



**AN EVIDENCE-BASED HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT TO  
MEASURE AND MANAGE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (HRD)  
IMPLEMENTATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN MUNICIPALITIES**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....  | 7  |
| KEY DEFINITIONS .....  | 11 |
| ABBREVIATIONS .....  | 17 |
| SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND .....   | 19 |
| 1 INTRODUCTION .....   | 19 |
| 2 PROBLEM STATEMENT .....  | 19 |
| 3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.....   | 20 |
| SECTION 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .....   | 22 |
| 1 INTRODUCTION .....   | 22 |
| 2 THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 2030 .....                                       | 22 |
| 3 INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION (ILO).....                                       | 24 |
| 4 SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (NDP) .....                                | 25 |
| 5 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNANCE<br>CONTEXT.....         | 26 |
| 5.1 Public Administration Act .....  | 28 |
| 6 SOUTH AFRICAN HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2033 .....                       | 29 |
| 7 MUNICIPAL MANAGEMENT AND TASK DISTRIBUTION .....                                   | 30 |
| 8 CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY CHALLENGES OF MUNICIPALITIES.....                          | 32 |
| 9 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT POLICY RESPONSE .....   | 37 |
| 10 INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR HUMAN RESOURCE<br>DEVELOPMENT (IMF-HRD) ..... | 38 |

|      |  |    |
|------|--|----|
| 11   | SALGA PROGRAMME ON PROFESSIONALISATION .....   | 41 |
| 12   | MUNICIPAL STAFF REGULATIONS – AN EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH TO HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT ..... | 42 |
| 12.1 | The Manager .....  | 44 |
| 12.2 | Staff Members .....  | 45 |
| 12.3 | Skills Development Facilitator .....   | 45 |
| 12.4 | Chief Financial Officer .....  | 45 |
| 12.5 | Training Committee .....   | 46 |
| 13   | PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM (PDMS) .....                                   | 46 |
| 14   | MUNICIPAL EVIDENCED BASED PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.....                                 | 47 |
| 14.1 | The Muni eMonitor System .....   | 49 |
| 14.2 | LGSETA Work Skills Plan Evaluation Reports.....  | 51 |
| 14.3 | Evidenced-Based Human Resourced Development Management System.....                           | 52 |
| 14.4 | Evidence-Base Human Resource Development Indicators .....                                    | 56 |
| 15   | COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK.....  | 57 |
| 16   | COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK (EVIDENCE) FOR SENIOR MANAGERS .....                                    | 58 |
| 17   | HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (HRM) .....  | 60 |
| 18   | A SUSTAINABLE MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK .....   | 62 |
| 19   | GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES .....   | 67 |
| 20   | EVIDENCE-BASED HRD CHANGE PRACTICES .....  | 69 |
| 21   | CHANGE AGENTS WITHIN THE ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT.....   | 70 |
| 22   | EVIDENCE-BASED HRD AND CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE .....                                 | 73 |

|     |  |    |
|-----|--|----|
| 23  | CONCLUSIONS.....                                       | 75 |
|     | SECTION 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....                   | 76 |
| 1   | INTRODUCTION .....                                     | 76 |
| 1.1 | Primary Objective.....                                 | 76 |
| 1.2 | Secondary Objectives .....                             | 76 |
| 2   | RESEARCH SCOPE .....                                   | 77 |
| 3   | RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY .....                  | 79 |
| 4   | RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS .....                             | 79 |
| 5   | CONSULTATIONS WITH EXPERTS .....                       | 83 |
| 6   | PROJECT SCOPE AND PHASES .....                         | 84 |
| 6.1 | Phase 1: Situational Analysis.....                     | 84 |
| 6.2 | Phase 2: Methodology .....                             | 84 |
| 6.3 | Phase 3: Data Collection Fieldwork And Interviews..... | 85 |
| 6.4 | Phase 4: Data Analysis .....                           | 85 |
| 6.5 | Phase 5: Research Findings and Reporting .....         | 85 |
|     | SECTION 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS.....                      | 86 |
| 1   | ETHICAL VALUES FINDINGS .....                          | 87 |
| 2   | HRD POLICY FINDINGS.....                               | 90 |
| 3   | HRD PRACTISE FINDINGS .....                            | 93 |
| 4   | ORGANISATION OF HRD FINDINGS .....                     | 96 |
| 5   | HRD INTERNAL DEMOCRACY FINDINGS.....                   | 99 |

|   |   |     |
|---|---|-----|
| 6 | HRD STAKEHOLDERS' FINDINGS .....  | 101 |
| 7 | KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FINDINGS.....  | 104 |
|   | SECTION 5: CONCLUSIONS.....   | 107 |
|   | SECTION 6: RECOMMENDATIONS.....   | 110 |
| 1 | COLLABORATIVE STAKEHOLDER IMPLEMENTATION .....  | 110 |
| 2 | MUNICIPAL RESEARCH READINESS PROTOCOL .....   | 112 |
|   | REFERENCES .....  | 114 |
|   | APPENDIX A – QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF OF MUNICIPALITIES AND MUNICIPAL ENTITIES .....                 | 122 |
|   | APPENDIX B – QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FOCUS GROUP WITH STAFF OF MUNICIPALITIES AND MUNICIPAL ENTITIES..... | 129 |
|   | APPENDIX C – EVIDENCED BASED HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM INDICATORS.....                      | 130 |

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Figure 1: Sustainable Development Goals (Stockholm Environment Institute, n.d.) .....        | 24 |
| Figure 2: Municipal Governance and functions (source: author) .....                          | 31 |
| Figure 3: Integrated Management Framework for Human Resource Development (Cloete, 2016)..... | 40 |
| Figure 4: Municipal Evidence - Based Performance Management Cloete, 2024 .....               | 48 |
| Figure 5: Participants in focus group discussions and one-on-one Interviews .....            | 83 |
| Figure 6: Project research phases (source: authors).....                                     | 84 |
| Figure 7: Ethical values findings .....  | 88 |
| Figure 8: Categorisation Ethical Values.....   | 89 |
| Figure 9: HRD Policy findings .....  | 91 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Figure 10: Categorisation HRD Policy findings.....    | 93  |
| Figure 11: HRD Practise findings.....                 | 94  |
| Figure 12: Categorisation HRD Practise findings ..... | 96  |
| Figure 13: Organisation of HRD findings .....         | 97  |
| Figure 14: Categorisation Organisation of HRD .....   | 98  |
| Figure 15: HRD Internal Democracy findings .....      | 99  |
| Figure 16: Categorisation HRD Internal Democracy..... | 101 |
| Figure 17: HRD Stakeholders findings.....             | 102 |
| Figure 18: Categorisation HRD Stakeholders.....       | 103 |
| Figure 19: Knowledge Management findings.....         | 105 |
| Figure 20: Categorisation Knowledge Management.....   | 106 |

#### **LIST OF TABLES**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Table 1: HRD System .....   | 54  |
| Table 2: Municipal Sample.....  | 78  |
| Table 3: Survey sample realization.....   | 80  |
| Table 4: Realization of Focus group discussions and one-on-one Interviews – explain why and how ..... | 82  |
| Table 5: Propose Recommendations – LGSETA .....   | 111 |

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The White Paper on Local Government (1998) set the direction for local government in South Africa, but also envisions the type of political and administrative leadership required to realise that vision. This is the first comprehensive study to assess the applicability of evidenced-based Human Resource Development (HRD) practices for local government. The main conclusion is that evidenced-based HRD and change management are not practised effectively in municipalities, giving rise to HRD not being effectively measured and managed despite the 26 year old enabling policy framework. The research results paint a bleak picture in terms of the understanding, application, and integration of evidenced-based HRD in the local government sector. This was highlighted by the quantitative results (questionnaire) and confirmed by the qualitative results (focus group discussions with key informants).

From the research findings (evidence) it is concluded that ethical values are poorly practised. This is evident in the following, managerial commitment to equal opportunities for the development of people is low and managers are not sufficiently supporting the development of people (human resources). HRD is clearly not a priority and performance management is not taken seriously. The competencies and contributions of staff to service delivery are not recognised.

It is concluded that there is a HRD policy problem in municipalities. There may be HRD policies but the implementation of such is not consistently implemented and staff are not informed sufficiently of the content of HRD policies and how this affects them. The HRD policy stands in isolation and the links with the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) (strategy) are not connected to internal transformation (employment equity and performance management). The different role players are not clearly stated as spelt out in the Municipal Staff Regulations.

Based on the research findings (evidence), it is concluded that there is a problem with how HRD is practised in municipalities. The skills development audits are poorly conducted with the result that HRD interventions are not undertaken in line with employee staff development plans. The municipality do not apply a variety of approaches such as formal and informal development and employees are not presented with opportunities to practice new competencies post skills development interventions. There is no agreed procedure for the implementation of human resource development in the workplace. Although Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) could be beneficial for particularly the blue collar workers, it is not implemented efficiently and effectively.

Although the Municipal Staff Regulations (MSR) indicate that line managers in departments should perform a more hands on role in HRD, the research findings (evidence) indicate the contrary. HRD plans for departments are not in place. It is concluded that the organisation of HRD in municipalities is a problem and line managers are not equipped to manage the implementation of HRD projects and the HRD outputs are not included in the Key Performance Areas (KPA's) for line managers. The HRD interventions are not monitored by the department managers. The Skills Development Facilitator (SDF) is the principal HRD internal consultant, however, the problem is a lack of confidence and credibility nor is the SDF is not trusted nor considered a knowledgeable subject matter expert. The organisational actors that must ensure the effective implementation of HRD are not collaborating effectively to achieve HRD objectives.

According to the MSR, line managers in departments should perform a more hands on role in HRD, however, the research findings (evidence) indicate the contrary. The legislated training committee have been in operation since 1998, but there is low awareness of the training committee and the representation throughout the organisation is a cause for concern judging by the low score. The committee members do not understand their roles and responsibilities and the organisation does not receive regular feedback. The research participants indicate that they manage their own development through their personal Development plan.

From the research findings (evidence) it is concluded that the key stakeholders (councillors and shop stewards) do not fully comprehend their HRD roles and responsibilities and senior managers are not supportive of HRD programs of employees, despite the senior manager competencies identifying people management as a key competency (2014). The Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA), South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) could be working better together. Finally, the employees are not aware of the potential impact of the Municipal Staff Regulations on municipalities.

From the research findings (evidence) it is concluded that knowledge management is not implemented effectively. More than half the participants indicated that they do not know or were unsure, thus, indicating a clear lack of communication. The performance and development system is not being implemented effectively and data analytics are not used to inform HRD decisions. It is also not known amongst the research participants whether



HRD systems integrate with existing municipal Information and Communications Technology (ICT) systems.

The MSR place the municipalities on a completely new trajectory with a renewed emphasis on increasing organisational capabilities through linking organisational structure and strategy, as well as a focus on performance and development. In the process potential new organisational capabilities and knowledge are developed but not harvested although this could benefit the organisation. Notwithstanding, there is a glaring absence of awareness of a change management plan which is considered a risk for the effective implementation.

The empirical evidence presented is clear – the benefits of evidence-based HRD is not applied nor appreciated in local government and hence evidence-based policy making is not practised in local government. An evidence-based approach to HRD will greatly contribute to the successful implementation of the Municipal Staff Regulations placing local government on the sustainable development path as envisaged by the White Paper. But Local government managers hold the key to optimal municipal performance. Evidence-based human resource development practice offers municipalities an institutional model through an evidence-based approach (audit) akin to that of the Auditor General (AG) to ensure that the human resource development performance of managers are included as part of material irregularities reporting (Public Audit Act). This will place local government on a completely new trajectory with the management of human resource development and knowledge at the centre of the transformation efforts of local government, in line with sustainable development goal 16.

The Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) evaluation report is the only tool used by the LGSETA to evaluate municipal HRD performance (capability). The LGSETA as the authority on HRD should be akin to the AG office through evidence-based HRD assessment to grade the HRD performance of municipalities in the following way:

- Clean signifies that everything was done correctly.
- Unqualified with findings indicates minor issues that could affect accountability.
- Qualified suggests that HRD management was not managed to achieve the best results.
- Adverse shows numerous problems with compliance to the agreed HRD rules and procedures.

- Disclaimer indicates a situation so problematic that reliable evidence to support HRD performance could not even be produced.

Increasing management HRD controls will ensure that municipalities become more capable, responsive and agile to address the plethora of challenges (financial and human resources) facing local government in South Africa (SA). Human resources (people) are the most important resource in the municipalities and the effective management of the development of people will foster trust and increase municipal implementation capabilities.

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## KEY DEFINITIONS

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**Affirmative action:** Affirmative Action ensures that qualified people from designated (black people, women, and people with disabilities) groups have equal opportunities in the workplace.<sup>1</sup>

**Annual Training Report:** The Annual Training Report (ATR) documents the progress made in implementing the previous year's WSP.<sup>2</sup>

**Assessment:** Is the systematic process used to infer students' learning and development through defining, selecting, designing, collecting, analysing, interpreting, and utilizing information to enhance their educational outcomes.<sup>3</sup>

**Best Practice:** A best practice is a standard or set of guidelines that is known to produce good outcomes if followed. Best practices are related to how to carry out a task or configure something.<sup>4</sup>

**Change:** Implies making either an essential difference often amounting to a loss of original identity or a substitution of one thing for another.<sup>5</sup>

**Change management:** Involves strategically guiding and supporting organizational change to achieve and control new objectives, processes, or technologies.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/general-publication/basic-guide-affirmative-action#:~:text=Affirmative%20Action%20ensures%20that%20qualified,Schedule%204%20of%20the%20Act.>

<sup>2</sup> [https://labourguide.co.za/uncategorised/the-compiling-of-workplace-skills-plans-and-annual-training-reports-course/#:~:text=Purpose%20of%20the%20course%3A&text=The%20Workplace%20Skills%20Plan%20\(WSP\)%20outlines%20the%20existing%20skills%20shortage,implementing%20the%20previous%20year%27s%20WSP.](https://labourguide.co.za/uncategorised/the-compiling-of-workplace-skills-plans-and-annual-training-reports-course/#:~:text=Purpose%20of%20the%20course%3A&text=The%20Workplace%20Skills%20Plan%20(WSP)%20outlines%20the%20existing%20skills%20shortage,implementing%20the%20previous%20year%27s%20WSP.)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.westminster.edu/about/accreditation-assessment/definition.cfm#:~:text=Assessment%20is%20the%20systematic%20basis,increase%20students%27%20learning%20and%20development.>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.techtarget.com/searchsoftwarequality/definition/best-practice#:~:text=A%20best%20practice%20is%20a,a%20task%20or%20configure%20something.>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/change>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.techtarget.com/searchcio/definition/change-management#:~:text=Change%20management%20is%20a%20systematic,people%20to%20adapt%20to%20change.>

**Competence:** Encompasses inherent qualities beyond learned skills, enhancing job performance through collaboration, knowledge, and abilities.<sup>7</sup>

**Critical Skills:** Are essential capabilities within a profession, such as management, teamwork, problem-solving, communication, and technology proficiency.<sup>8</sup>

**Designated Group:** Are Africans, Coloureds, and Indians, women of all races, and people with disabilities.<sup>9</sup>

**Employment Equity:** Ensures workplace diversity by representing all societal segments, including women, minorities, and disabled individuals.<sup>10</sup>

**Evidence - based Human Resource Development:** Evidence-based HR leverages data and research to link people management with improved business results like profitability and customer satisfaction.<sup>11</sup>

**Executive Manager:** An executive manager sets company goals, crafts policies, oversees budgets, and works with department heads to steer the organization towards success.<sup>12</sup>

**Focus Groups:** A focus group is a moderated discussion with selected individuals aimed at gaining insights on specific topics.<sup>13</sup>

**Fourth Industrial Revolution:** The Fourth Industrial Revolution, or 4IR, signifies the ongoing transformation of global business through connectivity, analytics, automation, and advanced manufacturing.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <https://explore.darwinbox.com/hr-glossary/competency#:~:text=Competency%20is%20a%20set%20of,collaboration%20skills%2C%20knowledge%20and%20ability.>

<sup>8</sup>

<sup>9</sup> <https://labourguide.co.za/employment-equity/employment-equity18/#:~:text=Certain%20state%20organs%20are%20excluded,races%2C%20and%20people%20with%20disabilities.>

<sup>10</sup> <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/employment-equity>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.consultancy.eu/news/5481/a-six-step-guide-for-evidence-based-human-resources#:~:text=Evidence%2Dbased%20human%20resources%20\(HR,%2C%20customer%20satisfaction%2C%20and%20quality.](https://www.consultancy.eu/news/5481/a-six-step-guide-for-evidence-based-human-resources#:~:text=Evidence%2Dbased%20human%20resources%20(HR,%2C%20customer%20satisfaction%2C%20and%20quality.)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.ziprecruiter.com/career/Executive-Manager/What-Is-How-to-Become#:~:text=An%20executive%20manager%20works%20to,on%20a%20path%20to%20success.>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/focus-group/#:~:text=a%20focus%20group%3F-,A%20focus%20group%20is%20a%20research%20method%20that%20brings%20together,of%204%20types%20of%20interviews.>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/mckinsey-explainers/what-are-industry-4-0-the-fourth-industrial-revolution-and-4ir>

**Gender:** Encompasses the socially constructed roles, behaviours, and attributes that society considers appropriate for men, women, boys, and girls.<sup>15</sup>

**Governance:** Refers to the systems and processes by which societies manage conflict and make collective decisions, emphasizing both the legal frameworks in place and the public's trust in institutions.<sup>16</sup>

**Government:** The government is the particular group of people, the administrative bureaucracy that controls the state apparatus at a given time.<sup>17</sup>

**Human Resource Development:** Refers to the organisation's plan to help employees develop their abilities, skills, and knowledge.<sup>18</sup>

**Human Resource Management:** Human resource management strategizes employee support and workplace positivity, focusing on recruitment, benefits, training, and relations.<sup>19</sup>

**Implementation:** Is the action of putting plans or ideas into effect.<sup>20</sup>

**Junior Manager:** A junior manager oversees projects and staff and may also serve as the main liaison between clients and the organization.<sup>21</sup>

**Knowledge Management:** Knowledge management (KM) involves efficiently handling information and resources within an organization.<sup>22</sup>

**Local Government:** (1) Municipalities form the local government across the Republic's entire territory. (2) A municipality's Municipal Council holds its executive and legislative power.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> [https://www.who.int/health-topics/gender#tab=tab\\_1](https://www.who.int/health-topics/gender#tab=tab_1)

<sup>16</sup>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governance#:~:text=Governance%20has%20been%20defined%20as,the%20public%22%20\(legitimacy\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governance#:~:text=Governance%20has%20been%20defined%20as,the%20public%22%20(legitimacy))

<sup>17</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State\\_\(polity\)#State\\_and\\_government](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_(polity)#State_and_government)

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.workhuman.com/blog/human-resource-development-hrd/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.adp.com/resources/articles-and-insights/articles/h/human-resource-management.aspx#:~:text=Human%20resource%20management%20is%20the,and%20development%2C%20and%20employee%20relations.>

<sup>20</sup>

<https://www.techtarget.com/searchcustomerexperience/definition/implementation#:~:text=Implementat ion%20is%20the%20execution%20or,for%20something%20to%20actually%20happen.>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.zippia.com/junior-manager-jobs/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.ibm.com/topics/knowledge-management>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.justice.gov.za/constitution/SACConstitution-web-eng-07.pdf>

**Male:** Male refers to the biological sex that produces sperm.<sup>24</sup>

**Manager:** A manager leads a team within an organization, overseeing departmental duties, performance reviews, and decision-making.<sup>25</sup>

**Middle Manager:** Middle management acts as the link between executive leadership and line managers, overseeing team and specialist managers to indirectly boost junior staff performance.<sup>26</sup>

**Municipal Councillor:** Councillors are elected to represent and serve local communities, ensuring accountable, equitable, and sustainable municipal services.<sup>27</sup>

**Municipality:** Municipalities in South Africa, defined by the Municipal Demarcation Board and established by the provincial Minister of Local Government, are governed by councils, and categorized into metropolitan, district, and local types.<sup>28</sup>

**National Government:** The National Government of South Africa functions through Parliament, Cabinet, and Ministries, as defined by the Constitution and laws passed by Parliament.<sup>29</sup>

**Official:** An official is a person who holds a position of authority in an organization.<sup>30</sup>

**Oversight:** Oversight ensures legislators verify if laws and funds meet their goals.<sup>31</sup>

**Policy:** A policy is an officially agreed-upon plan or set of guidelines for handling specific situations by a group, organization, or government.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>

<https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/male#:~:text=Male%20means%20a%20person%20belonging,productive%20role%20of%20producing%20sperm.>

<sup>25</sup> <https://au.indeed.com/career-advice/finding-a-job/what-is-a-manager#:~:text=A%20manager%20is%20a%20professional,performance%20reviews%20and%20making%20decisions.>

<sup>26</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle\\_management](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_management)

<sup>27</sup> <http://iwmp.environment.gov.za/book/export/html/366>

<sup>28</sup> <https://civicsacademy.co.za/what-are-municipalities-and-how-are-they-structured/#:~:text=Municipalities%20are%20geographical%20areas%20which,metropolitan%20district%20and%20local.>

<sup>29</sup>

[https://www.westerncape.gov.za/your\\_gov/34#:~:text=The%20National%20Government%20of%20South,in%20legislation%20enacted%20by%20Parliament.](https://www.westerncape.gov.za/your_gov/34#:~:text=The%20National%20Government%20of%20South,in%20legislation%20enacted%20by%20Parliament.)

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/official>

<sup>31</sup>

<https://legislature.maine.gov/doc/2249#:~:text=Oversight%20is%20the%20essential%20function,appropriations%20are%20achieving%20intended%20results.>

<sup>32</sup> <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/policy>

**Provincial Government:** Provincial governments operate with legislatures elected by proportional representation, which then elect a Premier to lead the executive, ensuring accountability to the legislature.<sup>33</sup>

**Qualitative Research:** Qualitative research explores phenomena in their natural settings to understand the meanings people assign to them.<sup>34</sup>

**Quantitative Research:** Quantitative research emphasizes numerical data and objective analysis, prioritizing convergent over divergent reasoning.<sup>35</sup>

**Scarce Skills:** Scarce skills are specific abilities in high demand within a profession, like management, communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and technology proficiency.<sup>36</sup>

**Skills Audit:** A skills audit evaluates an employee's abilities against their job requirements, often through surveys, questionnaires, or interviews.<sup>37</sup>

**Skills Development:** Skills development encompasses acquiring productive capabilities through learning and training in various settings, including formal, non-formal, informal, and on-the-job.<sup>38</sup>

**Skills Gap:** A skills gap is the discrepancy between the skills employers require and those possessed by their employees.<sup>39</sup>

**Skills Profile:** A skills profile is a comprehensive overview of an individual's expertise, including work experience, certifications, and technical abilities.<sup>40</sup>

**State:** The state is the organization and are immaterial and nonphysical social objects<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provincial\\_governments\\_of\\_South\\_Africa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provincial_governments_of_South_Africa)

<sup>34</sup>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6494783/#:~:text=Qualitative%20research%20is%20multimethod%20in,meanings%20people%20bring%20to%20them.>

<sup>35</sup>

<https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/quantitative#:~:text=Quantitative%20research%20deals%20in%20numbers,%2C%20free%2Dflowing%20manner%5D.>

<sup>36</sup> <https://ifundi.co.za/scarce-skills-critical-skills/#:~:text=Critical%20Skills%20refer%20to%20particular,literacy%20skills%5D%20and%20technology%20skills.>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.personio.com/hr-lexicon/skills-audit/>

<sup>38</sup> <https://cdn.sida.se/publications/files/sida62134en-skills-development.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.personio.com/hr-lexicon/skills-gap-analysis/>

<sup>40</sup> <https://gloat.com/blog/skills-profile/#:~:text=A%20skills%20profile%20is%20a,information%20that%20highlights%20their%20expertise.>

<sup>41</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State\\_\(polity\)#State\\_and\\_government](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_(polity)#State_and_government)

**Training:** Training enhances employees' knowledge and skills for better job performance.<sup>42</sup>

**Transformation:** The meaning of transformation is an act, process, or instance of transforming or being transformed.<sup>43</sup>

**Woman:** Female human being: a person assigned a female sex at birth, or a person who defines herself as a woman.<sup>44</sup>

**Workplace Skills Plan:** The Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) identifies a company's skills gaps and details plans to fill these through training.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> <https://byjus.com/question-answer/what-is-the-meaning-of-training-what-are-its-chief-objectives/>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/transformation>

<sup>44</sup> [https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1286?language\\_content\\_entity=en#:~:text=Description,defines%20herself%20as%20a%20woman.](https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1286?language_content_entity=en#:~:text=Description,defines%20herself%20as%20a%20woman.)

<sup>45</sup> [https://labourguide.co.za/uncategorised/the-compiling-of-workplace-skills-plans-and-annual-training-reports-course/#:~:text=Purpose%20of%20the%20course%3A&text=The%20Workplace%20Skills%20Plan%20\(WSP\)%20outlines%20the%20existing%20skills%20shortage,implementing%20the%20previous%20year%27s%20WSP.](https://labourguide.co.za/uncategorised/the-compiling-of-workplace-skills-plans-and-annual-training-reports-course/#:~:text=Purpose%20of%20the%20course%3A&text=The%20Workplace%20Skills%20Plan%20(WSP)%20outlines%20the%20existing%20skills%20shortage,implementing%20the%20previous%20year%27s%20WSP.)



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**ABBREVIATIONS**

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|          |  |
|----------|--|
| AG       | Auditor General  |
| AGSA     | Auditor General of South Africa                                |
| APSDPR   | Africa's Public Service Delivery & Performance Review          |
| ATR      | Annual Training Report   |
| DDM      | District Development Model                                     |
| DPSA     | Department of Public Service and Administration                |
| DWCP     | Decent Work Country Programme                                  |
| EMPRETEC | Employment Promotion through SMME Development                  |
| CoGTA    | Department of Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs     |
| HR       | Human Resources  |
| HRD      | Human Resource Development                                     |
| HRDBIP   | Human Resource Development Budget Implementation Plan          |
| HRDC     | Human Resource Development Council                             |
| HRM      | Human Resource Management                                      |
| ICT      | Information and Communications Technology                      |
| IDP      | Integrated Development Planning                                |
| ILO      | International Labour Organisation                              |
| IMF-HRD  | Integrated Management Framework for Human Resource Development |
| KASH     | Knowledge, Attitudes, Skills and Habits                        |
| KPAs     | Key Performance Areas  |
| KPIs     | Key Performance Indicators                                     |
| LGSETA   | Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority       |
| MFMA     | Municipal Finance Management Act                               |
| MSP      | Master Skills Plan   |
| MSR      | Municipal Staff Regulations                                    |
| MTSF     | Medium Term Strategic Framework                                |
| NDP      | National Development Plan                                      |
| NPC      | National Planning Commission                                   |
| PMDS     | Performance Management and Development System                  |
| RSA      | Republic of South Africa                                       |
| SA       | South Africa   |
| SALGA    | South African Local Government Association                     |
| SAQA     | South African Qualifications Authority                         |

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| SDBIP    | Service Delivery Budget Implementation Plan |
| SDF      | Skills development Facilitator              |
| SDFs     | Skills Development Facilitators             |
| SDGs     | Sustainable Development Goals               |
| SETAs    | Sector Education and Training Authorities   |
| SPSS     | Statistical Package for the Social Sciences |
| STEP     | Skills for Employment and Productivity      |
| TNSG/NSG | The National School of Government           |
| UN       | United Nations                              |
| WSP      | Work Skills Plan                            |
| YEA      | Youth Employment Accelerator                |

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## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

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### **1 INTRODUCTION**

The LGSETA (2017) adopted the Integrated Management Framework for Human Resource Development (IMF-HRD) as an implementation framework. Between November 2018 – March 2020 the LGSETA trained more than 1100 municipal officials in the 4-day Municipal HRD Governance course that is underpinned by the IMF-HRD. However, a weakness of the training is that trainees find it difficult to implement the theory reporting that they often return to toxic work environments that do not support the change efforts. The result is competent individuals but the institution is not capable to deliver on the predetermined municipal HRD outcomes. In addition to this, the 2022 promulgated Municipal Staff regulations advocate for a decentralised approach to human resource management to measure and manage HRD obligations, placing managers at the centre of the municipal change efforts.

### **2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The existing HRD assessment knowledge base is inadequate to measure and manage evidence-based HRD implementation in South African Municipalities. Current management research is further too far removed from the world of practice; is overly theoretical and abstract and hence cannot be applied to real life situations that could lead to the improvement of performance in municipalities.

The current HRD assessment knowledge base also fails to recognise the main problems and challenges facing organisational actors, specifically line managers in the process of executing their HRD roles and responsibilities. It is important that this problem is addressed through new empirical research since it is ultimately organisational actors that maintain and manage municipalities. Organisational actors (line managers, human resources (HR) department and non-managers) are, for example, not collaborating effectively to advance the development agenda of the state and continue to work in silos instead of collaborating, which in turn leads to municipalities not meeting their defined developmental objectives (Cloete, 2016).

There is further a lack of proper interpretation and implementation of HRD policies in municipalities together with a pervasive lack of line management integration with the HRD department. It can be argued that this lack of integration between line management and the HRD department directly leads to a dearth of appropriate competences amongst the employees. The absence of a balanced HRD conceptual understanding of the

responsibilities and roles of organisational actors may be the root cause of the competency deficit in municipalities. This results in subordinates of line managers, in particular, not being able to access the envisaged HRD opportunities, leading to a lack of productivity and motivation.

It is unclear whether a lack of human resource development capacity for line managers is the only factor that is preventing non managers from accessing development opportunities, nor is it clear whether there are other causal factors that may lead to the lack of development opportunities for subordinates of line managers (these would include policy inaction; one-dimensional practice of HRD; how the HRD function is organised; employee participation in their own development; external support and a lack of collaborative competence amongst the organisational actors).

### **3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

As mandated by the Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998), the LGSETA has the role and responsibility to facilitate and promote skills development of the workforce within and across the local government sector. This mandate includes the development and implementation of the sector skills plan as well as approving workplace skills plans.

The LGSETA requested the University of the Free State to produce a research report on an evidence-based human resource development assessment to measure and manage HRD implementation in South African Municipalities.

Section 1 presents the background to this study, section 2 presents the literature overview, section 3 the empirical research design and methodology, and section 4 the research results and findings. In section 5 the research conclusions are presented, while the recommendations are considered in section 6.

The primary objective of the research is to provide a research report on an evidence-based human resource development assessment to measure and manage HRD implementation in South African Municipalities. This objective has been pursued, firstly, through a comprehensive literature overview of evidence-based human resource development, secondly, through the collection, analysis and assessment of primary data on current, evidence-based HRD practices within the local government sector in South Africa, and thirdly through developing a measuring instrument to systematically assess the HRD results in municipalities in order to recommend improvement.

**The secondary objectives of the research are:**

1. Explore the concept of evidence-based human resource development in the local government sector.
2. Analyse the role of the different role players in evidence-based practices in human resource development in the local government sector.
3. Investigate whether HRD assessment tools (ICT) exist that can be applied and integrated with existing ICT tools in the local government sector.
4. Investigate the role of human resource development in improving service delivery areas in the local government sector.
5. Explore the international best practices in the application of evidence-based human resource development in the local government sector.
6. Investigate the link between organisational change and evidence-based human resource development practices.

