplines, including but not limited to economics, sociology, environmental science, and public policy. This broad-based educational foundation allows practitioners to draw upon an array of theories, tools, and methodologies, enabling them to craft comprehensive development solutions that address the diverse needs and aspirations of their communities (McConnell, Muia, Clarke 2021).

The European emphasis on inclusivity and sustainability aligns well with the global development goals, providing a valuable template for South African CDPs to localise and adapt to their unique contexts. By integrating the multidisciplinary approach into their practice, South African practitioners can enhance their effectiveness in promoting community development that is not only dynamic and responsive but also equitable and resilient.

Benchmarking with European countries, notably the Scandinavian, Ireland and Australian models underscores the critical role of comprehensive frameworks and multidisciplinary integration in contemporary community development (McConnell, Muia, Clarke 2021). For South African CDPs, embracing these principles can significantly elevate their capacity to address the complex challenges of community development, paving the way for more sustainable, inclusive, and holistic development outcomes.

African training programmes, particularly in Kenya and Ghana, focus on contextual adaptability and cultural competence. They emphasise understanding local contexts and leveraging indigenous knowledge for community development (Boadu, Ile & Oduro 2021). Kenya and Ghana exemplify this approach by integrating cultural competence and contextual adaptability into their community development training programmes. These programmes are designed to equip CDPs with the skills to navigate and address their communities' unique challenges and opportunities (Boadu, Ile & Oduro 2021). Emphasising the understanding of local contexts allows practitioners to leverage indigenous knowledge systems and cultural practices in crafting development initiatives, ensuring these are effective and resonate deeply with the community members.

In the exploration of community development practices, benchmarking South African methods with those of other African countries, notably Kenya and Ghana, provides invaluable insights. African training programmes in community development are distinguished by their emphasis on contextual adaptability and cultural competence. This focus is rooted in the understanding that effective community development must be deeply intertwined with the local context, drawing upon indigenous knowledge and practices to foster sustainable growth and development (Pouw et al., 2020).

The key learning for South African CDPs from the African models is the critical importance of enhancing cultural competence and adaptability in their training and practice. South Africa's rich diversity, characterised by a multiplicity of cultures, languages, and histories, necessitates a development approach that is both flexible and culturally informed. CDPs can better engage with communities by promoting a deeper understanding of the diverse South African context, recognising, and valuing their knowledge, practices, and perspectives (Ditlhake 2022). Incorporating a stronger focus on cultural competence and adaptability into South African

community development training programmes could significantly improve the effectiveness of development initiatives.

This approach would enable practitioners to develop strategies tailored to each community's specific needs and dynamics and empower community members by acknowledging and incorporating their indigenous knowledge and cultural assets into the development process. To achieve this, training programmes in South Africa could include modules on cultural studies, indigenous knowledge systems, and context-specific development strategies.

Fostering partnerships with local community leaders and organisations can provide CDPs with valuable insights into the cultural and social fabric of the communities they serve. Such partnerships can also facilitate the co-creation of development initiatives, ensuring these are grounded in local realities and aspirations.

Benchmarking with countries like Kenya and Ghana highlights the potential benefits of embedding cultural competence and contextual adaptability more firmly within South African community development practices. By doing so, South African CDPs can enhance their capacity to navigate the country's diverse landscape effectively, promoting development initiatives that are not only sustainable and impactful but also culturally resonant and inclusive. This approach underscores the importance of recognising and valuing the diversity and richness of local contexts in driving meaningful community development.

**7. Learnings and Application of CDPTP to South Africa**

The global benchmarking of CDP training programmes across Latin America, Europe, Africa, and the Asia-Pacific region offers invaluable insights for enhancing the effectiveness of such programmes in South Africa. This comparative analysis reveals a set of core principles critical for developing CDPs who can navigate the multifaceted challenges of community development in a diverse and rapidly changing world. These key learnings can be applied to the South African context:

Drawing from Latin American experiences, the value of participatory approaches in community development cannot be overstated. These methods prioritise community-led initiatives and participatory planning, ensuring that development efforts are sustainable and inclusive. For South Africa, incorporating participatory methodologies in CDP training programmes can enhance

community engagement and ensure that the community's needs and aspirations drive development efforts. This approach fosters a sense of ownership among community members, thereby increasing the likelihood of success and sustainability of development projects.

