Sector Skills Plan
2025-2030

MICTSETA

Media, Information And
Communication Technologies
Sector Education And Training Authority

SHAPING SKILLS, PIONEERING INDUSTRIES, EMPOWERING FUTURE

FOREWORD

This report presents the MICT SETA Sector Skills Plan (SSP) 2025-2030. We have conducted rigorous research to ensure that the documented occupational shortages and skills gaps are a true reflection of demand and supply in the labour market. Data on labour shortages is often a subject of debate. To this effect, several stakeholders were consulted to construct a comprehensive picture of the MICT sector and its direction.

This year, we did a comprehensive analysis of 4IR technologies and their role in the MICT sector to acquire deeper insights into the skills shortages and to support industry in closing those skills gaps. The more confidence we have in the Sectoral Priority Occupations, the more assured we are of the Strategic Plan. The combined efforts of all stakeholders to produce this document are gratefully acknowledged. The following deserve special mention:

- The MICT SETA Accounting Authority members;
- MICT SETA Industry and professional bodies;
- Academic and research institutions at large;
- Organised Labour; and
- All the stakeholders who kindly participated in our interviews, surveys and focus groups.

Our thanks go to the stakeholders whose collective wisdom have been incorporated into this document. Sharing of knowledge is a catalyst for achieving South Africa's skills development potential and economic growth.

MR MATOME MADIBANA
Chief Executive Officer (CEO): MICT SETA

MR SIMPHIWE THOBELA
Chairperson: MICT SETA Board

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
5G	Fifth-Generation Wireless Technology
ACASA	Association for Communication and Advertising South Africa
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AR	Augmented Reality
ATR	Annual Training Report
B-BBEE	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
BABOK	A Guide to the Business Analysis Body of Knowledge
CAGR	Compound Annual Growth Rate
CBO	Community- Based Organisations
CECS	Centre of Excellence in Cyber Security
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CISCO	Commercial & Industrial Security Corporation
CISSP	Certified Information Systems Security Professional
COBOL	Common Business-Oriented Language
CompTIA	Computing Technology Industry Association
Covid-19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
DCDT	Department of Communications & Digital Technologies
DHET	Department of Higher Education
DEF	Deaf Empowerment Firm
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
DTT	Digital Terrestrial Television
EE	Employment Equity
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurance
FOSS	Free Open Access Software
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GITOC	Government Information Technology Officers Council
GNU	Government of National Unit
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEMIS	Higher Education Management Information System
HRDSSA	Human Resource Development Strategy of South Africa
HTFV	Hard-to-Fill Vacancy
IBM	International Business Machines
IIBA	International Institute of Business Analysis
ICASA	Independent Communications Authority of South Africa
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IITPSA	Institute of Information Technology Professionals South Africa
IoT	Internet of Things
IPAP	Industrial Policy Action Plan
ISACA	Information Systems Audit and Control Association
IT	Information Technology
ITA	Information Technology Association
JET	Just Energy Transition
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MANCO	Management Committee
MCSA	Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate
MCSD	Microsoft Certified Solutions Developer
MCSE	Microsoft Certified Solutions Expert
MDDA	Media Development and Diversity Agency
MICT	Media, Information and Communication Technologies
MTDP	Medium-Term Development Plan
NAB	National Association of Broadcasters
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGP	New Growth Path
NLPE	Neuro-Linguistic Programming Executive
NLRD	National Learner Record Database
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSI	National System of Innovation
NSDP	National Skills Development Plan
OFO	Organising Framework for Occupations
OGS	Online Grant System
PC	Personal Computer
PRINCE2	Projects in Controlled Environments 2
PICC	Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
QMR	Quarterly Monitoring Report
SACIA	Southern African Communications Industries Association
SAP	Systems Applications and Products
SDF	Skills Development Facilitator
SDL	Skills Development Levy
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SET	Science, Engineering and Technology
SIC	Standard Industrial Classification
SIP	Strategic Integrated Projects
SITA	State Information Technology Agency
SKA	Square Kilometre Array
SLA	Service-Level Agreement
SMME	Small, Medium, and Micro-enterprises
SPO	Sectoral Priority Occupations
SSP	Sector Skills Plan
STB	Set Top Box
SoI	Statement of Intent
TIA	Technology Innovation Agency
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
USAASA	Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa
VOD	Video on Demand
VOIP	Voice Over Internet Protocol
VR	Virtual Reality
WIL	Work-Integrated Learning
WP-PSET	White Paper on Post-Schooling Education and Training
WSP	Workplace Skills Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The MICT Sector Skills Plan (SSP) has been developed to map out and plan for occupational and skills needs in the Advertising, Film and Electronic Media, Electronics, Information Technology and Telecommunications industries. The SSP is updated annually to analyse the changes in the sector's labour market and does so against the backdrop of the economic performance of the sector and the developmental agenda of the country. It sizes up the gap between the demand for and supply of skills and outlines strategies for dealing with the identified challenges. This SSP comes at the commencement of the 7th Administration of Government that came into effect after general elections held in May 2024. The new government administration brought about the Government of National Unity which is government formation where multiple parties constitute government. As the MICT we have accounted for these changes in this document and explained our position on what our contribution will be to the Medium-Term Development Plan as captured by the GNU.

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS AND METHODS

The data collection process for the study employed a variety of tools, including interviews, surveys, and focus group discussions, tailored to gather insights across the five sub-sectors of the MICT SETA. A comprehensive review of literature, national policies, sector performance reports, and industry plans was conducted, integrating findings from existing research such as tracer studies. Data analysis drew on diverse sources, including SETA employer and employee data, labour market trends from StatsSA, and recent HEMIS data on TVET colleges up to 2022, with SETA grant spending and learner data providing additional insights.

Stakeholder consultations across sub-sectors, along with input from the SETA research team and management, were integral to refining Strategic Skills Planning content. Efforts focused on triangulating findings on Hard-to-Fill Vacancies, Skills Gaps, Emerging Occupations, and PIVOTAL lists through extensive validation with stakeholders. Tools like interviews, online surveys, and focus groups were crucial in confirming the research findings, ensuring their reliability and robustness.

SECTOR PROFILE

As of 2024, the MICT sector is made up of 31 839 employers, this represents a 10% increase from the 28 829 reported in 2020. From the current employer base, only 8 069 employers are paying levies, this is an increase from 7 207 reported in 2020. In terms of the sub-sector distribution of employers, the Information Technology sub-sector is the largest sub-sector throughout the 2020-2024 period, accounting for between 57% and 44% of employers in the MICT sector. In terms of the number of employees in the MICT sector, employment increased between 2020 and 2024, reaching 300 625 employees in 2024. The largest proportion of employees are working in the Information Technology sub-sector, followed by the Telecommunications sub-sector. The highest proportion of people employed in the sector are African (51% in 2024), male (56% in 2024), and aged between 35-55 years (52% in 2024). In terms of the number of persons living with disabilities employed in the MICT sector, there was an increase from 2 698 employees in 2023 to 3 495 employees in 2024 (30% increase). Employees in the MICT sector are predominantly employed in professional occupational categories (35% in 2024).

KEY SKILLS CHANGE-DRIVERS

Chapter 2 provided an in-depth analysis of the factors shaping the landscape of skills supply and demand within the MICT sector. Central to this exploration is the profound influence of emerging technologies associated with the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), including Artificial Intelligence (AI), Cloud Computing, Big Data analytics, and the Internet of Things (IoT). These technologies were identified as pivotal change-drivers, fundamentally altering the nature of work, business operations, and economic paradigms within the sector. In addition, the loadshedding crisis has been identified as a key change driver as it significantly impacts businesses in the sector. Lastly, from the policy perspective, the 7th Administration of Government that underscores the Government of National Unity (GNU) is major change driver as it ushered the new phase in South African politics. This event, where different political parties constitute government is happening for the second time in history of South Africa. It was only in 1994 where and when this happened, when the ruling party African National Congress (ANC) worked along with the National Party (NP) in the formation of government. Interestingly, for the 7th Administration of Government, it is not just two parties constituting government, but various parties are part of the government under the auspices of the GNU.

SECTORAL SKILLS DEMAND AND SUPPLY ANALYSIS

This chapter identified the top HTFVs for the Advertising, Film and electronic media, Electronics, Telecommunications, and Information Technology sub-sectors. In addition, the key skills gaps were identified per major OFO group, as well as the emerging occupations within the MICT sector. The following is a list of the top 10 sectoral priority occupations for the MICT sector: Software Developer; Computer Network and Systems Engineer; ICT Systems Analyst; ICT Security Specialist; Developer Programmer; Data Scientist; Telecommunications Technical Officer or Technologist; Multimedia Specialist; ICT Sales Representative; and Editor. The predominant skills gaps in the sector include Management skills, Communication skills, Leadership skills, Project management skills, and certified skills (CompTIA A+, Network+, MCSA, MCSE, Azure, CISCO, etc.).

SETA PARTNERSHIPS

The SETA has entered into partnerships with various institutions to advance sector development and growth to address the skills development challenges posed by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). Partnerships include education and training delivery partnerships, strategic and special project partnerships, as well as industry and professional bodies partnerships. The MICT SETA has committed itself to partnerships that align with the key principles of the NSDP, ERRP and ERRP Skills strategy. Through strategic partnerships, the SETA will continue to leverage resources, expertise, and innovative solutions to equip the workforce with the skills needed to thrive in the digital age. Transformational imperatives will continue to be a priority – these include race, gender, geography, people living with disabilities, as well as SMMEs.

SETA MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The MICT SETA uses a results-based approach to Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) to support decision-making with reliable and useful information. This approach relies on integrating Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation, where planning focuses on key results, and M&E helps learn from past successes and challenges. To strengthen this, the SETA is gradually building its M&E Division, which oversees programme performance and reporting. The M&E Division's main roles include developing and implementing the M&E system, analysing monitoring data for decision-making, and improving programme implementation. Institutionalising M&E is central to managing and improving the SETA's performance across its initiatives.

STRATEGIC SKILLS PRIORITY ACTIONS

The following set out the strategic skills priorities of the sector:

1. Systematic and in-depth research will be achieved through collaboration with industry bodies, universities, and acclaimed research institutions. The trustworthiness of data used for skills planning will be improved through data triangulation.
2. Better position the MICT sector to enable the 4IR through increasing access to and uptake of relevant skills development interventions, as well as by developing required qualifications and learning interventions.
3. Ensure programme implementation through the allocation of discretionary grants and monitor delivery of Service-Level Agreement deliverables as a way of addressing sectoral occupational shortages and skills gaps. This will prioritise the development of skills that enable 4IR occupations and specialisations.
4. Identify TVET colleges with the potential for meaningful collaboration and enter into partnerships with them. These partnerships will recognise some of the TVET colleges as Centres of Specialisation, linking them with industry and ensuring that programmes offered are aligned to identified occupational shortages and skills gaps for ease of learner placement on programmes.
5. Scope skills development needs and priorities in rural areas. Support includes providing career and vocational guidance, supporting government in addressing e-governance issues, and assisting aspirant training providers to attain accreditation and deliver MICT SETA programmes. The SETA will support initiatives that enables transformation of the sector, with regards to female learners, learners with disabilities, and rural learners. One of the key aims is to improve digital literacy amongst rural townships with a particular focus on rural schools.
6. Improve provision of skills development to SMMEs, entrepreneurs and community-based organisations, particularly with regard to 4IR. This will enable the development and commercialisation of technologies and products that improve localisation and increase exports. The SETA will develop cross-sectoral partnerships and projects in the delivery of learning interventions.
7. Identify and develop occupational qualifications through the QCTO for occupations in high demand in consultation with the sector. Furthermore, the SETA will put in place mechanisms to prioritise all its qualifications and ensure increased numbers of accredited skills development providers offering occupational qualifications in high demand on an annual basis.

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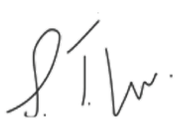

MR SIMPHIWE THOBELA
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INTRODUCTION

In working towards the 2025-2030 Sector Skills Plan (SSP), the MICT SETA was guided by the Department of Higher Education and Training's 2025-2030 SSP guidelines and requirements framework. Recognising that the research needs to be evidence informed, consultations with key industry role players were conducted to identify key trends within the sub-sectors. And at a strategic level, the MICT SETA Accounting Authority was also consulted.

The following are the MICT SETA research objectives for the 2025-2030 SSP:

1. To examine the profile and scope of the MICT sector including its scope of coverage, key role players, economic performance, and labour market performance and profile.
2. To determine the key skills change-drivers in the MICT sector. These are drivers that are shaping the demand and supply of sills in the sector.
3. To investigate the occupational shortages, skills gaps, emerging occupations, and the extent of occupational supply in the MICT sector.
4. To examine the implementation of MICT SETA partnerships and determine the need for new partnerships to further skills development within the MICT sector.
5. To analyse the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) approach of the MICT SETA and present a plan of action for improving the M&E function within the SETA.
6. To identify the key strategic priority actions for the MICT sector.

This section presents the research process that was followed to prepare this SSP. In summary, the research process started with a review of literature to look at the MICT sector broadly. Next, an analysis was conducted using StatsSA data, data found in industry research, as well as WSP/ATR data supplied by the SETA, and the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) data sourced externally to provide information on the sector profile of the MICT sector and the supply of skills in the sector.

Thirdly, interviews were conducted with stakeholders and experts within each sub-sector including employers, professional bodies, education and training institutions, and research institutions. Questions asked in these interviews focused on the impact of the new technologies on the sector as well as the impact of loadshedding, and what the SETA should be prioritising in the 2025-2030 period. In addition, the research process involved an employer survey and focus groups which also focused on the 4IR, the post-pandemic period, and the impact of loadshedding. Seeing that research should be an integrated process, findings from the 2023/24 MICT SETA Tracer study were also incorporated in this research to give a brief perspective on how the sector is performing in terms of employment, further assessing the relevance of the MICT SETA learning programmes (assessing causality). Together, these sources were used to write a quality researched SSP.

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS AND METHODS

The data collection tools used included: interview questionnaires; an employer survey; focus group discussion guides; and a tracer study.

The main methods of data collection for the study are: a review of available literature, including national policy and strategy documents, industry plans and sector performance reports; an analysis of data, including SETA employer and employee data, economic and labour market trend data accessed through StatsSA and industry reports, SETA data on grant spending and learner enrolments and completions in recent years, and HEMIS data on the supply of skills in the sector; interviews with industry stakeholders including employers, professional bodies, education and training institutions, and research institutions; an employer survey; a tracer study; and focus groups.

In addition, there was continuous consultation with the SETA research team and SETA management focusing specifically on the SSP content and the update of the information in it. In relation to the hard-to-fill vacancies, skills gaps, emerging occupations, and PIVOTAL lists, efforts have been made to triangulate findings and confirm the findings with stakeholders.

The following data collection methods were used:

REVIEW OF KEY LITERATURE

As a first step, the current MTCT SETA SSP was reviewed. Next, the relevant policies and strategies of the country were reviewed. The aim is to ensure that the SSP is aligned with the country's key strategies, such as the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP), as well as the supporting Skills Strategy, National Skills Development Plan (NSDP), the National Development Plan (NDP) and associated Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) plans, the New Growth Path (NGP), Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP), the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training and the Human Resource Development Strategy of South Africa (HRDS-SA), amongst others.

WORKPLACE SKILLS PLAN (WSP) AND ANNUAL TRAINING REPORT (ATR)

The final submission of WSP and ATR data (2024/25) from employers was on the 30th of April 2024. For this submission, the SETA utilised the most up to date data to get insight into the skills development needs and gaps identified by employers within the five sub-sectors. The 2021 version of the OFO framework was utilised to ensure that the analysis in the SSP was based on the most up to date mapping of occupations.

HEMIS

HEMIS data is sourced from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). It provides information on all of the public Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in the country on enrolments and graduation rates. The SETA utilised the 2022 data as it is the most up-to-date published by DHET.

ONLINE EMPLOYER SURVEY

An online employer survey was disseminated. The aim of the survey, together with getting additional data, is to strengthen the relationship the SETA has with the employers and other key role players such as professional bodies in the sector. Additionally, valuable industry information is obtained from all the MICT sub-sectors. Questions were asked about hard-to-fill vacancies, skills gaps, emerging occupations, the impact of loadshedding as well as the impact of the 4IR.

TRACER STUDY

In 2023, the SETA conducted a tracer study to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the learning programmes the SETA implements. The study aimed to determine the destinations of learners who have completed learnerships, internships, skills programmes, short learning programmes and bursary programmes. The purpose of the study was to understand the factors associated with employment/unemployment, to understand the intricacies of the articulation of qualifications into occupations, and to determine the nature of employment of learners who have found employment.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Interviews were conducted with employers, professional bodies, education and training institutions, and research institutions in the sector. These were semi-structured interviews that allowed room for discussion on matters that are important to stakeholders. Interviews are important as the voices of key industry stakeholders are heard about important issues such as the loadshedding crisis, the impact of 4IR, and the economic performance of the sector.

FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups play a crucial role in data validation by providing an opportunity for in-depth explorations of participants' perspectives. These sessions serve as platforms for discussion on various topics. Participants validate scarce and critical skills identified in the research and identify necessary interventions to address skills needs. Moreover, they explore challenges related to the supply of such skills. This process sheds light on the difficulties stakeholders encounter when collaborating with the SETA to deliver relevant occupational programmes in each of the sub-sectors. Three MICT SETA focus groups were conducted covering all sub-sectors as well as all key industry players, amongst which were employers, professional bodies, education and training institutions, and research institutions.