**The research questions are:**

1. What is evidence-based evidence human resource development?
2. Who are the different role players in evidence-based practices in human resource development in local government sector?
3. What are the available HRD assessment tools (ICT) that can be applied and integrated with existing ICT tools in the local government sector?
4. How can human resource development improve service delivery in the local government sector?
5. What are the international best practices in the application of evidence-based human resource development in the local government sector?
6. What are the links between organisational change and evidence-based human resource development practices?

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## SECTION 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

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### 1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the literature review is to provide the reader with an overview of HRD and the thoughts of scholars regarding the concept of evidence-based human resource development. The literature review builds on the work authored by Cloete (2023), *Towards an evidence-based human resource development assessment for South African local government* published in the Africa's Public Service Delivery & Performance Review (APSDPR).

The literature review explores the concept of evidence-based human resource development in the local government sector; identify the different role players in evidence-based human resource development in the local government sector; identify the current ICT tools and advocate how they can be applied and integrated; advance how human resource development planning can improve service delivery as envisaged in key transformation legislation (Municipal Staff Regulations); explore the international best practice in the use of evidence-based human resource development and finally investigate the link between organisational change and evidence-based human resource development practices.

### 2 THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 2030

South Africa's status as the most unequal country in the world was confirmed with SA ranking first among 164 countries in the World Bank's global poverty database (World Bank, 2023). Despite more than 22 years of the Skills Development Act and the resultant Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), SA continues to face a crisis of confidence around skilled labour. A structural mismatch between demand and supply in the South African labour market (LIMP, 2022) is prevalent which persistently undersupplies skilled workers, while oversupplying unskilled ones. Modern technologies and changing trade patterns have encouraged the growth of tradable services leading to a growing demand for skilled labour (LIMP, 2022). The ongoing structural transformation of the economy further amplifies this phenomenon with inequality of opportunity considered a persistent driver of unequal outcomes for the South African population (World Bank, 2022). Access to higher education is found to be limited especially among vulnerable and poor people (Chancel, Piketty, Saez, and Zucman, 2022).

Globally most organisations, for the last two decades, have been operating in what has been coined as a VUCA environment. This is specifically true for municipalities. VUCA is an acronym for an environment that is characterised by being **volatile** (the pace of change is fast and continuous and unexpected which creates instability), **uncertain** (organisations find it difficult to get clarity and certainty about the context as a result of not having sufficient information that is further complicated by opposing views and viewpoints), **complex** (describes the multitude of interrelated elements and variables that might impact a situation's "cause-and-effect" as well as the amount or type of information that is readily available) and **ambiguous** (refers to causal links that are totally unclear) (Bennett & James Lemoine, 2014; Mack, Khare, Kramer & Burgatz, 2016).

The global development agenda is summarised in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the UN. These goals should be action oriented, concise and easy to communicate, limited in number, aspirational, global and universally applicable to all countries, while considering different national and local realities, capacities and levels of development (Reddy, 2016). The seventeen SDGs are illustrated in Figure 1.

One of the most important aspects of the SDGs for the present study is goal 16, which aims to build inclusive strong institutions on all levels. This implies that local government, the sphere of government closest to people, plays a critical role to realise the developmental objectives and aspirations of local communities. The localisation of development decision making and its global impact were further emphasised by former Secretary General of the UN, Ban Ki-Moon (Reddy, 2016). This concept of localization is the process of defining, implementing and monitoring strategies at the local level for achieving global, national and subnational SDGs (Reddy, 2016).



**Figure 1: Sustainable Development Goals (Stockholm Environment Institute, n.d.)**

### **3 INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION (ILO)**

A specialised agency of the United Nations (UN), the ILO addresses labour-related issues such as employment, social protection, fair labour standards, social dialogue, and ethical work. With 187 member states, the ILO aims to advance social justice and human rights in the workplace by collaborating with companies, governments, and workers.

Promoting decent employment and sustainable development are means of enhancing the social and economic well-being of the society, objectives shared by the ILO and the South African HRD strategy 2025. Through a number of initiatives and programmes, including the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP), Skills for Employment and Productivity (STEP), Employment Promotion through SMME Development (EMPRETEC), and Youth Employment Accelerator (YEA), the ILO supports the implementation of the South African HRD strategy. In addition, the ILO offers capacity building, policy advice, technical support, and labour market information to the South African government and social partners on a range of labour-related issues, including social protection, employment creation, labour standards, labour legislation and social dialogue.



#### 4 SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (NDP)

The South African government adopted its NDP more than a decade ago. The plan represents the only cross-cutting, long-term plan for national development in South Africa, requiring co-ordinated efforts by all three spheres of government. The NDP states that “the state needs to play a transformative and developmental role. This requires well-run and effectively coordinated state institutions with skilled public servants who are committed to the public good and capable of delivering consistently high-quality services, while prioritising the nation’s developmental objectives. This will enable people from all sections of society to have confidence in the state, which in turn will reinforce the state’s effectiveness” (NPC, 2012).

The plan recognises the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality that is stunting progress, largely based on race and gender that must be addressed in order to achieve the ideals of a capable state. The NDP is framed around 12 outcomes and outcome 5 (skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path), necessitates that South African workers should have the competence (knowledge, skills and attitudes) to meet the present and future needs of their society and economy (Cloete, 2019).

However the evidence- based 2023 review of the NDP offers a frank admission by the South African government that the NDP has fallen short of the lofty outcomes - Instead of a capable state, on which the plan is predicated, we have an increasingly corrupt state; instead of a seamless planning system, we have a disjointed planning system that is poorly implemented and misaligned to the strategic goals of the NDP; instead of a more inclusive and equitable economy, we have economic policies that do not seem to be achieving the transformation that is required”. The National Planning Commission (NPC, 2023) also calls for a governance approach that is “comprehensive, coordinated, multi-sectoral” premised on an inclusive approach between civil society, the private sector, government, and academia.

The NPC acknowledged that the public service has been systematically and deliberately subjected to undue political interference which has hampered the state’s ability to function effectively as confirmed by various previous studies (Houston and Kanyane, 2022). In order to turn this around and to ensure the realisation of outcome 5 of the NDP (*a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path*), the NPC called on government to institutionalise and implement a National Framework towards the professionalisation of the public service, which was adopted by cabinet in 2022. The “how”

part is what the NPC calls a national capability building implementation programme aimed at “improving performance and accountability in strategic state institutions; building the capacity of municipalities for improved service delivery and better governance; developing the skills and expertise of employable young graduates and professionals; promoting co-operation and collaboration among state institutions and with private sector stakeholders; and mobilising turn-around interventions in strategic state institutions” (NPC, 2023). More details about professionalisation will be presented later in this report.

## **5 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNANCE CONTEXT**

South Africa is a constitutional democracy, with the Constitution through the Bill of Rights, affording all South Africans equal civil and political rights regardless of race, religion or gender. Participation in political life is guaranteed through representative democracy, allowing citizens through a multi-party electoral system to elect people to represent them in parliament, provincial legislatures and municipal councils.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, holds that the state is committed to the following: a high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained; efficient, economic, and effective use of resources must be encouraged; public administration must be development-oriented; services must be provided impartially, reasonably, equitably and without bias; people’s needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policymaking; public administration must be accountable; transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible, and accurate information to maximize human potential; good human-resource management and career-development practices must be cultivated; public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress past imbalances to achieve broad representation (Chapter 10, Section 195).

The SA Constitution is the supreme law of the land and sets out interdependent institutions. The legislature (parliament makes the laws) executive (cabinet executes) and the judiciary ensures that laws are interpreted in the correct way (courts). The state is organised around national, provincial and local spheres of government. The different spheres of government have different competencies and the three spheres (not levels) work intergovernmentally to achieve the objectives of the development state. A municipality is defined as consisting of the elected officials (politicians), appointed officials

(administrators) and the community (various formations). Local government is the sphere of government closest to the people.

The Constitution (RSA, 1996) compels the 257 municipalities to take on a development role by assigning certain developmental responsibilities to the local sphere of government. According to the Constitution (1996), the objective of local government includes the following: to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities, ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner, promote social and economic development, promote a safe and healthy environment; and encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government (RSA, 1996). A municipality must strive within its financial and administrative capacity to achieve the stated objective. Accordingly, a municipality must structure and manage its administration, budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community and to promote the social and economic development of the community and participate in national and provincial development programmes (RSA, 1996).

This implies that every municipality must strive to achieve the above objectives, considering (a) “its financial, human resource and administrative capacity, and (b) the powers conferred on it” (Cloete, 2016). The above principles have now been translated into various policies and legislation to create uniformity for the human resource management practice (HRM practice) of the country’s public service. In South Africa, “wall-to-wall” municipalities were demarcated to ensure that all areas of the country have access to development and governance. To address the various developmental needs of various parts of the country, municipalities were classified. The entire sphere of local government in South Africa is made up of municipalities, of which there are three distinct categories:

- **Category A municipalities** are large cities, with exclusive, executive and legislative authority within their municipal boundaries.
- **Category B municipalities** are local municipalities that share executive and legislative authority with Category C (or district) municipalities.
- **Category C municipalities** are district municipalities that contain several local municipalities (South Africa, 1996; Cloete, 2019)

However, the Constitution enables municipalities to provide services to communities through internal or external mechanisms. These mechanisms include municipal departments, municipal entities or service delivery agreements with third parties.

A municipal entity can be considered as an autonomous operational arm or agency, through which a municipality provides functions or services to its community. Municipal entities are accountable to the municipality or municipalities that established the entity and are required to adhere to a service delivery agreement that is consistent with the municipality's strategic plans and performance objectives (Institute of Directors South Africa, 2022). Municipal entities are independent organizations that perform municipal services on behalf of a municipality, although the municipality retains control through majority shareholding (Institute of Directors South Africa, 2022).

## **5.1 Public Administration Act**

The Public Administration Act 1994 (Amended Act 30, 2007) governs the administration and organisational framework of the public sector. The Public Service Act of 1994, the Public Administration Management Act of 2014, and the NDP are regulatory frameworks that regulate human resource management in the South African public service. The legislation places a strong emphasis on a prerequisite for a government sector that is ethical, professional, and sensitive to the interests of the people. The goal of the professionalisation initiatives is to enhance public servant capacity development, performance management, and recruitment procedures. In order to maintain efficient governance, legislation also supports values like accountability, justice, and transparency in the public sector.

The main objectives of the Public Administration Act of South Africa are to:

- Promote and give effect to the values and principles governing the public administration as stated in section 195(1) of the Constitution.
- Provide for the transfer and secondment of employees in the public administration.
- Regulate conducting business with the State.
- Provide for capacity development and training.
- Provide for the establishment of the National School of Government.
- Provide for the use of information and communication technologies in the public administration.
- Establish the Public Administration Ethics, Integrity and Disciplinary Technical Assistance Unit.
- Provide for the Minister to set minimum norms and standards for public administration.
- Establish the Office of Standards and Compliance to ensure compliance with minimum norms and standards.

- Empower the Minister to make regulations.

In essence, the Act provides for centralised control of local government by the national sphere, integrating local government employees into the public sector under the control of the Public Service Commission (PSC) and providing for transferring municipal staff to different district, provincial and national departments across the country and vice versa. Local government will, therefore, largely lose its autonomy as a separate government sphere in practice, despite the Constitution's entrenched stipulation that it is a separate sphere of government. This will necessitate significant amendments to local government legislation, including the municipal structures, systems and financial management legislation. The National School of Government (TNSG) is but one example of a body established by the Act to ensure support and monitoring implementation. It is envisaged that a single public service will include local government.

## **6 SOUTH AFRICAN HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2033**

The vision, objectives, and objectives for human resource development in South Africa from 2010 to 2030 are set forth in the HRD strategy 2025. The plan aims to match the workforce's skills and capabilities with the nation's developmental mandate and constitutional values. It is founded on the principles of the NDP and the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF). The Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) was tasked to ensure the implementation of a revised Human Resource Strategy. Noting that in South Africa, only 15% of the labour force hold a post school qualification as their highest level of education attainment (HRDC, 2023).

The HRDC, 2023 acknowledges that a skilled and globally competitive workforce drives economic growth, social development, nation-building, productivity, firm-level competitiveness and society's well-being. It proposes an all-encompassing definition of HRD as all forms of knowledge, education and skills acquisition, occurring in multiple settings (in person or online). HRD comprises formal (accredited courses leading to formal qualifications or short courses such as skills programs that lead to qualifications), informal (non-accredited courses) and non-formal (workshops and seminars). It includes short courses, formal qualifications, emerging formats such as online, blended and micro-credentialing. The HRDC further noted that implementation of policies have been weak, as confirmed by the NDP review, 2023. In order to ensure more measurable implementation, a Master Skills Plan (MSP) is proposed as the implementation plan over a five-year period.

The revised 2033 HRD Strategy has a vision of educated, skilled and competent individuals who contribute positively to their communities and the nation. The mission of the HRDS, 2033 is to create a more coordinated, effective, and efficient HRD system in South Africa that supports economic growth, reduces inequality and improves the quality of life for all individuals. The Strategy will contribute to addressing the socio-economic challenges faced by the country and ensure that individuals have the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the modern labour market and contribute to the development of a prosperous and inclusive society. This would include the centralised transformation of local government envisaged in the Public Administration Act.

## **7 MUNICIPAL MANAGEMENT AND TASK DISTRIBUTION**

Section 2 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), defines the municipality as the community (the various formations organised and unorganised sectors of society), the council (elected officials) and the administration (appointed officials) of which the community can be considered the primary stakeholder through the institutional ward committees.

The community can be considered the end-users of services, but they are also involved in the policy making process. Ward committees are the functional arms and legs of participatory local democracy and together with ward councillors are responsible for what can be considered grassroots governance or bottom-up democracy. Municipal councillors in the system are responsible for policy making and political oversight. A distinction is made between ward councillors and proportional representation councillors.

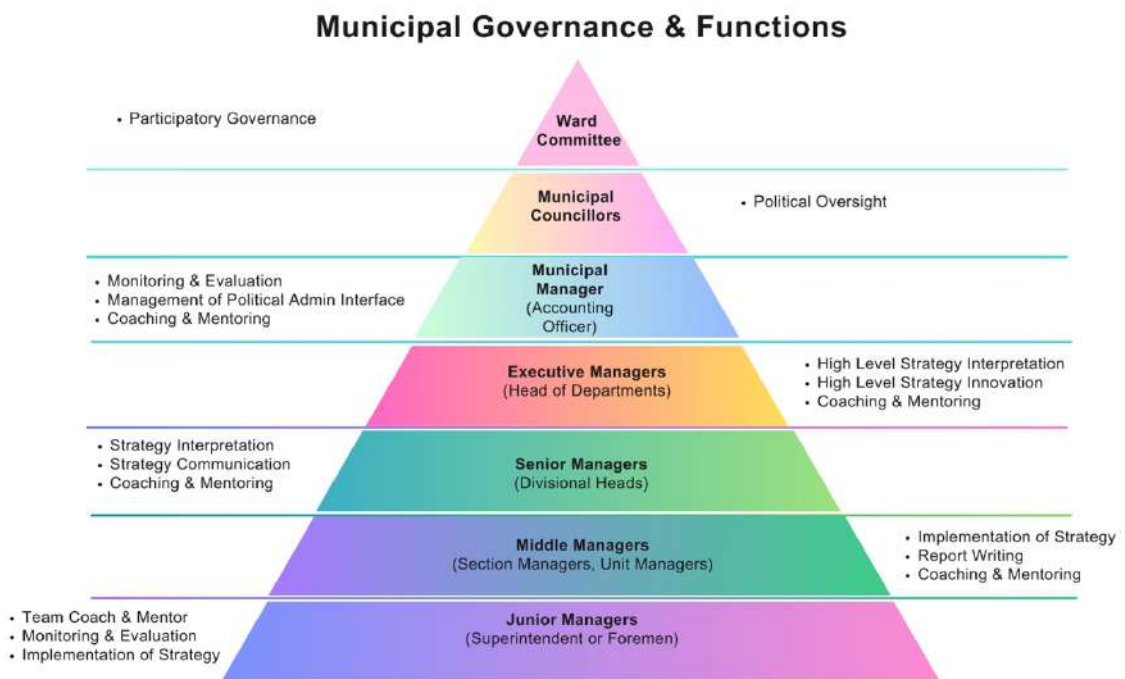
All municipalities or municipal entities have accounting officers (municipal managers). This functionary is considered the most senior administrative officer and performs various management and executive responsibilities as defined by the various local government legislation, notably the Municipal Systems Act (as amended) and the Municipal Finance Management Act (No. 56 of 2003) (as amended). The accounting officer, as the administrative leader has the task of ensuring an organizational culture of human resource development which includes monitoring and evaluation, management of the political and administrative interface as well as coaching and mentoring of, specifically, managers reporting to higher functionaries.

Executive managers comprise the second layer of managers who normally report to the accounting officers. They manage departments (or directorates as they are referred to in some municipalities) and are responsible for high-level strategy interpretation and

innovation, as well as coaching and mentoring of the senior managers who report to them. The third layer of managers, then, are these senior managers, who manage divisions and are sometimes called divisional heads. They report directly to their executive manager and are responsible for strategy interpretation, communication, as well as coaching and mentoring.

Middle managers are the fourth layer, managing sections or units and reporting directly to their senior manager. They are responsible for strategy implementation (execution of the agreed organizational strategies), gathering data and generating organizational reports. They also perform a coaching and mentoring role for the staff who report to them.

Lastly, at the bottom of the management hierarchy, are junior managers, sometimes referred to as first-line managers. They report to their middle managers and occupy positions such as supervisors or superintendents and are responsible for implementation of strategies and monitoring and evaluation of strategies.



**Figure 2: Municipal Governance and functions (source: author)**

## 8 CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY CHALLENGES OF MUNICIPALITIES

The National Skills Development Strategy III (2013) aims to reverse the structural inequality in SA with a renewed focus to increase access to training and skills development opportunities to achieve the transformation of inequities linked to class, race, gender, age and disability within the broader socio-economic context of South Africa. This by implication means that municipalities must embrace and prioritise human resource development (Cloete, 2019; Department of Higher Education and Training (nd.)). The broad aim of the National Skills Development Plan is to support the objectives of the National Development Plan, to ensure the realisation of a capable and responsive state as well as to respond to the post-school education and training policy demand (RSA, 2019). There can be no doubt about HRD's strategic role to prepare municipalities for the future (World Bank, 2019; McLean and Company, 2020). This, by implication, means that human resources (people) should be managed well.

However, consecutive reports from the Office of the Auditor General of South Africa (2022) confirmed that municipalities have regressed in terms of their financial and human resource performance. Despite the fact that the Auditor General has consistently been pointing out governance anomalies, municipalities have not committed to clean governance for more than a decade. The Free State province in particular is a case in point, where not a single municipality managed to produce acceptable financial statements over the last five years. In general, municipalities are in a permanent state of crisis (*permacrises*). However, it can be argued that the increasingly widespread reliance of municipalities on external consultants is a symptom of the failing of skills development initiatives even with the assistance of Sector Education and Training Authorities.

Over the last two decades of developmental local government, significant resources (time and money) have been invested by state institutions such as the Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA), the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and the Department Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) to build capacity in municipalities. No less than R1,26 billion was spent on such consultants in the 2021 financial year, with 79% of municipalities reappointing consultants used in the previous financial year (Auditor General of South Africa, 2022). The National Treasury, 2022 noted that over the past 5 years, more than R40 billion was allocated on programmes dedicated to building local government capacity. However, despite billions being allocated to local government, very little has changed in municipal capability (the ability to get things done – the how).



The result is that many municipalities have capacitated individuals, as evidenced by the annual work skills plan reports, but the organisation remains incapable of functioning optimally. Internal factors such as basic administration, standardised basic procedures and documented processes and control systems in determining local government outcomes are often ignored by scholars. This is despite these issues being highlighted repeatedly as key factors undermining organisational outcomes by entities such as the Auditor General (National Treasury, 2022)

Dauids et al (2022) note that the capacity constraints facing local government include more than just poor service delivery. They identified 10 areas that negatively impede local government performance:

- (1) financial resources (municipalities are failing to collect revenue efficiently which negatively impact on their ability to deliver services to communities);
- (2) human resources (municipalities are finding it difficult to appoint staff with the requisite competencies in strategic positions);
- (3) administrative leadership (administrative leadership fell short in the areas of ethics and accountability which in turn have a negative consequence on the institutional environment, culture as well as staff morale);
- (4) political leadership and administrative interface (the strained relationship between the elected (politicians) and appointed (staff) leadership is the cause of instability in many a municipality);
- (5) financial management capacity (municipalities suffer from a lack of financial management and an overdependence on consultants);
- (6) municipal service delivery (poor project management and financial and institutional governance prevents municipalities to perform optimally);
- (7) institutional environment (the morale of municipal officials is low, characterised by a lack of consequence management and rigid regulatory environment that stifles creativity and innovation);
- (8) infrastructure and work tools (a lack of “tools of the trade” negatively affect municipal performance);
- (9) community engagement (officials regard community engagements as a mere compliance exercise with the result that high levels of distrust between community members and elected and appointed leadership is prevalent) and finally;
- (10) the implementation of HRD interventions (the implementation of skills plans, and capacity building interventions was found to be a major problem for municipalities).

The lack of coordination and management of HR activities in municipal departments, as well as the lack of clear guidelines to departments on skills and capacity development are still prevalent in all municipalities. The poor state of implementation of HRD interventions in municipalities, confirms the conclusions of Cloete (2016) that municipalities face a plethora of integrated challenges in terms of managing the implementation of human resource development in local government.

The 2022 Auditor General report concluded that unless the root causes of local governance failure are addressed, service delivery will continue to lag behind, compromising sustainable development and service delivery. Three such causes are highlighted below:

- **Inadequate skills and capacity:** Municipalities suffer from an over reliance on consultants because of the limited capacity in the areas of finance, information technology and technical units. This is exacerbated by high vacancies and instability in key senior appointments (municipal manager and chief financial officer) which in turn contribute to poor (audit) improvements.
- **Governance failures:** Municipalities continue to be plagued by instability at the administration and political interface which leads to a breakdown in the areas of financial and performance management controls. Despite the presence of oversight committees, the recommendations of these committees are seldom implemented. The provincial oversight role was found to have very little impact (if at all) on municipal performance.
- **Lack of accountability and consequences:** Municipalities are guilty of taking limited or no action against officials for wrongdoing and poor performance. This is evident in the areas where councils fail to take remedial action on unauthorised, irregular, and fruitless and wasteful expenditure. Senior management are further guilty of inaction in the light of overwhelming evidence of wrongdoing. A lack of a performance culture continues to stifle internal excellence and continual improvement.

In addition, National Treasury, 2022 offered supportive arguments (evidence) to explain the poor performance of local government, arguing that;

- A significant number of municipal intervention programmes fail, in large part because of poor problem diagnosis (evidence)
- It is much easier to introduce new legislation or create new institutions or send people to training workshops, whereas it is much harder to fundamentally change the way in which things are done – effectiveness and efficiency (capabilities)

- Programmes tend to present activities (such as training) as impact, losing sight of long-term impact goals (evidence)
- The likelihood of success is increased by developing solutions that are based on local realities and buy-in (evidence)
- Long-term and sustainable improvements take time: focusing on 'quick fixes' and short-term performance are counter-productive
- Many of the implementing organisations themselves lack the requisite capabilities, but there is little focus on building appropriately capable delivery organisations

A closer look at interventions that have been taken so far to address the challenges of local government in South Africa have mostly focussed on individual capacity building. The hypothesis is that the lack of individual capacity is the cause of poor performance and weak service delivery. Capacitating individuals is therefore supposed to automatically result in improved organisational performance.

Andrews, Pritchett and Woolcock (2017) define capacity as the potential under ideal circumstances. Capability on the other hand refers to what is possible in a particular context. That is, under actual (almost always not ideal) circumstances. Capability therefore refers to the context of an organisation and how that particular context can impede or advance what is possible. In the municipal context, capability implies a basket of interconnected contextual factors such as financial resources, organisational processes and systems, political stability, staff morale, staff turnover, effective use of technology and community participation that impact the ability of municipalities to achieve their strategic outcomes. To illustrate, municipalities through the work skills planning (WSP) process, invest considerable resources in identifying competency gaps in individuals and then invest in capacity building activities of individuals through an array of human resource development interventions, of which the most widely used is education (formal academic courses) and training (accredited and non-accredited applied training).

However, individuals who have improved their capacity (knowledge, insight, skills), frequently return after such capacity-building sessions to toxic organisations (contexts) and find themselves not able to apply the newly acquired competencies in the workplace due to the limitations in the workplace (context or workplace capabilities that can include managers stuck in their ways and feeling threatened by younger, better qualified staff members or by new knowledge, insights, skills and technologies). The result is that organisations are not capable. This renders them incapable to achieve the envisaged development outcomes.

However Peters and van Nieuwenhuyzen (2013) point out that not all entities that are responsible for developing the capability of local government in South Africa have the requisite capability themselves to deliver on this obligation. Meyer and Venter (2014) concluded that one of the reasons why so many programs that aim to improve service delivery in local government fail is because the implementing department is often unable to implement these as planned. It thus appears that the entities responsible for improving the implementation capability of local government themselves lack the basic implementation capability to effect these improvements, leading to the low success rate of so many programs which is a problem.

It is widely accepted that improved skills and or building individual skills or improved deployment of skilled personnel will solve the complex problems of local government. However, Andrews, Pritchett and Woolcock (2017), argue that local government should focus on implementation capabilities (all the factors that supports the organisation's ability to implement, encompassing a much wider set of factors than just individual skills), stating that very purpose of capability is to support an organisation's ability to implement its mandate. The problem is not policy; the problem is the capability of the organisation to implement existing policies. Organisations lack implementation capability. In order for municipalities to ensure sustainable long-term development, a leadership paradigm shift is needed. Municipalities, in particular, have been guilty of focussing on individual capacity building programs instead of organisational capability building with a focus on fixing individual symptoms instead of focussing on the root organisational causes of poor performance and dysfunctionality. By focussing on capabilities instead (processes, systems, political administration interface) municipalities can embrace a more strategic long-term view of development through considering and addressing the contextual factors identified above that impact their ability to get things done (efficiency) (NPC, 2023).

Finding and implementing sustainable solutions for the HRD crisis in the municipal landscape should be a common goal for all stakeholders in local government with the relevant role-players working collaboratively to strengthen the capabilities, processes and controls of municipalities, which will enable credible HRD, financial and performance reporting, compliance with key legislation, and improved service delivery (AGSA, 2022). This does not imply that short-term individual capacity building should be ignored, but that such individual empowerment initiatives should be strengthened by organisational transformations that will reinforce more positive outcomes.

National Treasury, 2022 advocates for a Capability Development Problem-led approach that is centred around four guiding principles that will result in significant improvements to build sustainable, efficient and effective local municipalities.

The four guiding principles for the proposed new framework are:

- A clear focus on organisational capability development (rather than individual capacity building).
- A problem-led approach that starts with the problem that requires solving at the organisational level, rather than immediately supplying the solution, such as building the capacity of the individual.
- Co-production and inclusion at all points in the system.
- A whole-municipality (fully integrated) approach (financial and HRD governance).

## **9 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT POLICY RESPONSE**

The District Development Model (DDM) is the South African government's most recent response to arrest and turn around the governance collapse of municipalities (CoGTA, 2020). The DDM is built on a set of guiding principles. The DDM approach relies on a series of collaborative intergovernmental planning sessions that include research, evidence and innovation-oriented dialogues (knowledge) based on each district/metro's own context (unique dynamics, challenges and opportunities).

The institutional vehicle for the DDM is the district hub that is governed through three work streams viz,

- The Integrated Planning and Implementation stream, tasked to coordinate research related to service delivery and development.
- The Capacity Building stream tasked to oversee the implementation of capacity building.
- The monitoring stream that will develop baseline data to ensure that service delivery takes place (Cloete, 2021).

One of the weaknesses that the DDM seeks to overcome is the absence of an automated system to manage DDM operations, reporting, monitoring and governance (knowledge) as there is no centralized repository of data to enable government to realize the vision of coordinated HRD planning and budgeting.

The LGSETA has also already commissioned research into the challenges facing Skills Development Facilitators (SDFs) to implement human resource development in South African municipalities (University of Stellenbosch, 2016). The report concluded that municipal skills development facilitators (SDFs) face several challenges that prevent them from functioning optimally. This implies that skills development facilitation (HRD) is a high-risk activity. The main HRD challenges facing municipalities were found to be the following:

- knowledge pertaining to ethical values that support skills development (HRD),
- organisational weak/poor awareness and understanding of HRD policy/plan by employees,
- poor practice of HRD by municipalities,
- poor organisation (lack of departmental HRD plans),
- ineffective functioning of consultative committees, and
- poor support by stakeholders (University of Stellenbosch, 2016).

In order to address these challenges, the LGSETA adopted an Integrated Management Framework for HRD (IMF-HRD) as an implementation framework to address these and other HRD problems in municipalities (University of Stellenbosch, 2016). It then implemented a training intervention program across the 257 municipalities to empower municipalities to better manage HRD. To date more than 1100 municipal officials have already been trained in South Africa in the application of the IMF-HRD. A brief explanation and assessment of the IMF-HRD follows.

## **10 INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (IMF-HRD)**

Cloete (2023) contends that municipalities must adopt a more integrated approach to governing HRD and to manage the associated risks better and become more effective to ensure better governance outcomes and sustainability. This would include an integrated HRD governance framework with clear HRD policies, processes, procedures and consequences. This is expressed through the IMF-HRD.

The IMF-HRD has six (6) focus areas as illustrated in Figure 3 and focusses on the nature and extent of joint efforts by multiple departments in a municipality to create an innovative HRD culture for managing HRD effectively in municipalities. Figure 3 has more than six dimensions. At the centre of the IMF-HRD is a set of ethical values. The focus on ethical values emphasises the human element as reflected by the behaviour of the stakeholders

– openness, transparency, fairness, accountability, and procedural correctness that in turn can improve trust amongst the role players.

To prevent the organisation decisions being made based on outdated traditions and practices will require the organisation to adopt the code of ethical leadership in local government. In this the manager sets the tone for an ethical culture, follows a community-centred approach to governance, respects the boundary between the political and administrative spheres of the municipality, ensures the appointment of staff who have competence and integrity, ensures the appropriate level of competence, integrity, and diversity on committees and oversight structures, deals fairly and decisively with ethics transgressions and poor performance and engages respectfully and constructively with other leaders. The leadership in municipalities (elected and appointed officials) need to make sure that the organisations they are called to serve remain future focussed, keep making decisions based on empirical evidence, and keep internal and external stakeholders informed (Ethical Institute 2023; King IV, 2016).

In the IMF-HRD model the relationship between the HRD policies and practice is made explicit. For the municipal council (the employer) the policy sets in place a long-term vision that supports the strategic drivers of the municipality (the IDP) and prepares the municipality for the current and future competency needs. The functional organisation of HRD is organised within the directorates, which leads to better communication between the organisational actors (line managers, HRD professionals, employees, and councillors). The HRD practice is hence approached from a multidimensional level. Internal democracy is enhanced through the participation of employees in their own development. The value of stakeholder support is experienced on two levels, namely internal and external support. The stakeholders are all committed to continuous improvement by supporting the HRD efforts of the core organisational actors. This is a result of the HRD culture that continuously questions current HRD practices with the objective to improve practice. The external stakeholders recognise that each stakeholder brings to the table knowledge and experience that is beneficial. The shared service model is hence premised on the pooling of HRD services, which is beneficial to specifically the organisational actors (Cloete, 2016).