The European models, especially those from Scandinavia, demonstrate the importance of comprehensive, multidisciplinary frameworks in addressing modern community development's complex and interconnected challenges. By preparing South African CDPs with a broad skill set that spans social, economic, and environmental disciplines, they can devise holistic and sustainable solutions to development challenges. This multidisciplinary approach ensures that practitioners are well-equipped to consider the full spectrum of community development factors, from economic disparities to environmental sustainability.

The Asia-Pacific region's success in incorporating innovation and technology into community development provides a blueprint for South Africa. Integrating digital literacy and knowledge of technological solutions into CDP training can significantly improve the reach, efficiency, and effectiveness of development programmes. This includes leveraging technology for education, health services, economic development, and more. By equipping South African CDPs with digital skills and encouraging innovative thinking, they can harness technology to facilitate access to services, improve communication, and empower communities.

Implementing these cross-regional learnings into South African CDP training programmes requires a strategic and holistic approach. This entails revising curriculum frameworks to incorporate participatory methods, multidisciplinary approaches, cultural competence, and technological integration as foundational elements. Fostering partnerships with local communities, international organisations, and the tech sector can provide CDPs with the resources and exposure needed to apply these global learnings effectively.

By adapting these key learnings to the unique South African context, CDP training programmes can produce practitioners adept at navigating the complexities of community development and capable of leading inclusive, sustainable, culturally informed, and technologically empowered initiatives. This approach will ensure that South Africa's community development efforts are innovative and grounded in the realities and aspirations of its diverse communities, paving the way for meaningful and lasting change.

The synthesis of global best practices in community development training underscores the imperative for South African CDP training programmes to adopt a holistic and flexible approach. Incorporating participatory methodologies, multidisciplinary perspectives, cultural competence, and technological acumen into the curriculum can significantly enhance the capacity of South African practitioners to design and implement development initiatives that are impactful but also sustainable, inclusive, and responsive to the evolving needs of communities.

South Africa continues to navigate its complex social and economic landscape, integrating these global learnings presents a pathway towards a more resilient and vibrant future for Community Development Practice. By embracing these principles, South Africa can ensure that its community development efforts are innovative and deeply rooted in the realities and aspirations of its diverse communities, setting the stage for meaningful and lasting change. The next section outlines the lessons learnt from the CDPTP.

**8. Lessons learnt**

This section provides the lessons learnt from the CDPTP implementation and how the programme has been relevant, effective, efficient, coherent, and impactful. The section comprises also the challenges, conclusions and recommendations made. The analysis was guided by a key evaluation question: What lessons can be learnt, challenges and recommendations to strengthen the implementation of the CDPTP?

Training of CDPs was the cornerstone to addressing the skills gap. However, training without a suitable environment created for the support of CDPs could lead to limited application of the skills.

DSDs at national, provincial and district levels have an important role to play in the effective planning, implementation and tracking of progress on skills acquired by CDPs.

Training is an ongoing process and if well planned and with the relevant courses, and resources, can motivate CDPs, to participate and show commitment to their work.

Community development is a multifaceted discipline which needs integration among stakeholders and holistic planning to empower CDPS.

Development is ever-changing and interventions are unique to each province, therefore CDPs necessitate different new skills set to contribute to community development.

Resource mobilisation, alignment of the budget to the operational planning and enough support are key CDPs' capacity building. Through community capacity enhancement communities can deal with their issues.

**9. Identified challenges that affected CDPs and ACDPs**

This section provides the identified challenges from the supervisors, CDPs and ACDPs. It provides their frustrations to acquire skills and apply the skills. This includes the internal and external factors that enable and disenable their work. The following challenges were identified:

**Category 1: Training challenges**

a) CDPs did not have a proper budget for contingency issues, to work with communities in all poverty-stricken areas in their districts.

b) Insufficient funding and resources impeded the development and delivery of comprehensive training programmes. This affected the quality and reach of the training, limiting the impact on our side.

c) CDPs failed to deliver online or digital training in their communities due to the limited availability of technology in rural areas.

d) CDPs were not supported post-training in how to use the skills gained. Partnerships at a local level with municipalities and local structures (politicians) were not strong enough to enable the application of the skills gained.