CONCLUSION

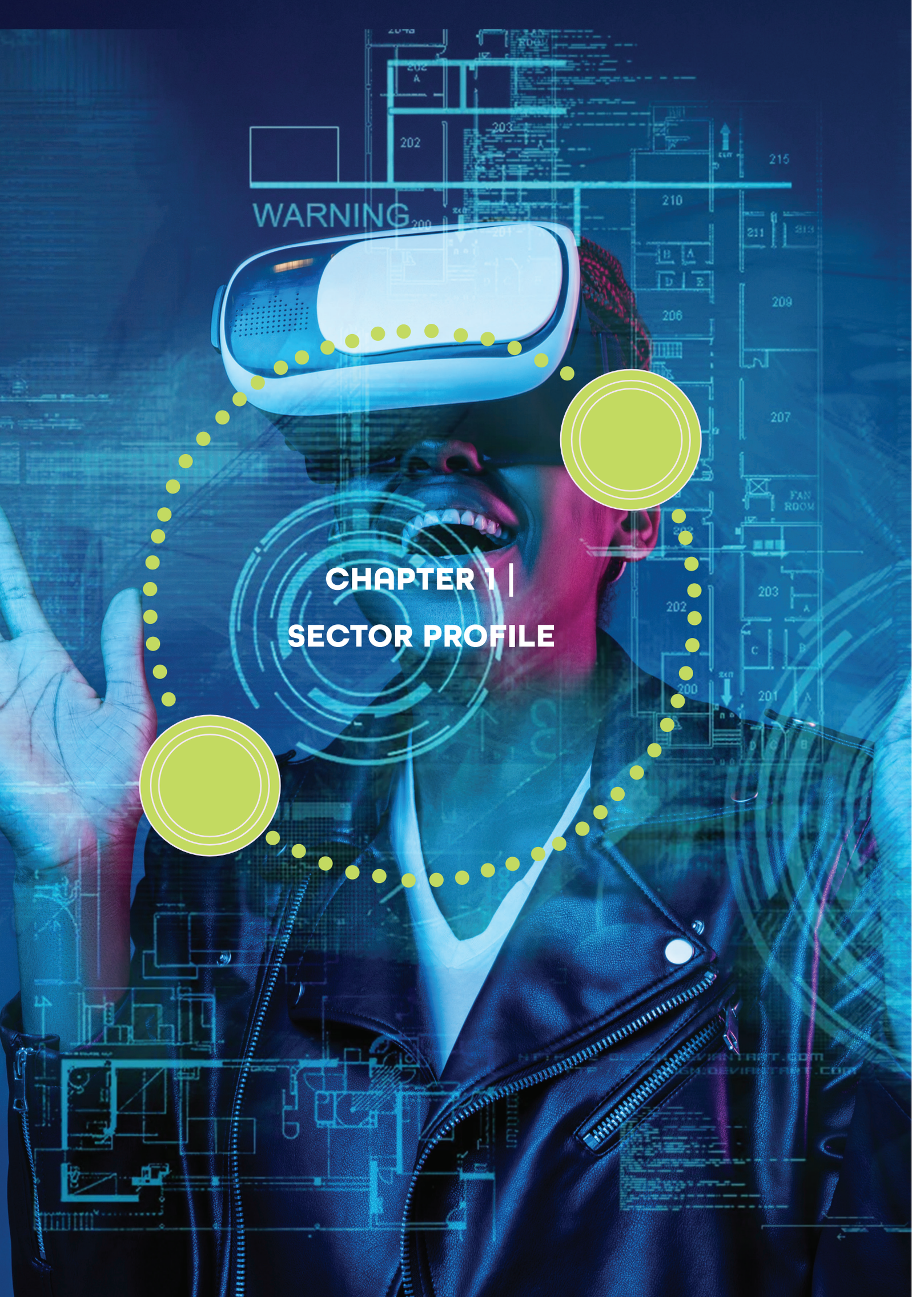
A mixed method of data collection was followed including quantitative and qualitative data. Provided that each method on its own has its limitations, using them all together certainly provides for a robust analysis of the MICT sector. There were two data challenges that emerged during the 2025-2030 research process, namely:

i. iStatsSA does not break down data according to the sub-sectors relevant to the MICT sector. Looking at what is contained in each StatsSA sector allowed us to determine which sectors are relevant to the MICT sector.

i. HEMIS data for enrolments and graduation in the higher education system reflects up to 2022 enrolments. Data for 2023 onwards is not yet available, this limits the SETA in reporting the most accurate information.

TABLE 1: RESEARCH UNDERTAKEN BY THE SETA

Topic	Nature (Design) of the Study	Objectives of Study	Data Collection Tool	Sample Size and Scope	Data Sources and Data Sets	Time Frame	Chapters Informed
2024/25 Sector Skills Plan	Qualitative and Quantitative	The study aimed to achieve several objectives, including gaining an understanding of key developments within the sector and gathering insights on critical areas such as hard-to-fill vacancies, skills gaps, future skills, and change-drivers in the MICT sector. Additionally, the study focused on examining the impact of significant factors such as the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) as well as exploring strategies for better alignment of the SETA's priorities with the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) and the Employment and Skills Development Plan (ERRP). Importantly, the research encompassed the perspectives of various stakeholders representing all five sub-sectors of the MICT sector.	• Interview questionnaire • Online Surveys • Focus groups • Literature reviews	• The scope of the interviews employers, professional bodies, education and training institutions, and research institutions • 35 interviews were conducted • 1 863 electronic questionnaires were distributed.	• MICT SETA Levy Huge File • WSP/ATR data • StatsSA GDP and QLFS data • Key role players list	31 August 2022- 1 August 2023	Chapters 1 to 6
MICT SETA Tracer Study	Quantitative and Qualitative	The study aimed to determine the destinations of learners who have completed learnerships, internships, skills programmes, short learning programmes and bursary programmes, amongst others.	• Survey • Telephone calls • Interviews • Focus groups	• The scope of the survey and telephone calls were learners who completed MICT SETA learning programmes in the 2021/22 financial year. • The sample size reached was 862	• MICT SETA Commitment Register • MICT SETA Training Provider List	1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024	Chapter 1, 3 and 6



CHAPTER 1 | SECTOR PROFILE

CHAPTER 1: SECTOR PROFILE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) is a strategic framework aimed at equipping South Africa with a workforce possessing "adequate, appropriate, and high-quality skills" to drive economic growth, job creation, and social progress (DHET, 2019). The Media, Information, and Communication Technologies (MICT) sector plays a pivotal role in this endeavour, wielding substantial influence across various sectors on a global scale. This chapter undertakes a comprehensive examination of the MICT sector, encompassing its size, scope, key stakeholders, economic performance, and position within the employer and labour market domains. A five-year analysis (2020-2024) is presented to provide a retrospective view as the sector embarks on a new strategic phase. This multifaceted analysis draws upon a diverse range of sources, including publicly available literature, MICT SETA databases, SETA employer profiles, WSP/ATR datasets, statistical data from Statistics South Africa (StatsSA), and industry reports.

1.2 SCOPE OF COVERAGE

The MICT sector is comprised of five interconnected yet distinct sub-sectors: Advertising, Film and Electronic Media, Electronics, Information Technology, and Telecommunications. The Standard Industry Classification (SIC) codes are instrumental in delineating these sub-sectors, effectively defining the boundaries of the MICT sector. This classification is further refined by categorising the sector into four sub-industries: manufacturing, transport, storage, and communication; finance, insurance, real estate, and business services; and community, social, and personal services.

TABLE 2: THE MICT SETA SIC CODE LIST

Sub-Sector	SIC Code	Main Activity Description
Advertising	88310	Advertising
	88311	Activities of advertising agents
	88313	Commercial design
Electronics	35791	Manufacture of alarm systems
	75216	Security systems services except locksmiths
	75217	Office automation, office machinery and equipment rental leasing including installation and maintenance
	86004	Electronic and precision equipment/ computer repairs and maintenance
	86010	Consumer electronics repair and maintenance
	86013	Other electronic and precision equipment repair and maintenance
	86014	Repair and maintenance of electronic marine equipment
	87142	Research and development of electronic equipment and systems
	87143	Information technology import and product integration of pre-manufactured electronics IT and telecommunications equipment
	87146	Research and development in the physical and engineering sciences
	87147	Electronics importation and product integration of pre-manufactured electronics IT and telecommunications equipment
	96133	Installation, maintenance and repair of tracking devices for cars
Film and Electronic Media	88940	Photographic activities
	96110	Motion picture and video production distribution
	96112	Related activities - film and tape renting to other industries, booking, delivery and storage
	96113	Film and video reproduction
	96132	Production and broadcast of radio and television broadcast content
	96200	News agency activities

Sub-Sector	SIC Code	Main Activity Description
Information Technology	86001	Software publishers
	86002	Computer systems design and related services
	86003	Computer facilities management services
	86005	Computer rental and leasing
	86006	Computer programming services
	86007	Other computer related activities
	86008	Call centre and customer relationship management systems development and installations activities
	86009	Computer system design services and integrated solutions
	86011	Computer and office machine repair, maintenance and support services
Telecommunications	75200	Telecommunication
	75201	Wired Telecommunication carriers
	75202	Television and radio signal distribution
	75203	Cable networks and programme distribution
	75204	Telephone
	75205	Wired Telecommunication carriers except satellite radio telephone
	75209	Television Broadcasting
	75211	Telecommunications and wired telecommunication carriers
	75212	Paging
	75213	Cellular and other wireless telecommunications
	75214	Satellite telecommunications
	75215	Other telecommunications
	86012	Communication equipment repair and maintenance
	87148	Telecommunications importations and product integration of pre-manufactured electronics IT and telecommunications equipment
	96131	Providing Radio and television transmission signals

Source: Government Notice, No. 42589, Government Gazette, 22 July 2019

1.3 KEY ROLE PLAYERS

The MICT sector is distinguished by a diverse array of stakeholders who play a pivotal role in enabling the SETA to fulfil its mandate of delivering high-quality, innovative skills that contribute to national economic growth. These stakeholders encompass a wide range of entities, including oversight bodies, professional organisations, government departments, and educational institutions. Their collective efforts are instrumental in shaping the skills development landscape within the MICT sector and ensuring its alignment with national development priorities as outlined in the NSDP.

TABLE 3: KEY ROLE PLAYERS

Organisation type	Name of Organisation	Role of organisation and its link to NSDP Outcomes
Oversight body	**Department of Higher Education and Training**	The DHET holds a supervisory role in overseeing the governance of the MICT SETA, as mandated by the Skills Development Act. The Minister of DHET is responsible for evaluating the performance of SETAs, and the SETA accounting authority is accountable to the Minister, who serves as the Executive Authority. The DHET's role in realising the NSDP outcomes involves ensuring the development and implementation of skills development initiatives, fostering collaboration amongst stakeholders, upholding the quality and standards of educational and training institutions nationwide, monitoring the progress of skills development initiatives, and assessing the impact of these initiatives on both the labour market and overall economic development.

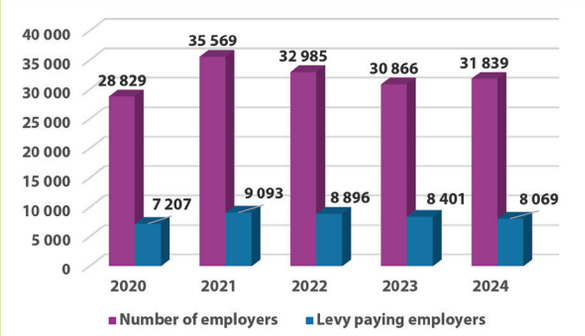
Organisation type	Name of Organisation	Role of organisation and its link to NSDP Outcomes
Professional Bodies	**Information Technology Association (ITA)**	The ITA is poised to play a pivotal role in the growth and development of the South African ICT sector. Through its membership and industry partnerships, the ITA serves as a credible and effective communication channel amongst diverse stakeholders. Notably, the ITA engages in lobbying and negotiation efforts at the government level on behalf of its members, enabling them to influence South African legislation through verbal and written submissions. These actions have far-reaching positive impacts on the entire ICT industry in South Africa, extending beyond the ITA's membership. The ITA's activities align with NSDP outcome 4.2 (Linking education and the workplace) and intervention 3 of the ERRP Skills Strategy, focusing on expanding work-based learning programmes to address occupational shortages and skills gaps within the sector.
	Information and Communication Technologies SMME Chamber (ICT SMME Chamber)	The ICT SMME Chamber is acknowledged for its crucial role in South Africa's development framework. It actively engages with government and other ICT stakeholders, advocating for ICT SMMEs on matters related to their development and the transformation of the ICT sector. The Chamber's efforts align with NSDP outcome 4.6, which focuses on entrepreneurship and cooperative development, as well as ERRP Skills Strategy intervention 7, both of which emphasise strengthening entrepreneurship development programmes.
	Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA)	The USAASA, a state-owned entity established under the Electronic Communications Act, No 36 of 2005, is mandated to ensure universal access to information and communication technologies (ICT) across South Africa, regardless of geographic location. By providing essential infrastructure to rural communities and educational institutions, USAASA contributes to the realisation of NSDP outcomes 4.2 (Linking education and the workplace) and 4.5 (Support the growth of the public college institutional type as a key provider of skills required for socioeconomic development), aligning with ERRP Skills Strategy intervention 10, which emphasise the need to strengthen the post-school education and training (PSET) system to meet the medium- and long-term demands of the economy.
	The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa ("ICASA")	The ICASA sponsors and supports various educational programmes aimed at encouraging students and professionals to explore the field of complex additive systems analysis. Currently, ICASA offers programmes such as internships, aligning with NSDP outcome 4.2 (Linking education and the workplace) and ERRP Skills Strategy intervention 3 (Expand the provisioning of WBL opportunities to respond to the occupational shortages and skills gaps identified in this strategy). Through these programmes, ICASA is dedicated to enhancing critical thinking and analytical skills within the intelligence community by providing high-quality, cutting-edge training that enables programmers to develop state-of-the-art innovative products.
	Institute of Information Technology Professionals South Africa (IITPSA)	The IITPSA actively engages with commerce, industry, and government to influence policy formulation on behalf of its members and other stakeholders. The IITPSA promotes the growth of professionalism and the responsible use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) across the South African economy. In alignment with NSDP outcome 4.2 (Linking education and the workplace) and ERRP Skills Strategy interventions 3 (Expand the provisioning of WBL opportunities to respond to the occupational shortages and skills gaps identified in this strategy) and 10 (Strengthen the PSET system), the IITPSA collaborates with other stakeholders to accredit university programmes with computing content at South African universities.

Organisation type	Name of Organisation	Role of organisation and its link to NSDP Outcomes
Government Department	**Department of Communications & Digital Technologies (DCDT)**	The DCDT collaborates with universities and industry partners to develop ICT policies and legislation that promote the advancement of the South African economy. The department also has partnerships with civil society organisations focused on skills development and achieving equity goals related to race, gender, and disability. Through these activities, the DCDT addresses NSDP outcome 4.2 (Linking education and the workplace) and ERRP Skills Strategy interventions 3 (Expand the provisioning of WBL opportunities to respond to the occupational shortages and skills gaps identified in this strategy) and 10 (Strengthen the PSET system).
Educational Institutions	**TVET Colleges**	Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges are instrumental in implementing and advancing skills development interventions. They are key players in providing training that emphasises practical skills and offers adaptable programmes. Their role and partnership with the SETA align with NSDP outcome 4.5 which focuses on promoting the growth of the public college system. Additionally, the partnership between the SETA and TVET colleges aligns with intervention 10 (Strengthen the PSET system) of the ERRP Skills Strategy.
	Universities	University partnerships with the SETA play a crucial role in promoting equitable access to education and skills development within the MICT sector. By collaborating with the SETA, universities can extend opportunities to learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, ensuring they have the same chances to acquire high-level skills as their peers from more privileged backgrounds. These partnerships not only enhance the supply of skilled professionals in the sector but also contribute to industry development and growth by empowering individuals with the expertise needed to drive innovation and progress. Ultimately, these initiatives align with NSDP outcome 4.2 (Linking education and the workplace) and ERRP Skills Strategy interventions 3 (Expand the provisioning of WBL opportunities to respond to the occupational shortages and skills gaps identified in this strategy) and 10 (Strengthen the PSET system), fostering a more inclusive and equitable MICT sector.

1.4 EMPLOYER PROFILE – TRENDS ANALYSIS (2020-2024)

As of 2024, the MICT sector comprises 31,839 employers, marking a 10% increase from the 28,829 reported in 2020. However, only 8,069 of these employers are currently paying levies, a decrease from the 9,093 reported in 2021, despite being an increase from the 7,207 reported in 2020 (Figure 1). This indicates a consistent decline in the number of levy-paying employers within the sector since 2021.

FIGURE 1: NUMBER OF MICT SECTOR EMPLOYERS AND LEVY PAYERS, 2020-2024

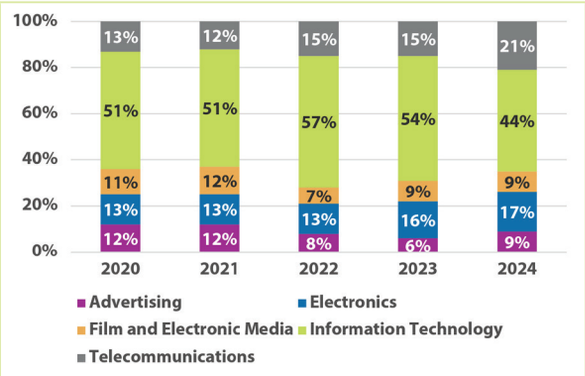


Source: MICT SETA Levy Huge File, 2020-2024

1.4.1 SUB-SECTOR DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYERS

Throughout the observed period of 2020 to 2024, the Information Technology sub-sector consistently maintained its position as the largest employer within the MICT sector, although its share of employers experienced a decline from 57% to 44%. Conversely, the Telecommunications sub-sector demonstrated growth in its employer base, increasing from 13% in 2020 to 21% in 2024. The Electronics sub-sector also exhibited an upward trajectory, with its share of employers rising from 13% in 2020 to 17% in 2024. In contrast, the Advertising and Film and Electronic Media sub-sectors experienced a decline in their respective shares of employers over the same period.

FIGURE 2: SUB-SECTOR DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYERS, 2020-2024

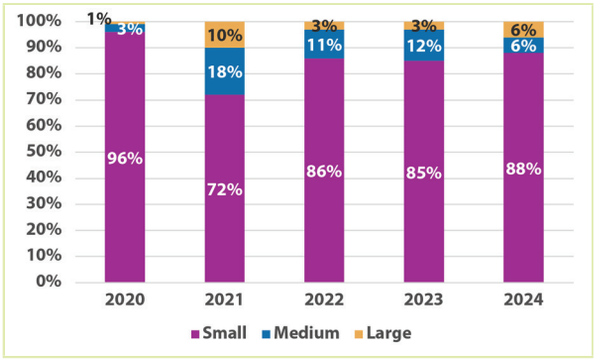


Source: MCT SETA Levy Huge File, 2020-2024

1.4.2 DISTRIBUTION BY SIZE OF EMPLOYERS

While small businesses with fewer than 50 employees constitute the majority of employers in the MICT sector, their predominance decreased from 96% in 2020 to 88% in 2024. Conversely, medium and large-sized employers, each holding a 6% share in 2024, represent a smaller but growing segment within the sector's employer landscape.