**Figure 3: Integrated Management Framework for Human Resource Development (Cloete, 2016)**

The temptation in many organizations is to consider individual training as the only solution to complex organizational problems. In the field of HRD, a paradigm shift, albeit incremental, is taking place. This shift entails considering HRD as going beyond just offering training to “fix” employees. The 70/20/10 approach holds that 70% of development (knowledge creation) occurs through providing on-the-job exposure that involves knowledge workers working on tasks and problems, 20% results from feedback from others through coaching and mentoring and 10% takes place through structured formal education and training. Although education and training is considered the most common tool for development, it was found to be the least effective (Jennings and Wargnier, 2011; Sewell, Venter and Masson, 2015).

However, despite the adoption of the Integrated Management Framework for Human Resource Development, one critical shortcoming so far has been the lack of an instrument or tool to measure HRD implementation as confirmed by a study conducted by Cloete, 2023. The study proposed that an HRD evidence-based system (dashboard) is developed, premised on gathering data from municipal actors i.e., employees, line managers, councillors and HR professionals to determine the HRD status quo of a municipality at any given time as envisaged in the Municipal Staff Regulations. This will enable internal and external stakeholders as identified in the literature and the IMF-HRD to monitor and evaluate institutional HRD municipal performance progress in order to plan and enable evidence-based interventions (new knowledge). The study further proposed that future national research be conducted with a more representative sample of municipalities to determine whether the HRD interventions of municipalities are realised and are as effective as envisaged by policy makers.



## 11 SALGA PROGRAMME ON PROFESSIONALISATION

The approach of local government professionalisation generally involves initiatives to further develop the abilities, proficiencies, and moral standards of municipal personnel and authorities. This includes actions like certification procedures, training courses, and capacity-building activities all of which are meant to increase the general efficacy and efficiency of the services that are provided by local governments (DPLG, 2008). By developing and implementing into practice a framework for promoting local government professionalism, the SALGA professionalisation initiative aims to enhance the level of professionalism and efficacy of local government employees and officials.

- The framework consists of four pillars of professionalisation (NSG, 2022):
  - **Competency-based recruitment and selection:** This pillar aims to ensure that local government officials and councillors are appointed based on their qualifications, skills, experience and suitability for the job.
  - **Performance management and development:** This pillar aims to ensure that local government officials and councillors are assessed and rewarded based on their performance and achievements and are provided with continuous feedback and support for their improvement and growth.
  - **Continuous professional development:** This pillar aims to ensure that local government officials and councillors are exposed to relevant and quality learning and development programmes and interventions that enhance their knowledge, skills and competencies.
  - **Professional bodies and associations:** This pillar aims to ensure that local government officials and councillors are affiliated with recognised and reputable professional bodies and associations that regulate and advance their professions and disciplines.

The implementation of the professionalisation framework relies on the effective cooperation and collaboration between CoGTA, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), the PSC, LGSETA, the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), the National School of Government (NSG), and higher institutes of learning that includes private training providers as well as elected and appointed officials as envisaged in the Public Administration Act discussed earlier in text. The Municipal Staff Regulations aims to, amongst others, facilitate a more professional approach to local governance.

## **12 MUNICIPAL STAFF REGULATIONS – AN EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH TO HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

The South African Constitution mandates municipalities to employ competent (in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes) staff for the effective performance of municipal functions to fulfil the South African government's commitment to building capable local governments and improving sound governance in municipalities. The Municipal Systems Act (No. 32 of 2000) obligates municipalities to develop and adopt appropriate systems and procedures to ensure fair, efficient, effective and transparent personnel administration to ensure effective delivery of their mandatory services to communities (CoGTA, 2022).

CoGTA (2021), introduced the MSR. The main objectives of the regulations are to create local government that is fair, efficient, effective, transparent and to create development-oriented human resource management and career development practices. The regulations further aim to ensure that high standards of professional ethics are nurtured within local government to strengthen the capacity of municipalities to perform their functions by recruiting and appointing suitably qualified and competent persons. In addition, the aim is to establish a cohesive HR management system with adequate controls measures.

The MSR sets the institutional guidelines for municipal staff selection, recruitment and organisational design (human resource management). It also sets the performance management and skills development (human resource development) protocols to be followed by local government (CoGTA, 2022) setting in motion the framework to ensure the professionalisation in the municipal sphere.

The MSR have far-reaching implications for human resource management and capability within the local government sector specifically in the area of human resource development stating that human resource development must:

- Support the achievement of the municipality's goals set out in the IDP by providing critical skills that ensure the delivery of quality services.
- Promote the development and retention of competent municipal staff, including the development of technical, professional and specialist staff who have the required qualifications and skills.
- Support the employment equity objectives of a municipality.

- Be based on high quality provision and effective workplace learning and development practices, including coaching, mentoring, on-the-job learning, and opportunities for the practical application of skills in the workplace.
- Seek to continuously improve its results and the returns on learning investments, by defining measures of success, conducting regular evaluations, and improving the impact of learning, training, and development; and
- Be designed to support and reinforce other capacity-building programmes in municipalities.

The MSR (2021) stipulate that the Human Resource Manager, the Skills Development Facilitator and senior management of the municipality should determine the skills needs of the municipality on an annual basis. This should be done by facilitating an annual assessment that measures the municipality's performance against its integrated development plan; identifies the roles (reasons) that are constraining service delivery, affecting community satisfaction or the efficient and effective internal operations of the municipality; and analyses the performance reviews and personal development plans of staff members employed in critical roles and job categories (MSR, 2021).

The annual assessment should involve meetings (evidence) with each municipal department to (MSR, 2021):—

- Evaluate the reasons for poor service delivery and performance (capability) by the department if any;
- Determine whether a lack of skills (competency) has contributed to the poor performance;
- Evaluate stakeholder complaints to establish whether poor service is a result of a lack of skills in certain key roles;
- Identify whether these problems are in critical roles and job categories which may need to be tracked more closely; and
- Identify the skills problems and needs associated with these roles.

This involves meetings with the senior management team of the municipality to present an aggregate assessment of the skills needs arising out of the department analysis; and validate the priority skills needs to be addressed by the municipality in the forthcoming year (evidence). A municipality must conduct regular evaluations of the workplace skills plan and personal development plans as well as their implementation; and adjust its

learning programmes to improve its effectiveness, including the impact on reducing the skills constraint on service delivery.

The MSR call on managers in particular to play a much more “hands on” role in creating an enabling human resource management environment, through a mandatory human resource plan and sets out the specific roles of the different municipal actors (MSR, 2021).

## **12.1 The Manager**

A manager must link HRD to the priorities of their function, the integrated development plan and to the outcomes of the performance management process; monitor skills needs and constraints that have, or may have, a major impact on the achievement of their objectives and report on these during the institutional skills needs analysis process; develop, report on and review progress with the personal development plans of the staff members who report to the supervisor or supervisor; ensure that development proposed in the personal development plans of the staff members who report to the supervisor is relevant to the functions of the municipality; provide coaching to and support for the development of their staff members; provide input into the content of training programmes, if relevant; allow their subordinates time off for training, as agreed in training schedules and plans; and actively facilitate the application of learning back on the job (MSR, 2021)

The MSR state that a municipality must support its staff members through the manager by:

- Clarifying the skills required for jobs,
- Identifying relevant skills needs and developing opportunities to satisfy the skills needs.
- Identifying new knowledge, attitudes, skills and habits (KASH) required by staff to support their career growth and progression
- Creating learning opportunities which will allow their staff to develop the skills and expertise to enable them to compete effectively for placement in new or vacant posts; and
- Ensuring that skills development is a key performance area in senior managers and supervisors’ performance agreements (MSR, 2021).

This is aimed at promoting career development through consultations with staff members supported by a skills development process that involves the planning, skills assessment implementation and review with the support of HRD professionals (MSR, 2021).

A municipality must ensure that every manager annually reports on progress with implementing staff personal development plans and the other programmes contained in the workplace skills plan; the effect of implementing personal development plans for staff is evaluated; evaluations, using standard benchmarks determined by the Minister, respond to priority learning programmes and contribute to the development of skills which result in improved performance and service delivery; and regular skills development reports and evaluation results are integrated into the wider capacity building initiatives within the municipality; and reported to the relevant provincial and national capacity building structures (MSR, 2021)).

## **12.2 Staff Members**

Staff members must actively manage their own development (whether for a current role or future career opportunities) based on their personal development plans; participate actively in skills audits; develop and reflect on their personal development plans with their supervisor; commit to development that coincides with the municipality's priority skills; participate actively in all forms of learning (training and development) which will assist the staff member to meet agreed needs; stay abreast of and apply new knowledge and skills in their field of expertise; and provide feedback on the outcomes, effectiveness and relevance of training and development received (MSR, 2021).

## **12.3 Skills Development Facilitator**

The skills development facilitator must facilitate the adoption of the Workplace Skills Plan, including liaising with the registered trade unions, facilitate the implementation of skills development programmes with supervisors, staff, and external training providers; liaise with the LGSETA and ensure that the municipality meets all the requirements of the LGSETA (MSR, 2021).

## **12.4 Chief Financial Officer**

The chief financial officer must ensure that proof (evidence) is provided to the LGSETA that all funds obtained from the LGSETA and the 1% budgeted towards skills development have been used for skills development purposes (MSR, 2021).

## **12.5 Training Committee**

A senior manager must chair the municipality's training committee. The training committee must have an equal number of managers and representatives of staff. The representatives of the municipality should include the integrated development planning manager, the skills development facilitator, the manager responsible for human resources, individual and institutional performance managers, and the chief financial officer. The representatives of staff members must include representatives of the registered trade unions recognised by the municipality or, in their absence, staff members who are representative of the municipality's staff as a whole (MSR, 2021). The training committee must consult and make recommendations to the municipal council on proposed improvements to skills audit processes as well as findings and priorities emerging from the skills audit presented by management; the draft workplace skills plan; management's regular skills development report; and skills development policies of the municipalities (MSR, 2021).

Although silent on the role of oversight, politicians perform a critical political oversight role in the implementation of HRD. The MSR (2021) further introduced a performance management and development system.

## **13 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM (PDMS)**

Various studies over the past two decades confirmed that performance management is not taken seriously in municipalities and not linked to development in municipalities. In order to address this, the MSR (2021) introduced a PDMS that is collaborative, transparent, and fair. Furthermore, the application of the PDMS should be consultative, supportive, and non-discriminatory to enhance organisational efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability. The PDMS must be underpinned by an open, constructive, and on-going communication between the manager/ supervisor and staff member. A municipality must formally adopt a PDMS as advocated in chapters 6 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000).

The PDMS must link to the municipality's strategic objectives, integrated development plan (IDP) and the Service Delivery Budget Implementation plan (SDBIP) of the relevant municipal department and that of the senior manager's performance plan and the performance plans of the staff members within that senior manager's department (CoGTA, 2020). The PDMS must be integrated with other human resource policies and practices of the municipality and must be developmental, while allowing for an effective response and relevant measures to manage all aspects of performance including substandard

performance, recognizing and reinforcement of fully effective performance, performance significantly above expectations and finally outstanding performance (Chapters 6 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000).

#### **14 MUNICIPAL EVIDENCED BASED PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

The Municipal Systems Act, 2000 mandates municipalities to develop a comprehensive 5-year strategic Integrated Development Plan (IDP). The IDP guides and informs all municipal planning and budgeting and can be considered the single integrated plan that guides all actions and decision making within a municipality. The IDP runs concurrent with the 5-year term of office of the political party and is developed in consultation with the community (individuals, ward committees and or representative organisations) and considers national and provincial plans and strategies (MSA, 2000). Once the five-year plan is developed and adopted by the municipal council, the IDP can be considered the overarching service delivery plan to ensure the realization of the developmental objectives of the municipality. The IDP is reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with the community (MSA, 2000).

According to the Municipal Structures Act, 2000, the Municipal Council's role is to govern municipalities in a democratic and accountable manner, to perform legislative and executive functions and generally fulfil its roles and responsibilities as set out in the Constitution. Municipal Councils are the highest authority within the municipality, whose responsibility it is to focus on legislation, decision-making, oversight, and participatory roles.

The implementation of the IDP is the responsibility of the municipal manager and the senior management team through the adoption of the SDBIP. The SDBIP is the tangible commitment of the respective municipal departments in a municipality to deliver on the annual commitments of the IDP. The SDBIP breaks the IDP down to manageable components through the identification of the service delivery targets and the budget to deliver on the development mandate. This is achieved through the identification of Key Performance Areas (KPAs) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) per manager to ensure that the service delivery commitments remain on track (performance management).

Managers sign individual and departmental performance agreements, committing their departments to meet their said targets. Individual and departmental performance is tracked using an evidence - based performance management system. There are various

performance management dashboard systems in place of which the most widely used one is the IGNITE system. See Figure 4.

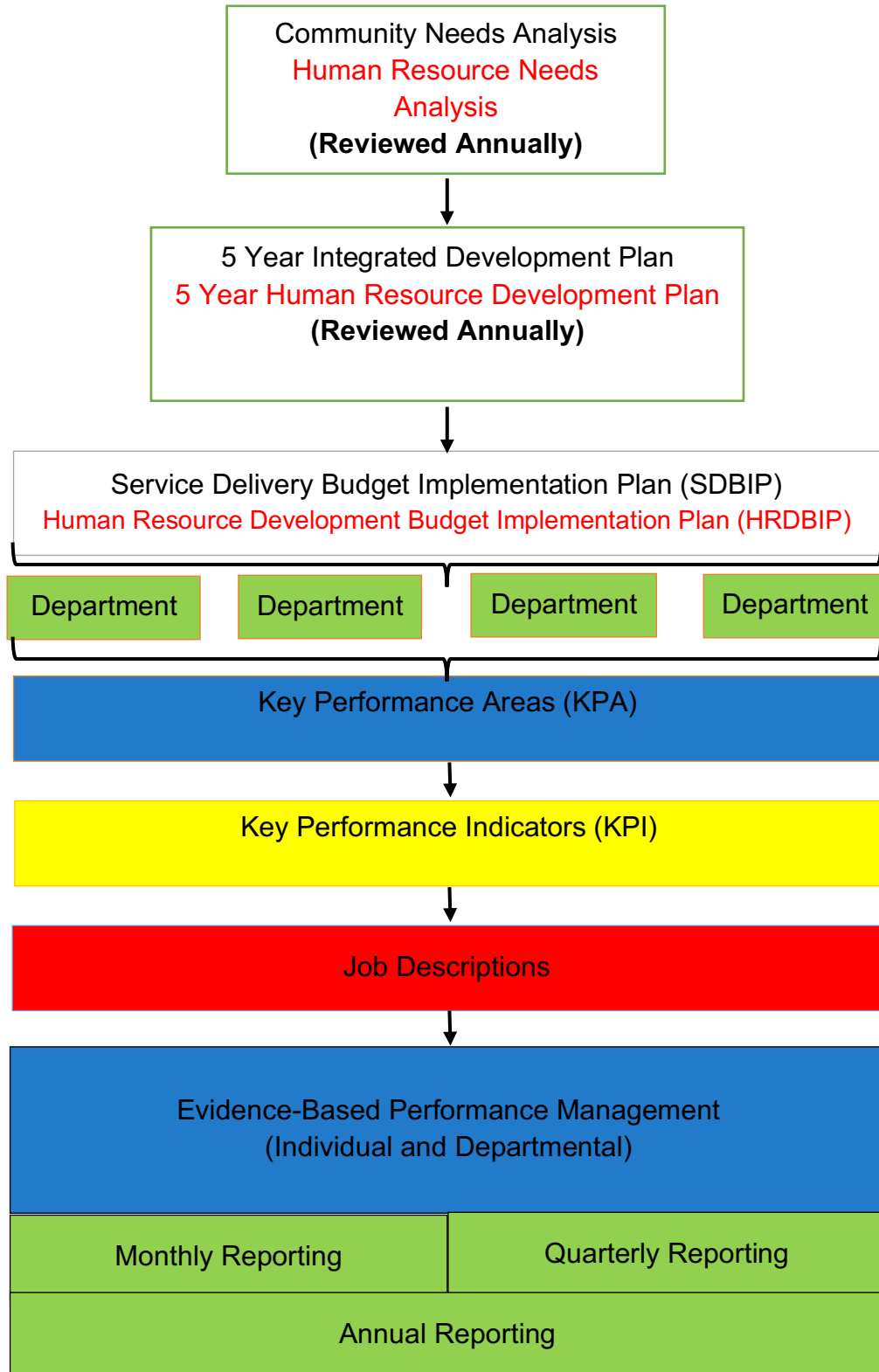


Figure 4: Municipal Evidence - Based Performance Management Cloete, 2024



## **14.1 The Muni eMonitor System**

Municipalities have been guilty of persistent non-compliance that have resulted in negative audit outcomes and poor performance and poor consequence management (National Treasury, MFMA Circular No. 125, Municipal Finance Management Act No. 56 of 2003). The intergovernmental framework legislatively enables National and Provincial Treasuries to monitoring compliance and support implementation of the MFMA by municipalities and municipal entities. Section 5(2)(c) of the MFMA requires National Treasury to monitor and assess the compliance of municipalities and municipal entities.

In November 2023, National Treasury launched the web enabled Electronic Monitoring and Evaluation – Muni eMonitor System and MFMA Calendar that has the objective to:

- strengthen the capacity and capability of municipalities and municipal entities to comply with the provisions of the MFMA and its regulations,
- introduce early reminders of impending deadlines,
- improve information flows for public accountability,
- enhance monitoring, oversight, support measures and effective reporting by various stakeholders in Municipalities, Provinces and National Treasury (National Treasury, MFMA Circular No. 125, Municipal Finance Management Act No. 56 of 2003).

The Muni eMonitor interfaces and complements other systems with the objective to enhance the overall completeness, accuracy, and timely submissions of MFMA compliance reports. The system aims to reduce and limit the use of manual processes, which has also been associated with delays in implementing corrective actions.

The benefit of the Muni eMonitor system is that it allows for easy compliance monitoring of the different financial management compliance disciplines and enable the results to be consolidated reflecting municipality, province or national.

### **The additional benefits include:**

- Compliance questionnaires and evaluations are completed mainly through selections from drop-down menus, thereby reducing the risk of omissions and errors and reduces the need to produce different compliance reports.
- Each aspect can be assigned to a specific responsible official for completion of the relevant section enhancing accountability and individual performance management.

- Timely reporting is enabled. The system is programmed to send out reminders as the due date for each action approaches, and an escalation notification is triggered, in addition to the reminder, when an action becomes due and overdue.
- The system enables simultaneous accessibility to key users in all three spheres of government (national, provincial and local), which enable enhanced co-operative government and oversight as Provincial Treasury and National Treasury reviews of the completed actions or evaluations are built in the system.
- Manual submissions are reduced as the required information is uploaded onto the system, thereby eliminating delays in sharing information with relevant stakeholders.
- Regular updates to the system will be made in response to comments and inputs from stakeholders and users.
- A comprehensive Help function is built into the system, which includes a detailed user guide.

The Muni eMonitor system introduces an electronic calendar (mobile app). The software application has an advantage in that it assists municipal officials to keep track of important events and tasks on their mobile devices. The MFMA calendar app is synced with the electronic MFMA calendar and provides features such as reminders and filters. The MFMA calendar app is accessible for councillors and other stakeholders. This will aid and promote transparency, accountability and good governance. The MFMA calendar app will allow citizens to obtain information about MFMA and related legislated due dates for required actions by municipalities, as well as, to participate in public decision-making processes.

The MFMA electronic calendar includes an **Actions Management Function** that supports municipal officials to improve compliance with key deadlines. This feature is available to officials that have registered on the Muni eMonitor system. It provides a built-in review process that improves the quality of compliance information. Use of the system will assist municipalities/municipal entities in strengthening accountability as the system tracks actions taken and review comments made. The actions management function is integrated with the electronic MFMA calendar and email notifications making it convenient and user-friendly (MFMA Circular No 125 Municipal Finance Management Act No. 56 of 2003).

The information is consolidated into several dashboards. The dashboards provide high level overviews by covering different financial management disciplines, trends, and progress in improving MFMA compliance within municipalities or municipal entities. The dashboards of the Monitoring and Evaluation system are data driven as information is

extracted from the data submitted by the municipality or municipal entity for Reporting and Evaluating purposes.

## 14.2 LGSETA Work Skills Plan Evaluation Reports

Municipalities are obligated to submit to the LGSETA on an annual basis a works skills plan (WSP) and annual training report (ATR). The WSP serves as the human resource development (HRD) plan and the commitment of the institution to facilitating a learning environment through various HRD projects. The WSP is followed by the ATR as the evidence on what was delivered in the WSP. The LGSETA Skills Development Handbook (2023) highlights the HRD planning process as crucial for managers in local government (assisted by the skills development facilitator). It involves analysing HRD needs, consulting with municipal employees, understanding occupational shortages, drafting personal development plans, developing a HRD budget, aligning skills planning with the municipal integrated development plan (IDP) and budget process. Managers (senior and junior) further play a vital role in incorporating HRD planning into business planning, budgeting cycles, and performance management processes. HRD should be integrated with employment equity processes to meet targets through internal staff development.

The LGSETA on an annual basis performs an external evaluation of the WSP and ATR as received from the municipalities in the 9 provinces. This evaluation report highlight, **employee profile** (evaluation and progress of progress of the designated group – Black people, women, and disabled employees), **age profile** (evaluation of the age distribution as it relates to youth and those employees nearing retirement) and **qualifications profile** (evaluation of the employee qualifications and whether the employees in the municipalities meet the required norms and standards in terms of qualifications). The evaluator of the report then draws inferences from the data presented (as captured on the LGSETA Server) and may make recommendations for improvements, in specific areas e.g., The municipality is encouraged to consider mentorship and coaching programmes to ensure transfer of skills and knowledge from well-experienced employees to less experienced employees (Interview: LGSETA, 2024).

These WSP evaluation reports are then presented to municipalities (via the office of the skills development facilitators). The evaluation reports are useful and provide the evidence to the municipalities of progress made enabling them to critically analyse and assess overall HR planning (succession planning and skills development planning) to improve individual skills levels and ensure employees are competent to fulfil their core functions and service delivery to the community (Interview, LGSETA, 2022). The WSP evaluation

reports are however not consistently applied in all the 9 provinces (LGSETA Provincial Managers Focus Group, 2024) which is a problem.

In the Western Cape, the evaluation reporting practice is established and the evaluation reports presented consistently allowing the evaluators to point out 3 – 5 year trends. It could not be established whether the evaluation reports are tabled to the accounting officer and senior management as there is no internal LGSETA process and or procedure to ensure strategic organisational attention (LGSETA Western Cape Focus Group, 2024; LGSETA Provincial Managers Focus Group, 2024). The role that managers play in the effective and efficient implementation of the WSP is also not reported on. Only training is reported on and informal HRD projects such as coaching and mentoring, informal on the job HRD are not accommodated in the WSP and hence is not evaluated. The evaluation report serves as the only quantitative evidence of HRD performance – this must be supported by qualitative HRD evidence akin to the process employed by the office of the Auditor General. Although the LGSETA is the authority on skills development, it does not exercise this to enforce corrective action.

### **14.3 Evidenced-Based Human Resourced Development Management System**

Although more than 1 100 municipal officials have been capacitated through the HRD for Good Governance Course, there is no known HRD management system to measure how municipalities are progressing on implementing the IMF-HRD and neither can the provincial offices of the LGSETA can track HRD implementation. To strengthen the HRD capabilities of local government, Cloete, 2021 developed an evidence-based HRD management system based on the Integrated Management Framework for Human Resource Development (IMF-HRD). The purpose of the HRD management system is five-fold. Firstly, the system allows the municipality to assess their own HRD performance against the Integrated Management Framework for HRD. Secondly, it provides a framework for the municipality to assess the HRD performance of the municipality and or departments. Thirdly, it provides the municipal actors (managers, non-managers, HRD professionals, councillors) and stakeholders with a dashboard on the interventions needed to implement targeted HRD interventions. Fourthly, it is a tool to ensure better HRD Governance and finally, the purpose is to ensure greater commitment from the municipal actors and stakeholders to implementing HRD in municipalities that increases professionalism in municipalities. The system measures HRD at the Departmental and institutional levels and flags HRD implementation performance as either red (high risk HRD

system – not functional) orange (medium risk HRD system- fair status) and green (functional HRD system-capable).

In a 2023 study Cloete recommended an evidence-based system (dashboard) to ensure better management of HRD in South African municipalities. Such a system, he argued, would enable internal and external stakeholders to monitor and evaluate municipal HRD performance in order to plan and enable evidence-based interventions (new knowledge). The recommended HRD management system is premised on gathering baseline data (evidence) from municipal actors (i.e. employees, line managers, HRD professionals and councillors) in order to determine the HRD-related status quo of a municipality at any given time, to analyse the findings (evidence) in order to determine the organisational HRD reality. This is followed by the development of departmental HRD plans so that HRD can be better managed leading to improved HRD capabilities (processes and procedures). The departmental plans are then monitored on a monthly basis so that sustainable institutional change is cemented. The bricks and mortar of the HRD management system identifies the implementation actors, the how (strategies) and the HRD outcomes as indicated in the table below.

The HRD management system is aligned to the one plan as advocated by the District Development Model (DDM) that is premised on a series of collaborative and deep intergovernmental planning sessions reflecting on research, evidence, solution and innovation orientated dialogues based on each district/metros' own dynamics, challenges and opportunities. The DDM concludes that this planning is not a tick box compliance driven implementation but rather a process of reimagining a preferred future and identifying strategies and interventions that will result in change and sustained impact.

**Table 1: HRD System**

| <b>WHY</b>  | <b>WHAT</b>                         | <b>HOW</b>  | <b>WHO</b>   | <b>KEY FEATURES &amp; BENEFITS OF THE SYSTEM</b>  |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| To gather baseline data (evidence) so that HRD can be managed HRD better.                       | Complete the questionnaire/survey   | Between 20% and 25% of actors per departments complete the questionnaire.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Line Managers</li> <li>• Non-Line Managers</li> <li>• HRD Professionals</li> <li>• Labour</li> <li>• Politicians</li> </ul> | The assessment can be completed at any time on any device that is connected to the Internet. The system reports data in real time.                                    |
| To analyse the findings (evidence) so that the municipality is confronted with the HRD reality. | Report the results                  | System represents graphs and the data is displayed per department in the municipality.                                | Line Managers  | The reporting reflects results in percentages per organisational actor in departments with a turnaround feature that directs the user to the populated outputs (how). |
| To develop HRD departmental implementation plans so that HRD is better managed and measured.    | Develop the HRD implementation plan | From the supplied list of Outputs, the Directorates develop change management plans through courageous conversations. | Line Managers with the support from the SDF with oversight sign off by the accounting officer  | The “WHAT”, “HOW” and “WHY” are already populated. The additional feature under “HOW” which is “OTHER” allows the user to add any additional “HOWS” (innovation).     |

|   |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|---|--|--|
|   |   |   |  | The user can upload all evidence for review, i.e., policies, infographics, records, meetings etc.  |
| To generate Monitoring and Evaluation reports so that institutional change is affected. | Monitor and Evaluate HRD Implementation | Ongoing dashboard on display through monthly reporting. | SDF, office of the MM and IDP, Labour Forum and the training committee | <p>The user uploads the evidence and a reviewer, senior or supervisor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Either reject evidence with comments or accept evidence with comments.</li> <li>• This section also allows for the reviewer to be reviewed by an outside consultant or internal senior or supervisor.</li> <li>• The system allows for the reviewing process to be tracked, meaning the Service Provider and/or Director to review the duration of the review to speed up delivery.</li> </ul> |

#### 14.4 Evidence-Base Human Resource Development Indicators

The HRD system allows for a set of evidence-based HRD implementation indicators that links organisational strategy namely the Service Delivery Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) and the HRD performance of managers. This will ensure an implementation framework that will deliver the organisational HRD outcomes. The evidence-based HRD management system is underpinned by the IMF-HRD indicators. These are Ethical values, Policy, Organisation, Practice, Internal Democracy and Stakeholders. A seventh indicator, namely, knowledge management was added for two reasons: Firstly, in support of the damning 2023 research finding on the poor state of knowledge management in municipalities and secondly, because of the close correlation between knowledge management and HRD as highlighted.

Each of the HRD indicators has suggested evidence-based outputs for managers that point to the “how”. Examples of evidence include minutes of meetings, still images, videos, posters, infographics, feedback forms, audio recordings, transcribed focus group interviews, individual interviews transcriptions. The list is by no means exhaustive and more outputs can be added as managers and skills development facilitators find more innovative ways to support the municipal HRD environment. This is followed by a “who” column that identifies the leading role players to realise the HRD outputs. In this instance the word manager is inclusive of senior, middle and junior managers as identified earlier in the text. Ethical values are convictions and beliefs about how the organisation and those who represent it (managers) should conduct themselves, how resources and stakeholders should be treated, what the core purpose and objectives of the organisation should be and how work duties should be performed. This demands ethical conduct from managers in decision making, conduct and behaviour (King IV,2015). The last column points to the HRD outcomes – the “what” to be achieved (See Appendix)

This implies that the organisation must develop an analytical abilities through an evidence-based approach by developing three key organisational capabilities (Jivan, 2023). **Descriptive analytics** focuses on the past and answers the question on what has happened. **Predictive analytics** identifies patterns from the past and present and tries to explain these and then attempts to answer the question on what will happen in future if these trends continue or change, and the reasons for it. Finally, **Prescriptive analytics** develops and compares the most accurate forecasts and scenarios of future trends and developments and provides recommendations about what should be done to achieve the ‘best’ future outcome (Jivan, 2023).



## 15 COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The Municipal Staff Regulations introduced a competency framework for various occupational skills that will ensure the employment of competent staff in local government so as to achieve higher levels of service delivery in municipalities. The competency framework provides municipal practitioners with a transparent framework that enables municipalities to recruit and select the right people through the identification of the critical competencies of defined occupations.

The competency framework further enables individuals to identify, appreciate and understand their strengths and development areas. It further serves to clearly identify the development interventions to ensure managers attain the competencies required for optimal performance. For managers, the competency framework serves as a tool to assess the competencies of individuals in terms of current jobs and occupations and to assess the readiness of incumbents (MSR, 2022).

The Municipal Staff Regulations competency framework, which encompasses every category of municipal staff, not just senior managers, is more comprehensive and detailed than the one that was intended for senior managers.

The competency framework identifies five basic components viz,

1. **Knowledge, qualification, and experience** – This can be considered the basic requirement of the incumbent in terms of what they bring to the organisation. In this instance knowledge refers to the breadth and depth of what is required to perform the job. A qualification is that which is obtained by an individual through a process of formal assessment by an independent body. Finally, experience is tacit knowledge considered as that which is gained through life experience and inherent to the individual.
2. **Professional/functional competence (competence in the functional and technical areas of the job)** – These are indicative of the specialized skills that an individual has cultivated within their professional domain. The specific competencies serve as manifestations of the knowledge and practical proficiency required by individuals for effectively dealing with the complexities, ambiguity and challenges faced by individuals in the day to day activities at work.
3. **Personal competencies** – These refer to the components or attributes of the individual that enable him/her to perform optimally. It includes elements such as proactiveness, resilience, change readiness, cognitive ability and teachability,

lifelong learning. These elements are indicative of one's attitude, energy, bias to action and tenacity which are critical to optimally deliver in a role.

4. **Public Service Orientation competencies** – This relates to the ability of the individual to reflect one's personal capacity and orientation in interaction with others in such a manner that positive and constructive long-term relationships are developed and maintained in delivering the desired services. It includes elements
  - a. such as interpersonal relationships, communication, and service delivery orientation.
5. **Management/Leadership competencies** – These refer to the ability to work with and through others on tasks and the ability to mobilize around a common cause. The ability to lead ethically and with integrity and to coach and mentor and motivate others. The regulations also introduce a completely new HRD governance regime for municipalities and is perfectly aligned with the Integrated Management Framework discussed earlier in the text and place the manager at the centre of human resource management and measurement (MSR, 2022).