e) The lack of robust monitoring and reporting disenabled the effectiveness of the training.

f) Time and budget constraints limited the duration of the training sessions leading to training being reduced to two days instead of five days.

g) The trainer of trainers for some training lacked the required expertise to train the CDPs, leading to some CDPs not assimilating the content.

h) The working environment in some district offices was not conducive for CDPs to apply their skills gained due to a lack of office space, and tools of trade.

i) Most of the CDPs were not consulted or involved in decision-making on the trainings they needed and could attend.

j) DSD changed CDPs attending training leading to CDPs having limited skills. The unclear job description of the ACDPs despite some being well qualified as CDPs, they were addressed as messengers and that demotivated them. The CDPs and ACDPs relationships in the (Free State) in some districts were sour, and it led to a lack of good relationships among themselves. Lack of adequate managers to support the processes of training and

addressing the needs of CDPs and ACDPs for them to acquire skills and use the skills in their duties.

**Category 2: Other Challenges Identified:**

k) CDPs failed to use the skills because of a lack of tools for trade and transport they could not contact the remotest communities.

a) Departmental policies hindered ACDPs in the Eastern Cape and Free State to perform as they were deemed not qualified for the work. ACDPs were doing the work of CDPs thus Level 5, yet they were classified as Level 3.

l) The three provinces encountered a challenge with prioritising projects and interventions from provincial leadership than those identified by CDPs.

m) Prioritisation by the provinces of social welfare over community development leading to resources being channelled to social welfare.

n) The CDPs and ACDPs' roles and responsibilities based on their performance management were hindered by the push for targets (numbers) instead of the actual planned work.

o) The partnerships with local municipalities were not that strong so there is parallel planning and implementation of community development initiatives in most districts.

## 10. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section outlines the recommendations made by the participants to address the challenges identified and for an effective and efficient CDPTP post-evaluation.

1. **Development of an integrated training model for CDPs**: An integrated training road map should be developed including all directorates responsible for CDPTP. The road map must inform the MTDP and guide all trainings to be implemented in the short term, medium term and long term. The road map will also include the proposed decentralisation of training resources to districts to facilitate a needs-based training. Planning for awareness campaigns at provincial level of the new road map. Post training support to CDPs must be included in the model and budgeted for to ensure implementation. Plan of action on how to create an enabling environment for CDPs to perform their duties should be included in the integrated training model. The advancement and use of technology for community development should form part of the integrated model, with clear budget. Systems strengthening of CDPTP embedded within the model to sustain the achievements made outlined in the evaluation.

2. **Strengthen collaboration with research and training institutions including SETAs**. Identify stakeholders to partner with in the CDPTP. Development of partnership or collaboration model for accredited and non-accredited trainings.
3. **Review of the ACDPs and CDPs Job Descriptions:** The ACDPs and CDPs job descriptions will need to be reviewed to harmonise the disparities that exist. National DSD in liaison with all relevant interested stakeholders embark on the review process. Workshop the supervisors and CDPs on the completed and approved JDs.
4. **Conduct an outcome evaluation post implementation of the improvement plan.** The developed improvement plan with SMART targets must be evaluated after 1 or 2 years of implementation to assess the outcomes of the improved CDPTP.
5. **Strengthen Human Resource development for CDPs.** Review and align the CDPs' remuneration structure to the occupation specific dispensation addressing the challenges identified in the report.
6. **Need for Resource mobilisation.** The distribution of the tools of trade to the respective CDPs within scope and time.

## 11. CONCLUSION

This section provides conclusions made based on the CDPTP objectives and the evaluation criteria key questions and sub questions.

From 2019 to 2023, the CDTP planned training interventions based on the skills gap identified. The training was implemented across provinces including the sampled Free State, Limpopo and Eastern Cape, with a pilot in Gauteng. The National DSD committed itself to ensuring that CDPs and ACDPs were trained. This included accredited and non-accredited courses relevant to their skills development. Through a consultative process with the steering committee a representative sample across the three provinces was interviewed using qualitative and quantitative techniques and the findings showed that:

The majority of the ACDPs and CDPs acknowledged that the training was relevant for their day-to-day responsibilities even though in different provinces and districts the inclusion and training were hindered by various factors, such as lack of adequate budgets and other resources to complete the training according to the required standards ie several days for the training. ACDPs and CDPs expressed their appreciation of the training but also recommended more training they needed.