FIGURE 3: SIZE OF EMPLOYERS, 2020-2024

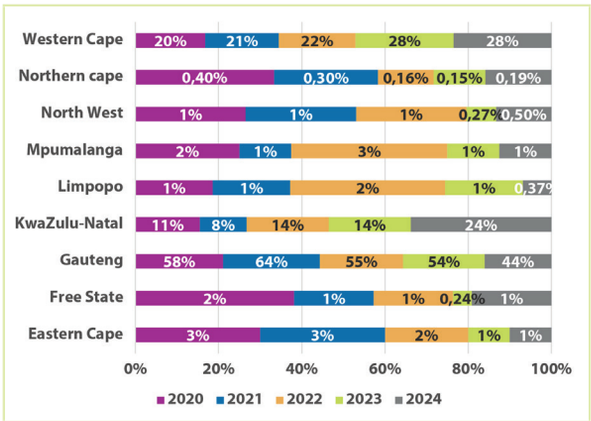


Source: MICT SETA Levy Huge File, 2020-2024

1.4.3 DISTRIBUTION BY PROVINCE

Gauteng province consistently held the largest share of employers in the MICT sector throughout the 2020-2024 period, maintaining a dominant position with 44% in 2024. The Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces followed, securing 28% and 24% of employers, respectively, in the same year. This data underscores the concentration of MICT sector employers within these three provinces, particularly in Gauteng, highlighting their significance as key hubs for the industry. The remaining provinces collectively accounted for a much smaller proportion of employers, indicating a more dispersed distribution across the rest of the country.

FIGURE 4: DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYERS BY LOCATION, 2020-2024



Source: MICT SETA Levy Huge File, 2020-2024

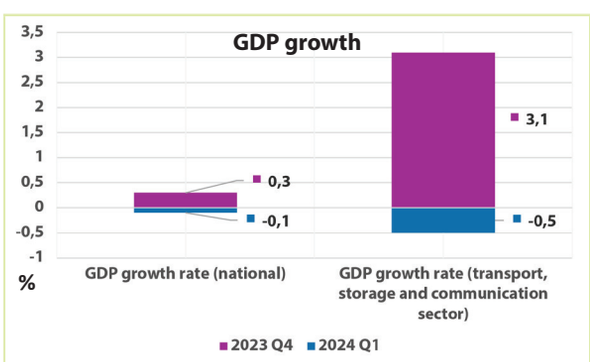
1.5 LABOUR MARKET PROFILE – TRENDS ANALYSIS (2020-2024)

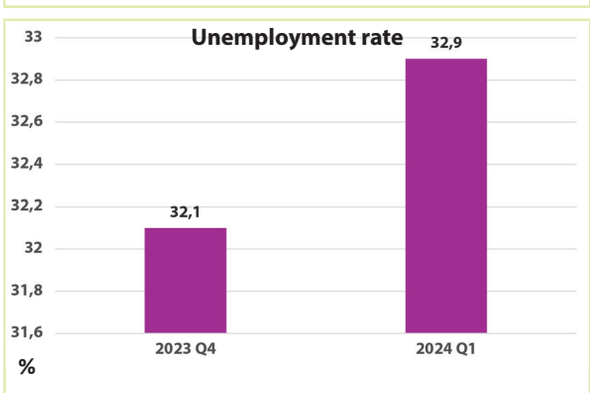
This section presents a retrospective analysis of the MICT sector's skills planning over the past five years (2020-2024). It commences with an overview of the sector's economic performance, followed by an examination of the employee profile, encompassing demographics such as race, gender, age, and disability status. Additionally, the section provides a breakdown of employees by sub-sector, geographical location, and occupational profile. This analysis aims to offer a comprehensive understanding of the sector's workforce composition and dynamics over the specified timeframe.

1.5.1 ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE IN RELATION TO LABOUR MARKET PERFORMANCE

The South African economy contracted in the first quarter of 2024, with GDP growth falling from 0.3% in the fourth quarter of 2023 to -0.1%. The transport, storage, and communication sector, which encompasses the MICT sector, was among the six sectors that negatively impacted overall economic growth, experiencing a GDP growth rate of -0.5% in the first quarter of 2024.

FIGURE 5: SOUTH AFRICAN GDP GROWTH RATES AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATES, 2023-2024





Source: Statistics South Africa, 2024

The concurrent decline in national GDP growth and the 0.8 percentage point rise in the unemployment rate from 32.1% in 2023Q4 to 32.9% in 2024Q1 underscores the inverse relationship between these two economic indicators. Despite the negative GDP growth of the transport, storage, and communication sectors, the MICT sub-sectors are projected to maintain a positive economic trajectory.

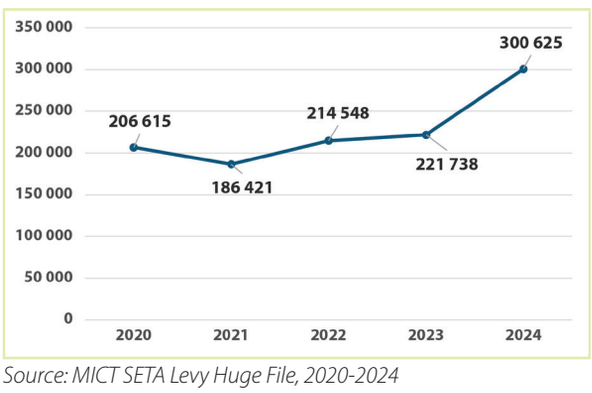
TABLE 4: MICT SUB-SECTOR ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

Sub-sector	Economic performance
Advertising	The advertising market in South Africa is anticipated to surge to US$2,482.00million, with TV & Video Advertising leading at US$699.90million by end of 2024. The per capita spending in TV & Video Advertising is estimated to be US$11.47 in 2024.
Film and Electronic Media	South Africa's film and electronic media industry is poised to surpass R230billion in the coming years. The sector remains robust and is projected to outpace the global average until 2027. South Africa boasts the largest OTT sector on the continent, generating R4.3 billion, a trend set to intensify amidst fierce competition from global platforms. Music streaming subscription revenue is also projected to rise reaching R1.1 billion by 2027. However, print-reliant segments such as newspapers, consumer magazines, and books are expected to decline as consumers increasingly shift towards digital alternatives.
Information Technology	South Africa stands out as one of Africa's largest marketplaces for ICT, boasting technological prowess in mobile software, security software, and online banking services. The South African ICT Market is poised for significant growth, with a projected Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 9.3%.
Electronics	In 2024, the Consumer Electronics market in South Africa records a revenue of US$6,321.0 million, with a projected annual growth rate of 2.57% (CAGR 2024-2028) within the country. Telephony emerges as the largest segment, reaching US$3,215.0 million in market volume in 2024. Considering population figures, the per capita revenue in South Africa stands at US$103.60 in 2024.
Telecommunications	Over the past five years, there has been a significant surge in demand for telecommunications services in South Africa. A trend expected to persist in the coming decade, driven by mobile data upselling and sales of fibre-to-the-x infrastructure. Revenue in the Communication Services market is forecasted to reach US$16.0 billion in 2024, with Mobile Data emerging as the dominant force with a projected market volume of US$8.8 billion for the same year. The South African Telecom Market is anticipated to exhibit an annual growth rate (CAGR 2024-2028) of 2.41%, resulting in a market volume of US$17.6 billion by 2028.

Source: Statista Market Insights, 2024; Motaung-Tshabalala & Stuart, 2023; Mordor intelligence report, 2024; Statista, 2024; Independent Communications Authority of South Africa, 2024

When looking at the number of employed in the MICT sector, the figure below shows that employment increased between 2020 and 2024, reaching 300 625 employees in 2024.

FIGURE 6: EMPLOYMENT IN MICT SECTOR, 2020-2024



Source: MICT SETA Levy Huge File, 2020-2024

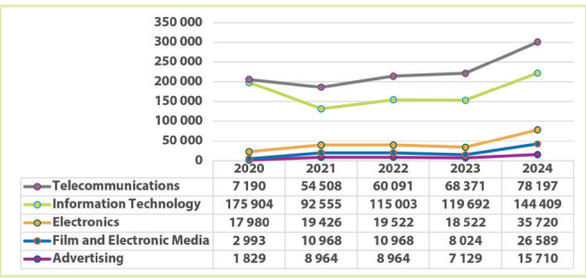
The data reveals a paradoxical situation: despite the overall economic downturn in South Africa, particularly in the transport, storage, and communication sectors, the MICT sector has demonstrated resilience and growth, leading to increased employment opportunities. This growth can be attributed to the escalating demand for skilled ICT professionals across various industries undergoing technological advancements and digital transformation. The need for specialised roles like software developers, data scientists, and cybersecurity specialists has fuelled job creation within the MICT sector, even as other sectors face economic challenges. However, it's important to note that larger companies within the MICT sector, especially in telecommunications, may still experience pressures to reduce costs and restructure, potentially leading to job losses. Despite this, the MICT sector's overall resilience and growth highlight its crucial role in driving economic development and employment in South Africa, even in the face of broader economic difficulties.

1.5.2 EMPLOYMENT IN THE MICT SECTOR

1.5.2.1 EMPLOYMENT BY SUB-SECTOR

The Information Technology and Telecommunications sub-sectors were the largest employers in the MICT sector from 2020 to 2024. While the Information Technology sub-sector experienced a brief decline in employment between 2020 and 2021, it rebounded and reached 144,409 employees by 2024. In contrast, the Telecommunications sub-sector demonstrated consistent growth throughout the period, reaching 78,197 employees in 2024. This data suggests a shift in the relative importance of these sub-sectors within the MICT sector's employment landscape.

FIGURE 7: NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES BY SUB-SECTOR, 2020-2024



	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Telecommunications	7 190	54 508	60 091	68 371	78 197
Information Technology	175 904	92 555	115 003	119 692	144 409
Electronics	17 980	19 426	19 522	18 522	35 720
Film and Electronic Media	2 993	10 968	10 968	8 024	26 589
Advertising	1 829	8 964	8 964	7 129	15 710

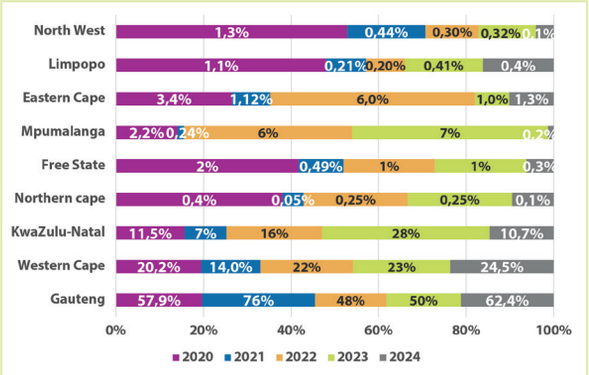
Source: MICT SETA Levy Huge File, 2020-2024

The Advertising sub-sector has the lowest number of employees, at 15 710 employees in 2024.

1.5.2.2 EMPLOYEE GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

The distribution of MICT sector employees across South African provinces from 2020 to 2024 reveals a concentration in three provinces: Gauteng, Western Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal. These provinces consistently accounted for the majority of employees, with their combined share reaching 97.6% in 2024. This data underscores the significance of these provinces as major employment hubs for the MICT sector, particularly Gauteng, which consistently held the largest share throughout the observed period. The remaining provinces collectively accounted for a much smaller proportion of employees, indicating a more dispersed distribution across the rest of the country.

FIGURE 8: PROVINCIAL DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES, 2020-2024

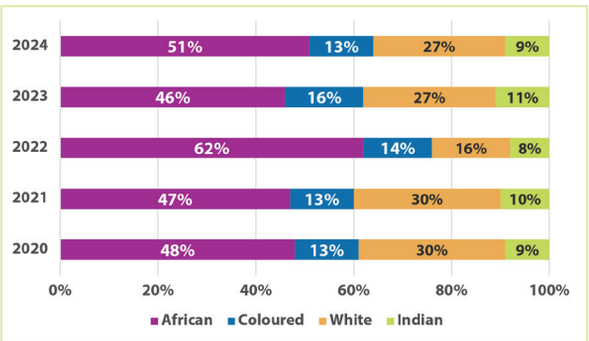


Source: MICT SETA Levy Huge File, 2020-2024

1.5.2.3 EMPLOYEE DEMOGRAPHICS

Due to the limitations provided by the levy database in terms of race and gender profiles, it was imperative to explore the details further using the WSP/ATR data provided by employers within the respective sub-sectors. An analysis of the WSP/ATR data reveals that the MICT sector workforce is predominantly African, comprising 51% of employees in 2024. This figure, however, reflects a decline from a peak of 62% in 2022. White employees constitute the second largest racial group, accounting for 27% of the workforce in 2024, a slight decrease from 30% in 2020. Together, these two racial groups represent 78% of the MICT sector's workforce. The representation of coloured and Indian employees is notably smaller and has decreased between 2023 and 2024. This data suggests a complex and evolving racial composition within the MICT sector workforce, with potential implications for diversity and inclusion initiatives.

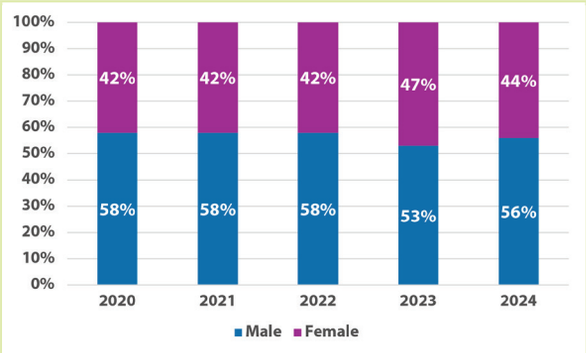
FIGURE 9: RACIAL PROFILE OF EMPLOYEES, 2020-2024



Source: MICT SETA WSP/ATR, 2020-2024

Whilst Africans make up the largest employee group by race, they still occupy relatively lower positions compared to other race groups and enjoy less representation at senior level. Only 8% of African employees occupy managerial positions and 34% occupy professional positions.

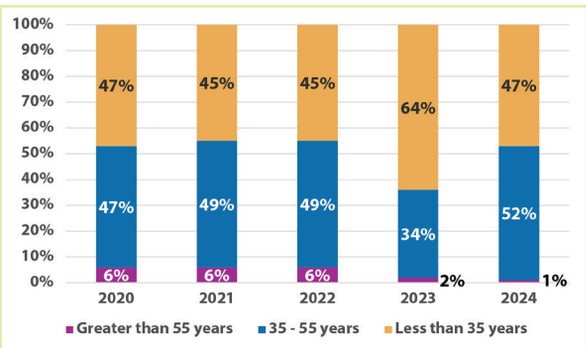
FIGURE 10: GENDER PROFILE OF EMPLOYEES, 2020-2024



Source: MICT SETA WSP/ATR, 2020-2024

The MICT sector workforce remains predominantly male, with men constituting 56% of employees in 2024, whilst women represent 44%. This marks a slight decrease in female representation compared to the previous year, where it stood at 47%. This data suggests that the sector is not meeting its transformational goals regarding gender equality.

FIGURE 11: AGE PROFILE OF EMPLOYEES, 2020-2024



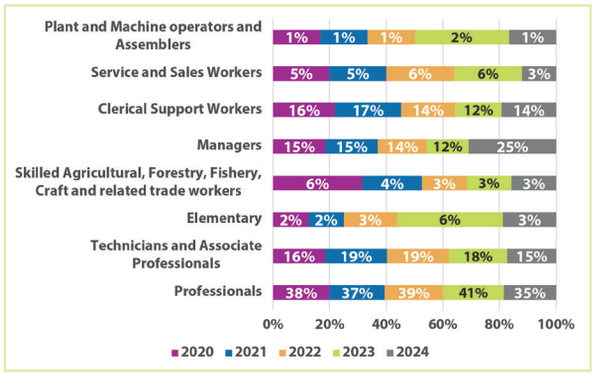
Source: MICT SETA WSP/ATR, 2020-2024

The MICT sector workforce is primarily composed of individuals aged 35-55, who accounted for 52% of employees in 2024. While the proportion of employees under 35 was notably higher in 2023 (64%), this appears to be an outlier, as this age group generally constituted 45-47% of the workforce throughout the 2020-2024 period. The employment of persons with disabilities in the MICT sector increased significantly by 30% from 2023 to 2024, reaching 3,495 employees. However, this still represents only 1.2% of the total workforce in 2024, indicating a need for further improvement in inclusivity.

1.5.2.4 OCCUPATIONAL SEGMENTATION

The MICT sector's workforce composition is characterised by a predominance of professionals, reflecting the industry's increasing demand for specialised skills, innovation, and expertise in complex technologies. This trend is driven by the sector's evolving nature, which necessitates technical knowledge and qualifications to navigate its complexities. Stakeholders have observed a growing specialisation within the sector, leading to an increase in specialised roles within existing occupations. The MICT sector's reliance on specialised skills in areas like software development, data analysis, network administration, cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence underscores the importance of professionals in driving innovation and growth within the industry.

FIGURE 12: OCCUPATIONS BY OFO MAJOR GROUPS, 2020-2024



Source: MICT SETA WSP/ATR, 2020-2024

In response to labour market trends observed over the past five years, the MICT SETA has made the inclusion of women, youth, and individuals with disabilities a priority in its annual targets. Programme 3 within the SETA's Annual Performance Plan (APP) specifically addresses these key priorities identified in the Sector Skills Plan (SSP), including youth unemployment and the training of individuals with disabilities.

1.6 CONCLUSION: KEY SKILLS ISSUES

This section has provided a comprehensive overview of the MICT sector's profile, encompassing its size, scope of coverage, key role players, economic performance, employer base, and labour market composition. The analysis reveals several key skills issues within the sector. Despite some progress, the representation of women in the MICT sector has declined, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to promote gender equality. Furthermore, while Africans constitute the largest employee group, they remain underrepresented in higher-level positions compared to other racial groups. This disparity underscores the necessity for the SETA to prioritise upskilling initiatives aimed at equipping African employees with the advanced skills required to advance within the sector.

These findings emphasise the importance of the SETA's role in addressing these critical skills challenges. By focusing on the development and implementation of targeted interventions, the SETA can contribute to a more inclusive, diverse, and equitable MICT sector workforce, ultimately enhancing the sector's overall competitiveness and innovation potential.


72%
54%
96%

CHAPTER 2 | KEY SKILLS CHANGE-DRIVERS

CHAPTER 2: KEY SKILLS CHANGE-DRIVERS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to identify and analyse the key skills change-drivers. Change-drivers are defined as factors that alter a sector's developmental trajectory and influence skills demand or supply (DHET, 2024). MICT SETA identified three primary change-drivers, namely: The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and Technological advancements, Energy: The impact of loadshedding on the MICT sector and 7th administration of the democratic government of along with their sub-drivers and elucidates their impact on various aspects of skills within the sector. This chapter draws upon a comprehensive review of current literature, an employer survey, Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) submissions, key informant interviews with diverse stakeholders across all MICT sub-sectors and focus group discussions with key stakeholders in the sector.