## 16 COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK (EVIDENCE) FOR SENIOR MANAGERS

The recruitment, performance, compensation, and discipline of senior managers in municipal institutions are governed by a set of regulations set forth by the local government in South Africa (2014). The purpose of these regulations is to guarantee that senior managers perform a responsible, ethical, and competent role in the delivery of municipal services and that they do so in an effective and efficient manner. The legislative framework for the competency framework is the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000) and has two focus areas viz:

- **core competencies** (competencies that cut across all levels of work in a municipality and enhance contextualized leadership that guarantees service delivery and impact; and
- **leading competencies** (competencies that are required to develop clear institutional strategy, initiate, drive and implement programs to achieve long-term sustainable and measurable service delivery performance results).

The competency framework consists of six leading competencies which comprise of twenty (20) driving competencies that communicate what is expected for effective performance in local government. The competency framework further involves six (6) core competencies that act as drivers to ensure that the leading competencies are executed at an optimal level. The competency framework is underscored by four (4) achievement

levels, i.e., (i) Basic, (ii) Competent (iii) Advanced, and (iv) Superior, that act as benchmark and minimum requirements for other human capital interventions which are, recruitment and selection, learning and development, succession planning, and promotion.

The **Core Competencies** (act as drivers to ensure that the leading competencies are executed at an optimal level and cuts across all levels of work in a municipality) of which there are five core competencies:

1. **Moral Competencies** – as stewards of public interest, senior management's moral competence becomes a cornerstone for building a resilient and ethically sound governance structure within the local government framework.
2. **Planning and Organising** – the capacity to strategically plan, coordinate resources, and execute initiatives to achieve organizational goals.
3. **Analysis and Innovation** – the ability to critically assess existing processes, identify areas for improvement, and implement innovative solutions to address challenges.
4. **Knowledge and Information Management** – a comprehensive understanding of information management strategies, including data collection, analysis, and dissemination.
5. **Communication** – the ability to articulate complex ideas clearly, engage with diverse stakeholders, and navigate communication challenges inherent in the dynamic environment of local governance.
6. **Results and quality focus** - to adopt a strategic approach, aligning resources with objectives, and implementing performance metrics to gauge success.

**Leading Competencies and Drivers** (required to develop clear institutional strategy, initiate, drive and implement programs to achieve long-term sustainable and measurable service delivery performance results) of which there are 6 lead competencies:

1. **People Management** – Human Capital Planning and Development, Diversity Management, Employee Relations Management and Negotiation and Dispute Management.
2. **Strategic Direction and Leadership** – Impact and Influence, Institutional Performance Management, Strategic Planning and Management, Organisational Awareness.
3. **Program and Project Management** – Program and Project Planning and Implementation, Service Delivery Management, Program and Project Monitoring and Evaluation.

4. **Financial Management** – Budget Planning and Execution, Financial Strategy and Delivery, Financial Reporting and Monitoring.
5. **Change Leadership** – Change Vision and Strategy, Process Design and Improvement, Change Impact Monitoring and Evaluation.
6. **Governance Leadership** – Policy Formulation, Risk and Compliance, Management, Cooperative Governance.

## 17 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (HRM)

Traditionally the human resource (HR) function was perceived to be about controlling labour costs and securing a steady supply of competent employees for the organisation to be of value (Mullins and McLean, 2019; Itika, 2011). The broad field of human resource management (HRM) focuses on the employment relationship between employer and employee and the way in which people are managed in the workplace for the achievement of optimal results (SABPP, 2013). HRM has been defined as incorporating the specific practices and processes, formal policies, and overarching HR philosophies where an organisation's employees are secured, developed, retained, and rewarded. Another view of HRM considers it as involving all the activities that line managers engage to attract and retain employees, to ensure that human resources in the organisation perform at efficient and effective levels to contribute to the accomplishment of organisational goals (Armstrong and Baron, 1998; Harrison and Kessels, 2004; Jones and George, 2004).

Stewart (2015) argues that specifically HR professionals are change agents that should be competent in advising and assisting managers to perform their organisation change development programs including HRD. This also calls into question the role of human resource management and in particular the role of the HR department to include the development of human capabilities.

Ulrich (1997) advises that human capability should be understood on four levels, namely the individual, organisation, leadership, and the HR department. These four pathways are briefly discussed:

- **Individual** – the old adage is true: people make or break organisations. People enter the workspace with knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits (KASH) that are used to create value. They either engage or disengage and participate to create societal value. The role of human resource management in this instance is to help people actualise (reach their full potential), their competencies and to create positive work life experiences (Ulrich, 1997).

- **Organization** – focusses on how individuals collaborate to create societal impact. Individuals come together to collectively work together to become more than their separate efforts. Through this process organisations combine individual competencies and turn this into organisational capabilities (what the organisation is known for and good at). In this way, organisations develop their own unique characteristics or identity. The role of HR's work is to identify and develop the organization's capabilities to achieve the predetermined organisational outcomes and results (Ulrich, 1997).
- **Leadership** – is experienced at the individual and the organisational level throughout the organisation. Leaders (individual competencies) and leadership (organization capability) shape organisational behaviour as people emulate leaders and organisations' processes which often reflect the leaders' competencies (Ulrich, 1997).

The role of the **HR department** is to drive the capabilities (discussed earlier in text) agenda, built on 9 key aspects that deliver value on four levels. At the foundational/administrative level (HR focus on efficiency), functional level (HR focus on best practice), strategic level (HR focus on delivery) and on strategy outside in (HR focus on stakeholders outside the organisation). These 9 aspects are:

1. **HR Reputation:** What is the HR department known for by all stakeholders?
2. **HR Success:** What and who defines HR success?
3. **HR Strategy:** What is the purpose, mission, or strategy of the HR department?
4. **HR Design:** How is the HR department organized?
5. **HR and Organization Capability:** How does HR create the right organization capabilities for the business?
6. **HR Analytics:** How can HR access information through digital HR to make better decisions?
7. **HR Practices:** How does HR design and deliver HR solutions?
8. **HR Professionals:** What do HR professionals need to be, know, and do to be effective?
9. **HR Work Style:** How does HR go about doing its work?

According to Ulrich (1997) the individual, organisation and leadership are the core components of human capability. The key question for any organisation should be to determine how to invest in talent, leadership, and organisation initiatives to deliver organisational outcomes.

Although considered a key component of HRM, human resource development (HRD) is a discipline in its own right as explained below. Earlier in the text HRD was defined as all forms of knowledge, education and skills acquisition, occurring in multiple settings (in person or online). It comprises formal (accredited courses leading to formal qualifications or short courses such as skills programs that lead to qualifications), informal (non-accredited courses) and non-formal (workshops and seminars). It includes short courses, formal qualifications, emerging formats such as online, blended and micro-credentialing.

HRD does not just happen in a vacuum but shaped by an array of organisational actors described above such as, HRD professionals, line managers, employees, elected officials (in the case of municipalities) who are in a collaborative relationship. HRD can also be thought of as the study or practice concerned with the diagnosis of performance-related behaviour change requirements at the individual, group and organisational level within any organisation, and the design, delivery, and evaluation of formal and/or informal learning activities to meet the identified needs (Hamlin, 2016).

However HRD will not succeed if the actors continue to work in silos since the challenges facing HRD are usually too complicated for one group to solve by themselves. Yet traditional HRD silos often mean groups are working independently on solutions to the same issues whereas leadership in municipalities in particular should focus on building and enhancing a collaborative HR culture to improve HR effectiveness (McLean & Company, 2020). Collaborative HRD is “the structure and process, of management that is based on active collaboration between the HRD professionals, line managers, employees, and elected officials at all levels of the municipality to meet and monitor set organisational HRD objectives. It is a facilitative partnership approach that is co-owned and premised on mutual trust, dialogue, shared learning, the effect of which is to ultimately add greater internal and external value” (Cloete, 2016).

## **18 A SUSTAINABLE MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK**

There are varied definitions of governance and no universal definition exists. Governance refers to the procedures, structures, systems, and processes used to regulate organisations in order for them to function and meet their predetermined societal objectives. These organisations are characterised by transparency, accountability, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation with a variety of stakeholders and interest groups (Graham, Amos and Plumpre, 2003:1; United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2016:3).

In the organisational context, governance refers to the system by which organisations are managed and the mechanisms by which it holds individuals within the organisation accountable. Governance encompasses critical aspects of effective organisational functioning such as ethics, leadership, management, roles and responsibilities, risk management, strategies, compliance, and administration (Governance Institute of Australia, 2023). In essence it involves the effective and efficient management of the relationships between an organisation's management, its board, shareholders in the case of non-profits – end users of services and other stakeholders (Governance Institute of Australia, 2023).

The King IV report on corporate governance in South Africa (2015) sets the implementation framework to achieve value creation in a sustainable manner in line with the objectives as set out in the United Nations Sustainable development goals (2016), the Africa 2063 Agenda and the South African 2030 National Development Plan. A code of good practice was presented for municipalities and if implemented can contribute to better governance outcomes.

**Principle 1: Leadership** – The municipal council must individually and collectively act with integrity through leading the organisation ethically and effectively. Thus the municipal council assumes collective responsibility for navigating and setting the strategic direction of the organisation.

**Principle 2: Organisational Ethics** – The municipal council must develop an acceptable code of conduct by ensuring that the code of conduct incorporates the ethical standards of the organization and ethical risks. The council must ensure the implementation and execution of codes of conduct and policies by management.

**Principle 3: Responsible corporate citizen** – Through its conduct the municipal council gives effect to the directive as expressed in the constitution through the Bill of Rights and all applicable laws. It does this by ensuring that the municipal council's core purpose and values, strategy and conduct are congruent with being a corporate citizen.

**Principle 4: Strategy and performance** – The municipal council must delegate to management the formulation and development of the short, medium, and long-term strategy that is approved by the municipal council by taking into consideration the timelines, risks, opportunity and resources.

**Principle 5: Reporting** – Municipalities develop 5 year integrated development plans and annually report back to communities on the progress made against the integrated plan.

The organisational reports should enable stakeholders to make informed assessments of the municipality's performance and its short, medium, and long-term prospects.

**Principle 6: Primary responsibility** – The municipal council exercises both legislative and executive authority within a geographic area. The municipal council sets the tone and performs as well as exercises leadership through steering, approving policy, planning, monitoring, and overseeing implementation by the management team.

**Principle 7: Composition of the council** – The municipal council should display individuals with the appropriate balance of competence, experience and diversity and independence to discharge its governance role objectively and effectively. The onus is then on political parties to ensure the candidates meet the criteria.

**Principle 8: Committees of council** – The municipal councils may only delegate to committees authority that is permissible under legislation. When delegating to committees the council must ensure that the committees have terms of reference and ensure that the latter promote independent judgement to discharge of its duties.

**Principle 9: Evaluation of council performance** – The municipal council should ensure that mechanisms are in place for the council to evaluate their own performance. In this council the political parties should work together to ensure an arbitrary measurement to evaluate the performance of councillors and the council.

**Principle 10: Appointment and delegation to management** – A competent and ethical management team must be appointed to lead the administration in municipalities. Various reports have confirmed that the lack of competent and ethical leadership to be at the centre of governance challenges in South Africa.

**Principle 11: Risk governance** – Risk should be governed in such a way that supports the organisation in setting and achieving its strategic objectives. The management and council should identify the risks and mitigation factors. Risks should be considered when developing strategy and considered in all decision making and execution.

**Principle 12: Technology and information governance** – Technology and information should be governed in such a way that supports the organisation setting and achieving its strategic objectives. Management must implement and execute effective information technology with oversight by the municipal council.



**Principle 13: Compliance governance** – The municipal council delegates to management the responsibility for implementation and execution of effective compliance management. The municipal council must also receive regular assurance reports from management to ensure the municipality remains in good standing.

**Principle 14: Remuneration governance** – The municipal council should ensure that it remunerates fairly as permitted through national remuneration regulations. The municipal council should responsibly and transparently remunerate so as to promote the achievement of strategic organisational objectives.

**Principle 15: Assurance** – The municipal council should ensure that assurance services and functions enable an effective control environment. The municipal council, committees, and community as well as the various external stakeholders should be able to assess the output of the municipality objectively.

**Principle 16: Stakeholder governance** – The municipal council is ultimately responsible for determining the strategy and policy for managing stakeholder relationships (internal and external). This participatory governance framework springs from a deep conviction by the municipality to involve citizens in decision making.

The outcomes of the application of the governance principles in South Africa will be an ethical culture, good performance and effective controls that ultimately lead to legitimacy and trustworthiness from the identified stakeholders. Through the implementation of governance principles, stakeholders are assured that their interests are advanced and protected by the sphere of local government closest to them (Institute of Directors, 2016).

Cloete, 2023, adopted from Barber, 2015 advocates for the adoption of a governance implementation framework that is structured along five core questions (Governance5iQ) and a subset of 5 statements to help organisations become more effective and efficient (leading to continuous improvements and innovation). These questions and statements should be answered by the organisational leadership (policymakers and policy implementers) that will give rise to evidence-informed policy and programme decisions at the local government sphere.

Governance5iQ functions on two tracks addressing capacity (competencies of individuals) and capability (factors impacting on the organisational ability to get things done) in order to achieve sustained organisational performance. It incorporates the 16 governance principles as advocated by King IV unpacked above, compelling the organisation to critically reflect on how the context of the organisation can either limit or constrain

organisational performance (Andrews, Pritchett and Woolcock, 2017 in National Treasury, 2023).

In the Governance5iQ framework the municipal council is responsible for the “why” (we do what we do) and the “what” (must be done) and management responsible for the how (the work should be done), who (the staff to do the work) and the when (timeframes). This critical organizational paradigm shift is a move away from individual capacity building initiatives to capability building that moves the organisation away from processes (inputs) towards outcomes. This is considered important for the long-term sustainability of the organization in line with objective 16 of the sustainable development goals (SDG) – peace, justice and strong institutions.

**Question 1: Why do we do what we do?**

This answer to the first question allows the organisation to define the unique contribution and impact it wishes to make with specific, measurable, achievable, realistic timeframe goals that is communicated to all levels of the organization. The first question addresses three governance principles namely leadership, organisational ethics and the primary responsibility of the council (King IV, 2015).

**Question 2: How is it being done?**

The answer to the second question allows the organisation to identify the clear implementable plans (strategies) together with the standard operating procedures and policies. This section explains the organisational daily disciplines (day-to-day tasks). The second question address the four governance principles namely strategy and performance, appointment and delegation to management, remuneration governance and stakeholder governance (King IV, 2015).

**Question 3: How will we know at any given moment that we are on track?**

This third question incorporates monitoring and evaluation. The organisation needs credible real-time data (evidence) on key indicators with analysis and monitoring routines involving all key stakeholders. This could include key performance indicators for all managers. The third question addresses five governance principles namely reporting strategy and performance, evaluation and performance, technology and information governance, compliance governance and assurance (King IV, 2015).

#### **Question 4: If we are not on track, what is being done about it?**

The fourth question address the issue of consequence management. The organisation should set in place agreements on corrective actions to be taken that is continually refined with a focus on innovative approaches to problem solving. The fourth question addresses the governance principle of risk governance (King IV, 2015).

#### **Question 5: How do we lead and learn?**

The final question addresses the issues of organisational leadership and knowledge management by questioning the organizational commitment to innovation and lifelong learning. This is achieved through a relentless pursuit of continuous improvement and high performance. The fifth question addresses three governance principles namely responsible corporate citizen, composition of the board and committees of the board (King IV, 2015).

### **19 GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES**

Collaboration can be seen as one activity/dimension of governance. This governance activity/dimension is defined by the relationship between the governors (the elected or appointed officials) and those being governed (the end users of services), encompassing both the process of governing (the how, for example is it transparent, fair, accountable, procedural correctness, collaborative, responsiveness). It also involves the outcomes of that process (equitable, competence, development, growth, care, sustainable) (Cloete, 2023). Since it is a behavioural framework, governance can be considered good or bad. Good governance is based on ethical and effective leadership that is based on formalised norms and standards/criteria (Cloete and Mmakola, 2018; Masegare and Ngoepe, 2018).

This leads to the concept of HR governance which can be described as a behavioural framework for dealing with multiple internal actors in organisations and its divisions/units that consists of formalised norms and is the result of multiple external stakeholder influence. As a management tool it has process and outcome indicators regulating HR management tasks, activities, and instruments under its scope (SABPP, 2018; Kaehler and Grundei, 2019). Against this background one can view HRD governance as separate from HR governance since it has been established that HRD (although a part of HRM) is also a discipline in its own right. HRD governance is defined by the 'functional, ethical, and effective collaborative working relationship of/between the organisational actors (with authority and those without formal authority) in organisations to achieve organisational optimisation through deliberate planned learning/development activities. It is underpinned

by a set of process indicators that include (participation, accountability, responsiveness, strategic vision, consensus orientation and procedural correctness) and outcome indicators (impact, competence, growth, performance, productivity, sustainability). Having provided the definition of HRD governance, it is concluded that HRD governance is imperative for good municipal governance (Grobler, Bezuidenhout and Hyra, 2014).

According to Armstrong and Taylor (2023) the impact of human resource development governance initiatives depends on in-depth analysis, logical reasoning and critical thinking which can be considered the building blocks of an evidence informed approach to human resource development, considered critical for problem solving and decision making. Effective accountability is another important dimension of good governance. According to the Auditor General of South Africa, material irregularities is defined as “any non-compliance with, or contravention of, legislation, fraud, theft or a breach of a fiduciary duty identified during an audit performed under the Public Audit Act that resulted in or is likely to result in a material financial loss, the misuse or loss of a material public resource or substantial harm to a public sector institution or the general public”. Thus material irregularities is built around various sets of evidence. The question could be posed whether material irregularities should be extended to include human resource development management to ensure greater accountability.

Wallis, 2012 proposes four accountability control strategies/activities that can be identified in the management of human resource development, namely directive, preventative, detective and corrective controls, elaborated on below:

1. **Directive Controls:** Directive controls are those controls that can be considered embedded in the culture of the organisation. They are specifically designed to ensure the achievement of specific outcomes or behaviours. Examples of directive controls include policies, codes of conduct, value statements, ethical guidelines, policies, performance standards.
2. **Preventative Controls:** Preventative controls are aimed at averting potential losses or harm. They act as safeguards against adverse occurrences. For instance, a preventive control might involve enforcing that the HRD intervention must be supported with a personal development plan and the skills development facilitator signing off on the intervention. This practice will minimise the training for the sake of training so prevalent.
3. **Detective Controls:** Detective controls are designed to monitor and identify deviations from established HRD procedures and processes. These controls serve to recognize situations where prescribed protocols have not been followed. For example, HRD

interventions in the directorates not undertaken in line with directive of employment equity plan in terms of advancing women in the workplace.

4. **Corrective Controls:** Corrective controls are implemented to restore a system or situation to its original state before an adverse event occurred (Scholtz, 2014). An illustrative scenario involves the organisation undertaking a comprehensive system restoration after discovering that employees receive no feedback post skills audit processes in departments and committing to ensure that HRD interventions take place in line with organisational directives.

## **20 EVIDENCE-BASED HRD CHANGE PRACTICES**

Evidence-based research HRD can be considered as research that is informed by practice in the field of HRD, regarding it as the explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the development of individuals, groups, and organisations. It integrates the individual HRD practitioner (the specialist in the HR department), line manager and employee expertise with the best available external evidence derived from systematic research. Evidence-based HRD is thus the conscientious and explicit use of research findings and the research process to inform, shape, measure and evaluate professional HRD practice. Evidence in this case can be made up of a range of components such as scientific evidence typically expressed as research/surveys, dashboard, quantitative/statistical data, qualitative data, and analysis thereof (Hamlin and Reidy, 2005; Hamlin, 2016).

However, evidence can also include economic, attitudinal, behavioural, and anecdotal evidence. Evidence-based practice is thus the systematic approach to decision making that supports best practice and accountability. When the evidence is considered critically, the chances of doing the right thing at the right time for the individual and the organisation improves (Van der Walt and Minnie, 2008; Cloete, 2019; Hamlin, Jones and Ellinger, A. (nd). In order to increase their effectiveness and credibility in the eyes of managers, Hamlin contends that HRD professional practitioners should work to become more critically reflective and genuinely evidence-based (Gubbins, Harney, van der Werff & Rousseau, 2018; Hamlin, 2007; Holton, 2004; Kearns, 2014). Tourish (2013) on the other hand argues that evidence-based managers should utilise a variety of evidence types, such as case studies, journalistic accounts, qualitative and quantitative research, and anecdotes. Rynes and Bartunek (2017) hold that multiple types of evidence must be considered for many of the problems confronting organisations if HRD advocates hope for a positive reception by practitioners and non-positivist researchers.

The argument that managers and HRD professional practitioners should be critically reflective and evidence-based in their professional approach and practice is compelling, bearing in mind the VUCA environment which makes the task of organisational change management more difficult (Hatton, 2001; Vince, 2014). According to Hamlin, HRD practitioners should implement action research methods for HRD in order to improve the information, development, and assessment of their change agency practice as well as to assist in resolving context-specific real-world issues in order to gain a deeper understanding of the change context.

This further underlines the importance of evidence-based management that is defined as making decisions through “the conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of the best available evidence from multiple sources by: asking an answerable question; acquiring research evidence; appraising the quality of the evidence; aggregating the evidence; applying the evidence in decision-making and assessing the outcomes of the previous steps” (Rynes & Bartunek, 2017). The value of an evidenced approach to policy making is that policies based on evidence have a much better chance of succeeding as opposed to policies that are formulated on ideology and politically constrained considerations without an evidence-based input which is so often the case in local government in South Africa. Evidence-based policy is also likely to give policymakers confidence in the decisions that they take. Evidence-based practice can further serve as a bridge between theory and practice to ensure excellence in application (Van der Walt and Minnie, 2008). The ability to make evidence-based ethical decisions can be considered a required core competency for HRD professionals and managers in local government (Akinnusi, 2008; Strydom, Funke, Nienaber, Nortje and Steyn, 2010).

## **21 CHANGE AGENTS WITHIN THE ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT**

Noting the VUCA environment of municipalities, managers in organisations can be considered change agents. Although it may be widely recognized that most managers in organizations are to a greater or lesser extent agents of change, this cannot be assumed to be the case for most HRD practitioners.

The role of the HRD professional is that of training consultant, learning consultant and organisational change consultant. This implies that the HRD professional plays an important role to shape organisational culture through creating the climate for the development of current and future leaders, build commitment and solidarity among organisation members and anticipating and managing the VUCA environment (Gold, Holden, Iles, Stewart, & Beardwell, 2009). This redefined role implies that HRD

professionals must perform the role of partners to executive managers by shifting the focus away from just promoting and supporting learning and development to actively being a strategic partner tasked to advise on the alignment of strategy (IDP and SDBIP), performance, human resource development and change agent (McKenzie, Garavan and Carbery, 2012).

Ten Have et al. (2017) holds that one of the reasons why change efforts often fail is that what is considered as “best practice” approaches are often not based on sound empirical evidence and theory but in many instances based on assumptions that are not true or highly unlikely. This brings into question the role of consultants who often sell change solutions to municipalities from untested theories and books. This may be one of the reasons why the change efforts in organisations fail to succeed which gives further impetus for the need to adopt evidence-based approaches when facilitating HRD change programs since HRD, and change cannot be divorced from one another.

In support of Ten Have et al, (2017) Hamlin, 2001 provides six compelling reasons why change efforts fail. Five of these reasons relate to management failure.

#### **Failing 1: Managers not knowing the fundamental principles of change management**

Hamlin, 2001 argues that ‘complacency’ and ‘ignorance’ are the two essential factors contributing to the failure of organisational change programs. The reason for the failure can be attributed to lack in the professional education in the areas of the 'behavioural aspects' of change management, the training and development of their people and to the interpersonal communication skills required for managing change effectively. There seems to be a gap between what managers are taught in institutions and the lived realities of managerial life (Mintzberg, 2004).

#### **Failing 2: Managers succumbing to the temptations of the 'quick fix' or 'simple solution.**

Managers are often driven by immediate gratification and ‘short termism’. Such approaches rarely deliver the results required, but instead lead to failure. This skipping of critical change management phases as suggested by Kotter (1996) create the illusion of speed but fails to produce sustainable results that will negate further progress.

### **Failing 3: Managers not fully appreciating the significance of the leadership and cultural aspects of change**

Hamlin, 2001 argues that leadership, culture, and the management of change are the three most important factors in a fully functioning organisation. To bring about significant organizational change requires the commitment of top management that is backed by evidence that is consistent and sustained throughout the change process. For organisational change programs to succeed, adequate attention must be given to the 'cultural' issues and to the style and quality of the 'leadership' displayed by managers.

### **Failing 4: Managers not appreciating sufficiently the significance of the people issues**

Hamlin, 2001 argues that in many change programs not enough attention is given to those that develop and implement the change strategy. He argues that employees need to be capacitated and supported to let go of the old ways of working (ending), engage with the required new ways of working (in-between) and to finally embrace the new direction and organisational culture (new beginnings). This requires managers to pay sufficient attention to the 'soft' human aspects in the change management process.

### **Failing 5: Managers not knowing the critical contribution that the HRD function can make to the management of change**

Hamlin, 2001 argues that managers do not consider HRD as being able to assist in the change development programs. Power (2011) suggests that this is partially as a result of how top management views HR. They view HR as an expense with a transaction focus rather than an adding value contribution with a strategic focus; mainly engaged in personnel, compliance, and transactions, without operational experience and credibility unable to offer operational advice. Managers are also not mindful that every organisational change requires new knowledge, attitudes, skills, and habits (KASH). These KASH gaps are the result of organisational change initiatives and must be addressed if the organisation is to move from the undesired present state to the desired future state through developing key capabilities and individual capacities to function effectively.

### **Failing 6: Trainers and developers lacking credibility in the eyes of line managers**

Historically, a considerable number of HRD practitioners, if not most of them, have been perceived by line managers as lacking in 'credibility'. Due to line managers' frustration with HR personnel who are either too inflexible or do not understand their work context,



the HR department lacks status in many businesses. (Hamlin, 2001a). Thus, managers have placed a uniformly low role expectations on the HR function (Thornhill *et al.*, 2000; Ulrich, 1997, Cloete, 2016).

In light of their empirical research, Burnes and Jackson (2011) argued that a major factor contributing to the failure of many change initiatives related are the misalignment of the values held by the organisational members going through the change, the values supporting the goals and content of the change intervention, the value system of the chosen approach, and the processes by which change is managed and facilitated. The difference between these values may explain many of the problems that can possibly arise during a change initiative and this value system alignment may very well be an important factor in the success of organizational change initiatives (Burnes & Jackson, 2011).

It is up to HRD professionals to ensure that they become credible partners to line managers in the planning and implementation of change initiatives by making sure that they are knowledgeable and adopt new KASH.

## **22 EVIDENCE-BASED HRD AND CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE**

It was earlier pointed out that a great deal of organisational change efforts are not supported by evidence and hence there is a need to consider a variety of evidence - based human resource development approaches. This will enable the organisation to better understand and comprehend the organisational context. This includes understanding the elements of leadership, organisation, the individual, management culture and the organisational culture that may facilitate or impede the change efforts (capabilities).

Hamlin, 2022, argues for the need to explore context-specific/case-specific internal HRD change research that is conducted by management in partnership with HRD practitioners who are skilled with sufficient research expertise or with an academic institution or with qualified academic researchers. Such research it is argued can assist the change process and with the ethical and academic vigour can lead to deep seated issues being brought to the surface that would otherwise have been overlooked. This in turn can potentially lead to better policy implementation.

These surfaced issues are often the ineffective aspects of organization and management culture and of managerial and/or employee behaviour which impede or block organizational change and innovation. This helps bring to light organisational “no go” areas or latent and unsaid sensitive issues that require attention, helping the organisation to make the paradigm shift from instinctive to "evidence-based" practise and being able to

think and act like academic researchers (Bruce & Wyman, 1998). When there is confidence in the commissioned research as relevant, rigorous, and meeting the high ethical standards by management and employees, the chances of success are enhanced as the organisation moves to evidence as opposed to gut feel or ideology. The fact that there is confidence in the research process coupled with the element of anonymity increases the chances for managers and non-managers to admit their fears and or behavioural deficiencies that contribute to ineffective organisational outcomes. Employees are also more inclined to share personal beliefs, sentiments, and hypotheses that they might not otherwise share.

Empirical evidence serves as a mirror for decision makers in the organisation, allowing the latter to accurately reflect the lived experience of the work and organisational life through the process of rigorous empirical research. However, Hamlin (2022) argues that most of the HRD and change related empirical research emanate from Europe and the United States of America which amplify the need for more evidence - based research to come from Africa. When considering evidence - based human resource and change research the following could be considered.

- **Design science research** – the primary focus of design science research is particularly useful in the field of management and organisation and serves to provide general knowledge that can be applied in organisational contexts. It serves to develop "general substantive and procedural design science" to address common field problems within a particular discipline/field of study and practise (van Aken, 2007).
- **Professional partnership-research** – the primary focus of this research partnership involves the organisation and an academic institution entering into a collaborative partnership to conduct research focused on transforming the organisation through the application of rigorous research. The findings of such research, depending on its focus, can either guide the critical evaluation and redesign that should occur at every step of the change process until the intended desired future state is achieved.
- **Replication research** – the primary focus of replication studies is to test for the commonalities in order to enhance the quality of organisational change management and to gain greater insight and understanding. Conducting empirical generalization replication studies have several benefits, one being the emergence of mid-range theories with the potential to be further developed into a body of knowledge and best evidence (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

Evidence-based Human Resource Development (HRD) as advocated by Hamlin has the potential to foster sustainable outcomes in organisations which allows HRD practitioners the opportunity to enhance their effectiveness in facilitating beneficial organizational change by engaging in professional partnership research, action research, or design science research. These approaches necessitate practitioners to be "critically reflective," "research-informed," and ultimately fully "evidence-based" in their change agency practice.

By adopting these research-oriented approaches, HRD practitioners contribute to the knowledge base and body of 'best evidence' in their field. Moreover, this proactive engagement can play a pivotal role in bridging the existing scholar-practitioner gap in management and HRD-related domains. However, the realization of these benefits is contingent upon line managers addressing the identified "failings" within the organizational change and human resource development context.

HRD practitioners must embody evidence-based practices not only as practitioners but also as role models for management and HRD scholars. This entails a commitment to becoming aware cognizant of the 'soft' issues in management when formulating HRD strategies. Business and organizational leaders, particularly those spearheading change initiatives, are encouraged to recognize the significance of 'soft' human aspects in change management processes. They should also acknowledge the value of evidence-based management and HRD in driving effective and beneficial strategic organizational change and development.

## **23 CONCLUSIONS**

The Municipal Staff Regulations and the capability plan advocated by the NPC have a greater chance of being successfully implemented if underpinned by evidence-based practices as described in this chapter. Evidence-based HRD should be a key pillar of the HRD governance model of South Africa, with a strong focus on consequence management (Van der Walt and Minnie, 2008; McLean and Company, 2020). For HRD practitioners to maximize their contribution to evidence-based HRD, it is imperative for them to embrace the principles of evidence-based management and HRD. This alignment can result in a more profound impact on organizational development and change, provided that line managers implement the identified challenges. Evidence-based HRD will enhance the role and credibility of HRD professionals as key strategic partners in organisations.