CDPTP was relevant in building the capacity of community development practitioners and Assistant Community development practitioners across the three provinces Free State, Eastern Cape and Limpopo and from the pilot in Gauteng.

The accredited and unaccredited training related to the needs of CDPs from 2018-2023 at the provincial and local levels. This is despite the challenges experienced in different districts, such as a lack of awareness campaigns, tools of trade and training shortened due to budget constraints.

Training contributed to CDPs gaining the skills and competencies needed to perform well. The Training frameworks were developed and aligned with training the CD framework. The CDPs and ACDPs outlined the effectiveness of the training skills acquired; they have applied these skills in the communities they work.

CDPTP has been effective in achieving its intended objectives and led to most CDPs and ACDPs doing their work professionally based on their testimonies. CDPTP was implemented as planned from 2018 to 2023 despite the challenges encountered across the provinces and districts and the budget constraint measures introduced.

The CDPs' Capacity to perform their duties was enhanced despite the shortage of tools of trade, transport to go to the communities, and the discouragements with the job descriptions for ACDPs.

Across the three provinces (Free State, Eastern Cape and Limpopo) CDPTP enabled CDPs and ACDPs to facilitate community development to the best of their abilities despite challenges experienced.

CDPTP enabled CDPs and ACDPs to conduct household and community profiling in the districts; some CDPs and ACDPs could not reach out to all communities due to transport problems.

It also enabled CDPs and ACDPs to conduct stakeholder engagements and empower individuals, households, and communities in ME processes.

Across the Free State, Limpopo and Eastern Cape provinces, the CDPTP showcased some level of efficiency and cost-effectiveness during the implementation of CDPTP. The National staff, the CDPs, ACDPs, managers and supervisors stated that the training programme was partially effective and varied from province to province, and district to district. Others outlined the training was not based on needs analysis while others rated the training as efficient. The establishment of four one-

stop centres around Capricorn was rated cost-effective. The lack of resources led to CDPs using their own to attend training or travel to training.

The operational cost of implementing the programme from 2018 to 2023 varied from national, and provincial levels and from one directorate to the other. In the districts, the CDPs and ACDPs were not aware of the operational costs.

Sufficiency of resources (financial, human, infrastructure, etc.) needed for the training was not sufficient and this led to a reduction in the number of days for some training and a reduction in the number of CDPs and ACDPs trained. Cost containment measures led to limited programme activities.

The follow-ups and reporting on the results were limited post-training. Lack of resources disenabled follow-up and reporting. Integrated implementation of the CDPTP is a work in progress across provinces and at the district level; it was partially integrated with institutions, such as NDA and SASSA but no integration with other government departments and local municipalities.

The CDPTP contributed to the training programme for communities accessing quality services. Training programmes contributed to improved service delivery. The consciousness and knowledge levels of the community were raised to engage rather than protest. Training further made the communities accountable and able to participate in their development.

Training programmes contributed to strengthening the capacity of communities self-reliant this is despite limited resources allocated to the training. Post-training support to CDPs to use the skills remained a challenge and the platforms to enable CDPs to use the skills acquired remain a work in progress and varied across districts. Coherence of the training programme across directorates/units remains a work in progress as directorates planned their budgets and were not integrated with other directorates.

There were levels of alignment of new knowledge/systems to existing programmes, with the introduction of the Norms and Standards which some CDPs and ACDPs. CDPs and ACDPs were introduced to tools to familiarise themselves with the move towards professionalisation of the field. Norms and standards were introduced and aligned with the roles and responsibilities of CDPs

CDPs and ACDPs acquired various skill sets from 2018 to 2023. There has been a commitment from the Community Development Policy and Service Standards Directorate and other directorates to ensure the identified skills gap was addressed. The capacity of CDPs to deliver on the DSD mandate has increased. Evidence of best practice in the implementation of CDPTP has been recorded as communities were empowered by the CDPs and ACDPs.

The training has provided opportunities to most CDPs and ACDPs in the Free State, Eastern Cape and Limpopo to acquire skills they will use beyond the training in the communities they serve.

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