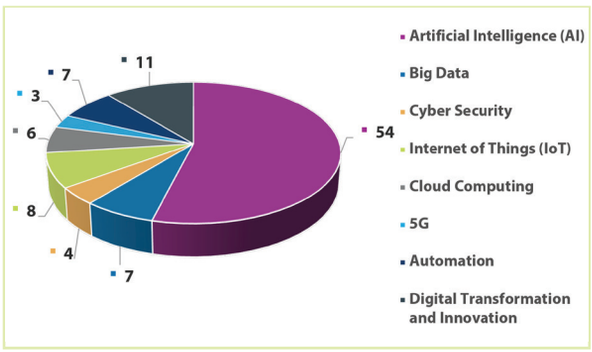
2.2 FACTORS AFFECTING SKILLS DEMAND AND SUPPLY

The following subsections present an overview of the MICT Sector change-drivers that are affecting skills demand and supply.

2.2.1 THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION (4IR) AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS

The 4IR is a key driver of change in the MICT sector, reshaping skills demand and supply through the rapid adoption of advanced technologies such as AI, IoT, cloud computing, and big data. These innovations create a flow in demand for digital and technical skills, such as data analytics, cybersecurity, and software development, whilst reducing the need for routine, manual tasks. Concurrently, 4IR challenges traditional education and training systems to adapt quickly, emphasising the need for upskilling, reskilling, and lifelong learning to align the workforce with evolving industry demands.

FIGURE 13: MICT SECTOR CHANGE-DRIVERS



Source: MICT SETA SSP Survey, 2024

2.2.1.1 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Artificial Intelligence (AI), defined as the simulation of human intelligence in machines capable of learning and problem-solving, has emerged as a significant change driver in the MICT sector. The widespread deployment of AI, exemplified by models like ChatGPT, Stable Diffusion, Whisper, and DALL-E 2, has gained considerable attention in recent years. Organisations adopting AI have reported substantial cost reductions and revenue growth. South Africa, leading the continent in AI adoption, boasts a thriving AI ecosystem comprising numerous technology hubs and research groups. Many South African companies are actively integrating AI solutions into their operations or developing novel AI-based solutions (Eke et al., 2023).

From a skills perspective, there are both demand-related and supply-related implications. The development and deployment of AI technologies necessitate a highly skilled workforce. Consequently, there is a growing emphasis on nurturing talent and providing individuals with the necessary training and opportunities to acquire advanced AI skills. This endeavour requires financial and technical support from both industry and government stakeholders.

2.2.1.2 CLOUD COMPUTING

Cloud computing, the provision of various services over the internet through interconnected servers, has emerged as a pivotal catalyst for digital transformation in South Africa. The widespread adoption of cloud services by companies has yielded substantial benefits in terms of business growth, innovation, and enhanced customer service. However, this increasing reliance on cloud computing has also underscored the critical need for skills development in this domain. There are both demand-related and supply-related implications. In terms of demand, professionals with expertise in designing and deploying cloud technologies are in high demand, both domestically and internationally, leading to a shortage of these essential skills. In terms of supply, the scarcity necessitates strategic investments in skills development interventions by key stakeholders within the MICT sector to ensure a sustainable and competitive workforce in the digital age (Huawei, 2022).

2.2.1.3 AUTOMATION

Automation in the ICT sector necessitates specialised technical skills for implementation, maintenance, and troubleshooting. This change driver gives rise to both demand-related and supply-related skills implications. In terms of demand, as routine tasks are automated, the demand for manual and repetitive skills diminishes, whilst the need for critical thinking, problem-

solving, creativity, and adaptability skills increases. These skills are essential for designing, managing, and innovating automated systems effectively. To remain relevant, the existing workforce must continuously upskill and reskill, acquiring new technical skills or enhancing existing ones to work alongside automated technologies. In terms of supply, employers often invest in training programmes to bridge the skills gap and maintain a competitive workforce. While automation may displace some traditional roles, it also generates new job opportunities, such as automation specialists, data scientists, robotics engineers, and AI ethicists, who play crucial roles in designing, implementing, and overseeing automated systems.

The increasing prevalence of automation has intensified global competition for talent with specialised ICT skills. Countries and organisations that prioritise education and training to develop a skilled workforce gain a competitive advantage. Automation also influences educational institutions, with a greater emphasis on STEM education to prepare students for ICT careers. Lifelong learning and adaptability are vital for individuals to thrive in the rapidly evolving technological landscape.

2.2.1.4 INTERNET OF THINGS (IOT)

The "Internet of Things' (IoT) refers to a network comprised of physical objects capable of gathering and sharing electronic information. This change driver gives rise to both demand-related and supply-related skills implications. In terms of demand, research published by the World Economic Forum (WEF) showed that the IoT is part of individuals' daily lives. This became more visible on the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic where businesses and governments found themselves increasingly dependent on the IoT and related technologies to ensure connectivity and the continuity of activities (World & Forum, 2023). It is no doubt that the IoT will continue to grow as cloud computing and cloud application offerings expand in the coming years. The IoT virtually links all the 4IR change-drivers, further expanding the impact of 4IR. In terms of supply, there continues to be limited recognition of emerging 4IR occupations in the OFO, thus limiting funding and formalised training opportunities in "new age" fields, such as the IoT. In consultations, stakeholders expressed a need for more "IoT specialists". However, currently no such occupation exists on the OFO, instead IoT specialists may emerge as specialisations of existing fields such as software development and design.

2.2.1.5 BIG DATA ANALYTICS

Big data analytics is viewed as one of the most suitable technologies for business innovation. Big data analytics is about managing fast-moving traditional data processing systems at ever-increasing rates. It encompasses the volume of information, and the velocity or speed at which it is created and collected. It is about identifying patterns, predicting trends, and insights that can inform business decisions. An example of big data includes social media, with Facebook processing about 500+terabytes of new data every day. This data is mainly generated in terms of photo and video uploads, message exchanges, inserting comments, amongst others (Huang, 2022).

With big data analytics being a relatively new field, there are both demand-related and supply-related skills implications. Companies are forced to retrain their workforce to be able to operate and deal with the new systems for analysing sophisticated datasets. Larger companies are swiftly recruiting new graduates, increasing their budgets, and offering more training opportunities to their current staff who are capable in an attempt to develop the talent they need from within. As a result, this makes it difficult for smaller MICT companies to keep up with the changing labour market (Huang, 2022).

2.2.2 ENERGY: THE IMPACT OF LOADSHEDDING ON THE MICT SECTOR

While the above change-drivers are influencing the MICT sector from a technology perspective, without electricity such technologies cannot be fully adopted. The MICT sector is not immune to disruptions caused by loadshedding, especially small businesses. The persistent power interruptions compromise the survival of surviving SMMEs. This change driver largely has demand-related consequences. Recent observations indicate that some SMMEs are already making drastic decisions to cut costs, seek alternative energy sources, and in some instances retrench staff to reduce overheads. In a recent pulse survey on loadshedding conducted by the MICT SETA, 13% of the stakeholders indicated that their organisations are planning to retrench about 10%-20% of the staff, and this is mainly for business survival. Moreover, it was also interesting to investigate how much of their organisational budget was or is being spent on back-up power. 39% of the stakeholders indicated that they spend about 30%-40% of the organisational budget, followed by 28% spending 10%-20%, and 17% indicated that they spend about 50%-60% of the organisational budget on back-up power.

Even some of the big giants in the industry within the telecommunications sub-sector are planning to retrench about 15% of the workforce to ensure sustainability. Big telecoms companies spent R150 million in a single quarter to fight the effects of ongoing loadshedding, with some having reported that they had spent R2.6 billion on batteries, generators, and security for their towers each year. On the positive side, this has given rise to increased employment of network engineers and cloud computing specialists for business continuity (Illidge, 2023).

2.3 REFLECTION ON OCCUPATIONAL CHANGES AS A RESULT OF 4IR TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES

The widespread adoption of technology across industries is causing a significant shift in the skills landscape, requiring individuals and organisations within the MICT sector, which is central to the digital economy, to adapt to the changing demands. As companies in this sector increasingly adopt new technologies and digitise their operations, there is a growing need for employees with digital skills such as coding, data analysis, digital marketing, cybersecurity, and Artificial Intelligence. This demand is making traditional roles less relevant or requiring them to be enhanced with digital competencies. For example, marketing professionals now need expertise in social media marketing and data analytics to remain competitive.

Furthermore, technological advancements are not only displacing jobs but also creating new ones, such as cloud architects, user experience designers, and digital transformation specialists. The rapid pace of change necessitates adaptability and continuous learning for individuals to stay current with the evolving requirements of their roles. While digital transformation creates new opportunities, it also automates specific tasks, potentially leading to job displacement. This highlights the importance of reskilling and upskilling initiatives to help affected workers transition into new roles.

To address the skills gap, educational institutions and training providers must adapt their curricula to equip graduates with the skills needed for the digital age. Lifelong learning and upskilling are becoming increasingly important for both individuals and organisations. The rise of remote work and collaboration, enabled by technology, is contributing to a more globalised talent pool, offering companies access to a wider range of skilled individuals but also intensifying competition for talent.

2.4 POLICY FRAMEWORKS AFFECTING SKILLS DEMAND AND SUPPLY

South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP) serves as the foundation for the country's development trajectory, aiming to achieve sustained economic growth by 2030. In addition to the NDP, various policies, regulatory frameworks, and government strategies influence the demand and supply of skills in the economy. These policy frameworks collectively shape the skills development landscape within the MICT SETA, guiding the demand for specific skills, promoting inclusivity and transformation, and ensuring alignment with industry standards and regulations. The MICT sector, as an integral component of the South African economy, is significantly impacted by these policy interventions.

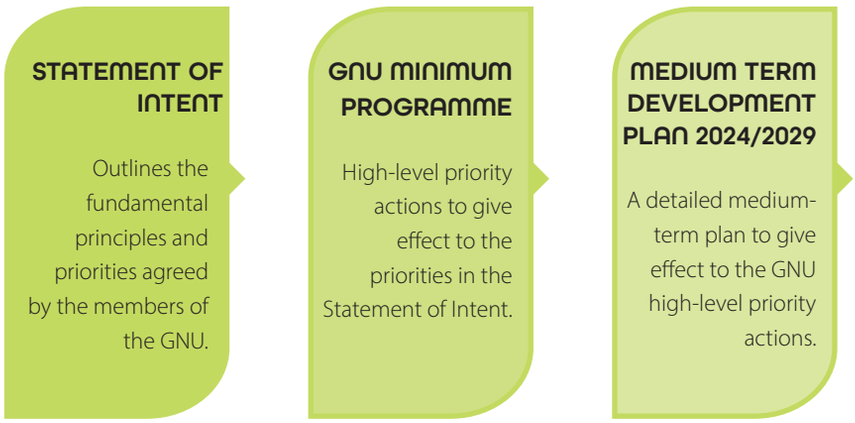
The section below discusses three national strategies and plans and reflects on how the SETA has responded to the skills implications of these over the past 5 years.

2.4.1. THE 7TH ADMINISTRATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

The 7th administration of the South African democratic government has introduced the Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) 2024–2029 as a prioritisation framework to guide government efforts and resource allocation across all spheres. This plan emphasises coordinated governance and reflects a commitment to inclusive development through the Government of National Unity (GNU), where a multi-party cabinet collaborates under a unified Statement of Intent (SoI). MICT SETA will play a key role in supporting the MTDP by aligning its initiatives with the National Development Plan (NDP), focusing on integrated planning and partnerships to ensure cohesive implementation of national priorities.

MICT SETA's efforts are geared towards strengthening labour market and skills planning, increasing access to intermediate and advanced learning programmes, and enhancing the efficiency of occupationally directed initiatives in critical sectors. The administration's collaborative approach underscores the need for all sectors to develop aligned plans that support the NDP, with MICT SETA working to expand access to high-impact skills development opportunities whilst ensuring a unified strategy for sustainable national growth. Below is an outline and overview of the process how the implementation of the programmes under the 7th Administration will unfold:

FIGURE 14: GNU PROGRAMMES



In the announcement of the members of the National Executive, the president emphasised on the three (3) priorities of the GNU which will be implemented throughout the MTDP 2024 -2029 period. The priorities of the Medium-Term Development Plan are listed below:

- Strategic Priority 1: Inclusive growth and job creation
- Strategic Priority 2: Reduce Poverty and tackle the high cost of living
- Strategic Priority 3: A capable, ethical and developmental state

Monitoring Framework for MTDP Five-year Implementation Plan

The development of an effective monitoring and evaluation framework is crucial for the successful implementation of any programme, particularly for the NDP in this instance. To this end, MICT SETA has since institutionalised Monitoring and Evaluation by establishing a well-capacitated M&E division. Through this division, the SETA will continue to monitor the progress made towards the achievement of set targets. In line with the MTDP, MICT SETA will conduct evaluation and impact assessment studies to ascertain the extent of impact of the programmes. To this effect, the impact evaluations will take place mindful of the time lag before impact can be realised. Particular attention will be given to conducting impact evaluations based on cohorts and targeting high impact programmes.

The table below make a reflection on how the MICT SETA has responded to the skills implications of the national strategics and plans over the past 5 years. The table looks at the implications of the national strategies and plans for skills planning and how it responded to each of them over the past 5 years.

TABLE 5: REFLECTION ON HOW THE SETA HAS RESPONDED TO THE SKILLS IMPLICATIONS OF NATIONAL STRATEGIES AND PLANS OVER THE PAST 5 YEARS

National Strategies and Plans	SETA Response to the Skills Implications
National Skills Development Plan (NSDP)	The MICT SETA responds to the NSDP outcomes by determining which occupations are in high demand through research and subsequently funding relevant skills development programmes in line with what is needed in industry. Furthermore, the SETA strengthens TVET colleges and CET colleges through infrastructure development and lecturer development programmes. The SETA also contributes to increasing the number of workers trained and supported through skills development interventions. The SETA supports SMMEs and Cooperatives, with particular support for learners in rural areas.
Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP) and Skills Strategy	The Skills Strategy interventions are integrated into the SETA's Key Skills Priority Actions, Strategic Plan, and Annual Performance Plan targets. The SETA ensures that research informs planning by conducting both quantitative and qualitative research annually. The research process includes stakeholder engagements to ensure that the voices of industry are heard and that findings are robust. The SETA also continuously reviews the OFO Codes to ensure that emerging occupations in the sector are captured. Many stakeholders highlight the need for OFO Codes to be updated to enable them to apply for funding for skills development in line with the recognised OFO Codes in the sector. Furthermore, the SETA in partnership with the QCTO and DHET, develops industry relevant occupational qualifications to ensure that people can enter relevant education and training programmes.
Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI)	Programme 3 within the SETA's Annual Performance Plan (APP) specifically addresses youth unemployment. Through various skills development programmes including internships, work-integrated learning (WIL), learnerships, and skills programmes, the SETA targets youth.

2.4.2. LIST OF ALL POLICY FRAMEWORKS AFFECTING SKILLS DEMAND AND SUPPLY

The table below discusses the major national strategies and plans impacting the MICT sector. Specifically, it looks at the implications for skills planning as well as the measures the SETA put in place to support the national strategies and plans.

TABLE 6: MAJOR NATIONAL STRATEGIES AND PLANS AFFECTING SKILLS DEMAND AND SUPPLY

National Strategies and Plans	Implications for skills planning in the sector for each of the Identified National Strategies and Plans	Measures planned in support of National Skills Strategy and plans
National Development Plan (NDP)	The NDP Vision 2030 (November 2011) identifies as one of its core priorities, reducing unemployment to 6% by 2030. The following NDP objectives affect skills planning within the MICT SETA. They are both demand-related and supply-related: A larger, more effective innovation system closely aligned with firms that operate in sectors consistent with the growth strategy; support for small businesses through better coordination of relevant agencies, development of finance institutions, and public and private incubators; an expanded skills base through better education and vocational training; identify business incubation for SMEs generally and the expansion of business services in particular as priority actions for growth and development.	The MICT sector contributes towards the National System of Innovation and thus, plays a role in supporting its effectiveness and efficiency. Additionally, the SETAs strategic plan emphasises provision of financial and non-financial support to SMMEs, NGOs, NLPEs, and CBOs. SETA partnerships to encourage incubation, mentorship and skills development play a key role in achieving sustainability and growth of small businesses in the sector.
Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) 2024-2029	The Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) 2024–2029, under the Government of National Unity (GNU), underscores the critical role of skills development in achieving inclusive and sustainable growth. It focuses on aligning education and training systems with the needs of key sectors such as ICT, renewable energy, and manufacturing, fostering a workforce equipped for a dynamic and resilient economy. The GNU's collaborative approach encourages partnerships between government, private sector, and civil society to create demand-driven skills programmes and enhance public service delivery. Emphasis is placed on addressing historical inequalities by expanding access to technical and vocational training for marginalised communities, particularly women and youth, thereby promoting social cohesion and reducing unemployment. Furthermore, the plan integrates digital transformation and innovation into education systems, ensuring the workforce remains competitive in a rapidly evolving global landscape.	The MICT SETA drives programmes that stimulate employability and inclusive growth. To realise inclusivity, MICT SETA adopted Rural Development Strategy and also support growth of CBO, NPOs and SMMEs. These programmes respond direct and indirectly on inclusivity growth and ensuring that no one is left behind. By the end of the term in 2029/2030, MICT SETA planned to have achieved number of workplace-based learnings and other employment-based programmes through internships, learnerships, university graduates placement and apprenticeship. Furthermore, by the end of the term MICT SETA will have achieve number of academic programmes and learning programmes, including amongst others: number of learners funded through bursaries and number of learners enrolled in learnerships and skills programmes.