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## SECTION 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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### 1 INTRODUCTION

This section presents the methodologies employed to collect, analyse and assess empirical evidence in the pursuance of achieving the stated research objectives followed by a summary of the research findings, conclusions and recommendations in subsequent sections. The primary and secondary research objectives are first highlighted in this section. This is followed by the research strategy and research approach as well as the project scope and phases.

The primary and secondary research objectives were previously highlighted but are repeated here for ease of reference:

#### 1.1 Primary Objective

The primary objective of the research is to provide a research report on an evidence-based human resource development assessment to measure and manage HRD implementation in South African Municipalities.

For this study, the measurement and management of HRD is assessed in terms of the following seven dimensions within organizations:

- Ethical Values
- HRD Policy
- HRD Practice
- HRD Organisation of HRD
- HRD Internal Democracy
- HRD Stakeholders
- Knowledge Management

#### 1.2 Secondary Objectives

The secondary objectives defined for this research project are to:

1. explore the concept of evidence - based human resource development in the local government sector.
2. analyse the roles of the different role players in evidence-based practices in human resource development in the local government sector.

3. investigate whether HRD assessment tools (ICT) exist that can be applied and integrated with existing ICT tools in the local government sector.
4. investigate the role of human resource development in improving service delivery areas in the local government sector.
5. explore the international best practices in the application of evidence-based human resource development in the local government sector.
6. investigate the link between organisational change and evidence-based human resource development practices.

## **2 RESEARCH SCOPE**

The units of analysis in this research are 572 respondents from 19 South African local governments (municipalities) in 5 provinces. To ensure a geographical spread of the municipalities included in the study, care was taken to purposefully select municipalities situated in both inland and coastal regions. Initially 40 municipalities were selected across the nine provinces to include, category A (metropolitan), Category B (local municipalities and Category C (district municipalities). Care was taken that this also represented rural and urban municipalities.

The levels and scope of the analysis were to obtain a sample of municipal managers (executive, senior, middle managers, and junior managers) and non-managers in purposefully selected South African municipalities

A structured survey (using questionnaires) was conducted in person and online in municipalities (metropolitan, local and district) to obtain a comprehensive perspective of how HRD is managed and measured in the South African local government sector. The sampled municipalities represented below also had the governance performance index rating as well as the AG office audit outcomes. The process of entry into the municipality followed the following:

- A letter from the LGSETA forwarded to the Municipal Manager and the Skills Development Facilitator introducing the project.
- Letter forwarded to the municipality requesting online onboarding meeting with Municipal Manager and the Skills Development Facilitator and the provincial LGSETA manager to reach consensus on site visit date.
- Researcher forwarded site visit requirements to the assigned champion in order to ensure a smooth site visit.

Although the three-step process was followed, the cooperation of the municipalities was extremely poor and support was also not always forthcoming. From an initial sample of 40 municipalities only 19 participated in the study.

**Table 2: Municipal Sample**

| <b>Municipality</b>            | <b>Governance Performance Index 2023</b> | <b>CoGTA Risk Rating 2023</b> | <b>Audit General Audit Outcomes 2023</b> |
|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Metros</b>                  |  |                               |  |
| 1. Mangaung Metro              | 8 of 8                                   | Dysfunctional – High Risk     | Qualified with findings                  |
| 2. City of Ekurhuleni Metro    | 2 of 8                                   | Stable                        | Unqualified with no findings             |
| <b>District Municipalities</b> |  |                               |  |
| 3. Fezile Dabi DM              | 19 of 23                                 | High Risk                     | Qualified with findings                  |
| 4. Frances Baard DM            | 5 of 23                                  | Low Risk                      | Unqualified with no findings             |
| 5. ZF Mgcawu DM                | 9 of 23                                  | Low Risk                      | Unqualified with no findings             |
| 6. West Coast DM               | 2 of 23                                  | Stable                        | Unqualified with no findings             |
| 7. Garden Route DM             | 3 of 23                                  | Stable                        | Unqualified with no findings             |
| <b>Local Municipalities</b>    |  |                               |  |
| 8. Metsimaholo LM              | 156 of 205                               | High Risk                     | Qualified with findings                  |
| 9. Midvaal LM                  | 10 of 205                                | Stable                        | Unqualified with no findings             |
| 10. Merafong LM                | 139 of 205                               | High Risk                     | Disclaimed with findings                 |
| 11. Lesedi LM                  | 70 of 205                                | Medium Risk                   | Unqualified with findings                |
| 12. Hantam LM                  | 25 of 205                                | Low Risk                      | Unqualified with no findings             |
| 13. Gamagara LM                | 154 of 205                               | High Risk                     | Unqualified with findings                |
| 14. Emthanjeni LM              | 121 of 205                               | Medium Risk                   | Qualified with findings                  |
| 15. George LM                  | 20 of 205                                | Medium Risk                   | Unqualified with no findings             |
| 16. Stellenbosch LM            | 8 of 205                                 | Stable                        | Unqualified with no findings             |
| 17. Oudtshoorn LM              | 33 of 205                                | Medium Risk                   | Unqualified with findings                |
| 18. Bergrivier LM              | 6 of 205                                 | Low Risk                      | Unqualified with no findings             |
| 19. Senqu LM                   | 45 of 205                                | Low Risk                      | Outstanding audits                       |

### **3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

A mixed-methods approach was adopted for the research, applying both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods and instruments to both primary and secondary data sources. The selected strategies for the collection of primary data included face-to-face interviews, focus group discussions and a survey. The mixed-methods approach allowed the researchers to test and triangulate the validity of the research findings and to develop an accurate, in-depth understanding of the aspects measured in the survey, since the qualitative instruments were designed to provide context for the quantitative findings.

The research population defined for this study comprised:

- all four levels of management within the local government sector, i.e., executive, senior, middle, and junior managers and non-managers (survey and focus group discussions)
- key informants, including experts (both academics and practitioners) in HRD and local government sectors (face-to-face interviews).

### **4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS**

The design and application of the research instruments were informed by the literature review, and the survey was adapted from previous studies conducted by Cloete (2023).

Both qualitative and quantitative data were solicited from respondents through semi-structured interview schedules for both the focus group discussions and face-to-face interviews with key stakeholders informed by the variables (items) measured in the survey instrument. In applying this strategy, the data collected by means of both the quantitative and qualitative instruments resulted in a holistic assessment of the research question, providing both trend data as well as a qualitative understanding. The latter provided contextual data with which to better interpret the former.

This strategy of collecting complementary qualitative data was applied in the data collection strategy. Municipal management (executive, senior, middle, and junior managers) as well as non-managers were required to complete both the survey instrument and to participate in a focus group discussion where the themes covered in the survey were further explored.

**Table 3: Survey sample realization**

| Province                        | #Staff | #Councillors | Non-Managers | Councillors | Managers | HR Professional | Total Completed |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------------|--------------|-------------|----------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Eastern Cape</b>             |        |              |              |             |          |                 |                 |
| Senqu Local                     | 317    | 49           | 1            | 0           | 0        | 1               | 2               |
| <b>Free State</b>               |        |              |              |             |          |                 |                 |
| Mangaung Metropolitan           | 3 459  | 101          | 1            | 0           | 0        | 1               | 2               |
| Metsimaholo Local               | 857    | 40           | 17           | 2           | 3        | 1               | 23              |
| Fezile Dabi District            | 181    | 13           | 3            | 1           | 1        | 2               | 7               |
| <b>Gauteng</b>                  |        |              |              |             |          |                 |                 |
| City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan | 30 000 | 224          | 0            | 0           | 3        | 1               | 4               |
| Midvaal Local                   | 926    | 27           | 23           | 0           | 4        | 8               | 35              |
| Lesedi Local                    | 699    | 24           | 26           | 0           | 6        | 1               | 33              |
| Merafong City Local             | 996    | 54           | 42           | 0           | 4        | 2               | 48              |
| <b>Northern Cape</b>            |        |              |              |             |          |                 |                 |
| Frances Baard District          | 138    | 12           | 32           | 0           | 3        | 1               | 35              |
| Hantam Local                    | 150    | 13           | 45           | 0           | 9        | 0               | 54              |
| Gamagara Local                  | 479    | 24           | 33           | 0           | 7        | 1               | 40              |
| ZF Mgcawu District              | 159    | 23           | 16           | 0           | 11       | 0               | 27              |
| Emthanjeni Local                | 371    | 15           | 49           | 1           | 4        | 2               | 54              |
| <b>Western Cape</b>             |        |              |              |             |          |                 |                 |
| Garden Route District           | 6 104  | 183          | 0            | 0           | 0        | 9               | 9               |
| George Local                    | 1 541  | 51           | 24           | 0           | 4        | 4               | 28              |
| Stellenbosch Local              | 1 251  | 45           | 38           | 0           | 6        | 1               | 44              |

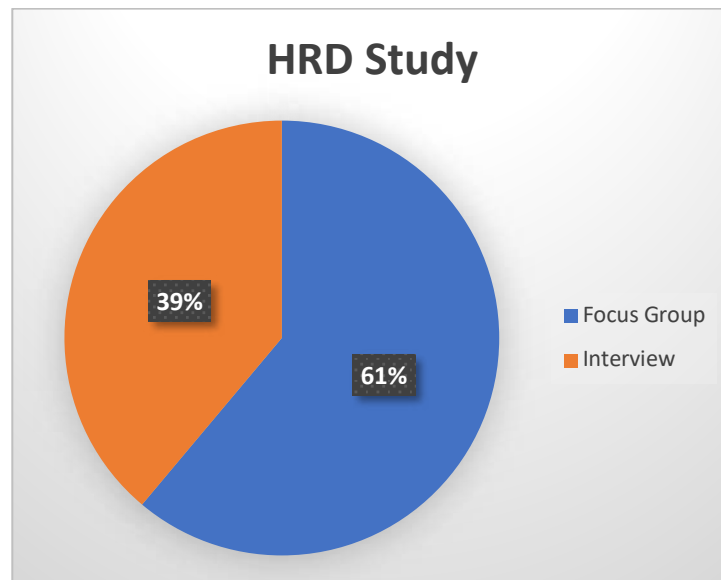


|                     |               |            |            |           |           |           |            |
|---------------------|---------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Oudtshoorn Local    | 838           | 25         | 22         | 7         | 7         | 6         | 36         |
| West Coast District | 613           | 40         | 21         | 0         | 7         | 0         | 28         |
| Bergrivier Local    | 413           | 10         | 35         | 1         | 10        | 2         | 46         |
|                     | <b>49 492</b> | <b>973</b> | <b>428</b> | <b>12</b> | <b>89</b> | <b>43</b> | <b>572</b> |

In the end, 75% of the participants that completed the questionnaire were non-managers, which provided valuable insight on how management is experienced. The 16% sample of managers who participated provided further insight. Why so few managers participated cannot be explained despite the best efforts of the researchers. In most cases managers were too busy and undertook to submit responses online, although from the research responses it is clear that this did not always materialise.

**Table 4: Realization of Focus group discussions and one-on-one Interviews – explain why and how**

| Focus Group and Individual | Portfolio                         | Municipality/agency | Focus Group | Interview |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------|
| HRD                        | HRD Department                    | Merafong Local      | √           |           |
| Mzwakhe Nhlapo             | Assistant Director: Human Capital | Midvaal Local       |             | √         |
| Patrick Pulane             | Labour Relations Manager          | Midvaal Local       |             | √         |
| Finance                    | Finance                           | Stellenbosch Local  | √           |           |
| HRD                        | Finance                           | Stellenbosch Local  | √           |           |
| Vivian Kotzee              | Corporate Services Director       | Bergriver Local     |             | √         |
| Anonymous                  | Consultant                        | Gamagara Local      |             | √         |
| LGSETA Provincial Managers | LGSETA Provincial Managers        | LGSETA              | √           |           |
| JS & AJ                    | LGSETA Provincial Managers        | LGSETA              | √           | √         |
| HR Department              | HRD Department                    | Stellenbosch Local  | √           |           |
| HR Department              | HRD Department                    | Stellenbosch Local  | √           |           |
| HRD                        | HRD                               | Berg River Local    | √           |           |
| Walter Hendricks           | HRD                               | Oudtshoorn Local    |             | √         |
| Chief Internal Auditor     | Office of the MM                  | Oudtshoorn Local    |             | √         |
| HR Staff                   | HRD                               | Garden Route        | √           |           |
| HR Staff                   | HRD                               | Garden Route        | √           |           |
| HR Staf                    | HRD                               | Garden Route        | √           |           |
| <b>Total</b>               |                                   |                     | <b>11</b>   | <b>7</b>  |



**Figure 5: Participants in focus group discussions and one-on-one Interviews**

The data analysis approach was to quantify some responses that were suitable for such quantification and to cluster similar types of qualitative statements to assess the results against the critical success factors for managing and measuring HRD as summarised in the literature review in section 2.

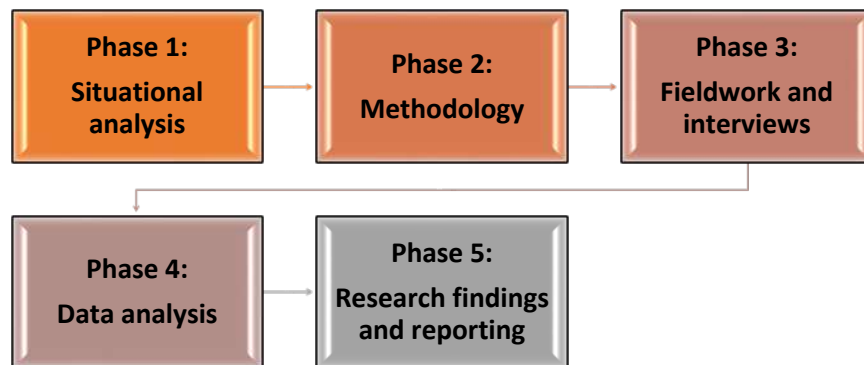
## 5 CONSULTATIONS WITH EXPERTS

A participatory, consultative approach was adopted that involved a wide array of scholarly and industry practitioner experts in the design and roll-out of the project. The consultative approach ensured that experts in the field became involved in the project. The consulted experts ranged from governance experts to local government practitioners. Interactive sessions were held to:

- pinpoint the most suitable research design and methodology
- survey literature on international best practice on KM models
- survey literature on international best practice regarding planning praxis in general and KM planning in particular
- identify critical elements the experts perceived as essential to include in data collection instruments
- create the desired climate to ensure maximum participation from research participants for the project
- establish monitoring, control and reporting mechanisms among the research team, field workers and the client.

## 6 PROJECT SCOPE AND PHASES

As illustrated in Figure 6 below, the project is organized in five phases. These phases are discussed in this section.



**Figure 6: Project research phases (source: authors)**

### 6.1 Phase 1: Situational Analysis

Prior to the roll-out of the project, a letter was obtained from the LGSETA for the municipalities to agree to participate in the study. This was considered a necessary step to create a positive climate for the project and to give the research team the necessary credibility and legitimacy to conduct the fieldwork. Despite the letter the process of entry into the municipalities proved extremely difficult. A recommendation on how future research can be better managed is highlighted in the section dealing with recommendations.

### 6.2 Phase 2: Methodology

Four main activities, which were aligned with the secondary research objectives, were undertaken during this phase:

- Completion of a literature review to determine whether it is possible to measure and manage HRD and to unpack the concept of evidence-based HRD.
- Contextualization of HRD in the South African governance framework by consulting key informants.
- Identification of the major HRD role players that are active in South Africa.
- Determination of the best implementation framework for evidence-based HRD in South Africa.

### **6.3 Phase 3: Data Collection Fieldwork And Interviews**

Phase 3 entailed finalizing the data collection instruments and setting up the site visits to the municipalities to conduct the focus group interviews and administer the survey questionnaires in person. This proved to be extremely complicated due to non-responses from targeted respondents as indicated below.

The questionnaire was designed to test the six dimensions of the Integrated Management Framework for HRD within each of the organizations, namely HRD ethical values, policy, practice, organisation, internal democracy and stakeholders. A seventh dimension, namely, knowledge management was added. Statements were developed to test each of these dimensions, and respondents had to indicate their response on a three-point Likert scale indicating 1 = agree, 2 = don't know/not sure and 3 = disagree.

Setting up appointments with municipal councillors and officials proved very challenging. Municipalities were busy with either the adjustment budget or the Integrated Development Plan processes, while many individuals just never responded to requests for participation. This hampered participation as reported earlier (a recommendation in this regard is made in the section dealing with recommendations).

### **6.4 Phase 4: Data Analysis**

Survey data was transferred from Google Forms to Excel spreadsheets and then transferred to and analysed in SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). In some municipalities the data was recorded on an electronic device, while some participants preferred to complete a hard copy of the survey. In the end, hard copies proved to be the preferred method for collecting data.

### **6.5 Phase 5: Research Findings and Reporting**

The final phase entailed the verification and cross-referencing of the findings and identifying key observations by the research team:

- the current levels of HRD management in the municipalities under study, including the known HRD management and measurement models and implementation tools (as discussed in the literature review in section 2)
- a proposed implementation model for measuring and managing implementation in the local government sector with key recommendations from focus groups and key informants.

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## SECTION 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

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Scientific theory and professional practice are deeply intertwined. During the process of creating evidence-based knowledge, theory cannot be divorced from practice. Thus, any scientific inquiry can only be the result of a phenomenon observed in the reality of practice. Irrespective of the theoretical soundness of information needed, the statistical validity and reliability of any survey are influenced by, *inter alia*, the following issues:

- Respondents may not understand the content of the research questions.
- Respondents could experience a language barrier given that there are twelve official languages in South Africa and English (the language of the survey) is most participants' second language.
- Respondents may not have the time to complete a survey.
- Respondents may not be willing to provide accurate and or honest answers for different reasons. For example, they may not feel comfortable providing answers that portray themselves in an unfavourable light or that might be perceived by someone to be critical and thus as a threat to their job security (Schutte, 2023).

This section reports on the research results and interpretation of findings emanating from the survey, examining the challenges that reduce the effective measurement and management of HRD in the local government sector. The questionnaire was adapted from the article by Cloete (2023) and the Integrated Management Framework for HRD and evidence-based practices as described in the literature review in section 2.

Since the questionnaire was completed anonymously, the research findings were interpreted in the following way: Where the respondents agreed with the statement, this was considered positive. Where the respondents indicated "don't know/not sure", the interpretation was that the respondents are probably not aware or genuinely uncertain in terms of the practice, policy or application. An answer of "disagree" was interpreted as the respondents' being aware of the practice, policy or application but still disagreed with the statement.

In some instances, the added scores reflect a sum total of 101% or 99%. This is because the scores were rounded off for easier interpretation e.g., 49,6 is presented as 50% and similarly 49,3 is presented as 49%. The statistical variance observed in the cases where the total is either 101 or 99, is 0,01% and thus has no statistically significant impact on the general trend observed. The research respondents were managers, non-managers and HR professionals. Although 12 councillors completed the questionnaire and since they do not form part of the unit of analysis, their scores were not interpreted.

The findings are presented as per the defined dimensions of the Integrated Management Framework for HRD, i.e., ethical values, policy, organisation, practice, internal democracy, stakeholders. A seventh area namely knowledge management was included since there is close correlation between knowledge management and human resource development as determined by the knowledge management study completed for the LGSETA in 2023..

When analysing the data, the consolidated data is presented and then the data is segmented to present the perceptions of managers, non-managers and HR professionals against the critical success factors for measuring and managing HRD as described in the literature review. The triangulation of the data is presented in combining quantitative and qualitative findings. The 18 municipalities are not assessed individually but rather collectively since in many of the municipalities the sample size was too small to make reliable inferences e.g., Senqu (2), Mangaung (2) Ekurhuleni (4).

All fieldwork culminates in the analysis and the interpretation of data. In terms of the statistical analysis of the data all scores below 70% are noted as unacceptable practice.

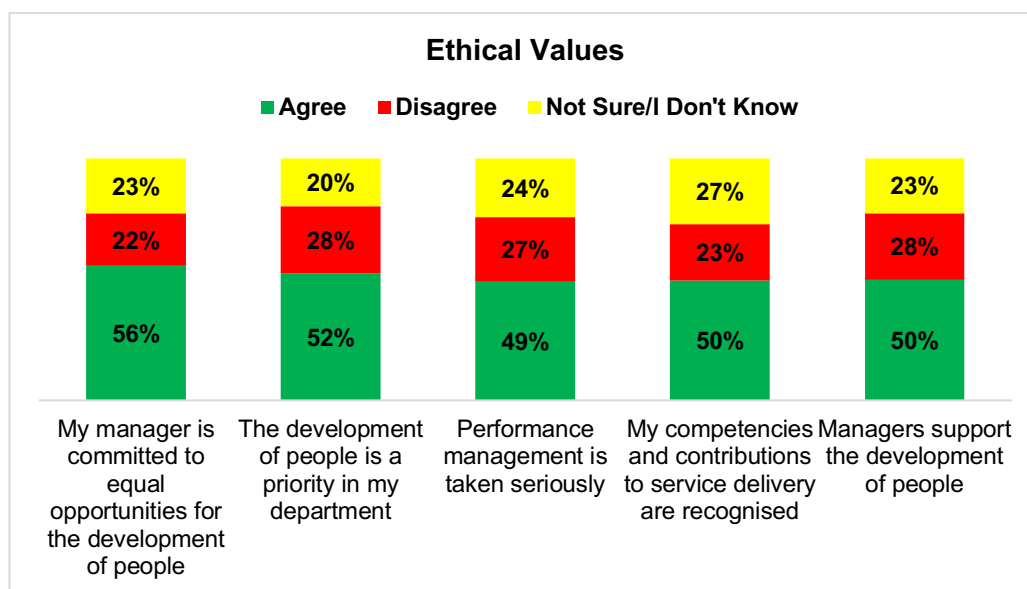
## **1 ETHICAL VALUES FINDINGS**

The importance of ethical values and the link to organisational conduct was described in the text. The survey tested whether:

- Managerial commitment to equal opportunities for the development of people is present
- The development of people is a priority
- Performance management is taken seriously
- Competencies and contributions to service delivery are recognised and
- Managers support the development of people.

From the research findings presented in Figure 7 it is concluded that ethical values are poorly practiced in municipalities. This is evident in the following low scores found for: managerial commitment to equal opportunities for the development of people (56%) and managers that indicated to not sufficiently support the development of people (50%). The development of people is clearly not a priority with only 52% of respondents that confirmed that this is supported in their departments. Furthermore, only 49% of participants confirmed that performance management is taken seriously. Another aspect measured as a dimension of ethical values is the degree to which the competencies and contributions of staff to service delivery is recognised. In this case only 50% of respondents affirmed that this is indeed their experience in their respective departments, a clear indication that

this aspect is not sufficiently recognised. An important observation in the responses to the dimensions constituting the ethical culture of the organisation is that approximately one quarter of responses that consistently responded by indicating not sure/don't know to the respective questions testing this value. This observation is interpreted as a strong indication of a generally poor HRD ethical culture evident within the organisation. The findings stand in sharp contrast to the identified competencies for managers as per the Municipal Staff Regulations and the competency framework for senior managers, described earlier in the text.



**Figure 7: Ethical values findings**

From the research findings an analysis of how the different actors experience the ethical values in the organisation is presented in Figure 8. An interesting aspect to note is the lower percentage of non-management respondents compared to managers and HR practitioners to all the aspects measured. This does suggest that the implementation of the ethical values of HRD are experienced at very low levels by this target group.

In general, all the municipal actors reported scored below the 70% threshold, illustrating well established practices. Non-managers in particular experience (50%) the lowest satisfaction on managerial commitment to equal opportunities for the development of people. Asked to respond to the extent to which performance management is taken seriously, all three actor groups noted scores well below 70% with only 45% of non-managers confirming that this does indeed take place, 49% of HR practitioners and 58% of managers. Asked to rate the extent to which competencies and contributions to service delivery are recognised, responses again illustrated low levels of experienced recognition within all three respondent groups ranging from 45% noted by non-managers and 55% by



managers, below the 70% benchmark. Commitment to equal opportunities is one aspect that seems to be a relatively strong sentiment by managers and HR officials with just below 70% of respondents (66% of managers and 68% of HR officials) confirming this sentiment. Managerial support for the development of people is also well below the 70% threshold with 59% of managers and 61% of HR agreeing with the statement. The 43% for non-managers is significantly lower in relation to the scores for managers and HR.

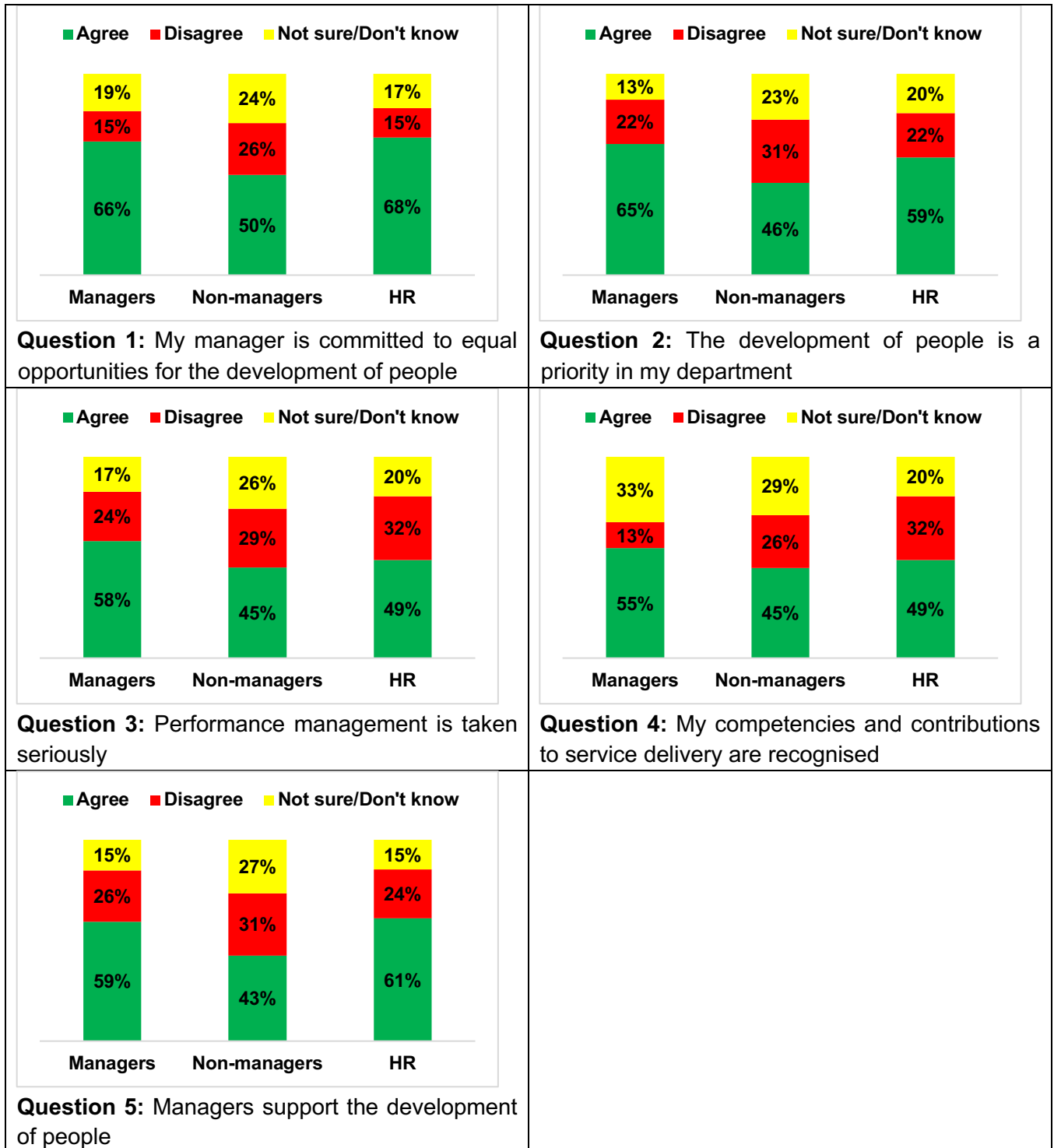


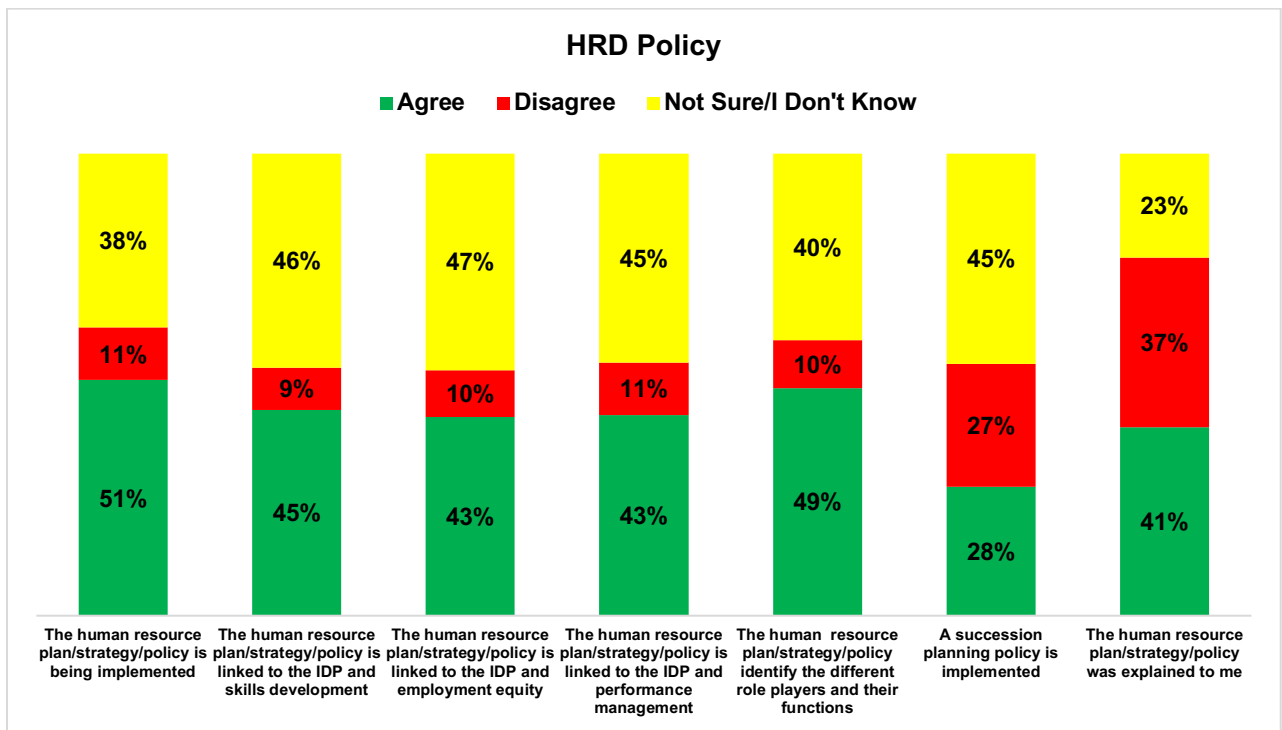
Figure 8: Categorisation Ethical Values

## 2 HRD POLICY FINDINGS

The importance of HRD policy was described earlier in the text as the intention on how the organisation will implement the stated intention. The survey tested whether;

- human resource plan/policy/strategy is implemented
- human resource plan is linked to the IDP and skills development
- human resource plan is linked to IDP and employment equity
- human resource plan is linked to IDP and performance management
- human resource plan identifies
- the different role players and their functions
- succession planning policy is in place
- the human resource plan was explained

From the consolidated analysis presented in figure 9 below, it is evident that HRD policy is generally not well developed, integrated and implemented within municipalities. This observation is strongly illustrated in the low percentage of respondents that were found to agree with the respective statements designed to test these aspects in relation to the HRD policy. Weak implementation of the HR policy is confirmed in the low number of respondents who agree that (i) the HRD policy/strategy is being implemented (51%), (ii) the HRD policy/strategy has been explained to me (41%) and, (iii) a succession planning policy is being implemented (28%). The poor integration of the HRD policy/strategy is evident in the low percentage of respondents who agree that this policy is linked with the IDP and skills development (45%), the IDP and employment equity (43%) and, the IDP and performance management (43%). Gaps in how the HRD policy is developed are noted in the poor rates in responses agreeing that the HRD policy/strategy identifies different role players and their functions (49%). From these findings it is clear that the HRD policy generally stands in isolation and that it is not linked with internal transformation. Furthermore, the high percentage of research participants who indicated not sure/do not know to the respective questions posed is an indication of the poor communication in the organisation. These findings are consistent with the findings from the focus groups and stands in contrast to the literature discussed on the need to communicate policy as per the Integrated Management Framework for HRD as discussed earlier in the text.