National Strategies and Plans	Implications for skills planning in the sector for each of the Identified National Strategies and Plans	Measures planned in support of National Skills Strategy and plans
White Paper on Post-Schooling Education and Training (WP-PSET)	The white paper envisages an expanded, effective, and integrated post-school system in South Africa. The skills implications are largely supply-related. It is premised on achieving: Expanded access to TVET and University education; Establishment of community colleges and skills centres, to mainstream vocational education and training; Establishment of a national skills planning mechanism within DHET; A strengthened NSA to perform a Monitoring and Evaluation role in the skills system; and opening up workplaces to give more youth access to work-integrated learning opportunities. The white paper calls for a restructuring of the skills system and an efficient skills development system where strategic plans form the foundation of the service-level agreements that SETAs sign with DHET.	The MICT SETA ensures expanded access to TVET and University education through bursaries. This directly contributes to one of the premises of the white paper to expand access to TVET and University education. In addition, the SETA provides mandatory and discretionary grant funding which enables increased access to TVET colleges and universities through skills development interventions.
National Skills Development Plan (NSDP)	The NSDP is informed by and consolidates the NDP, NGP, WP-PSET and IPAP and seeks to "improve access to occupations in high demand and priority skills aligned to supporting economic growth, employment creation and social development whilst also seeking to address systemic considerations" (DHET, 2019). The skills implications are both demand-related and supply-related. A call for increased emphasis on improving "both basic skills and technical skills, with a specific focus on 'historically disadvantaged individuals'" is made and eight outcomes are presented to this effect.	In addressing the NSDP and new SETA landscape, the MICT SETA has incorporated and aligned the outcomes into its Strategic Skills Priority Actions, thus ensuring continued relevance and responsiveness to key issues.
Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP)	The IPAP has identified priority sectors which it aims to support for development in the country. Projects such as a South African garment-sizing database using three-dimensional (3-D) body-scanner technology, and computer-aided design using 3-D scanner data were highlighted. The skills implications are both demand-related and supply-related.	As stakeholders in the sector start to engage in these programmes, the MICT SETA is a skills development partner, ensuring that the requisite skills are being developed.
National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper	The National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper replaces all the previous white papers on telecommunication (1996) and postal services (1998). The policy outlines the plan for the rollout of broadband services across the country and directs the allocation of spectrum to all licenced operators, new entrants and SMMEs. The white paper also covers interventions to boost the manufacturing and software development sectors particularly through advancing affordable devices and innovative services and applications relevant to the South African context. The direct link with the MICT sector includes facilitation, upgrade of manufacturing facilities and capabilities for domestic production and growth of exports; Commercialisation of technologies; and Skills development for the business process outsourcing sector. These are both demand-related and supply-related skills implications.	The MICT SETA supports this planning priority through managing supply-side issues and infrastructure rollout, including supporting work done in scarce resources such as spectrum and interventions to facilitate open access and rapid deployment of infrastructure. The SETA committed itself to facilitating multi-stakeholder participation in the drive for an inclusive digital economy.

National Strategies and Plans	Implications for skills planning in the sector for each of the Identified National Strategies and Plans	Measures planned in support of National Skills Strategy and plans
Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP) and Skills Strategy	The ERRP identified key skills challenges in South Africa, including skills mismatch, technological displacement of unskilled workers, and the need for future-ready skills. In response, a short-term skills strategy was developed to strengthen the skills system and support the ERRP's implementation. The strategy prioritises interventions that provide immediate access to skills development opportunities for a large number of youth. It outlines ten interventions, six of which directly involve the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), including the MICT SETA. The skills implications are largely supply-related.	The MICT SETA actively supports six key interventions identified in the skills strategy: embedding skills planning into sectoral processes, increasing access to qualifications in priority sectors, providing access to targeted skills programmes, supporting entrepreneurship and innovation, retraining and upskilling employees to preserve jobs, and strengthening the post-school education and training system. These interventions are integrated into the SETA's Key Skills Priority Actions, Strategic Plan, and Annual Performance Plan targets.
Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI)	The purpose of the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI) is to address the pressing issue of youth unemployment and create employment opportunities for young people in the country. The initiative was launched by the South African government, with a focus on providing work experience, skills development, and support to help young people enter the job market and gain meaningful employment. The skills implications are largely supply-related.	The MICT SETA responds to this initiative by offering internships, developing skills development programmes, and promoting inclusion and diversity in the ICT sector. This is achieved through providing hands-on experience and training for young people in various technical fields, creating targeted programmes to equip them with industry-relevant skills, and focusing on increasing opportunities for underrepresented groups.

2.5 IMPLICATIONS OF CHANGE-DRIVERS FOR SKILLS PLANNING IN THE SECTOR AND SUPPLY SIDE CONSIDERATIONS MADE IN RESPONSE TO IMPLICATIONS

The change-drivers significantly influence MICT SETA's skills planning, requiring a flexible approach to align interventions with the rapidly evolving demands for new skills. To address these needs, the SETA supports education and training programmes, including internationally recognised vendor programmes not yet accredited in South Africa, ensuring the workforce meets global skill standards used by private sector companies.

These change-drivers also impact other economic sectors, such as the Blue Economy, where maritime businesses are adopting 4IR technologies like AI, machine learning, Big Data, blockchain, IoT, robotics, drones, and additive manufacturing to optimise ocean resource utilisation. As a result, MICT SETA's role in skills development extends beyond its traditional sub-sectors, influencing a broader range of industries and fostering cross-sectoral growth.

The disruptions brought by the 4IR necessitate extensive reskilling and upskilling of the current and future MICT workforce. However, the lack of recognition for emerging 4IR occupations in the OFO codes presents challenges. To address this, the SETA is actively developing new qualifications and enhancing existing ones in collaboration with stakeholders like the QCTO, training providers, and industry. The SETA also works with Quality Assurance Partners to ensure that the MICT sector remains agile and responsive to evolving skills demands.

The new government administration introduces changes to skills supply and demand, reflecting priorities outlined in the Statement of Intent (SoI) and GNU documents. While key priorities such as skills development, employment, poverty alleviation, and inclusive growth remain, new sub-priorities have emerged, including the Just Energy Transition (JET), re-industrialisation, localisation, and beneficiation. The MICT SETA will play a critical role in addressing these national priorities by aligning its programmes with the MTDP priorities, ensuring that its initiatives support the broader socioeconomic goals of the government.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has comprehensively explored the multifaceted factors influencing the dynamics of skills supply and demand within the MICT sector. The analysis underscores the perpetually evolving nature of technology within the sector, its transversal impact across various industries, and its pivotal role in driving economic growth. The MICT SETA, positioned at the forefront of these developments, has a unique opportunity to shape a sustainable, inclusive, and prosperous future for all sectors.

Through its strategic initiatives, the SETA will continue to champion skills development that prioritises specialised expertise in the setup and maintenance of emerging technologies. Simultaneously, the SETA will maintain a balanced approach, ensuring that lower-end skills are not neglected, thereby creating a diverse qualification mix that caters to the needs of all levels of employees within the sector. This comprehensive strategy will empower the MICT sector to adapt to technological advancements, foster innovation, and contribute to the broader economic development of South Africa.

CHAPTER 3 | SECTORAL SKILLS DEMAND AND SUPPLY ANALYSIS

CHAPTER 3: SECTORAL SKILLS DEMAND AND SUPPLY ANALYSIS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the occupational shortages and skills gaps within the MICT sector whilst also evaluating the availability and nature of training programmes. By identifying and addressing these challenges, the sector can enhance its workforce to better align with the evolving labour market, fostering economic growth and individual wellbeing.

To compile comprehensive lists of Hard-to-Fill Vacancies (HTFVs), Skills Gaps, Emerging Occupations, and Sectoral Priority Occupations, an analysis of employer-submitted Workplace Skills Plans (WSPs) was conducted. Recognising the limitations of WSPs, such as vague occupational descriptions, key informant interviews were conducted with industry stakeholders to supplement the information. Respondents identified key HTFVs, skills gaps, emerging occupations, and change-drivers within the sector. To further validate the data, an online survey and focus group discussions were conducted and analysed. The research findings were triangulated across various sources to provide a holistic and accurate picture of the sector's skills landscape. The extent of occupational supply was assessed using data from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) Post-school Education and Training (PSET) Statistics and the MICT SETA Quarterly Monitoring Reports (QMRs).

3.2 OCCUPATIONAL SHORTAGES AND SKILLS GAPS

3.2.1 OCCUPATIONS THAT HAVE CONSISTENTLY BEEN ON THE HTFVS LIST OVER THE PAST 5-YEARS AND WHY

This subsection provides an analysis of the occupations that have remained on the sub-sector HTFVs lists over the past 5-years, including a discussion on the reasons for the consistency.

Advertising: In the Advertising sub-sector, Multimedia Specialists, Multimedia Designers, Digital Artists, and Marketing Practitioners have consistently been identified as hard-to-fill vacancies from 2020 to 2024, with Advertising Specialists added in 2022. This scarcity is attributed to factors such as low wages leading to a "brain drain" of skilled professionals, particularly in niche areas like digital marketing and 3D design. The industry's increasing digitisation further exacerbates the shortage, as the demand for digital marketing skills surpasses the supply of qualified candidates. While the gig economy offers a potential solution to the sector's dynamic environment, it also presents challenges in research and levy systems due to the nature of freelance work.

Despite these shortages, the 'Gig economy,' characterised by freelance or on-demand work, is seen as a solution to the sector's dynamic environment. Freelancers offer greater flexibility in terms of working hours, clients, and workload, often operating on a contractual or project basis. However, this trend poses challenges in research and levy systems, as freelance workers may not be captured within traditional employment structures or subject to industry levies, highlighting the need for adaptive approaches to talent management and policy development within the advertising sub-sector.

Film and electronic media: In the Film and electronic media sub-sector, the occupations that remained on the HTFVs throughout the 5-year period (2020-2024) are Director (Film, Television, Radio, or Stage); Media Producer; and Sound Technician.

Scarcity in the film and electronic media industry in South Africa presents multifaceted challenges that impact both talent acquisition and industry development. One of the primary issues contributing to scarcity is the limited availability of suitably qualified professionals within niche roles. This scarcity is particularly evident in highly specialised positions such as Film Director, Media Producer, and Sound Technician. The demand for skilled professionals often exceeds the supply, leading to talent shortages and project delays. Another factor exacerbating scarcity is the brain drain phenomenon, where talented individuals seek better opportunities abroad due to factors such as limited local industry growth, insufficient investment in training and development, and relatively low wages compared to international standards. The loss of skilled professionals further strains the talent pool and hampers the industry's capacity for innovation and competitiveness.

Additionally, the rapid evolution of technology and digital media platforms necessitates a constant demand for individuals with up-to-date skills and expertise. However, the availability of relevant training programmes and educational resources may not always align with industry needs, resulting in a skills gap that contributes to scarcity within the sector. Furthermore, the film and electronic media industry in South Africa faces challenges related to access to funding and resources. Limited financial support for film production and media projects constrains the industry's ability to attract and retain talent, as well as to produce high-quality content that can compete on a global scale.

Addressing scarcity in the film and electronic media industry requires a multifaceted approach that includes investment in skills development, infrastructure, and funding mechanisms. Collaborative efforts between government, industry

stakeholders, educational institutions, and funding bodies are essential to nurture local talent, stimulate industry growth, and create a vibrant ecosystem that fosters creativity, innovation, and sustainability within the sector.

Electronics, Information Technology and Telecommunications (ICT): In the ICT sub-sectors, the occupations that remained on the HTFVs throughout the 5-year period (2020-2024) are Software Developer; Computer Network and Systems Engineer; ICT Systems Analyst; ICT Security Specialist; Developer Programmer; ICT Sales Representative; and Electronics Engineer.

The ICT sector in South Africa is undergoing significant transformation and facing various challenges and opportunities, as evidenced by insights provided by industry experts. The rapid adoption of advanced technologies necessitates skilled professionals who can manage associated risks effectively. Software developers, Developer programmers, ICT Security Specialists, and ICT systems analysts consistently rank among the top occupations that are challenging to fill within the sub-sectors.

Some of the reasons for scarcity amongst these occupations are that larger companies, offering higher salaries and attractive packages, tend to attract skilled talent, leaving small and medium-sized enterprises (SMMEs) struggling to compete and resulting in skills shortages. Furthermore, high entry requirements for entry-level positions pose challenges, particularly for rural youth seeking opportunities in urban areas. This barrier to entry exacerbates disparities in access to opportunities within the sector.

Moreover, Electronics Engineers continue to be in high demand in the electronics subsector, driven by emerging technologies like 5G infrastructure and household backup power products.

The increasing demand for ICT sales representatives underscores the evolving technological landscape and the need to adapt to changing consumer needs, particularly in response to challenges like loadshedding. The loadshedding crisis further emphasise the importance of skilled professionals in ensuring business continuity and operational efficiency.

Overall, the ICT sector in South Africa presents both challenges and opportunities, requiring strategic investments in skills development, infrastructure, and innovation to drive sustainable growth and competitiveness

3.2.2 SUB-SECTOR HTFVS LISTS

This subsection provides an analysis of the occupations that are hard to fill in the Advertising; Film and electronic media; and the Electronics, Information technology, and Telecommunications (ICT) sub-sectors.

3.2.2.1 ADVERTISING SUB-SECTOR OCCUPATIONS WITH HARD-TO-FILL VACANCIES

Using the OFO framework as a tool for uniformity in terms of reporting, the table below provides the top occupations which are hard to fill in the Advertising sub-sector. The five vacancies identified by stakeholders include Multimedia Specialist, Digital Artist, Marketing Practitioner, Multimedia Designer and Advertising Specialist.

TABLE 7: ADVERTISING HARD-TO-FILL VACANCIES

OFO Code	Occupation	Reason	Quantity Needed in Sub-sector
2021-251301	Multimedia Specialist	Lack of skilled people	47
2021-216603	Multimedia Designer	Lack of skilled people	40
2021-243101	Advertising Specialist	Lack of skilled people	40
2021-216601	Digital Artist	Equity consideration	20
2021-243103	Marketing Practitioner	Replacement demand	20

Source: WSP/ATR Submission, 2024; MICT Survey, 2024; MICT sector stakeholder consultations, 2024

3.2.2.2 FILM AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA SUB-SECTOR OCCUPATIONS WITH HARD-TO-FILL VACANCIES

Table 89 below illustrates the top hard-to-fill vacancies of the Film and Electronic Media sub-sector.

TABLE 8: FILM AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA HARD-TO-FILL VACANCIES

OFO Code	Occupation	Reason	Quantity Needed in Sub-sector
2021-265401	Director (Film, Television, Radio, or Stage)	Lack of skilled people	43
2021-352102	Camera Operator (Film, Television or Video)	Equity consideration	36
2021-265412	Media Producer	Lack of skilled people	26
2021-352103	Sound Technician	Lack of skilled people	23
2021-216601	Digital Artist	Lack of skilled people	20
2021-264203	Journalist	Lack of skilled people	20
2021-264202	Editor	Lack of skilled people	20

Source: WSP/ATR Submission, 2024; MICT Survey, 2024; MICT sector stakeholder consultations, 2024

3.2.2.3 ELECTRONICS, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS (ICT) SUB-SECTORS OCCUPATIONS WITH HARD-TO-FILL VACANCIES

There are similarities between the Electronics, Telecommunications, and the Information Technology sub-sectors. Consequently, these sub-sectors are addressed as one ICT sub-sector due to the overlapping nature of their occupational demands. To accommodate this amalgamation and the larger size of the ICT sub-sector, provision is made for additional HTFVs. Table 8 below presents the top HTFVs within the ICT sub-sector over the next year.

TABLE 9: ICT OCCUPATIONS WITH HARD-TO-FILL VACANCIES

OFO Code	Occupation	Reason	Quantity Needed in Sub-sector
2021-251201	Software Developer	Lack of skilled people	380
2021-252301	Computer Network and Systems Engineer	Lack of skilled people	285
2021-251101	ICT Systems Analyst	Lack of skilled people	165
2021-351301	Computer Network Technician	Lack of skilled people	148
2021-252901	ICT Security Specialist	Lack of skilled people	130
2021-251203	Developer Programmer	Lack of skilled people	91
2021-251102	Data Scientist	Lack of skilled people	87
2021-352201	Telecommunications Technical Officer or Technologist	Lack of skilled people	63
2021-243403	ICT Sales Representative	Lack of skilled people	28
2021-215201	Electronics Engineer	Lack of skilled people	25

Source: WSP/ATR Submission, 2024; MICT Survey, 2024; MICT sector stakeholder consultations, 2024

3.2.3 SKILLS GAPS

Skills gaps within the MICT sector span across various areas, including management and leadership, customer service, and technical expertise, amongst others. These skills gaps are delineated in the table below, categorised by occupation (with OFO codes) and OFO Major Group.

TABLE 10: SKILLS GAPS AND THE TOP OCCUPATIONS .