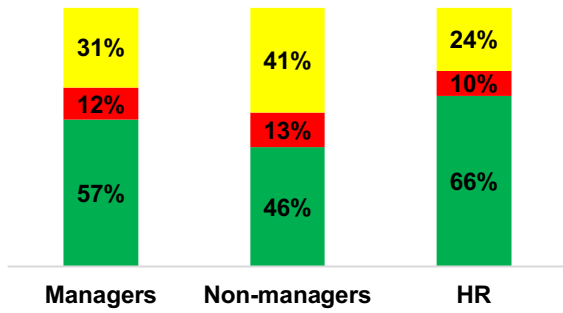
**Figure 9: HRD Policy findings**

When analysing the responses as per respondent groups in figure 10, the findings are found to correspond with the consolidated findings presented above which confirmed the high percentage of not sure/do not know. The findings show that that managers and non-managers agree on the implementation of HR policies. This was a surprising finding as a higher score was expected by managers given that they are responsible for the implementation of these policies. From the findings it is also clear that HR is more informed about HR policy implementation and content mentation compared to managers and non-managers.

The HRD policy links to IDP, equity, skills and performance management all scored low for managers, non-managers and HR professionals. In this area, the HR score is higher than that of managers and non-managers. The only area where there is more or less consensus score was in the area of succession planning. The lowest score across all was reserved for the implementation of the succession planning. The survey scores for HR professionals are higher than that for non-managers and managers which can be interpreted as HR close proximity to the policy environment but also the inability of the HR professional to effectively communicate the policies for improved implementation.

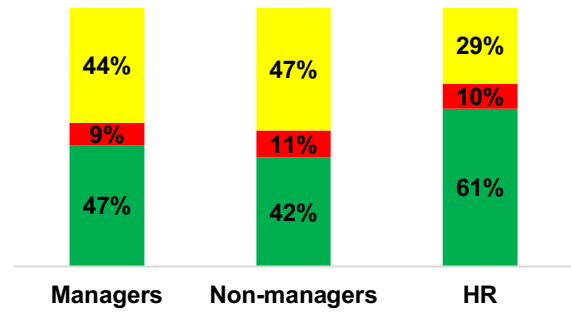
The data confirms scores far below the 70% threshold for managers, non-managers as well as HR. Attention to these matters will enhance the policy environment and add to the achievement of an ethical culture.

■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Not sure/Don't know



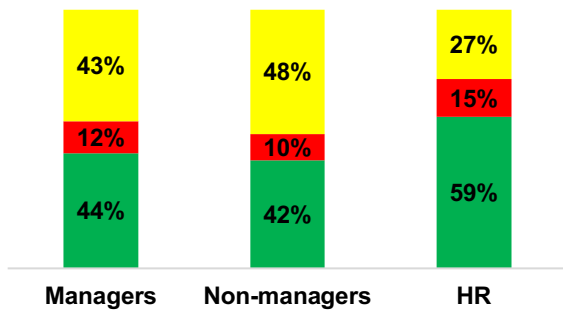
**Question 1:** A human resource plan/strategy/policy is being implemented

■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Not sure/Don't know



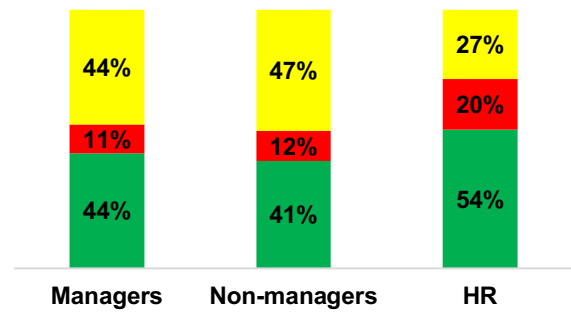
**Question 2:** The human resource plan/strategy/policy is linked to the IDP and skills development

■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Not sure/Don't know



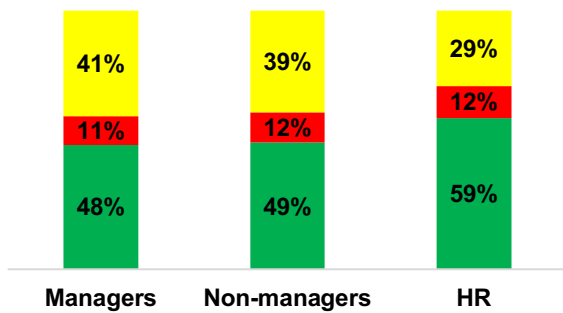
**Question 3:** The human resource plan/strategy/policy is linked to the IDP and employment equity

■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Not sure/Don't know



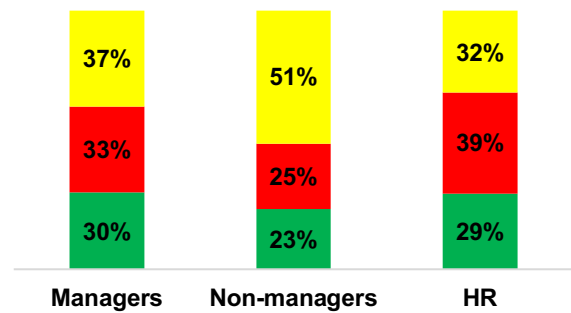
**Question 4:** The human resource plan/strategy/policy is linked to the IDP and performance management

■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Not sure/Don't know

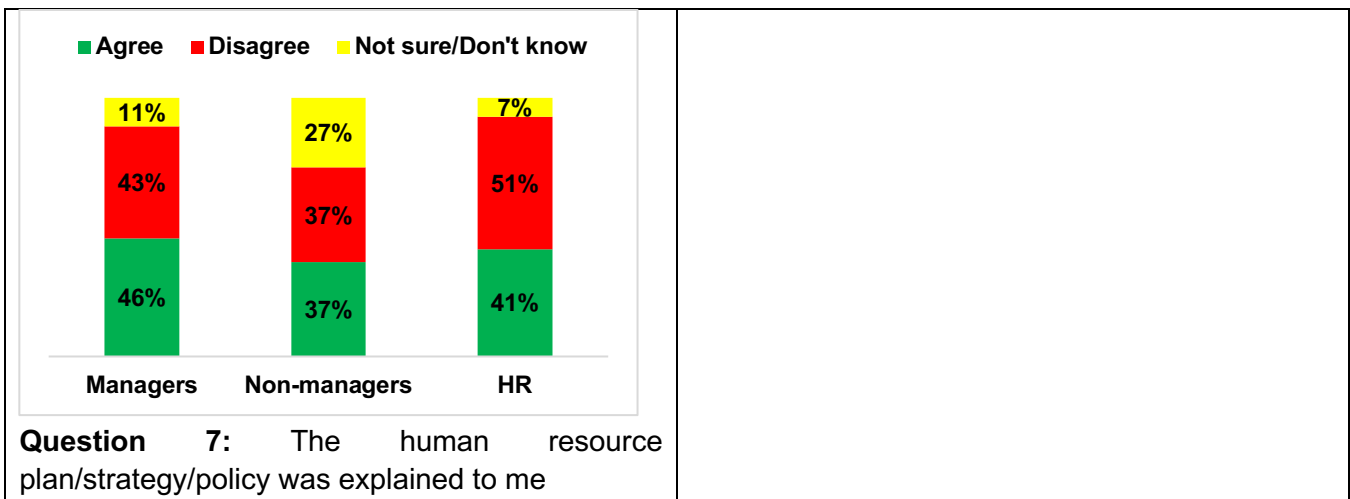


**Question 5:** The human resource plan/strategy/policy identify the different role players and their functions

■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Not sure/Don't know



**Question 6:** A succession planning policy is implemented



**Figure 10: Categorisation HRD Policy findings**

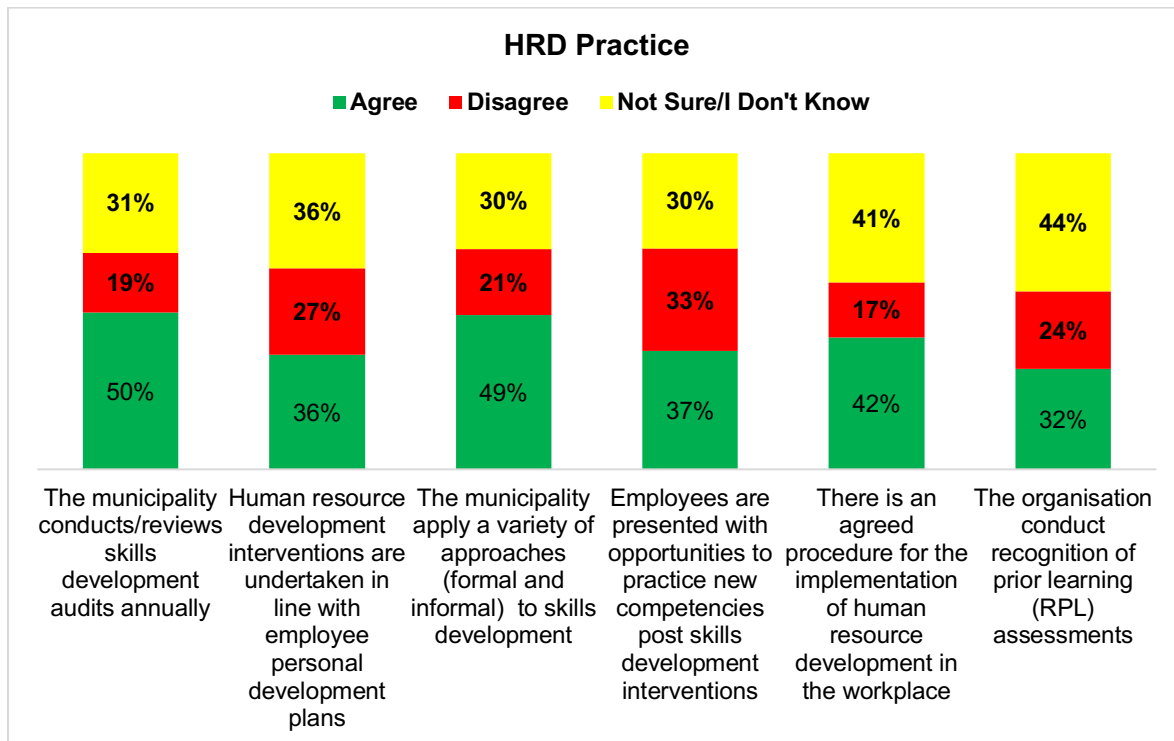
### 3 HRD PRACTISE FINDINGS

The importance of HRD practice was described earlier in the text as the variety of options available to employees in the context of human resource development. The survey tested whether:

- The municipality conducts and reviews skills development annually
- Human resource interventions are undertaken in line with employee personal development plans
- A variety of approaches to skills development is employed
- Employees are presented with opportunities to practice new competencies post skills development interventions
- An agreed procedure for the implementation of human resource development
- RPL is conducted in the organisation

From the research findings in figure 11 it is concluded that there is a problem with how HRD is practiced in municipalities with the low scores across the six surveyed questions. The skills development audits are poorly conducted (50%) with the rest either disagreeing or unsure, with the result that HRD interventions are not undertaken in line with employee staff development plans (36%), pointing to a potential misalignment between individual development needs and HRD interventions. The municipality does not apply a variety of approaches such as formal and informal development (49%) and employees are not presented with opportunities to practice new competencies (37%) post skills development interventions. There is no agreed procedure for the implementation of human resource development in the workplace (42%). Although RPL could be beneficial for particularly the blue-collar workers, RPL is not implemented efficiently and effectively (32%). The high

percentage of research participants who indicated not sure/do not know (between 31% - 44%) is an indication of the poor communication in the organisation. The findings were consistent with the discussions in the focus groups, the uncertainty of non-managers in particular. The data confirms scores far below the 70% threshold for managers, non-managers as well as HR. Attention to these matters will enhance the HRD practice and add to the achievement of an ethical culture.

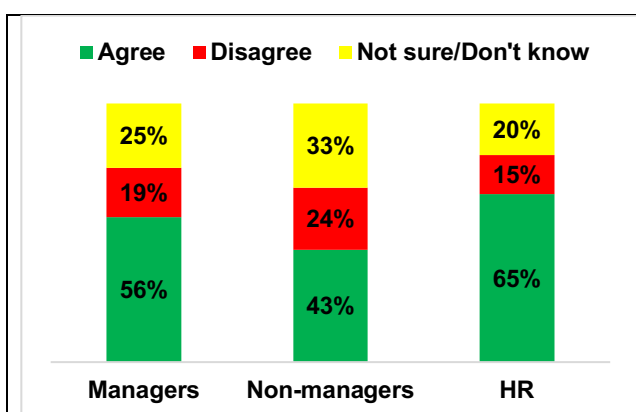


**Figure 11: HRD Practise findings**

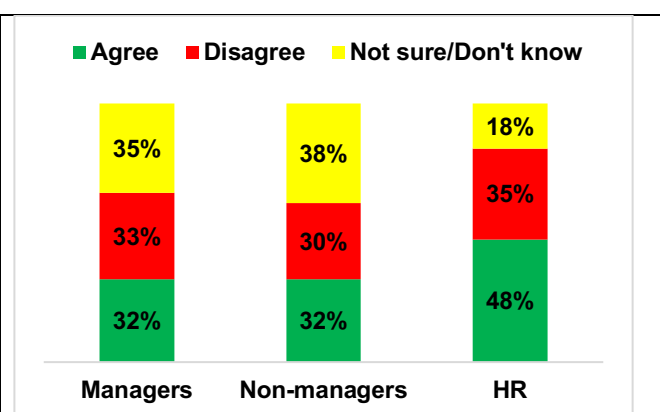
When analysing the responses as per respondent groups in figure 12, the findings are found to correspond with the consolidated findings that the respective actors experience the practice of HRD negatively. From the research findings it is concluded that there is a general problem with managers and non-managers indicating the low score (56% and 43%) for skills audits. The HR scored considerably higher at 65%, the same was for the application of a variety of approaches to skills development. The highest proportion of responses who indicated not sure/don't know came from non-managers followed by managers, with HR scoring lower in terms of the category not sure/don't know.

From the research findings, it is concluded that there is a problem with how HRD is practised in municipalities with the low scores across the six surveyed questions. The skills development audits are poorly conducted scored the lowest for the end users – non-managers (43%) followed by managers (58%) with HR (65%) scoring higher. The result that HRD interventions are not undertaken in line with employee staff development plans

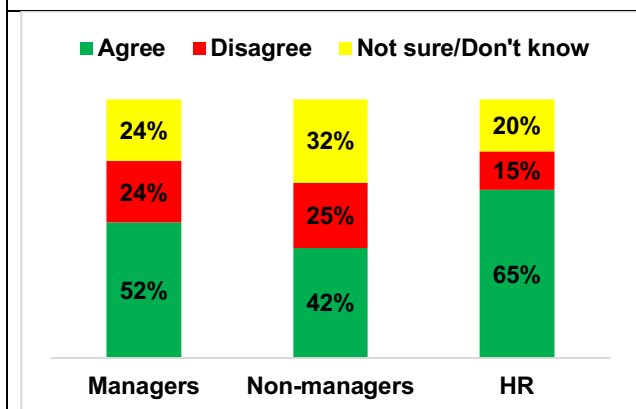
(32%) as indicated by managers and non-managers, pointing to a potential misalignment between individual development needs and HRD interventions. The municipality does not apply a variety of approaches such as formal and informal development (42%) and employees are not presented with opportunities to practise new competencies (34%) post skills development interventions as reported by non-managers strongly supported by managers and HR. There is no agreed procedure for the implementation of human resource development in the workplace as reported by all respondents. Although RPL could be beneficial for particularly the blue-collar workers, it is not implemented efficiently and effectively as agreed by all three respondent groups. The high percentage of research participants who indicated not sure/do not know (between 31% - 44%) is an indication of the poor communication in the organisation. The findings are consistent with the discussions in the focus groups, the uncertainty of non-managers in particular.



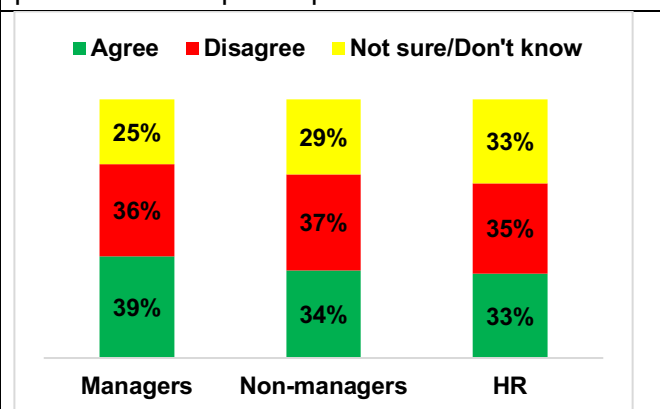
**Question 1:** The municipality conducts/reviews skills development audits annually



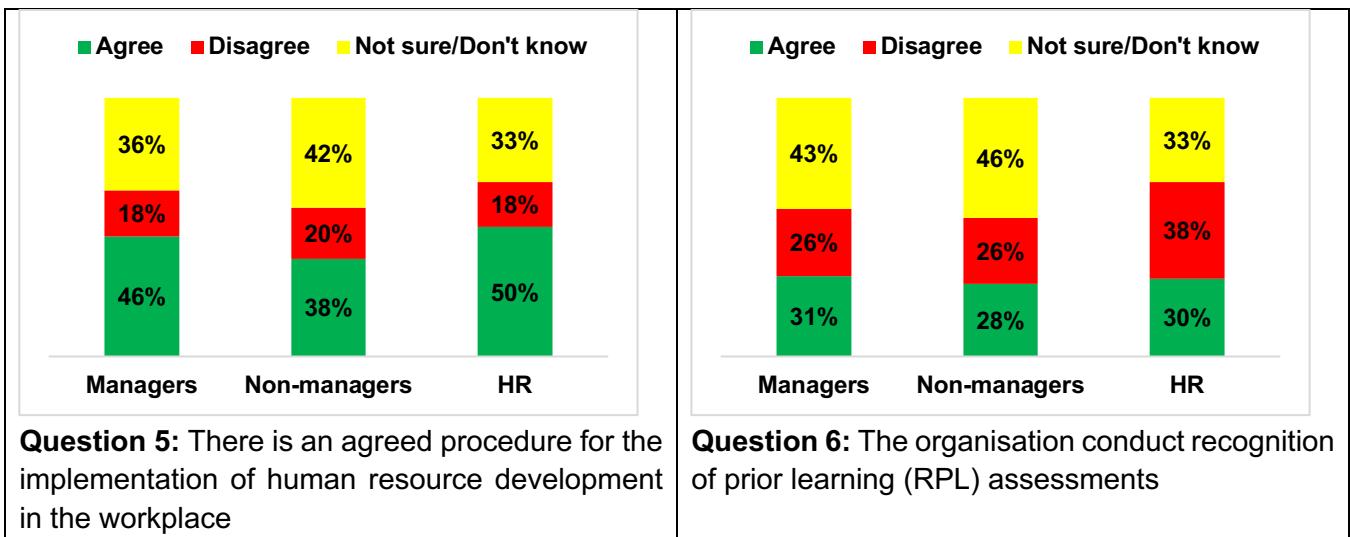
**Question 2:** Human resource development interventions are undertaken in line with employee personal development plans



**Question 3:** The municipality apply a variety of approaches (formal and informal) to skills development



**Question 4:** Employees are presented with opportunities to practice new competencies post skills development interventions



**Figure 12: Categorisation HRD Practise findings**

#### 4 ORGANISATION OF HRD FINDINGS

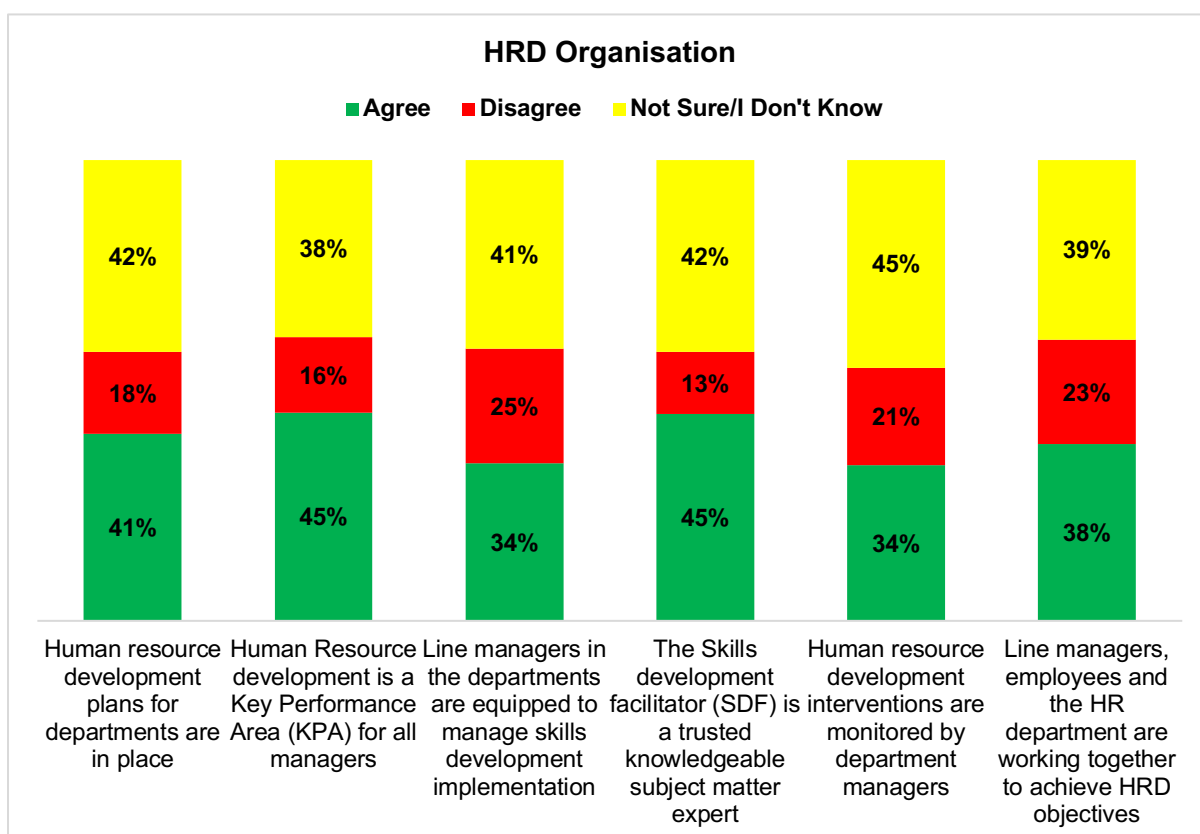
The decentralised way in which HRD should be managed was described earlier in the text as part of the Integrated management framework for human resource development. The survey tested whether:

- HRD plans for departments are in place
- HRD is a key performance area for all line managers
- Line managers are equipped to manage skills development implementation
- The skills development facilitator is a knowledgeable subject matter expert
- HRD interventions are monitored by department managers
- Line managers, employees and HR department are working together to achieve HRD objectives.

Although the Municipal Staff Regulations indicate that line managers in departments should perform a more hands-on role in HRD, the research findings in figure 13 indicate the contrary. HRD plans for departments are not in place (41%). It is concluded that the organisation of HRD in municipalities is a problem and line managers are not equipped to manage the implementation of HRD projects (34%) and the HRD outputs are not included in the KPAs for line managers (45%). The HRD interventions are not monitored by the department managers (34%). The Skills Development Facilitators (SDF), the principal HRD internal consultant, however, indicates a lack of confidence and credibility problem – the SDF is not trusted nor considered a knowledgeable subject matter expert (45%). The organisational actors to ensure the effective implementation of HRD are not collaborating effectively to achieve HRD objectives (38%). The high percentage of research participants



who indicated not sure/do not know (38% - 45%) is an indication of poor communication in the organisation. The research findings contradict the directive of the Municipal Staff Regulations as advocated in the Integrated Management Framework for Human Resource Development – HRD should be decentralized. The problem of the SDF was highlighted in the focus group discussion with LGSETA managers who stated that “*even the municipalities themselves do not really take the SDF seriously. So, you deal with the person down here that cannot even decide whatsoever. So even when you come up with a resolution at the provincial SDF forums. The poor SDF really cannot do much. So, I think the positioning of the SDF itself is working against us.*”



**Figure 13: Organisation of HRD findings**

The research findings for (manager, non-manager and HRD professional) in figure 14 indicate that there is a HRD organisation problem in municipalities. Managers who are responsible to set the HRD climate in organisations themselves indicated not sure//don't know (40%) regarding whether HR plans are in place and are also not sure (32%) whether HRD is a KPA. The very low score of managers who indicate that they are equipped (36%) to manage the implementation of skills development, which is supported by HR 30% is a concern. The Skills development facilitator who plays a pivotal coordinating HRD role is not trusted across the organisational actors as reported by managers (50%), non-managers (40%) and HR (63%). Managers themselves do not know whether HRD

implementation is monitored (31%) and the internal collaboration across the organisation to achieve HRD objectives is extremely poor as reported by managers (42%) non-managers (37%) and HR (53%). The data confirms scores far below the 70% threshold for managers, non-managers as well as HR. Attention to these matters will enhance the organisation of HRD to departments and add to the achievement of an ethical culture.

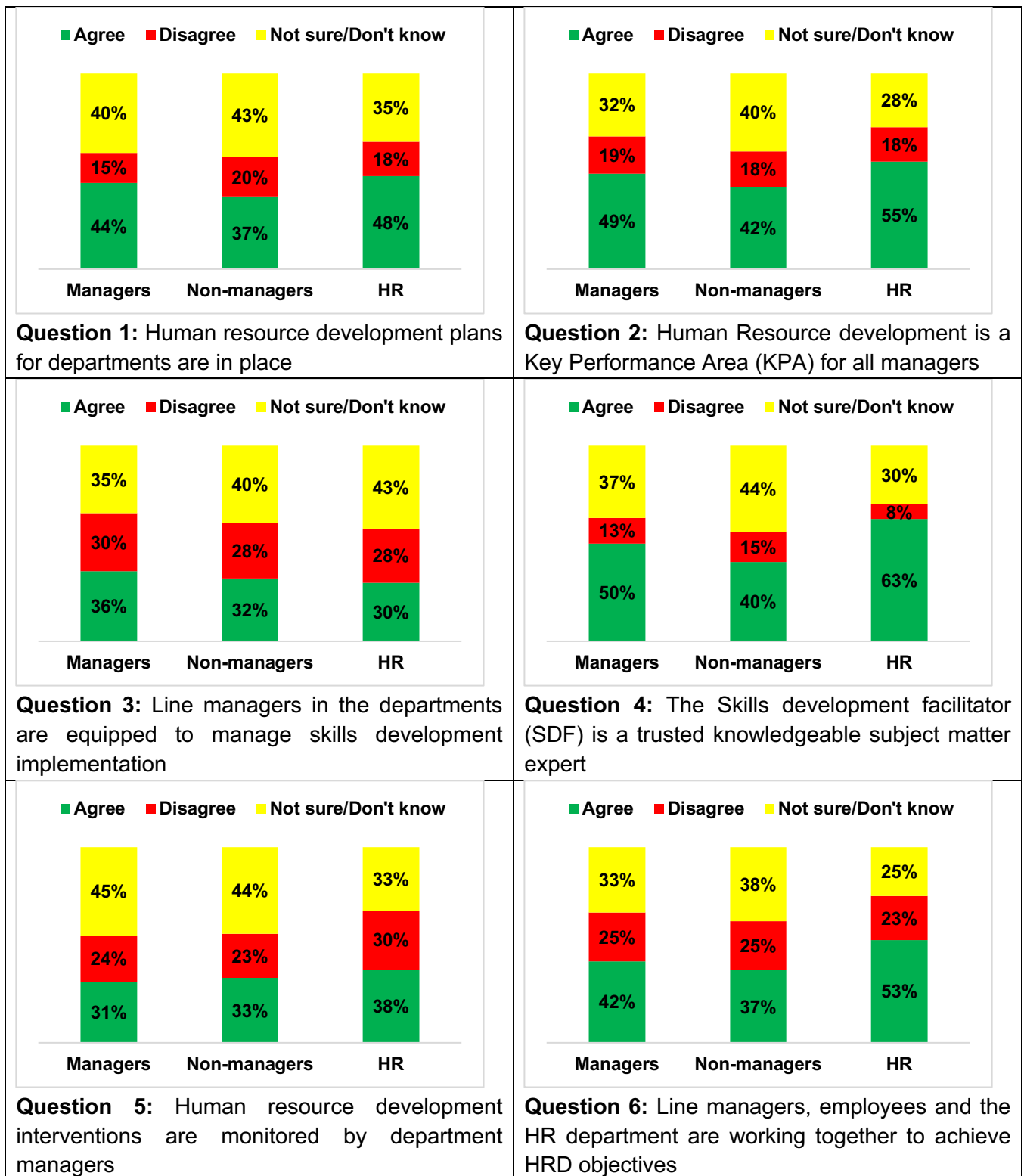


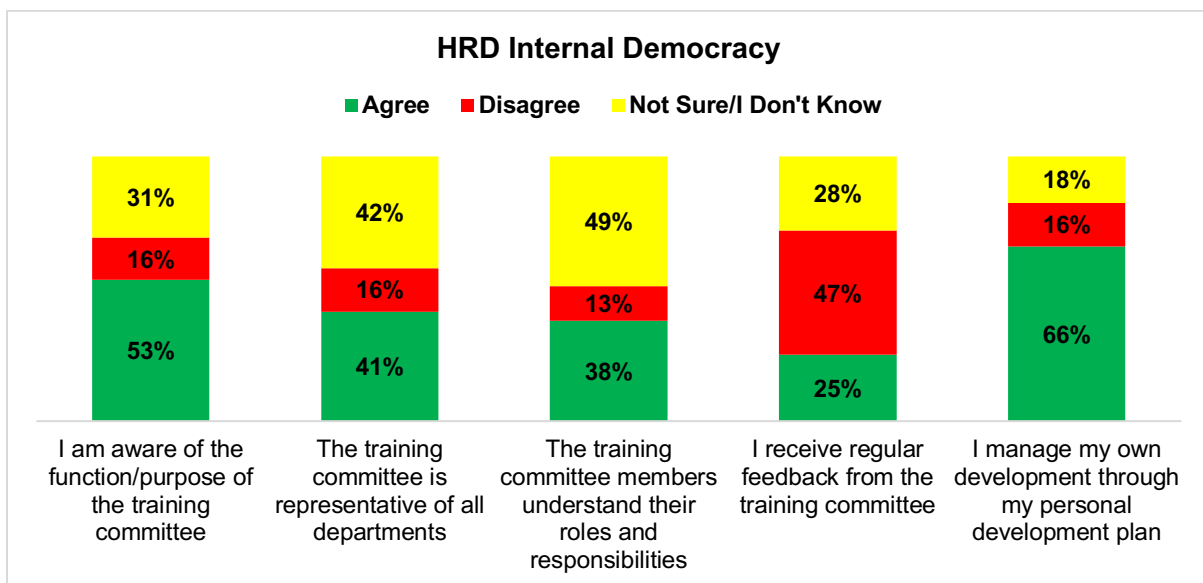
Figure 14: Categorisation Organisation of HRD