Skills Gap	Lower-Level (plant operators and elementary)	Mid-level (technicians, associates, artisans, and clerical)	Senior (managers and professionals)
Management Skills	N/A	• 2021-351401 Web Technician • 2021-311301 Electrical Engineering Technician • 2021-312201 Production / Operations Supervisor (Manufacturing) • 2021-333908 Marketing Coordinator	• 2021-133102 ICT Project Manager • 2021-122101 Sales and Marketing Manager • 2021-133104 Application Development Manager • 2021-122102 Sales Manager • 2021-251201 Software Developer • 2021-251101 ICT Systems Analyst
Certified Skills (CompTIA A+, Network+, MCSA, MCSE, Azure, CISCO, etc.)	N/A	N/A	• 2021-133102 ICT Project Manager • 2021-251203 Developer Programmer • 2021-251101 ICT Systems Analyst • 2021-252301 Computer Network and Systems Engineer
Financial Management Skills	N/A	• 2021-333910 Business Support Coordinator	• 2021-112101 Director (Enterprise / Organisation) • 2021-121101 Finance Manager • 2021-121901 Corporate General Manager • 2021-241102 Management Accountant
Communication skills	N/A	• 2021-333908 Marketing Coordinator • 2021-351401 Web Technician • 2021-332201 Commercial Sales Representative • 2021-333903 Sales Representative (Business Services) • 2021-352106 Production Assistant (Film, Television or Radio) • 2021-351201 ICT Communications Assistant • 2021-351301 Computer Network Technician	• 2021-122102-Sales Manager • 2021-133105 Information Technology Manager • 2021-121905 Programme or Project Manager • 2021-112101 Director (Enterprise / Organisation) • 2021-251401 Applications Programmer • 2021-251201 Software Developer • 2021-243101 Advertising Specialist • 2021-243201 Communication Coordinator • 2021-251101 ICT Systems Analyst • 2021-242103 Business Development Officer

Skills Gap	Lower-Level (plant operators and elementary)	Mid-level (technicians, associates, artisans, and clerical)	Senior (managers and professionals)
Customer Service Skills	N/A	• 2021-352201 Telecommunications Technical Officer or Technologist • 2021-351301 Computer Network Technician • 2021-333903 Sales Representative (Business Services) • 2021-672104 Electronic Equipment Mechanician	• 2021-122101 Sales and Marketing Manager • 2021-122105 Customer Service Manager • 2021-121905 Programme or Project Manager • 2021-133105 Information Technology Manager • 2021-243402 ICT Business Development Manager • 2021-243401 ICT Account Manager • 2021-265410 Radio or Television Programme Organiser • 2021-243202 Communication Strategist • 2021-242101 Management Consultant • 2021-211403 Materials Scientist • 2021-251102 Data Scientist
Sales Skills (Technical sales ability)	N/A	• 2021-524903 Salesclerk / Officer • 2021-522301 Sales Assistant (General)	• 2021-243402 ICT Business Development Manager • 2021-243403 ICT Sales Representative • 2021-243401 ICT Account Manager • 2021-242101 Management Consultant
Problem Solving Skills	N/A	• 2021-351301 Computer Network Technician • 2021-352201 Telecommunications Technical Officer or Technologist • 2021-351301 Computer Network Technician • 2021-441903 Programme or Project Administrators	• 2021-133102 ICT Project Manager • 2021-133105 Information Technology Manager • 2021-251201 Software Developer • 2021-252902 Technical ICT Support Services Manager • 2021-252301 Computer Network and Systems Engineer • 2021-251202 Programmer Analyst • 2021-251301 Multimedia Specialist
Leadership Skills	N/A	N/A	• 2021-133102-ICT Project Manager • 2021-121901-Corporate General Manager • 2021-122102-Sales Manager • 2021-122104 Interactive and Direct Marketing Strategist • 2021-133104 Application Development Manager • 2021-122102 Sales Manager • 2021-251101 ICT Systems Analyst • 2021-251901 Computers Quality Assurance Analyst • 2021-252901 ICT Security Specialist

Skills Gap	Lower-Level (plant operators and elementary)	Mid-level (technicians, associates, artisans, and clerical)	Senior (managers and professionals)
Business Management Skills	N/A	• 2021-333910-Business Support Coordinator • 2021-351301 Computer Network Technician • 2021-672205 Telecommunications Technician	• 2021-112101-Director (Enterprise/ Organisation) • 2021-122201-Advertising and Public Relations Manager • 2021-133102 ICT Project Manager • 2021-251202 Programmer Analyst • 2021-122101 Sales and Marketing Manager • 2021-242101 Management Consultant • 2021-251102 Data Scientist • 2021-243402 ICT Business Development Manager • 2021-252301 Computer Network and Systems Engineer
Project Management Skills	N/A	• 2021-312201 Production/ Operations Supervisor (Manufacturing) • 2021-333908 Marketing Coordinator • 2021-333910 Business Support Coordinator	• 2021-112101-Director (Enterprise/ Organisation) • 2021-133102 ICT Project Manager • 2021-243402 ICT Business Development Manager • 2021-122101 Sales and Marketing Manager • 2021-133105 Information Technology Manager • 2021-121901 Corporate General Manager

Source: WSP/ATR Submission, 2024; MICT Survey, 2024; MICT sector stakeholder consultations, 2024

The MICT sector is perpetually undergoing rapid change, driven by the swift and extensive technological transformation that has transformed the landscape of work. Digital skills have become indispensable for the contemporary workforce, yet employers frequently encounter a discrepancy between the skills they seek and those possessed by employees or job seekers. The demand for digital skills often outweighs the available supply, posing challenges for businesses in their quest for suitable talent. In addition, graduates coming out of education and training institutions with the needed qualifications lack the necessary workplace skills i.e. there is a disconnect between what is being taught at education and training institutions and what is needed in the workplace, as reported by stakeholders during consultations (2024).

During MICT SETA focus groups (2024), stakeholders highlighted the increased need for skills in cloud computing, cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence (AI), as well as quantum computing. Individuals already employed in occupations in the MICT sector need to continually upgrade their skills to stay abreast of evolving technological advancements, particularly evident with the emergence of 4IR technologies.

Undoubtedly, in a world of rapidly evolving technologies and constant innovation, a comprehensive approach is paramount. There must be a prioritisation of investment in upskilling and reskilling the current workforce to address the prevalent skills gaps within organisations. This entails a concerted effort to cultivate a blend of hard and soft skills crucial in today's technologically advancing landscape, such as proficiency in programming languages like Python, C, C++, Rust, and Perl, which remain pivotal in the era of 4IR, but also on softer skills such as communication, teamwork, problem solving, adaptability, creativity, amongst others.

The development of communication and collaboration skills essential for cross-border work can significantly differentiate between a successful career trajectory and a stagnant one. An engineer or computer programmer may possess extensive technical knowledge and expertise, which is undoubtedly vital, particularly in their initial training. Yet, this singular focus may prove insufficient to maintain their relevance in a rapidly evolving field. Soft skills, often overlooked but equally essential, are paramount. Engineers lacking in interaction and communication abilities, or programmers with deficient teamwork skills, risk stagnation in their professional advancement. The inability to effectively communicate ideas or solutions to non-expert audiences hampers their potential for growth, especially in environments where interdisciplinary collaboration is increasingly prevalent.

3.2.4 EMERGING OCCUPATIONS IN THE MICT SECTOR

New occupations in the MICT sector emerge for various reasons but key amongst those are the 4IR and the associated technological advancements; changing consumer behaviour; and the green economy agenda of the country.

The tables below list some of the emerging occupations in the sector brought on by the 4IR; changing consumer behaviour; and the green economy agenda.

Emerging occupations were determined through desk research, an employer survey, stakeholder interviews, as well as focus group sessions with key stakeholders in the sector.

TABLE 11: EMERGING OCCUPATIONS DUE TO THE 4IR AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS

SETA Name	Period	Occupation Code	Occupation	Intervention(s) Planned	NQF Level	NQF Aligned	Quantity Needed	Quantity to be Supported	Rationale
MICT SETA	2025/26	2021-214101 Specialisation: 2021-214101 - 9	Operations Research Engineer	Bursary: Bachelor of Science Honours in Computer Science	8	Y	N/A	N/A	The occupation is emerging because of technological advancements in the MICT sector. The SETA does not yet know the number needed. This will be established in the near future through research.
MICT SETA	2025/26	2021-252301 Specialisation: 2021-252301-1	Computer Systems Integrator	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Information Systems	7	Y	N/A	N/A	The occupation is emerging because of technological advancements in the MICT sector. The SETA does not yet know the number needed. This will be established in the near future through research.

SETA Name	Period	Occupation Code	Occupation	Intervention(s) Planned	NQF Level	NQF Aligned	Quantity Needed	Quantity to be Supported	Rationale
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Research Scientist	Bursary: Bachelor of Science Honours in Computer Science	8	Y	N/A	N/A	The occupations are emerging because of technological advancements in the MICT sector. These are new occupations hence they do not have an OFO Code. The SETA does not yet know the number needed. This will be established in the near future through research.
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Cloud Computing Specialist	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Computer Science	7	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Quantum Computing Research Scientist	Bursary: Bachelor of Science Honours in Computer Science	8	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Quantum Engineers Application Developer	Bursary: Bachelor of Science Honours in Computer Science	8	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Technology Brand Sales Specialist	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Information Technology	6	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Account Technical Specialist Customer Success Manager	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Information Technology	6	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Cloud Security Analyst	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Information Technology	6	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Nano-technology Specialist	Bursary: Master of Science in Nanoscience	9	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Data Virtualisation Specialist	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Computer Science	7	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Drone Engineer	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Engineering	8	Y	N/A	N/A	

Source: Employer survey, stakeholder interviews, focus group consultations; 2024

TABLE 12: EMERGING OCCUPATIONS DUE TO THE CHANGING CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN THE MICT SECTOR

SETA Name	Period	Occupation Code	Occupation	Intervention(s) Planned	NQF Level	NQF Aligned	Quantity Needed	Quantity to be Supported	Rationale
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Human-Machine Interface (HMI) Designer	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Computer Science	7	Y	N/A	N/A	The occupations are emerging because of changing consumer behaviour. Consumers are increasingly completing transactions online thereby necessitating businesses to develop or strengthen their online presence. These are new occupations hence they do not have an OFO Code. The SETA does not yet know the number needed. This will be established in the near future through research.
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Marketing Technology Specialist	Bursary: Bachelor of Commerce in Digital Marketing	7	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Advanced Advertising Specialist	Bursary: Bachelor of Commerce in Digital Marketing	7	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Digital Marketing Content Creator	Bursary: Bachelor of Commerce in Digital Marketing	7	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Online Customer Service Expert	Short Course in Online Customer Service	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Customer Experience Analyst	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Computer Science	7	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Search Engine Optimisation Developer	Bursary: Bachelor of Science Honours in Computer Science	8	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	E-commerce Specialist	Bursary: Bachelor of Commerce in Digital Marketing	7	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Chatbot Developer	Bursary: Bachelor of Science Honours in Computer Science	8	Y	N/A	N/A	

Source: Employer survey, stakeholder interviews, focus group consultations; 2024

TABLE 13: EMERGING OCCUPATIONS DUE TO THE GREEN ECONOMY AGENDA OF THE COUNTRY

SETA Name	Period	Occupation Code	Occupation	Intervention(s) Planned	NQF Level	NQF Aligned	Quantity Needed	Quantity to be Supported	Rationale
MICT SETA	2025/26	2021-213302 Specialisation: 2021-213302-9	Climate Change Analyst	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science	7	Y	N/A	N/A	These occupations are emerging because of the green economy agenda of South Africa. People and organisations in the economy are becoming more conscious of their purchasing habits, ensuring that it is in line with sustainable development. As such, businesses must ensure that their products and services on offer are "green". The SETA does not yet know the number needed. This will be established in the near future through research.
MICT SETA	2025/26	2021-215103 Specialisation: 2021-215103-2	Renewable Energy Engineer	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Engineering in Electrical and Computer Engineering	8	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	2021-311303 Specialisation: 2021-311303-5	Energy Efficiency Consultant	Bursary: National Diploma in Electrical Engineering	6	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Alternative Energy Installer	Bursary: Bachelor of Engineering	8	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Green Technology Specialist	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science	7	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Green Telecom Specialist	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science	7	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Sustainable Design Specialist	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science	7	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Environmental Sustainability Expert	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science	7	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Renewable Energy Specialist	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Engineering in Electrical and Computer Engineering	8	Y	N/A	N/A	
MICT SETA	2025/26	N/A	Green Technology Developer	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science	7	Y	N/A	N/A	

Source: Employer survey, stakeholder interviews, focus group consultations; 2024

Considering the above lists of emerging occupations in the sector, the MICT SETA has developed 52 occupational qualifications that align to the demand of the 4IR, in partnership with the QCTO and other key relevant stakeholders. Several consultative road shows were held to explain the process followed to develop these qualifications. The table shows the qualifications that have been developed by the SETA to date:

TABLE 14: DEVELOPED 4IR QUALIFICATIONS

1.	Occupational Certificate: Artificial Software Developer
2.	Occupational Certificate: Cloud Administrator
3.	Occupational Certificate: Cybersecurity Analyst.
4.	Occupational Certificate: Design Thinking Innovation Lead.
5.	Occupational Certificate: Design Thinking Practitioner.
6.	Occupational Certificate: Quality Test Automator.
7.	Occupational Certificate: Software Developer.
8.	Occupational Certificate: Data Science Practitioner.
9.	Occupational Certificate: E -waste Operator Controller.
10.	Occupational Certificate: Internet of Things.
11.	Occupational Certificate: Robotic Processing Automation Developer
12.	Occupational Certificate: Mobile Computing Technician Devices
13.	Occupational Certificate: Drone Technician
14.	Occupational Certificate: Remote Piloting Aircraft
15.	Occupational Certificate: Remote Piloting Technician
16.	Occupational Certificate: Blockchain
17.	Occupational Certificate: 3D Printing
18.	Occupational Certificate: Extended Reality
19.	Occupational Certificate: Optical Fibre
20.	Occupational Certificate: Quantum Computing
21.	Occupational Certificate: Embedded Systems Developer
22.	Occupational Certificate: Substation Automation
23.	Occupational Certificate: PCB Design Technician Fabrication
24.	Occupational Certificate: Automotive Ethernet Technician
25.	Occupational Certificate: Electronic Engineering Technician
26.	Occupational Certificate: Data Science Engineer
27.	Occupational Certificate: Encryption
28.	Occupational Certificate: Smart Grids Communications
29.	Mobile Device Repairer (Part qualification)
30.	Laptop Repairer (Part qualification)
31.	Wearable Repairer (Part qualification)
32.	Accessories Repairer (Part qualification)
33.	Cybersecurity Defender (Skills Programme)
34.	Python (Skills Programme)
35.	HTML (Skills Programme)
36.	Java (Skills Programme)
37.	Java script (Skills Programme)
38.	5G Cellular Network Administrator (Skills Programme)
39.	Technopreneur (Skills Programme)
40.	Java Programmer (Skills Programme)
41.	Agile Practitioner (Skills Programme)
42.	Apache Groovy Developer (Skills Programme)
43.	React Native Developer (Skills Programme)
44.	Ruby (Skills Programme)
45.	Scrum Master (Skills Programme)
46.	UI/UX (Skills Programme)
47.	Go Groovy (Skills Programme)
48.	DNS (Skills Programme)
49.	Digital Terrestrial TV Decoder Installer (Skills Programme)
50.	Digital Product Designer (Skills Programme)
51.	Digital Literacy (Skills Programme)
52.	ICT Trainer Skills (Skills Programme)

Source: MICT SETA/QCTO, 2023/24

3.3 SUPPLY-SIDE ANALYSIS

This section looks at the provision of education and training, with the focus specifically on MICT-accredited qualifications. It also reviews provision in higher education, TVET colleges and vendor programmes. It assesses the gaps in the supply pipeline to identify where the MICT SETA can most effectively intervene.

3.3.1 THE EXTENT OF OCCUPATIONAL SUPPLY

3.3.1.1 POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

TABLE 15: ENROLMENTS IN PSET INSTITUTIONS, 2022

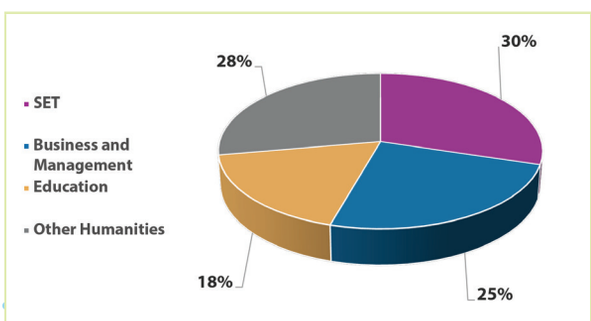
	HEIs			Colleges				Total PSET
	Public	Private	Total HEIs	TVET	CET	Private	Total Colleges	
Number of institutions	26	125	**151**	50	9	161	**220**	**371**
Number of students enrolled	1 077 768	258 215	**1 335 983**	518 584	130 752	85 787	**735 123**	**2 071 106**

Source: Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2022 (DHET 2024)

Higher Education: The higher education system comprises 26 public universities differentiated into eleven traditional, nine comprehensive and six Universities of Technology (UoTs), whilst the private higher education sector currently consists of 125 registered Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs). These universities are responsible for generating a skilled workforce and yield academics who can produce the research output and innovation needed to drive economic growth in the.

Figure 15 below provides a visual representation of enrolments categorised by major field in public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The depicted figures indicate a notable emphasis on Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET) programmes, which constitute 30% of total enrolments. Following closely behind is the Humanities field, comprising 28% of enrolments, whilst Education trails with the lowest enrolments at 18%. This distribution underscores the prioritisation of SET programmes in response to the challenges and opportunities presented by technological advancements.

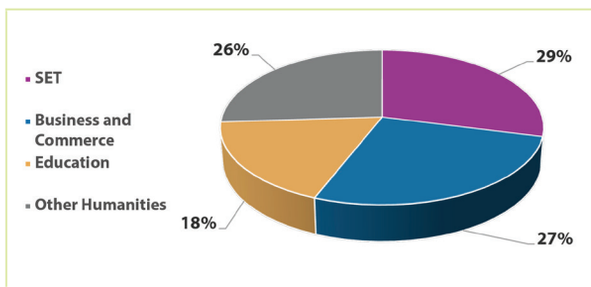
FIGURE 15: PROPORTION OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN PUBLIC HEIS BY MAJOR FIELD OF STUDY, 2022



Source: Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2022 (DHET 2024)

Figure 16 below presents the graduations across major fields of study in all public higher education institutions in 2022.

FIGURE 16: GRADUATIONS FOR 2022 IN PUBLIC HEIS BY MAJOR FIELD OF STUDY



Source: Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2022 (DHET 2024)

Based on the data illustrated above, Science, Engineering, and Technology recorded the highest number of graduations at 29%, closely followed by Business and Commerce at 27%, and other Humanities at 26%. In contrast, only 18% of graduates came from the Education field. Notably, some stakeholders have drawn attention to a significant challenge within the South African education system: a pervasive issue of high dropout rates in tertiary education. This challenge represents a substantial barrier for many students, highlighting the urgent need for targeted interventions to address this persistent issue and ensure equitable access to quality education for all.

Moreover, the table below show the enrolments in private HEIs. Stakeholders in the sector highlight that the reason for low enrolments for qualifications in Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology is mainly attributed to the expensive fees, youth coming from disadvantaged backgrounds cannot afford such studies, and hence, the SETA through vendor programmes consistently tries to partner with key role players to bridge this gap.

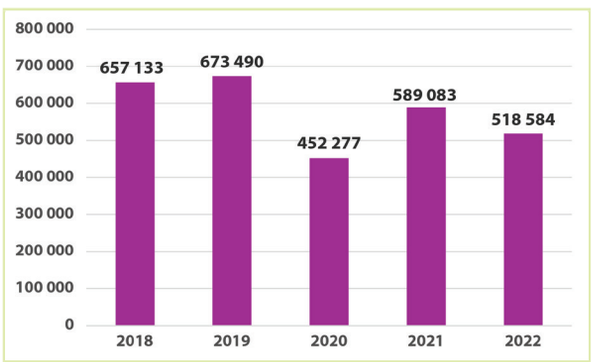
TABLE 16: ENROLMENTS IN PRIVATE HEIS BY NQF FIELD

NQF field	2022
1. Agriculture and Nature Conservation	322
2. Culture and Arts	11 442
3. Business, Commerce and Management Studies	130 077
4. Communication Studies and Language	7 528
5. Education, Training and Development	46 094
6. Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology	244
7. Human and Social Studies	13 707
8. Law, Military Science and Security	15 686
9. Health Sciences and Social Services	3 403
10. Physical, Mathematical, Computer and Life Sciences	24 785
11. Services	4 486
12. Physical Planning and Construction	441

Source: Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2022 (DHET 2024)

TVET Colleges: DHET has been promoting TVET colleges to be learning institutions of choice, this has also been supported by legislative mandates such as the NSDP, ERRP and the supporting skills strategy. The legislative mandates mirror the objectives of the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training (PSET), aspiring for a quality post-school education which includes expanded access to public TVET colleges. In addition to increased access, the strategic objective of the public TVET colleges sector is to improve success in programmes that produce quality education at intermediate and higher levels, by providing technical and vocational qualifications. Figure 17 below depicts the total student enrolments in TVET colleges over a 5-year period ending 2022.

FIGURE 17: NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN TVET COLLEGES, 2018 TO 2022

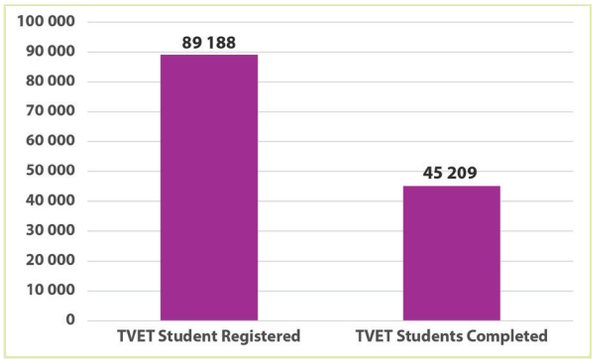


Source: Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2022 (DHET 2024)

As seen above, there were 518 584 students enrolled in TVET colleges, and this was a 12% decline compared to 2021 (589 083). The COVID-19 pandemic caused a decrease in TVET college enrolment in 2020; however, enrolment began to improve, which explains the high increase between 2020 and 2021. Nevertheless, subsequently enrolment declined in 2022.

At national level, Figure 18 below shows students in TVETs that completed their qualifications. About half of the students who registered at TVET colleges, completed their studies.

FIGURE 18: 2021 TVET COMPLETIONS AT NATIONAL LEVEL



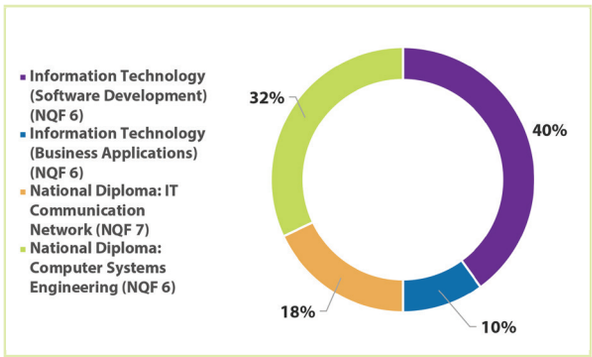
Source: Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2022 (DHET 2024)

3.3.1.2 MICT SETA LEARNING PROGRAMMES

Learnerships and Skills Programmes: The figure below shows a significant portion of total enrolments in MICT SETA learnership and skills programmes have been in the following five qualifications:

- Information Technology: Technical Support (NQF 4)
- Information Technology: Systems Development (NQF 4)
- Telecommunications Network Operations (NQF 4)
- Information Technology: Systems Support (NQF 5)
- Information Technology: Systems Development (NQF 5)

FIGURE 19: TOP 5 QUALIFICATIONS ENROLLED FOR

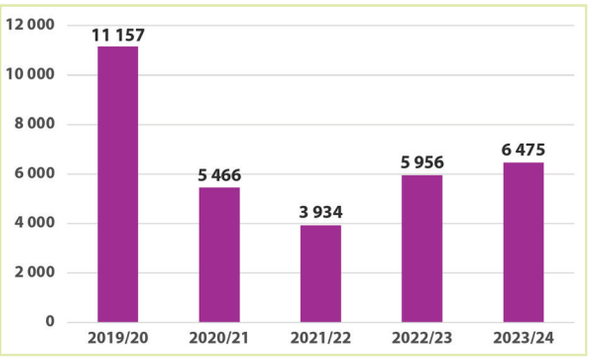


Source: MICT SETA QMR, 2023/24

The qualifications data for the 2023/24 academic year reveals a notable preference for NQF level 6 qualifications. Specifically, there is significant interest in information technology qualifications at NQF level 6, with software development accounting for 40% of enrolments, followed by the national diploma in computer systems engineering at 32%, and Information technology business applications at 10%. Additionally, there was a considerable enrolment in the national diploma qualification in communication networks at NQF level 7. These qualifications are pivotal in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) era, driving innovation and progress. Computer systems engineering and software development equip individuals with the skills necessary to design, develop, and implement advanced technological solutions across diverse industries. Given the rapid pace of technological evolution, professionals trained in these fields play a crucial role in remaining at the forefront of innovation and effectively leveraging emerging technologies to address complex challenges.

Moreover, upon further examination of enrolments in MICT SETA qualifications, Figure 19 depicts the enrolment trends in learnerships and skills programmes over the past five years. It is evident that there has been a noticeable uptick in the SETA's implementation, with a discernible recovery observed from the 2022/23 financial year onwards, rebounding from a significant decline experienced during the 2021/22 financial year, largely attributed to the ripple effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Notably, there has been an increase in enrolments during the 2023/24 financial year, indicating positive momentum in participation.

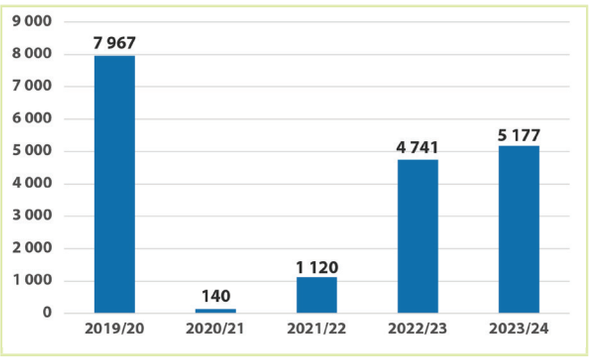
FIGURE 20: LEARNERSHIPS & SKILLS PROGRAMMES ENROLMENT, 2019/20-2023/24



Source: MICT SETA QMR, 2023/24

While the above highlights enrolments, it is also important that light be shed on completions, Figure 21 below shows the total number of completed learnerships and skills programmes from 2019/20 to 2023/24.

FIGURE 21: LEARNERSHIPS & SKILLS PROGRAMMES COMPLETIONS, 2019/2020-2023/24



Source: MICT SETA QMR, 2023/24

Based on the data presented, there has been notable growth in the number of completions in learnerships and skills programmes during the 2023/24 financial year. This considerable increase can be attributed to the enhanced business models adopted by institutions, which have innovatively adapted to ensure continuous operations. Strategies such as the implementation of e-learning models and the introduction of remote working policies have played a pivotal role in facilitating this growth. The decline in completions observed during the 2020/21 and 2021/22 periods was primarily a result of the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, including delays in the academic year. However, as previously mentioned, institutions have made significant strides in adapting their operations to ensure business continuity, thereby resulting in the substantial increase in completions witnessed during the specified financial year.

The NSDP seeks to promote equity. The MICT SETA programmes appear to have consistently managed to attract black women into the sector. Stakeholders in the sector confirmed that there was a rise in the number of women in learnerships, especially in ICT technical areas which were traditionally dominated by men. However, it was noted that there were very few black candidates being trained as "creatives" in both the Advertising and Film and Electronic Media sub-sectors.

Vendor-specific Programmes: These programmes offer students the opportunity to integrate disciplinary and theoretical knowledge with practical work experience, allowing them to apply their skills in real-world professional settings. Vendor programmes are tailored to keep pace with advancements in applications and technologies utilised by companies and business units, making them particularly prevalent and pertinent in the ICT sub-sector. Typically, vendor programmes consist of short, focused courses developed by software and hardware companies to introduce new technologies or applications to both new entrants and existing professionals in the job market.

While vendor courses excel at staying current with rapidly evolving technology, they also face challenges. These courses risk obsolescence if the products they cover have short shelf-lives. Additionally, there is a concern that the training content may be too focused on the vendor's specific products, lacking the breadth to educate on underlying principles comprehensively. Consequently, there has been a noticeable uptick in demand for customised training solutions that address a broader range of technology solutions, rather than off-the-shelf training.

Simultaneously, stakeholders in the sector have observed a growing trend where employers expect employees to hold certifications from multiple vendors. Possessing a diverse skill set is increasingly becoming a fundamental job requirement, with certifications such as CompTIA A+, Network+, MCSA, MCSE, Azure, CISCO, amongst others, ranking as the third most in-demand skills for mid-level to senior-level employees across the sector. These skills also feature prominently in the top 10 skills gaps in Telecommunications across various occupational groups.

The MICT SETA maintains a strong focus on vendor programmes, recognising them as immediate solutions to meet sector demands. Efforts are ongoing to ensure these programmes align with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), with plans in place to streamline this process and acknowledge the importance of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

3.3.1.3 SKILLS SUPPLY CHALLENGES IN THE SECTOR AND INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES

Stakeholders highlighted various challenges at the basic education level. This includes low uptake of STEM disciplines or poor results in these disciplines, as well as limited use of ICT. This implies that learners completing the basic education level are not prepared to enrol in MICT sector relevant qualifications at further and higher education level. This is particularly inhibiting in rural communities. To address this, the MICT SETA has a strategic skills priority focusing on supporting rural communities with skills development interventions as well as infrastructure development projects.

Another challenge is the low enrolment rate in qualifications in Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology. This is predominantly attributed to the expensive fees as youth coming from disadvantaged backgrounds cannot afford such studies. Through vendor programmes, the MICT SETA consistently tries to partner with key role players to bridge this gap.

A further challenge amongst stakeholders in the MICT sector is the high dropout rates in tertiary education. The high drop-out rate coupled with the poor enrolment rate results in an insufficient number of graduates with needed qualifications coming out of the education and training system. In the MICT SETA Focus group sessions (2024), stakeholders highlighted the low quantity of graduates with relevant degrees and diplomas joining the labour market. The SETA plays a key role in advocating for youth to join MICT sector-related education and training programmes through career awareness initiatives, highlighting the importance of completing qualifications to obtain prosperous employment opportunities in the sector. There is a sub-programme in the APP of the SETA dedicated to career awareness including career guides as well as career development events hosted by the SETA.

The MICT SETA survey (2024) shows that employers in the sector prefer to recruit from universities as opposed to TVET colleges, attributed to the perceived poor quality of education at these institutions. To address this challenge, the MICT SETA is actively engaged in improving the capacity and infrastructure of public education and training institutions. It is a key skills strategic priority of the SETA.

Despite universities being the preferred institutional type to recruit from, stakeholders indicate that students coming from university are not always prepared for the world of work. In the MICT SETA focus groups (2024), stakeholders stated that there is a gap between "what educational institutions offer versus what industry needs" or "formal education and training institutions are not supplying the market with graduates who have the most relevant and up to date skills in line with industry needs". Because of this, when they join the workforce, industry needs to provide extra support to get graduates ready for the world of work. As such, there is a need for work-integrated learning (WIL) initiatives. A suggestion by stakeholders in a MICT SETA focus group (2024) is that "the SETA should establish partnerships with companies that have training facilities to use their facilities to train for supply into the broader sector". Additionally, university programmes need to be better aligned with industry requirements. To address this challenge, the MICT SETA funds WIL programmes. In addition, the SETA develops occupational qualifications that align to the demands of the 4IR, in partnership with the QCTO and other key relevant stakeholders. The SETA also enters into partnerships with universities to deliver industry relevant education and training programmes.

A further challenge to providing education and training, highlighted by stakeholders, is available funding. Most stakeholders who responded to the MICT SETA survey (2024), reported that they spend between 20%-30% of their budgets on training and development. In alleviating this challenge the MICT SETA provides mandatory and discretionary grant funding to employers in the sector.

Another key challenge is the unavailability of critical skills needed in the MICT sector, specifically to address the advent of the 4IR. As such, the MICT SETA has undertaken a comprehensive initiative to map key occupations within the sector to various qualifications and learning pathways. Through this mapping exercise, the SETA has garnered valuable intelligence and insight from industry stakeholders regarding how to effectively address key occupations in the sector. It is anticipated that the Sectoral Priority Occupations interventions' list identified through this process will play a crucial role in addressing skills shortages within the sector. Furthermore, these interventions will enable employers in the sector to bridge the gap between skills demand and supply effectively. Table 16 below presents a detailed list of possible qualifications mapped to occupations within the sector, providing a valuable resource for stakeholders involved in workforce development and training initiatives.

TABLE 17: POSSIBLE QUALIFICATIONS MAPPED TO OCCUPATIONS

Qualification	Career Prospects/Job Roles
BSc. or Nat. Dipl majoring in: • Computer Engineering • Computer Science/ Studies/Systems • IT (Web Design & Development) • Information Systems/ Technology	• Network Programmer/ Analyst • Communications Analyst (Computers) • ICT Customer Support Officer • Computer Network Engineer • Computer Systems Integrator • Network Support Engineer • Network Engineer • Computer Systems/ Service Engineer • Systems Engineer • Systems Integrator
B.Arts/Learnerships majoring in: • Acting • Drama and Performance Studies • Film and Television	• Actor • Director
Master of Arts or B. Arts/ Learnerships majoring in: • Audio-Visual Communication • Translation and Professional Writing • Creative writing	• Scriptwriter • Creative Director
BTech or Nat. Dipl. majoring in: • Motion Picture Production • Audio-Visual Communication • Multimedia • Multimedia • Film and Television Production	• Multimedia Specialist • Film and Video Editor
B.Com Honours or Nat. Dipl majoring in: • IT Management • Information Technology • Applied Information Systems	• Chief Information Officer • ICT Project Manager • IT Manager
B.Com/BTech/Dipl. majoring in: • Business Management/ Management Sciences • Project Management	• Management Consultant • Business Analyst • Service Solutions Project Manager
BTech/Nat. Dipl/ Learnership majoring in: • Electronic Engineering • Computer Engineering • Information Technology • Computer Science	• Computer Network and Systems Engineer Developer Programmer • Software Developer • Telecommunications Technologist • Electronic Engineering Technician
BA Honours in: • Film and Documentaries • Media and communication • Development and communication • Digital Media Design	• Editor • Director • Content producer
B.Com/Nat.Dipl/ Learnership majoring in: • Strategic Brand Management • Digital Marketing • BA Creative Brand Communications • Marketing Management/ Communication	• Brand Strategist • Brand Auditor • Digital Marketing Strategist • Copywriter • Social Media Coordinator

Qualification	Career Prospects/Job Roles
Diploma/Learnerships/ Higher Certificates in: • Marketing & Advertising Communications • Art Direction Diploma • Graphic Design • Copywriting	• Creative Director • Campaign Coordinator • Graphic Designer • Digital marketer

Source: DHET, the National Career Advice Portal, 2024

3.4 SECTORAL PRIORITY OCCUPATIONS AND INTERVENTIONS

3.4.1 CHANGES IN THE SECTORAL PRIORITY OCCUPATIONS AND INTERVENTIONS LIST OVER THE 5-YEAR PERIOD (2020-2024)

The following 7 occupations have consistently been on the Sectoral Priority Occupations and Interventions (SPOI) List over the past 5-years: Software Developer; Computer Network and Systems Engineer; ICT Systems Analyst; ICT Security Specialist; Multimedia Specialist; ICT Sales Representative; and Developer Programmer. These occupations are in high demand across the various MICT sub-sectors, and other sectors in the economy, and as such they are constantly in short supply. The MICT SETA thus prioritises them. The Data Scientist, Editor, and Telecommunications Technical Officer occupations were added to the 2025/26 SPOI list due to the highlighted need during stakeholder consultations in 2024.

3.4.2 APPROACH TO COMPILING THE SECTORAL PRIORITY OCCUPATIONS AND INTERVENTIONS LIST

The compilation of the SPOI list involves a comprehensive process that integrates both analytical and qualitative inputs. Quantitative analysis entails examining occupations and specialisations identified as challenging to fill in WSP/ATR submissions. These findings are then tested for prioritisation against systemic and volumetric considerations through surveys and interviews. Further validation of these findings occurs during focus group discussions. Interviews and focus groups are conducted with a diverse array of stakeholders, including employers, professional bodies, education and training institutions, research institutions, and other key informants.

Determining the quantity of support by the SETA involves using the previous year's APP target as a baseline, supplemented by sector demand reported in WSP/ATR submissions, surveys, interviews and focus group discussions.

Consultations with key stakeholders have been pivotal, particularly in understanding the business and skills fundamentals underlying the 4IR. Despite the comprehensive approach, the data presented has limitations, notably are challenges with employer WSP inputs. Stakeholders have highlighted issues with vague and confusing Occupational Classification of Occupations (OFO) codes, particularly concerning 4IR-related occupations, along with overlapping occupational descriptions. Nevertheless, the SETA is confident that the rigorous and balanced approach employed in determining the SPOI list will support skills development planning and implementation within the MICT sector. This includes addressing critical areas such as 4IR. The SPOI list was approved by the Board on 30 May 2024.

The forthcoming table outlines the 2025- 2030 SPOI List and the planned interventions.