## 5 HRD INTERNAL DEMOCRACY FINDINGS

Internal democracy was described earlier in the text as part of the Integrated management framework for human resource development. The survey tested whether:

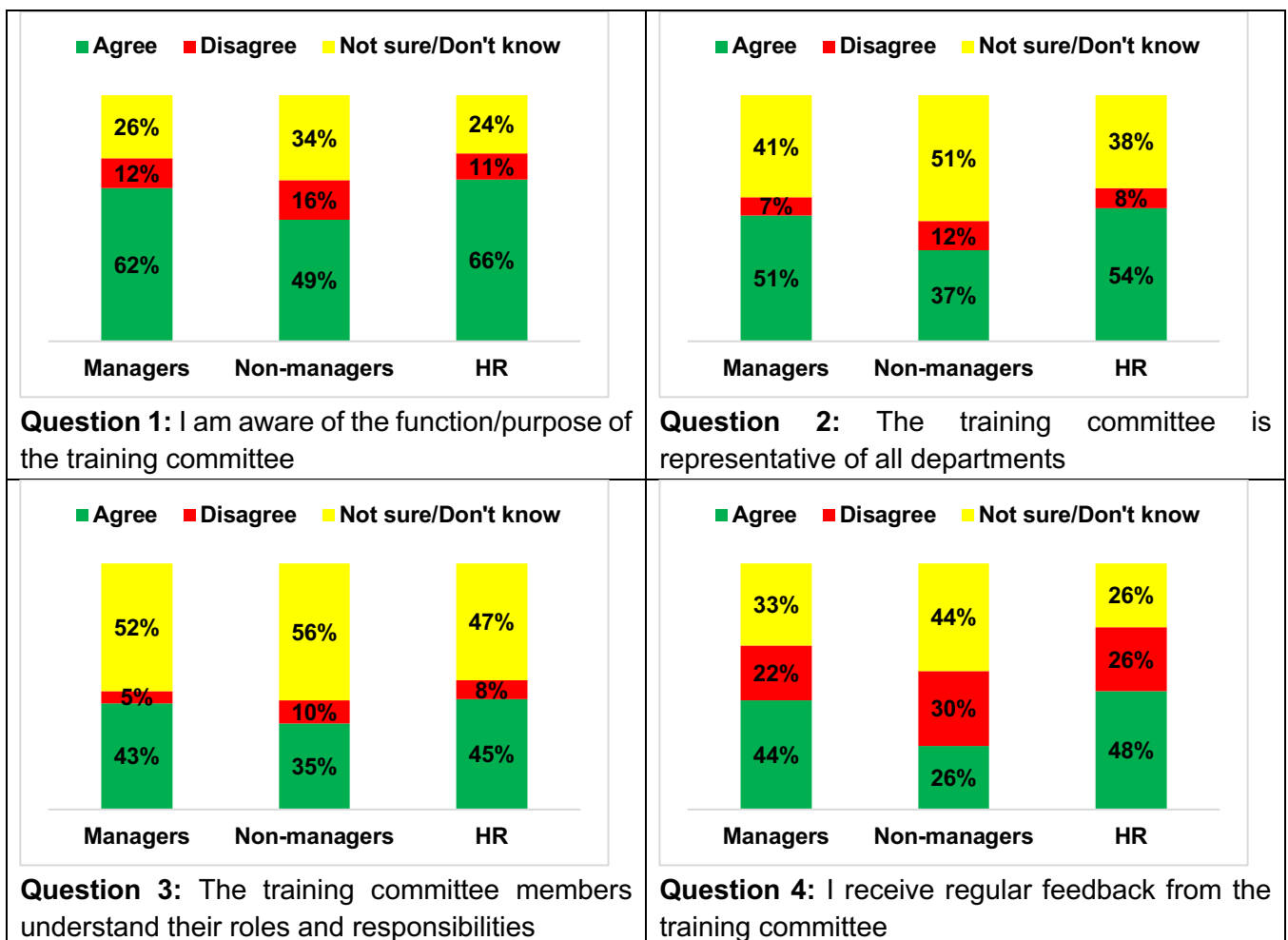
- Organisational awareness of the purpose and function of the training committee
- The representativeness of the training committee
- The roles and responsibilities of the training committee
- Organisational feedback from the training committee
- Management of individual personal development plans

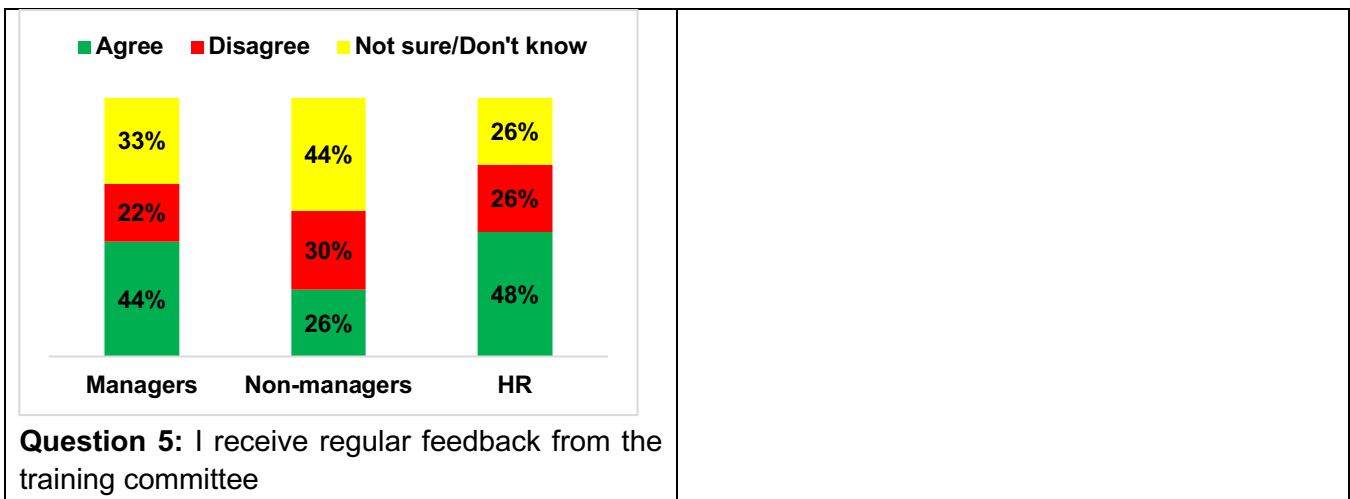
Although the legislated training committee has been in operation since 1998, there is low awareness of the training committee (53%) which is not representative of all departments (41%). The committee members do not understand their roles and responsibilities (38%) and the organisation does not receive regular feedback (25%). The research participants indicate that participants manage their own development (66%) through their personal development plan. The high score of 66% is not consistent with the discussions in the focus group, nor consistent with the rest of the statements. However, the high score of participants who are not sure/don't know indicates the poor internal communication as indicated as well as the high percentage (47%) of participants who indicated that they receive no regular feedback. This is illustrated in figure 15.



**Figure 15: HRD Internal Democracy findings**

The research findings for managers, non-manager and HRD professional research findings in figure 16 for internal democracy indicate the proportional low scores for non-managers compared to that of managers and HRD professionals. There are proportional high levels of uncertainty amongst the three sampled groups considering awareness of the training committee and the representation of the committee. There are even higher levels of uncertainty in terms of training committee members on whether the training committee understands their roles and responsibilities with more than 50% either indicating that they disagree or were not sure. The high percentage of managers, non-managers and HR who indicated not sure/don't know is a cause for concern. Non managers across all statement continue to score the lowest which is consistent with the scores for the other categories. The data confirm scores far below the 70% threshold for managers, non-managers as well as HR. Attention to these matters will enhance internal democracy and add to the achievement of an ethical culture.





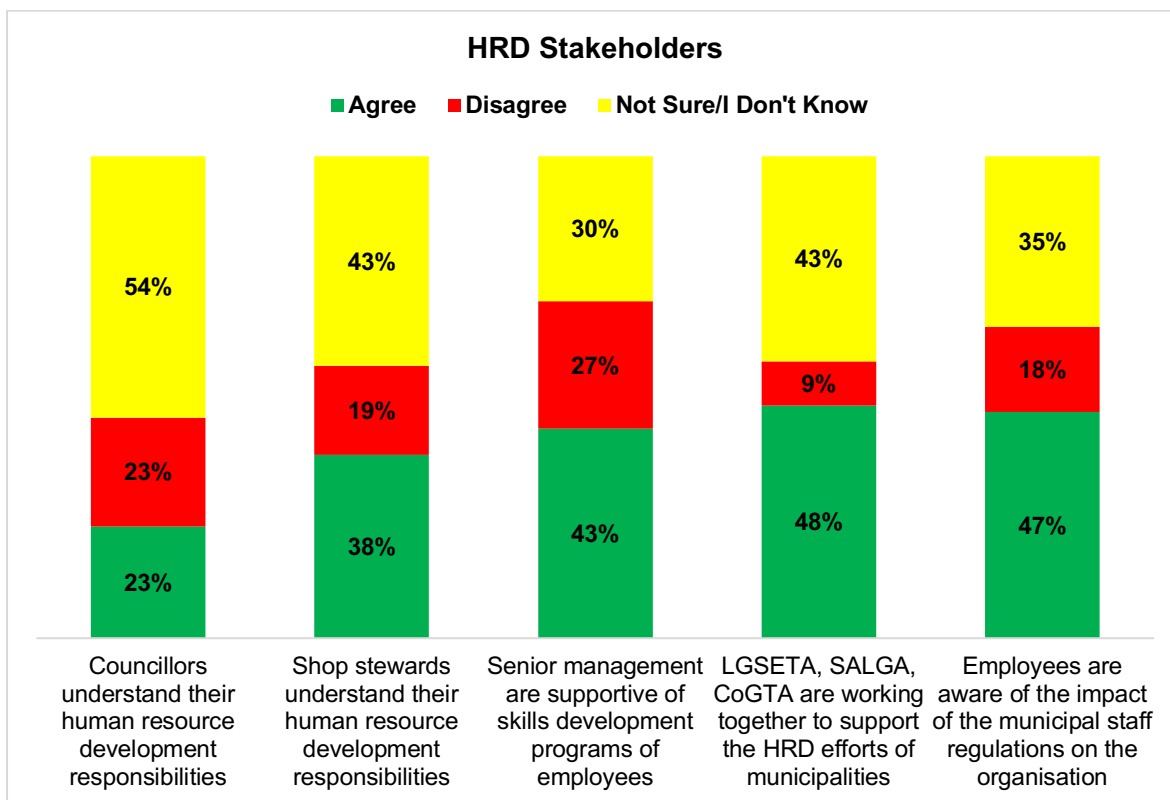
**Figure 16: Categorisation HRD Internal Democracy**

## 6 HRD STAKEHOLDERS' FINDINGS

The importance of HRD stakeholders was described earlier in the text as part of the Integrated management framework for human resource development. The survey tested whether:

- Councillors understand their HRD responsibilities
- Shop stewards understand their HRD responsibilities
- Senior managers are supportive of the skills development programs of employees
- LGSETA, SALGA and CoGTA are working together to support HRD efforts of municipalities
- Employees are aware of the impact of the municipal staff regulations

From the research findings in figure 17, it is concluded that it is not known whether councillors (23%) and shop stewards (38%) understand their human resource development and responsibilities. Senior managers (43%) are not supportive of HRD programs of employees, despite the senior manager competencies identifying people management as a key competency for senior managers. The research participants are not certain that the LGSETA, SALGA and CoGTA are working together (48%). Finally, the employees are not aware of the potential impact of the Municipal Staff Regulations on municipalities (47%). Again, the high percentage of research participants that indicated that they are not sure or do not know (between 35% and 54%) is an indication of the poor communication and the organisation working in silos. The focus group confirmed that the key national role players are not effectively working together but work in silos.



**Figure 17: HRD Stakeholders findings**

The analysis for managers, non-managers and HRD professional responses illustrated in figure 18 indicate the high levels of uncertainty amongst municipal actors in so far as understanding of the HRD roles of councillors and shop stewards. The managers indicated that senior managers who are supposed to show leadership are not supportive (59%) of skills development programs of employees. In this HR indicate the strongest disagreement (33%) that senior managers are not supportive. It is understandable that managers (41%) and non-managers (43%) show high scores of uncertainty on whether LGSETA, SALGA and COGTA are working together to support the HRD efforts of municipalities. There is great uncertainty amongst the managers, non-managers and HR professional on the level of awareness on the impact of the Municipal Staff Regulations on municipalities, although the high score for managers indicates a greater level of awareness compared to the others. The data confirm scores far below the 70% threshold for managers, non-managers as well as HR. Attention to these matters will ensure greater stakeholder participation and add to the achievement of an ethical culture.

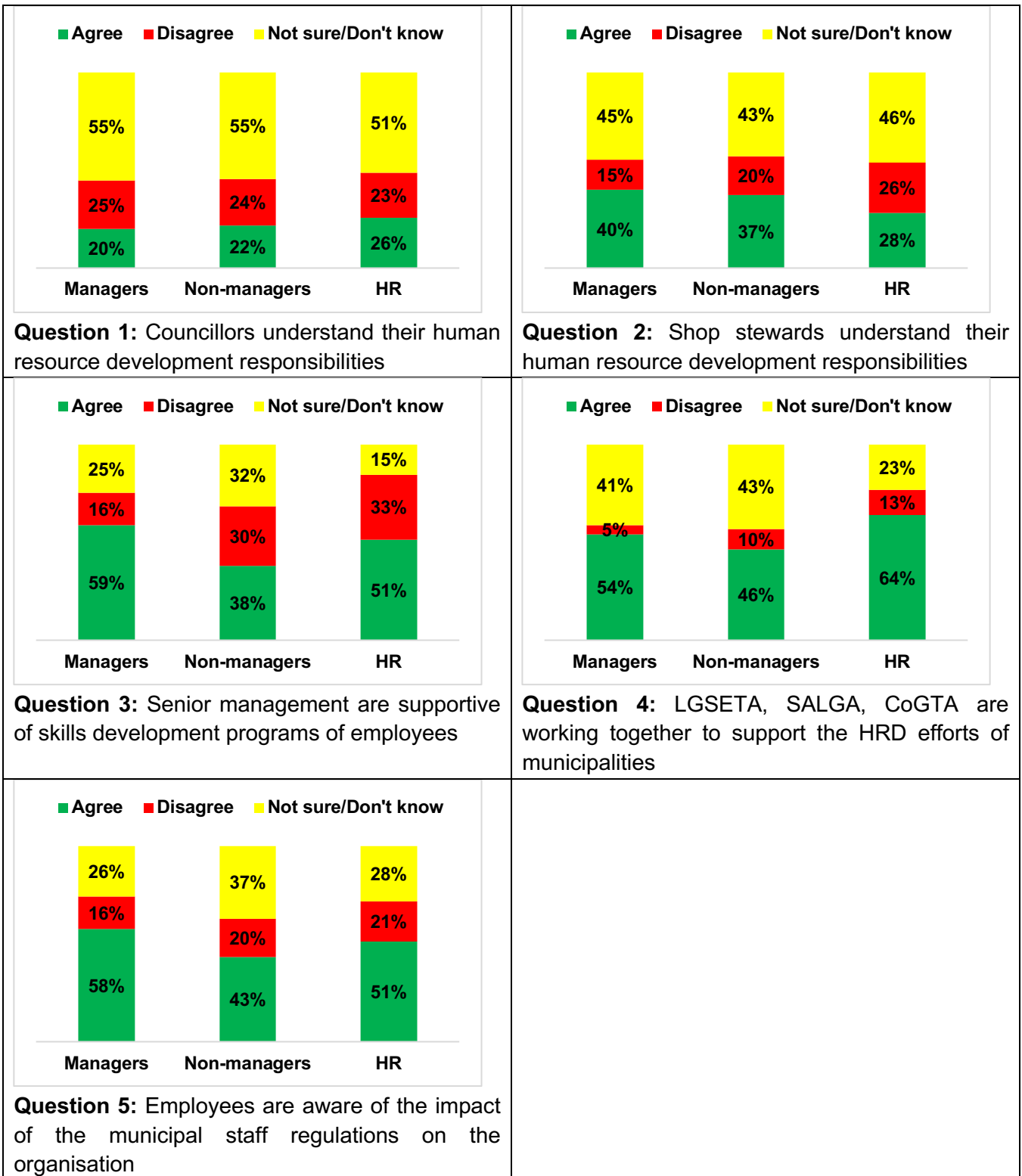


Figure 18: Categorisation HRD Stakeholders

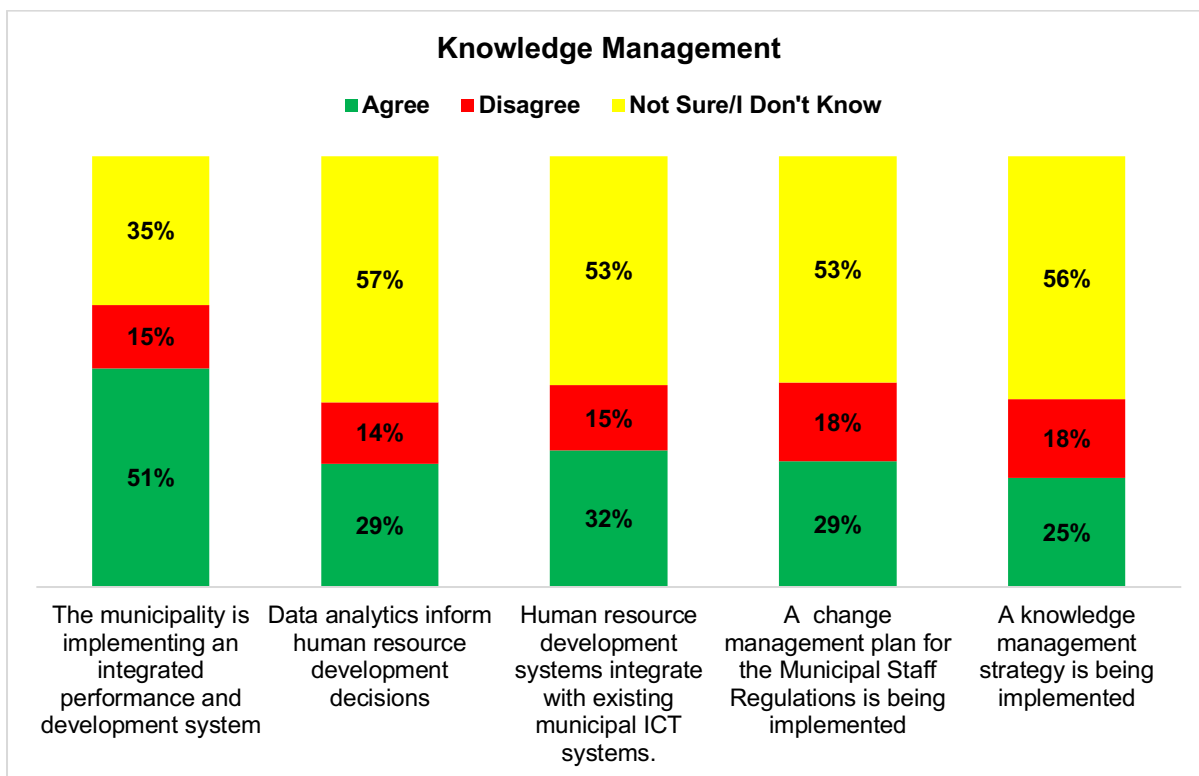
## 7 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FINDINGS

The section of knowledge management tested whether;

- The municipality is implementing an integrated performance development system
- Data analytics inform HRD decisions
- HRD systems integrate with existing municipal ICT systems
- A change management plan for municipal staff regulations is being implemented
- Knowledge management strategy is being implemented.

From the research findings illustrated in figure 19 it is concluded that key indicators in support of knowledge management are not implemented effectively. More than half the participants indicated that they do not know or were unsure indicating a clear lack of communication. The performance and development systems are not being implemented effectively (51%) and data analytics are not used to inform HRD decisions (29%). It is also not known whether HRD systems integrate with existing municipal ICT systems (32%). The Municipal Staff Regulations place the municipalities on a completely new trajectory with a renewed emphasis on increasing organisational capabilities through linking organisational structure and strategy, a focus on performance and development. In the process new organisational capabilities and knowledge are developed that is not harvested that could potentially benefit the organisation. Notwithstanding there is glaring absence or awareness of a change management plan which is considered a risk for the effective implementation (29%). There is low awareness of the implementation of a knowledge management strategy (25%). This confirmed the LGSETA 2023 study on the poor implementation of knowledge management in South African municipalities. The high levels of uncertainty ranging from 35% to 57% is indicative of the low levels of communication and the organisations working in silos.





**Figure 19: Knowledge Management findings**

The research findings for managers, non-managers and HRD professionals as illustrated in figure 20 indicate a high level of uncertainty across the board for all respondent groups. For management who lead the organisation, the levels of uncertainty are alarming in terms of how human resource development systems integrate with existing municipal ICT systems (47%), on data analytics (49%). The integration with existing HRD system (47%) is also an unknown. Managers are also not aware (46%) of whether a change management approach is being followed. That only 26%, managers, 21% non-managers and 20% HR are aware that knowledge management is being implemented confirms the 2023 study on the poor implementation of knowledge management in South African municipalities. It would appear from the data that municipalities are beginning to implement an integrated performance and development system although still far from the acceptable 70% threshold. The data confirm scores far below the 70% threshold for managers, non-managers as well as HR. Attention to these matters will ensure greater knowledge management and add to the achievement of an ethical culture.

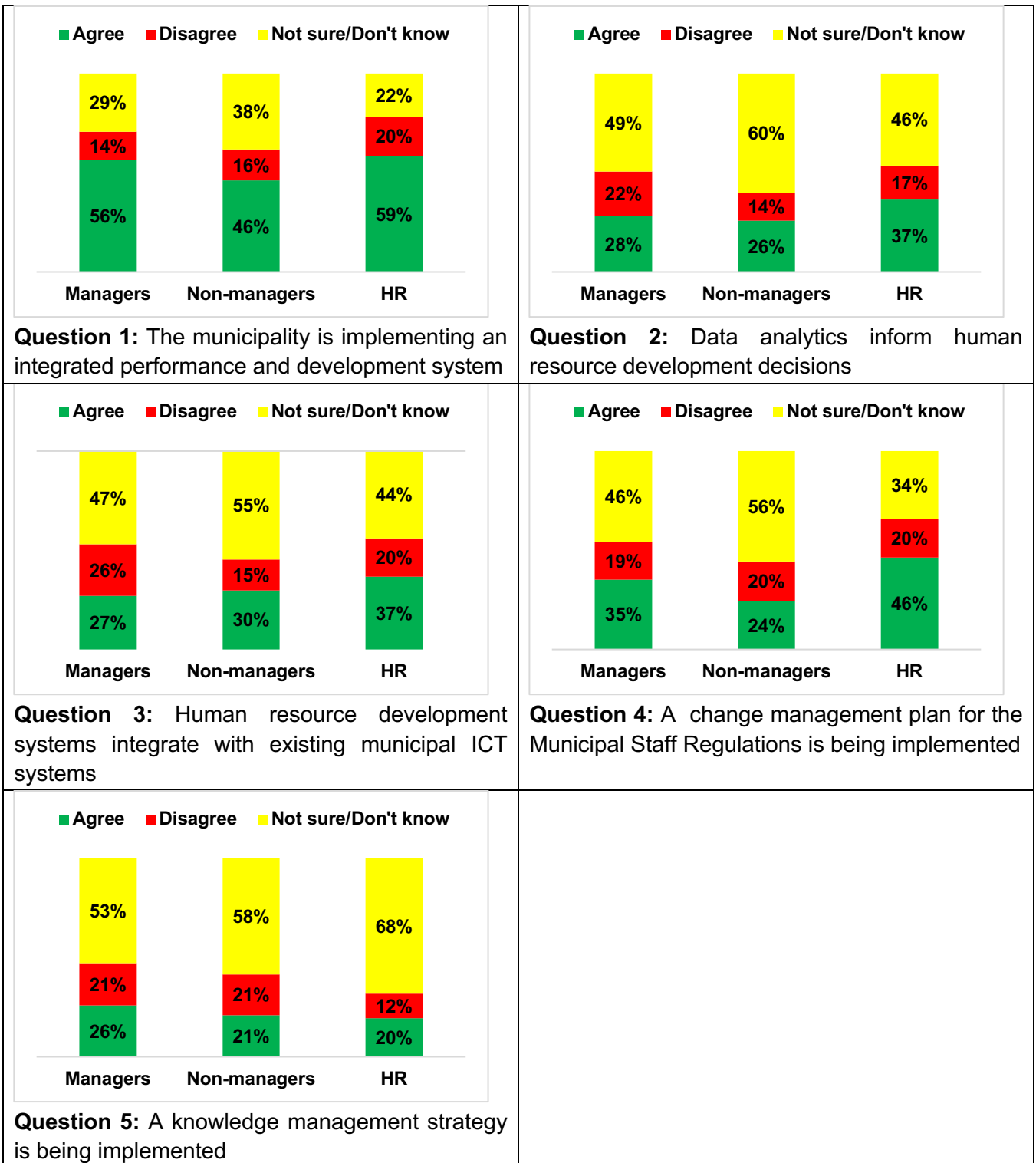


Figure 20: Categorisation Knowledge Management

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## SECTION 5: CONCLUSIONS

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Despite an enabling legislative environment, South African organisations have generally failed to effectively implement workplace transformation (Employment Equity and Skills Development). The Employment Equity Commission report (2020) concluded that “there is no will to affect (implement) transformation”. Michael Barber (2015) argues that effective workplace transformation is dependent on organisational commitment to policy (10%) and implementation (90%).

This is the first comprehensive study to assess the applicability of evidence-based HRD practices for local government. The main conclusion is that evidence-based HRD and change management are not practised effectively in municipalities, giving rise to HRD not being effectively measured and managed despite the 26-year-old enabling policy framework. The research results paint a bleak picture in terms of the understanding, application, and integration of evidence-based HRD in the local government sector as participants scored far below the 70% threshold. This was highlighted by the quantitative results (questionnaire) and confirmed by the qualitative results (focus group discussions and discussions with key informants).

From the data findings (evidence) it is concluded that:

- A negative outlook on ethical values within the workplace exists. Significant areas for improvement in making HRD a much clearer priority and enhancing the effectiveness of evidence-based performance management are needed. The gaps between managers' and HR on the one hand and non-managers' perceptions indicate potential areas where communication must be enhanced to ensure the achievement of an ethical organisational culture.
- The existence of an HR policy environment, however, there are serious gaps in alignment with organizational goals, strategic planning, and communication. These gaps could potentially impact organizational performance and employee satisfaction and lead to employee disengagement and low morale.
- The decentralised HRD approach as favoured by legislation is a problem and managers are ill equipped for their new HRD roles. An evidence-based system to assist managers to plan and prepare, as well as systematic monitoring of HRD interventions is critical as well as supporting (hand holding) of managers as envisaged in the Municipal Staff Regulations.
- The practice of HRD confirmed the weak application of HRD practices within the municipality. There is evidence of structured HRD implementation and opportunities for skill application, however, significant gaps exist in the alignment

of interventions with personal development plans as well as the communication of the procedure for the implementation of HRD in the workplace and RPL application.

- The internal democratic structures as expressed in the training committee is extremely poor. The training committee representation, feedback mechanisms and the awareness of the functioning of the committee were found wanting.
- It is not known whether the key oversight role players in local government namely councillors and shop stewards understand their HRD roles and responsibilities nor whether senior managers supportive of HRD programs. Although the Municipal Staff Regulations is a game changer, the communication of the impact of such was found wanting.
- Local government is making some effort to advancing knowledge management practices and integrating technology into human resource development; however, this is not enough. Significant effort will need to be put in to ensure that knowledge management is implemented.

The empirical evidence presented is clear – the benefits of evidence-based HRD is not applied nor appreciated in local government and hence evidence-based HRD is not practised in local government. An evidence-based approach to HRD will greatly contribute to the successful implementation of the Municipal Staff regulations placing local government on the sustainable development path as envisaged by the White Paper.

Local government managers hold the key to optimal municipal performance. Evidence-based human resource development practice offers municipalities an institutional model through an evidence-based approach (audit) akin to that of the Auditor General to ensure that the human resource development performance of managers are included as part of material irregularities reporting (Public Audit Act). This will place local government on a completely new trajectory with the management of human resource development and knowledge at the centre of the transformation efforts of local government, in line with sustainable development goal 16.

The primary objective of this research project was to assess whether evidence-based HRD can be applied to measure and manage HRD in the local government sector in South Africa. The secondary objectives of the research and the extent to which they have been achieved in the end, were the following:

1. Explore the concept of evidence-based human resource development in the local government sector: **This was done in section 2 in the literature review from point 12 – 23.**
2. Analyse the role of the different role players in evidence-based practices in human resource development in local government sector. **This was done in section 2 in the literature review under point 12.**
3. Investigate whether HRD assessment tools (ICT) exist that can be applied and integrated with existing ICT tools in the local government sector. **This was done in section 2 in the literature review under point 14.**
4. Investigate the role of human resource development in improving service delivery areas in the local government sector. **This was done in section 2 in the literature review from point 1 – 11.**
5. Explore the international best practices in the application of evidence-based human resource development in the local government sector. **This was done in section 2 in the literature review from point 20 – 23.**
6. Investigate the link between organisational change and evidence-based human resource development practices. **This was done in section 2 in the literature review from point 19 – 23.**

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## **SECTION 6: RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The ‘father’ of management, Peter Drucker said, “You cannot manage what you cannot measure.” (as cited in Cloete, 2019)

The White Paper on Local Government (1998) set the direction for local government in South Africa, but also envisioned the type of political and administrative leadership required to realise that vision as – providing community-wide leadership and vision, constantly builds its capacity to make policy judgements, is accountable and transparent, builds partnerships and coalitions, represents the diversity of interests and demonstrates value for money.

Based on the triangulation of the respective data sets and the findings of the survey, the recommended strategies to improve the measurement and management in the local government sector are presented in the following two parts:

1. Collaborative Stakeholder Implementation
2. Municipal Research Readiness Protocol

### **1 COLLABORATIVE STAKEHOLDER IMPLEMENTATION**

The stakeholder-assisted implementation recommendations below emanate from the best practices observed in the literature review and in-depth discussions with stakeholders, including CoGTA, SALGA, AGSA, institutions of higher learning, local government practitioners. These recommendations are synthesized and expounded on below in no particular order.

Barber, 2023 concludes – if public servants are to change (dissatisfaction with the status quo) and be motivated to implement such change (behaviour) they need to experience two emotions simultaneously. Firstly they need to feel the pressure to change (the feeling that they cannot be complacent) and secondly the sense that they are receiving the support, skills and tools (enabling environment from their managers) they need to do things differently (innovation) (www.cde.org.za. 2023). Evidence-based research allows society to solve problems of the future.

The recommendations address and recognise the need for change and making sure that the organisational capabilities are addressed.

It is recommended that the LGSETA, as the lead facilitator:

**Table 5: Propose Recommendations – LGSETA**

| Recommendations  | Stakeholders                            | Timeframe                  |
|--|---|----------------------------|
| 1. Adopt the Code for Ethical Leadership in Local Government and encourage municipalities to do the same.  | Ethical Institute<br>SALGA<br>COGTA     | In the next 6 months       |
| 2. Develop a provincial wide policy and implementation procedures to evaluate the WSP and ATR per municipality in line with evidenced based practices identified and highlighted in this report. | SALGA<br>COGTA                          | In the next 6 months.      |
| 3. Update the WSP and ATR forms are to include the full spectrum of HRD as well as the HRD performance of managers.  | SALGA<br>COGTA                          | In the next 6 months.      |
| 4. Confirm the IMF- HRD and adopt the HRD questionnaire to obtain baseline data to rate municipalities per district.   | SALGA<br>COGTA                          | In the next 6 months       |
| 5. Determine the viability to audit HRD management in local government as part of performance reporting of the AG  | SALGA<br>COGTA<br>AGSA                  | Within the next 12 months. |
| 6. Proceed with the finalisation of an evidenced based HRD system that integrates with the (Muni eMonitor).  | SALGA<br>COGTA<br>Treasury<br>Developer | Within the next 12 months  |

|  |                                    |                            |
|--|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 7. Adopt the Capability Development Problem Led Framework for municipalities and workshop this in provinces.                     | SALGA<br>COGTA<br>AGSA<br>Treasury | Within the next 12 months. |
| 8. Ensure that provincial LGSETA offices are capable to support municipalities as they adopt evidenced based HRD practice.       | SALGA<br>COGTA<br>UFS              | Within the next 12 months. |
| 9. Align the LGSETA Skills handbook and that of the MSR implementation handbook.   | COGTA<br>SALGA                     | Within the next 12 months. |
| 10. Establish District wide knowledge management forums that incorporate evidenced based HRD practice through the Governance5iQ. | COGTA<br>SALGA                     | Within the next 12 months. |

## 2 MUNICIPAL RESEARCH READINESS PROTOCOL

Like happens with any research project, this study had certain limitations. The first was an impossibly tight timeframe over the extended summer holiday period to complete the research project as required. This timeframe did not take into consideration that municipal activities normally scale down significantly over the festive period, starting normally from 1 December to the middle of January when the schools open again, with many potential respondents away on holiday during this period. It is recommended that research schedules in future take this factor explicitly into account in order to maximise the quality of research results.

The second constraint was a significant non-responsiveness of municipalities and their individual respondents despite direct support interventions by the LGSETA, SALGA and other official stakeholders in this field. Inordinate volumes of time and effort were spent (not invested) in persuading municipalities to participate in this LGSETA research program. It was only partially successful and the research team had to adopt contingency strategies to substitute numerous municipalities as a result of non-responses from the originally targeted institutions. This negative experience confirms the dismal condition that local government finds itself across the country, and the lack of skills and commitment



from senior local government practitioners that aggravates the serious under-performance of these institutions in terms of their statutory local governance mandates. It is recommended that the LGSETA develop a municipal research readiness protocol in consultation with provincial LGSETA managers, skills development facilitators, SALGA and CoGTA within the next six months in order to streamline research in the local government sector and obtain in advance the willingness of municipalities to participate in these critical evidence - based research programmes. This point was already raised in earlier research reports to the LGSETA but has not been actioned.

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In God we trust. All others must bring data (evidence) - W. Edwards Deming

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## **APPENDIX A – QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF OF MUNICIPALITIES AND MUNICIPAL ENTITIES**

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### **QUESTION SCHEDULE: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF OF MUNICIPALITIES AND MUNICIPAL ENTITIES**

#### **Instructions:**

- Please rate the questions honestly and openly (there is no right or wrong answer).
- Please note the terms human resource development (HRD) and skills development are used interchangeably

#### **Section A: General questions**

**Please tick your response**

1. My current position at (manager, non-manager, trade unionist, politician, HR professional)
2. My Directorate (Infrastructure, Office of the MM, Corporate Services, Finance, Community Services, Planning, Strategic Services, Other)

### Section B: Ethical Values

**Instruction:** Rate each statement using the scale provided.

|   |       | Rate each statement using this scale |          |  |
|---|-------|--------------------------------------|----------|--|
| Question  | 1     | 2                                    | 3        |  |
|   | Agree | Not sure/<br>don't know              | Disagree |  |
| 1. My manager is committed to equal opportunities for the development of people |       |                                      |          |  |
| 2. The development of people is a priority in my department                     |       |                                      |          |  |
| 3. Performance management is taken seriously                                    |       |                                      |          |  |
| 4. My competencies and contributions to service delivery are recognised         |       |                                      |          |  |
| 5. Managers support the development of people                                   |       |                                      |          |  |

Please feel free to elaborate \_\_\_\_\_

### Section C: HRD Policy

**Instruction:** Rate each statement using the scale provided.

|  |       | Rate each statement using this scale |          |  |
|--|-------|--------------------------------------|----------|--|
| Question   | 1     | 2                                    | 3        |  |
|  | Agree | Not sure/<br>don't know              | Disagree |  |
| 1. A human resource plan/strategy is in place                    |       |                                      |          |  |
| 2. The human resource policy link the IDP and skills development |       |                                      |          |  |
| 3. The human resource policy link the IDP and employment equity  |       |                                      |          |  |

|    |   |  |  |  |
|----|---|--|--|--|
| 4. | The human resource policy link the IDP and performance management                 |  |  |  |
| 5. | The human resource policy identify the different role players and their functions |  |  |  |
| 6. | A succession planning policy is in place for all employee levels                  |  |  |  |
| 7. | The human resource plan/strategy is being implemented                             |  |  |  |

Please feel free to elaborate \_\_\_\_\_

### Section D: HRD Practise

**Instruction:** Rate each statement using the scale provided.

|          |  | Rate each statement using this scale |                         |          |
|----------|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------|
| Question |  | 1                                    | 2                       | 3        |
|          |  | Agree                                | Not sure/<br>don't know | Disagree |
| 1.       | The municipality conducts/reviews skills development audits annually                                     |                                      |                         |          |
| 2.       | Human resource development interventions are undertaken in line with employee personal development plans |                                      |                         |          |

|    |   |  |  |  |
|----|---|--|--|--|
| 3. | The municipality apply a variety of approaches (formal and informal) to skills development                    |  |  |  |
| 4. | Employees are presented with opportunities to practice new competencies post skills development interventions |  |  |  |
| 5. | There is an agreed procedure for the implementation of human resource development in the workplace            |  |  |  |
| 6. | The organisation conduct recognition of prior learning (RPL) assessments                                      |  |  |  |

Please feel free to elaborate \_\_\_\_\_

## Section E: Organisation of HRD

**Instruction:** Rate each statement using the scale provided.

|    |   | Rate each statement using this scale |                              |               |
|----|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
|    | Question  | 1<br>Agree                           | 2<br>Not sure/<br>don't know | 3<br>Disagree |
| 1. | Human resource development plans for departments are in place                                       |                                      |                              |               |
| 2. | Human Resource development is a Key Performance Area (KPA) for all manager's performance agreements |                                      |                              |               |

|    |   |  |  |  |
|----|---|--|--|--|
| 3. | Line managers in the departments are equipped to manage skills development implementation     |  |  |  |
| 4. | The Skills development facilitator (SDF) is a trusted knowledgeable subject matter expert     |  |  |  |
| 5. | Human resource development interventions are monitored by department managers                 |  |  |  |
| 6. | Line managers, employees and the HR department are working together to achieve HRD objectives |  |  |  |

Please feel free to elaborate \_\_\_\_\_

### Section F: HRD Internal Democracy

**Instruction:** Rate each statement using the scale provided.

|          |  | Rate each statement using this scale |                         |          |
|----------|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------|
| Question |  | 1                                    | 2                       | 3        |
|          |  | Agree                                | Not sure/<br>don't know | Disagree |
| 1.       | I am aware of the function/purpose of the training committee |                                      |                         |          |
| 2.       | The training committee is representative of all departments  |                                      |                         |          |

|    |  |  |  |  |
|----|--|--|--|--|
| 3. | The training committee members understand their roles and responsibilities |  |  |  |
| 4. | I receive regular feedback from the training committee                     |  |  |  |
| 5. | I manage my own development, based on my personal development plan         |  |  |  |

Please feel free to elaborate \_\_\_\_\_

### Section G: HRD Stakeholders

**Instruction:** Rate each statement using the scale provided.

|    |  | Rate each statement using this scale |                         |          |
|----|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------|
|    | Question   | 1                                    | 2                       | 3        |
|    |  | Agree                                | Not sure/<br>don't know | Disagree |
| 1. | Councillors understand their human resource development responsibilities |                                      |                         |          |

|    |  |  |  |  |
|----|--|--|--|--|
| 2. | Shop stewards understand their human resource development responsibilities.              |  |  |  |
| 3. | Senior management are supportive of skills development programs of employees.            |  |  |  |
| 4. | LGSETA, SALGA, CoGTA are working together to support the HRD efforts of municipalities.  |  |  |  |
| 5. | Employees are aware of the impact of the municipal staff regulations on the organisation |  |  |  |

Please feel free to elaborate \_\_\_\_\_

## Section H: Knowledge Management

**Instruction:** Rate each statement using the scale provided.

|  |                 | Rate each statement using this scale |                         |          |
|--|-----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------|
|  | <b>Question</b> | 1                                    | 2                       | 3        |
|  |                 | Agree                                | Not sure/<br>don't know | Disagree |



|    |   |  |  |  |
|----|---|--|--|--|
| 1. | The municipality is implementing an integrated performance and development system |  |  |  |
| 2. | Data analytics inform human resource development decisions.                       |  |  |  |
| 3. | Human resource development systems integrate with existing municipal ICT systems. |  |  |  |
| 4. | A Municipal Staff Regulations change management plan is being implemented.        |  |  |  |
| 6. | A knowledge management strategy is being implemented                              |  |  |  |

**Please feel free to elaborate** \_\_\_\_\_

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**APPENDIX B – QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FOCUS GROUP WITH STAFF OF MUNICIPALITIES AND MUNICIPAL ENTITIES**

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**QUESTION SCHEDULE:**

**FOCUS GROUP WITH STAFF OF MUNICIPALITIES AND MUNICIPAL ENTITIES**

**Researcher’s introductory remarks to the research participant(s)**

**Instructions:**

- Kindly turn off your cell phone or put it on silent.
  - Please answer the questions honestly and openly (there are no right or wrong answers).
1. Research point to HRD professionals (SDFs) lacking credibility. What can be done to change this perception?
  2. How has the Municipal staff regulations impacted your organisation?
  3. What do you consider the knowledge, attitudes, skills and habits (KASH) required by specifically managers to perform their new role as envisaged in the Municipal staff regulations?
  4. How is evidence based human resource development understood and interpreted ?
  5. What mechanisms must be in place for the municipality to have an ideal learning outcome?
  6. Describe how HRD change management initiatives are approached in the organisation?
  7. What are some of the barriers preventing skills development measurement and management in your organisation?
  8. How should human resource development be measured?
  9. Please identify the different role players in your organisation that play a role in the success of human resource development management and measurement.
  10. How should managers specifically be supported in their HRD roles to measure and manage HRD?

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**APPENDIX C – EVIDENCED BASED HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM INDICATORS**

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| <b>HRD Indicator</b><br>(Why we do what we do) | <b>HRD Outputs - Evidence</b><br>(How we do what we do)                                | <b>Suggested WHO</b><br><b>Supported by/with</b> | <b>HRD Outcomes</b><br>(What we wish to achieve) |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Ethical Values</b>                          |  |  |  |
| 1. My manager is committed to equal            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal development plan for each</li> </ul> | 1. The manager supported by the SDF              | 1. HRD values are visible and known              |

| HRD Indicator<br>(Why we do what we do)     | HRD Outputs -<br>Evidence   | Suggested WHO   | HRD Outcomes  |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ethical Values                              | (How we do what we do)  | Supported by/with   | (What we wish to achieve)   |
| opportunities for the development of people | team member signed off my manager <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minutes produced of meeting between manager and the SDF to identify appropriate HRD interventions.</li> <li>Minutes of quarterly update report between manager and the SDF.</li> </ul> |   | 2. HRD behaviours that match the values have been identified for line managers, non-line managers, HR professionals and political principals<br><br>3. Values have been communicated to all stakeholders via appropriate communications channels. |
| 2. The development of people is a priority. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An infographic developed for unethical behaviour</li> </ul>  | 1. Line managers with support from the SDF<br><br>2. Communications department supported by the SDF | 1. A fair selection procedure is in place for the development of staff  |

| HRD Indicator<br>(Why we do what we do)                                 | HRD Outputs -<br>Evidence<br>(How we do what we do)  | Suggested WHO<br>Supported by/with        | HRD Outcomes<br>(What we wish to achieve)   |
|---|--|---|---|
| Ethical Values  |  |   |   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mechanisms such as hotline, tip-offline in place to report unethical HRD behaviours by managers</li> </ul>                                    | 3. SDF with support from HRD              |   |
| 3. Performance management is taken seriously                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance management contracts submitted for each employee</li> <li>Initiate a recognition and incentives</li> </ul>                        | 1. Director with support from SDF/HR      | 1. Employees can site examples of how they believe their contribution is recognised             |
| 4. My competencies and contributions to service delivery are recognised | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees can list specific examples on how they are recognised</li> <li>An employee of the month per department scheme identified</li> </ul> | 1. Line Manager with support from SDF     | 1. Mechanisms in place for employees to report unfairness in HRD access and implementation.     |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint development of the criteria to recognise employees</li> </ul>   | 2. Line manager with support from the SDF |   |
| 5. Managers support the development of people                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managers site specific examples of how they are supporting the development of people</li> </ul>   | 1. Line manager with support with SDF     | 1. Management can cite specific HRD implementation plans and strategies they have put in place. |

| <b>HRD Indicator</b><br>(Why we do what we do) | <b>HRD Outputs - Evidence</b><br>(How we do what we do)  | <b>Suggested WHO</b><br><b>Supported by/with</b> | <b>HRD Outcomes</b><br>(What we wish to achieve) |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Ethical Values</b>                          |  |  |  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish case studies showcasing success of employees</li> </ul> | 2. Line manager with support from SDF            | 2. A multimedia HRD communication plan in place  |

| <b>HRD Indicator</b><br>(Why we do what we do)                 | <b>HRD Activities</b><br>(How we do what we do)  | <b>Suggested WHO</b><br><b>Supported by/with</b> | <b>Evidenced based HRD Implementation Outcomes</b><br>(What we wish to achieve) |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>HRD Policy</b>  |  |  |   |
| 1. A human resource plan/strategy/policy is being implemented. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HR plan is presented</li> <li>The minutes of how the HR plan was developed</li> <li>Meeting resolution</li> </ul> | 1. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD        | 1. HRD policy was reviewed and co designed by the organisational actors         |

| <b>HRD Indicator</b><br>(Why we do what we do)                                     | <b>HRD Activities</b><br>(How we do what we do)  | <b>Suggested WHO</b><br><br><b>Supported by/with</b> | <b>Evidenced based HRD Implementation Outcomes</b><br>(What we wish to achieve)  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>HRD Policy</b>  |  |  |  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HR Implementation plan per department</li> </ul>  |  |  |
|  |  | 2. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD            | 2. Policy review mechanisms in place.  |
| 2. The human resource plan/strategy/policy link the IDP and skills development     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extract of the HR plan and link to the SDBIP</li> </ul>   | 1. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD            | 1. Different platforms are used to show that organisational actors understand the HRD policy   |
|  |  | 2. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD            |  |
| 3. The human resource plan/strategy/policy link the IDP and employment equity      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extract of the HR plan and link to employment equity</li> </ul>   | 1. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD            | 1. Evidence can be produced of policy and implementation linkages  |
| 4. The human resource plan/strategy/policy link the IDP and performance management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extract of the HR plan and link to employment equity</li> </ul>   | 1. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD            | 1. Specific roles and responsibilities have been identified for stakeholders and the institutional arrangements to facilitate this collaboration is known. |
|  |  | 2. SDF with support from line manager                |  |
| 5. The human resource plan/strategy/policy identify the different role             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct workshops with the organisational actors to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities</li> </ul> | 1. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD            | 1. Succession planning policy and implementation plan in place as  |

| <b>HRD Indicator</b><br>(Why we do what we do)                 | <b>HRD Activities</b><br>(How we do what we do)   | <b>Suggested WHO</b><br><br><b>Supported by/with</b> | <b>Evidenced based HRD Implementation Outcomes</b><br>(What we wish to achieve)           |
|--|---|--|---|
| <b>HRD Policy</b>  |   |  |   |
| players and their functions                                    |   | 2. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD            | well as the review mechanisms   |
| 6. A succession planning policy is implemented                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Succession implementation plan presented and approved</li> <li>• A 5-year succession plan (audit per division) is completed</li> </ul> | 1. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD            | 1. An incentive policy and implementation plan in place as well as the review mechanisms. |
| 7. The human resource plan/strategy/policy was explained to me | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roadshow</li> </ul>  |  |   |

| <b>HRD Indicator</b><br>(Why we do what we do) | <b>HRD Activities</b><br>(How we do what we do)                                       | <b>Suggested WHO</b><br><br><b>Supported by/with</b> | <b>Evidenced based HRD Implementation Outcomes</b><br>(What we wish to achieve) |
|--|---|--|---|
| <b>HRD Practice</b>                            |   |  |   |
| 1. The municipality conducts                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills audit form co-designed and</li> </ul> | 1. SDF   |   |

| <b>HRD Indicator</b><br>(Why we do what we do)  | <b>HRD Activities</b><br>(How we do what we do)   | <b>Suggested WHO</b><br><b>Supported by/with</b> | <b>Evidenced based HRD Implementation Outcomes</b><br>(What we wish to achieve) |
|---|---|--|---|
| <b>HRD Practice</b>   |   |  |   |
| /reviews skills audits annually.  | presented to labour forum   |  | 1. Skills audits completed.   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Result of the skills audit presented per department</li> </ul>                                 | 2. Line manager with support from SDF            |   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Results shared on popular platforms</li> </ul>   | 3. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD        |   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managers are capacitated to lead the skills audit project with support from the SDF</li> </ul> | 4. SDF   |   |
| 2. Human resource development interventions are undertaken in line with employee personal development plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5-year personal development plan signed off by line managers</li> </ul>                        | 1. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD        | 1. All staff have updated personal development plans (PDP)                      |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training and development plan is aligned with personal development plans.</li> </ul>           | 2. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD        | 2. Employee HRD interventions are completed on the basis of the PDP             |
| 3. The municipality apply a variety of approaches (formal and informal) to skills development               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and adopt an informal HRD prospectus</li> </ul>  | 1. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD        | 1. All division are applying formal and informal HRD initiatives.               |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and adopt a formal HRD prospectus</li> </ul>   | 2. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD        | 2. HRD interventions are linked to formal and informal interventions            |



| <b>HRD Indicator</b><br>(Why we do what we do)  | <b>HRD Activities</b><br>(How we do what we do)   | <b>Suggested WHO</b><br><b>Supported by/with</b> | <b>Evidenced based HRD Implementation Outcomes</b><br>(What we wish to achieve)   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <b>HRD Practice</b>   |   |  |   |
| 4. Employees are presented with opportunities to practice new competencies post skills development interventions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design and implement an integrated Work Learning Program</li> </ul>                          | 1. SDF/HRD with line managers                    | 1. Employees are provided with opportunities to practice new competencies post HRD interventions.   |
| 5. There is an agreed procedure for the implementation of human resource development in the workplace             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a departmental quarterly planner and report monthly on HRD interventions.</li> </ul> | 1. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD        | 1. Employees are aware on how to access skills development opportunities in the workplace.  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an Infographic and communicate procedures.</li> </ul>                                | 2. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD        | 2. Evidence can be produced of steps the directorate have put in place to ensure that employees know the procedure to follow to access skills development opportunities |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design and adoption of procedure for the practice of HRD.</li> </ul>                         | 3. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD        |   |
| 6. The organisation conduct recognition of prior learning (RPL) assessments                                       |   |  |   |

| <b>HRD Indicator</b><br>(Why we do what we do)                                 | <b>HRD Activities</b><br>(How we do what we do)  | <b>Suggested WHO</b><br><b>Supported by/with</b>              | <b>Evidenced based HRD Implementation Outcomes</b><br>(What we wish to achieve)   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Organisation of HRD</b>   |  |   |   |
| 1. Human resource development plans for departments are in place               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A divisional HRD plan developed with the support of the organisational actors.</li> </ul> | 1. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD                     | 1. A divisional HRD plan that is linked to the SDBIP  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HRD plan is linked to the budget.</li> </ul>  | 2. Line manager with support from SDF/HRD                     | 2. A divisional HRD budget in place.  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minutes produced of meetings at a departmental level.</li> </ul>                          | 3. Line manager with support from admin officer in department | 3. Divisional organisational actors are involved in the development of the HRD plan                                       |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity building workshop conducted with the divisional actors.</li> </ul>               | 4. SDF with support of consultant                             | 4. HRD initiatives improved individual and team performance.  |
| 2. Human Resource development is a Key Performance Area (KPA) for all managers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Line managers complete the HRD for Non-HR managers Master Class</li> </ul>                | 1. SDF with support of consultant                             | 1. Line Managers are taking responsibility for HRD in the directorate.  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Line managers complete the 8 Non-Negotiables Masterclass</li> </ul>                       | 2. SDF with support of consultant                             | 2. Organisational Directorate HRD delegations in place  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Line Managers complete the introduction to Coaching Masterclass</li> </ul>                | 3. SDF with support of consultant                             | 3. Line managers are competent and well versed in HRD.<br>4. Line managers down to first line managers are supporting the |

| HRD Indicator<br>(Why we do what we do)  | HRD Activities<br>(How we do what we do)  | Suggested WHO<br>Supported by/with          | Evidenced based HRD<br>Implementation Outcomes<br>(What we wish to achieve)   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Organisation of HRD  |   |   | development of people   |
|  |   |   | 5. Line managers are being supported to assist in the development of people   |
|  |   |   | 6. Managers are supporting the development of employees   |
| 3. Line managers in the departments are equipped to manage skills development implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The SDF sign service level agreements with each Directorate</li> </ul>   | 1. Line Managers                            | 1. All the organisational actors understand the role and responsibility of the SDF.   |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 7 habits of highly effective SDF Masterclass are presented as part of Continuous Professional development</li> </ul> | 2. SDF with support from the consultant     | 2. The SDF has a job description and performance management contract in line with regulations that spells out the role of the SDF |
|  |   |   | 3. The SDF has a reporting line to MM   |
| 4. The Skills development facilitator (SDF) is a trusted knowledgeable                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills/Equity programs are reported on monthly to the divisions</li> </ul>   | 1. SDF with support from the line managers. | 1. A system is in place to monitor and evaluate divisional HRD Interventions and performance.                                     |

| <b>HRD Indicator</b><br>(Why we do what we do)   | <b>HRD Activities</b><br>(How we do what we do)   | <b>Suggested WHO</b><br><b>Supported by/with</b> | <b>Evidenced based HRD Implementation Outcomes</b><br>(What we wish to achieve)       |
|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Organisation of HRD</b>   |   |  |   |
| subject matter expert  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best HRD practice is shared</li> </ul>   | 2. SDF   | 2. New HRD knowledge is created   |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A chapter included in the annual report on the workplace transformation.</li> </ul>  | 3. SDF with support from line manager            | 3. Every Directorate has a directorate skills development champion.                   |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SDF champions appointed that has a service level agreement and understands the transformation mandate at all directorates</li> </ul> | 4. SDF with support from line managers           |   |
| 5. Human resource development interventions are monitored by department managers                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative competence masterclass conducted throughout the organisation.</li> </ul>   | 1. Consultant with support from SDF              | 1. Evidence can be produced of collaborative competence of the organisational actors. |
| 6. Line managers, employees and the HR department are working together to achieve HRD objectives |   |  |   |

| <b>HRD Indicator</b><br>(Why we do what we do)                                | <b>HRD Activities</b><br>(How we do what we do)   | <b>Suggested WHO</b><br><br><b>Supported by/with</b> | <b>Evidenced based HRD Implementation Outcomes</b><br><br>(What we wish to achieve) |
|---|---|--|---|
| <b>HRD Internal Democracy</b>   |   |  |   |
| 1. I am aware of the function/purpose of the training committee               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly meeting of the skills/equity committee</li> </ul>                                | 1. SDF   | 1. The local labour forum has a functional HRD committee                            |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Terms of Reference for the skills committee is approved</li> </ul>                         | 2. SDF   |   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A skills/equity toolbox is implemented.</li> </ul>   | 3. SDF with support from consultant                  | 2. Skills Equity committee members are capacitated                                  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills Equity Masterclass conducted</li> </ul>   | 4. SDF with support from consultant                  |   |
| 2. The training committee is representative of all departments                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Terms of Reference for the skills committee is approved at the divisional level</li> </ul> | 1. Line Manager with support from consultant.        | 1. Consultative committee presents at each directorate                              |
|   |   |  | 2. Terms of reference of the committees is in place.                                |
| 3. The training committee members understand their roles and responsibilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills Equity Masterclass conducted</li> </ul>   | 1. SDF with support from consultant                  | 1. Skills/equity committee capacitated and supported                                |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly meetings conducted</li> </ul>  | 2. SDF   |   |
| 4. I receive regular feedback from the training committee                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roadshows conducted and HRD infographic designed and distributed</li> </ul>                | 1. Line manager with support from the SDF            | 1. All employees understand their HRD roles and responsibilities.                   |

| <b>HRD Indicator</b><br>(Why we do what we do)                      | <b>HRD Activities</b><br>(How we do what we do)  | <b>Suggested WHO</b><br><b>Supported by/with</b>       | <b>Evidenced based HRD Implementation Outcomes</b>                                   |
|---|--|--|--|
| <b>HRD Internal Democracy</b>                                       |  |  | (What we wish to achieve)  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees sign a pledge and commitment letter</li> </ul>                    | 2. SDF   | 2. Employees are taking responsibility for their own development                     |
| 5. I manage my own development through my personal development plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly newsletter on skills development and employment equity</li> </ul> | 1. SDF with support from the communications department | 1. Employees in divisions receiving quarterly feedback from skills/equity committee. |

| HRD Indicator<br>(Why we do what we do)                                       | HRD Activities<br>(How we do what we do)   | Suggested WHO<br>Supported by/with      | Evidenced based HRD Implementation<br>Outcomes<br>(What we wish to achieve)  |
|---|--|---|--|
| HRD Stakeholders  |  |   |  |
| 1. Councillors understand their human resource development responsibilities   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delegated Authority assigned to a senior manager</li> </ul>                                     | 1. MM with advise from the SDF          | 1. Senior manager leads workplace transformation.  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appointment letter for senior manager</li> </ul>  | 2. MM                                   | 2. Workplace transformation included in the Key Performance Indicator of the senior manager                                      |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly dashboard update by the senior manager on the state of skills development</li> </ul>     | 3. Line Manager with support from SDF   | 3. The senior manager can produce evidence of how the organisational priorities (IDP) are linked to the development of employees |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting on the Skills development cycle inside municipalities</li> </ul>                      | 4. Line Manager and SDF                 |  |
| 2. Shop stewards understand their human resource development responsibilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rules of the HRD Governance Masterclass for politicians completed</li> </ul>                    | 1. SDF with support from consultant     | 1. Portfolio holders and councillors understand their HRD oversight roles and responsibilities                                   |
| 3. Senior Management are supporting the development of management             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HRD Governance and the oversight and the role of trade unions master class completed</li> </ul> | 1. SDF with support from the consultant | 1. Local trade union leadership understand their HRD oversight roles and responsibilities.                                       |

| <b>HRD Indicator</b><br>(Why we do what we do)  | <b>HRD Activities</b><br>(How we do what we do)   | <b>Suggested WHO</b><br><b>Supported by/with</b> | <b>Evidenced based HRD Implementation Outcomes</b><br>(What we wish to achieve)  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <b>HRD Stakeholders</b>   |   |  |  |
| and employees.  |   |  |  |
| 4. LGSETA, SALGA, CoGTA are working together to support the HRD efforts of municipalities.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Personal development plan for all employees can be presented by senior managers</li> </ul>                                   | 1. Line managers with support from the SDF       | 1. Senior Managers can cite specific strategies and implementation plans they have put in place to support the development of management and employees |
| 5. Employees are aware of the impact of the municipal staff regulations on the organisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly report submitted by the Municipal manager to the external stakeholders on progress made against the IMF-HRD</li> </ul> | 1. Line managers with the support of SDF         | 1. Senior Management can describe strategies and provide evidence they are implementing to ensure external stakeholders collaborate better.            |



| <b>HRD Indicator</b><br>(Why we do what we do)<br><b>Knowledge management</b>        | <b>HRD Activities</b><br>(How we do what we do)  | <b>Suggested WHO</b><br><b>Supported by/with</b> | <b>Evidenced based HRD Implementation Outcomes</b><br>(What we wish to achieve)  |
|--|--|--|--|
| 1. The municipality is implementing an integrated performance and development system | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delegated Authority assigned to a senior manager</li> </ul>                                     | 1. MM with advise from the SDF                   | 1. Senior manager leads workplace transformation.  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appointment letter for senior manager</li> </ul>  | 2. MM  | 2. Workplace transformation included in the Key Performance Indicator of the senior manager                                      |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly dashboard update by the senior manager on the state of skills development</li> </ul>     | 3. Line Manager with support from SDF            | 3. The senior manager can produce evidence of how the organisational priorities (IDP) are linked to the development of employees |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting on the Skills development cycle inside municipalities</li> </ul>                      | 4. Line Manager and SDF                          |  |
| 2. Data analytics inform human resource development decisions.                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rules of the HRD Governance Masterclass for politicians completed</li> </ul>                    | 1. SDF with support from consultant              | 1. Portfolio holders and councillors understand their HRD oversight roles and responsibilities                                   |
| 3. Human resource development systems integrate with existing                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HRD Governance and the oversight and the role of trade unions master class completed</li> </ul> | 1. SDF with support from the consultant          | 1. Local trade union leadership understand their HRD oversight   |

| <b>HRD Indicator</b><br>(Why we do what we do)  | <b>HRD Activities</b><br>(How we do what we do)  | <b>Suggested WHO</b><br><b>Supported by/with</b> | <b>Evidenced based HRD Implementation Outcomes</b><br>(What we wish to achieve)  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <b>Knowledge management</b>   |  |  |  |
| municipal ICT systems.  |  |  | roles and responsibilities.  |
| 4. A change management plan for the Municipal Staff Regulations is being implemented. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Personal development plan for all employees can be presented by senior managers</li> </ul>                                  | 1. Line managers with support from the SDF       | 1. Senior Managers can cite specific strategies and implementation plans they have put in place to support the development of management and employees |
| 5. A knowledge management strategy is being implemented                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly report submitted by the Municipal manager to the external stakeholders on progress made against the IMFHRD</li> </ul> | 1. Line managers with the support of SDF         | 1. Senior Management can describe strategies and provide evidence they are implementing to ensure external stakeholders collaborate better.            |