TABLE 18: TOP 10 SECTORAL PRIORITY OCCUPATIONS LIST FOR THE MICT SECTOR

SETA Name	Period	Occupation Code	Occupation	Specialisation/Alternative Title	Intervention Planned by the SETA	NQF Level	NQF Aligned	Quantity Needed	Quantity to be supported by the SETA
MICT SETA	2025/26	2021-251201	Software Developer	Software Architect; Information Architect Software; Software Designer; Software Engineer; ICT Risk Specialist	Bursary (diploma)	6	Y	380	350
					Bursary (degree)	7	Y		
						8	Y		
					Internship	6	N		
						7	N		
						8	N		
					MCSD Certification	5	N		
					Scrum Certification	6	N		
MICT SETA	2025/26	2021-252301	Computer Network and Systems Engineer	Computer Systems/Service Engineer; Systems Integrator; Computer Systems Integrator; Network Engineer; Communications Analyst (Computers); Systems Engineer; Network Support Engineer; ICT Customer Support Officer; Network Programmer / Analyst; Computer Network Engineer	Bursary (diploma)	6	Y	285	280
					Bursary (degree)	7	Y		
						8			
						9			
					Internship	6	N		
						7			
						8			
					CISCO Certification	5	N		
						6	N		
						7	N		
					CompTIA Network+ Certification	5	N		

SETA Name	Period	Occupation Code	Occupation	Specialisation/Alternative Title	Intervention Planned by the SETA	NQF Level	NQF Aligned	Quantity Needed	Quantity to be supported by the SETA
MICT SETA	2025/26	2021-251101	ICT Systems Analyst	Computer Analyst; ICT Systems Contractor; ICT Systems Coordinator; Capacity Planner Computing; LAN/ WAN Consultant/Specialist; ICT Systems Architect; Systems Programmer; Internet Consultant/Specialist; ICT Systems Consultant; ICT Business Systems Analyst; ICT Systems Specialist; ICT Systems Advisor; ICT System Designer; ICT Systems Strategist	Bursary (diploma)	6	Y	165	160
					Bursary (degree)	7	Y		
						8	Y		
					Internship	6	N		
						7	N		
						8	N		
					MCSA Certification	5	N		
					MCSE Certification	5	N		
					Work-integrated Learning	4	Y		
						5	Y		
MICT SETA	2025/26	2021-252901	ICT Security Specialist	Internet Security Architect/Engineer/ Consultant; Security Administrator; ICT Security Architect; Database Security Expert; Information Technology Security Manager	Bursary (diploma)	6	Y	130	120
					Bursary (degree)	7	Y		
						8	Y		
					Internship	6	N		
						7	N		
						8	N		
					CompTIA Security + Certification	5	N		
						6	N		
					CISSP Certification	5	N		
						6	N		
					Work-integrated Learning	4	Y		
						5	Y		

SETA Name	Period	Occupation Code	Occupation	Specialisation/Alternative Title	Intervention Planned by the SETA	NQF Level	NQF Aligned	Quantity Needed	Quantity to be supported by the SETA
MICT SETA	2025/26	2021-251203	Developer Programmer	ICT Developer; ICT Programmer; Applications Developer	Bursary (diploma)	6	Y	91	90
					Bursary (degree)	7	Y		
					Internship	6	N		
						7	N		
					MCSD Certification	5	N		
						8	Y		
						9	Y		
					PRINCE2 Certification	6	N		
						7	N		
MICT SETA	2025/26	2021-251102	Data Scientist	N/A	Bursary: Bachelor of Science in Data Science	7	Y	87	80
MICT SETA	2025/26	2021-352201	Telecommunications Technical Officer or Technologist	Engineering Technician (Telecommunications)	Bursary: National Diploma in Electrical Engineering	7	Y	63	60
MICT SETA	2025/26	2021-251301	Multimedia Specialist	Digital Media Specialist; Multimedia Developer; Graphical Programmer; Computer Games Programmer; Multimedia Programmer; Animation Programmer	Bursary (diploma)	6	Y	47	40
					Bursary (degree)	7	Y		
						8	Y		
					Internship	6	N		
						7	N		
MICT SETA	2025/26	2021-243403	ICT Sales Representative	Computer Consultant; Computer Software Support Consultant; Computer Systems Consultant	Bursary (national certificate)	5	Y	28	25
					Short Programme	5	N		
					Internship	8	N		
MICT SETA	2025/26	2021-264202	Editor	News Editor; Editorial Administrator; Publications Officer; Website/Blog Editor; Pictures Editor; Publications Editor; Programme Editor; Editor; Artwork Editor; Publications Advisor; Subeditor; Associate Editor; Technical Editor; Magazine Designer; Features Editor	Bursary: National Diploma in Film and Television Production	6	Y	20	20

3.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter examined the occupational shortages, skills gaps and emerging occupations in the MICT sector. The chapter also explored the types and extent of training available to the sector. The identification of occupational shortages in this chapter revealed the need for a more proactive approach by the SETA to address the evolving demand for skills brought about by technological advancements. By fostering collaboration, investing in education, upskilling, and promoting digital literacy the SETA and the sector can bridge the gap and ensure a well-prepared workforce to deal with the challenges and opportunities presented by the 4IR. Moreover, bridging the gap between academia and industry will always remain crucial to addressing the occupational shortages in the 4IR landscape. Hence, close collaboration between educational institutions and industry can help align curriculum with the changing skills requirements, ensuring that graduates possess the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the demands of the job market. The following chapter discusses the SETA's partnerships which align to the recommendations put forward by this chapter.

CHAPTER 4 | SETA PARTNERSHIPS

CHAPTER 4: SETA PARTNERSHIPS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the significance of partnerships within the MICT SETA. The chapter highlights how the MICT SETA responds to the mandate of the Skills Development Act of 1998, which encourages SETAs, as agents of skills development, to establish partnerships with both the public and private sectors. Through these partnerships, the SETA responds to the NSDP outcomes and ERRP interventions which seek to ensure that South Africa has adequate, appropriate, and high-quality skills that contribute towards economic growth, employment creation and social development. This chapter presents both the proposed and existing partnerships in the SETA. The SETA believes that by documenting such partnerships it can inspire others to embark on similar journeys and foster a broader culture of collaboration within the organisation and beyond. Information on partnerships was obtained through Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) between partners.

4.2 EXISTING MICT SETA PARTNERSHIPS

4.2.1 MOST IMPORTANT STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH THESE HAVE ASSISTED THE SETA ACHIEVE ITS STRATEGIC INTENTIONS

MICT SETA views partnerships as a critical mechanism that safeguards the delivery of its skills development mandate. Partnerships with TVET colleges and universities are two important strategic partnerships over the past five years. The SETA enters into these partnerships to encourage learners from previously disadvantaged backgrounds to enrol in middle-level education and training programmes through TVET colleges and high-level education and training programmes through universities and universities of technology. In addition, these partnerships ensure an increased supply of people with relevant education and training to the MICT sector. A TVET college partnership that the SETA maintained between 2020 and 2024 is with South West Gauteng TVET college. University partnerships that the SETA maintained between 2020 and 2024 is with North West University and Rhodes University.

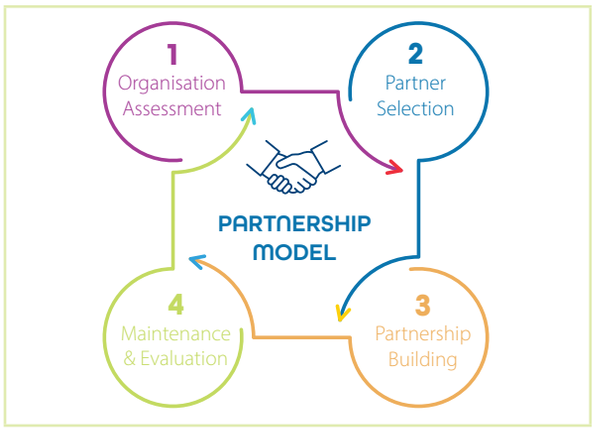
The SETA partnership with the QCTO is a third important strategic partnership over the past five years. The value of the partnership lies in the development of occupational qualifications to ensure that the system is more responsive to labour-market skills needs. This partnership ensures that curricula reflect the changing needs of a dynamic industry.

These partnerships bridge the gap between the demand for and supply of skills; it ensures that curricula align to the ever-changing skills needs of this dynamic sector; and it allows the SETA to further its transformational imperatives in relation to upskilling youth, women, persons living with disabilities, persons living within rural areas, as well as SMMEs, amongst others.

4.2.2 THE MICT SETAS PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

The MICT SETA uses a partnership model to ensure that successful outcomes are based on collaborative efforts between the SETA and the sector. It begins with the identification of the right partnerships, delineation of the roles and responsibilities for both parties and the maintenance of constant and open communication to mitigate potential risks that can impede the achievement of intended objectives. The figure below depicts the SETAs partnership model.

FIGURE 22: MICT SETA PARTNERSHIP MODEL



In terms of the role of partners in partnership agreements predominantly, the MICT SETA provides mandatory and discretionary grant funding. In addition to this, the SETA provides quality assurance as well as monitoring and evaluation of partner projects. The partner provides the SETA with necessary documentation to allow for the successful quality assurance as well as monitoring of the project. The partner also ensures the successful delivery of education and training programmes, research initiatives, or work-integrated learning opportunities, amongst others. Transformational imperatives, including race, gender, age, geography, and disability, remain priorities in terms of partnership formation.

The SETAs partnership approach takes account of the SETA High Impact Programmes. These include:

- Rural Development for Community Impact
- Infrastructure development and public sector Institutional Delivery capacitation
- Significant reduction of unemployed people including graduates
- Sustainable entrepreneurial, SMME and Cooperatives development
- Holistic digitisation and advancement of technological infrastructure, research and development
- Effective and efficient shared services on Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for SETA-wide Learner Information Management system

The MICT SETA delves into various dimensions of partnerships that will contribute to the sector's skills development needs. These partnerships are structured into three typologies which capture the SETA High Impact Programmes as follows:

1. Strategic and Special Project Partnerships
• Partnerships with industry vendors. • It contributes to a "Significant reduction of unemployed people including graduates"; and "Holistic digitisation and advancement of technological infrastructure, research and development".
2. Education and Training Delivery Partnerships
• Partnerships with TVET colleges and universities. • It contributes to "Infrastructure development and public sector Institutional Delivery capacitation"; "Significant reduction of unemployed people including graduates"; and "Holistic digitisation and advancement of technological infrastructure, research and development".
3. Industry and Professional Bodies Partnerships
• Partnerships with employers and professional bodies. • It contributes to "Rural Development for Community Impact"; "Significant reduction of unemployed people including graduates"; "Sustainable entrepreneurial, SMME and Cooperatives development"; and " Effective and efficient shared services on Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for SETA-wide Learner Information Management system"

4.2.3 STRATEGIC AND SPECIAL PROJECTS PARTNERSHIPS

Since the emergence of 4IR, the MICT sector is witnessing a major shift in the higher education landscape. Thus, the MICT SETA understands that partnering with industry vendors who have high expertise is of paramount importance. It is for this reason that the MICT SETA continues to implement such partnership as it promotes meaningful employment and rapid growth.

The table below highlights strategic and special projects partnerships.

TABLE 19: STRATEGIC AND SPECIAL PROJECTS PARTNERSHIPS

Industry Vendor	Term and Duration	Objectives and value of Partnership	Partnership Challenges
GIRLHYPE	Apr 2024 - Mar 2027	The objectives of the partnership: a) Development of skills that respond to the future of work and new frontier technology job market skills delivery. b) Foster sectoral collaboration and initiatives intended to reduce unemployment in South Africa as set out in the National Development Plan (NDP). c) Establish a partnership on Skills Development Initiatives responding to the priorities in the South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP). The value of the partnership is the provision of a formal basis for the creation of placement opportunities for unemployed youth by national, provincial, and local government departments.	Partners may occasionally take a while to return the authorised memorandum of understanding.
QCTO	Apr 2024 – Mar 2025	The objective of the partnership is to develop occupational qualifications. The value lies in the development of occupational qualifications to ensure that the system is more responsive to labour-market skills needs.	There is consistent change in the requirements for qualifications realignment and development with a lack of formal communication and capacitation on the shifts. From a quality assurance perspective, accreditation for occupational qualifications, the roles and responsibilities have not been clearly defined which impacts on the SETAs ability to plan for required resources and the accompanying budget. Moreover, this also creates a challenge as the SETA is unable to communicate the changes in requirements to stakeholders, which results in confusion and frustration.

Source: MICT SETA Partnership, Memorandum of Understanding 2024/25

4.2.4 EDUCATION AND TRAINING DELIVERY PARTNERSHIPS

Education and training delivery partnerships include partnerships with TVET colleges and universities.

The SETA in its implementation aligns itself with the national priorities such as the NSDP and the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP). The partnerships outlined in the table below mainly support TVET Placement, CET Lecturer Development, TVET Lecturer Development, TVET Office Establishment and Skills programmes. Furthermore, they respond to NSDP Outcome 2: Linking education and the workplace. The MICT SETA plays a key role in proactively initiating these partnerships which in turn accelerates the realisation of the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training (PSET) on the need for TVET colleges to enrol 700 000 to 2.5 million students by 2030. The table below illustrates existing partnerships with TVET colleges, and programmes supported by the MICT SETA.

TABLE 20: PARTNERSHIPS WITH TVET COLLEGES

Name of TVET	Term and Duration	Objectives and value of Partnership
INGWE TVET COLLEGE	May 2023 – Jul 2024	These partnerships focus on the following programmes: TVET Placement, CET Lecturer Development, TVET Lecturer Development, TVET Office Establishment and Skills programmes. The purpose of these partnerships is to ensure that there is equitable participation of people from different backgrounds. They are about being responsive to the low- to middle-level skills demands of the sector, serving as one of the many mechanisms in which education and training can become more responsive to employers, learners, lecturers, and the overall socioeconomic needs of the country. The value lies with addressing broad sectoral low to middle-level skills issues that stimulate opportunities for job creation and poverty reduction. They contribute to the transformational agenda in terms of prioritisation of race, gender, disability, and geographical location.
SOUTH CAPE TVET COLLEGE	Apr 2023 – Jun 2024	
SOUTHWEST GAUTENG TVET COLLEGE	Dec 2023 – Dec 2024	
COLLEGE OF CAPE TOWN	Sep 2023 – Nov 2024	
KING SABATA DALINDYEBO TVET COLLEGE	Jul 2023- Sep 2024	
NKANGALA TVET COLLEGE	Sep 2023- Nov 2024	
KING HINTSA TVET COLLEGE	0ct 2023 – Jan 2025	
GERT SIBANDE TVET COLLEGE	Sep 2023 - Aug 2024	
KING SABATA DALINDYEBO TVET COLLEGE	Dec 2023 - Dec 2024	
MTHASHANA TVET COLLEGE	Dec 2023 - Dec 2024	
NORTHERN CAPE URBAN TVET COLLEGE	Sept 2023 - Dec 2024	
UMGUNGUNDLOVU TVET COLLEGE	Dec 2023 - Dec 2024	
LETABA TVET COLLEGE	Aug 2023 – Aug 2024	
GOLDFIELDS TVET COLLEGE	Feb 2023 - Feb 2025	
VHEMBE TVET COLLEGE	Mar 2024 -March 2025	
LEPHALALE TVET COLLEGE	Sep 2023 - Aug 2024	
MAJUBA TVET COLLEGE	Dec 2023 - Dec 2024	
SEDIBENG TVET COLLEGE	Feb 2024 - Feb 2025	
NORTHERN CAPE RURAL TVET COLLEGE	Feb 2024 -Jan 2025	
MALUTI TVET COLLEGE	Feb 2024 - Feb 2025	
FLAVIUS TVET COLLEGE	Feb 2024 - Feb 2025	

Source: MICT SETA Commitment Registers, 2024/2025

University partnerships, as outlined below, provide similar opportunities. While bursaries have been the main partnering mechanism, key developmental and transformational imperatives remain at the heart of these partnerships. Learners from previously disadvantaged backgrounds become better positioned to acquire high-level skills in programmes such as Honours, Masters and PHDs, which enables them to compete with those from more affluent backgrounds. The table below confirms that forging mutually beneficial ties with institutions contribute towards addressing industry occupational shortages and skills gaps.

TABLE 21: UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

Name of University	Term and Duration	Objectives and value of Partnership
NORTHWEST UNIVERSITY	Apr 2023 - Jul 2024	The objective of the partnerships with universities is to ensure that support is offered to learners from disadvantaged communities to afford them the same opportunities as their counterparts from affluent backgrounds, whilst at the same time exposing them to occupations and high-level skills that meet the labour market needs. These partnerships improve the supply of skilled people in the sector and afford learners from previously disadvantaged backgrounds opportunities to acquire high-level skills critical to industry development and growth, thus creating employment for those graduates. It facilitates increased access to occupationally directed programmes through bursaries, short programmes, learnerships and university placements. The value lies in addressing skills development and job creation within the information and communications technology (ICT) sector, equipping the youth with relevant skills, and making them attractive to prospective employers.
RHODES UNIVERSITY	Jul 2023 - Sep 2024	
TSHWANE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY	Jun 2023 - Sep 2024	
VAAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY	Aug 2023 - Oct 2024	

Source: MICT SETA Commitment Registers, 2024/2025

The tables above confirm that forging mutually beneficial ties with institutions contribute towards addressing industry occupational shortages and skills gaps.

4.2.5 INDUSTRY AND PROFESSIONAL BODIES PARTNERSHIP

As illustrated in the table below, employers and professional bodies are well placed as critical foundations for the development of skills and the creation of employment opportunities in the sector. Similar to special projects, employer and professional bodies partnerships serve as potential catalysts for employment and sustainable growth.

TABLE 22: PARTNERSHIPS WITH SMMES/EMPLOYERS AND PROFESSIONAL BODIES

SMMEs	Term and Duration	Objectives and value of Partnership	Partnership Challenges
DKSS Trading	Jan 2024 - Mar 2025	The objectives of the partnerships: a) Development of skills that respond to the future of work and new frontier technology job market skills delivery. b) Foster sectoral collaboration and initiatives intended to reduce unemployment in South Africa as set out in the National Development Plan (NDP). c) Establish a partnership on Skills Development Initiatives responding to the priorities in the South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP). The value lies in providing a formal basis for the creation of placement opportunities for unemployed youth by national, provincial, and local government departments.	Partners may occasionally take a while to return the authorised memorandum of understanding.
ELIDZ	Feb 2024 - Mar 2025		
Maredi Technologies	Jan 2024 - Mar 2025		
ESRI SOUTH AFRICA (PTY) LTD	Apr 2023 - Jul 2024		
Mecer	Feb 2024 – Mar 2025		
Mirae Robotics	Feb 2024 - Mar 2025		
MmaTau INC	Feb 2024 - Mar 2025		
JP4IR	Feb 2024 - Mar 2025		
SAIGA	Feb 2024 - Mar 2025		

Source: MICT SETA Commitment Registers,2024/2025

4.2.6 PARTNERSHIPS THAT WORKED SUCCESSFULLY

In response to the booming cell phone repair industry, the MICT SETA in collaboration with Trailblazer Digital Hub and Orbit TVET College implemented a trailblazing mobile repairs skills programme, aimed at skilling young people to fix computers and cell phones.

Twenty youth graduated from the programme at a ceremony held in Brits, North West on 11 July 2024. The graduates were also equipped with cell phone and laptop repair toolkits to kickstart their own repair start-ups. This is amongst the programmes that the SETA is most proud of and was the first mobile device repair programme successfully implemented at a TVET College in the country. Through this programme, young people can strengthen their local community's workforce and develop industry-specific skills.

Another notable partnership is the collaborative initiative with stakeholder Hitachi Vantara addressing inadequate school uniforms and create an environment where every learner has equal opportunities to thrive academically and socially. The partnership between the MICT SETA and Hitachi Vantara delivered new school uniforms to over 150 needy students. This act of generosity significantly alleviated the burden on families and ensured every student had the necessary attire to build self-confidence whilst at school. Beyond providing students with essential clothing. The project has fostered a sense of unity within the community.

4.2.7 CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED WITH EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS AND MEASURES TO ADDRESS SUCH CHALLENGES

TVET colleges in rural areas are lacking in skilled lecturers, infrastructure, and alternative centres of excellence. Thus, TVET colleges may at times lack delivery capacity, which impacts negatively on the timeous implementation of programmes. In relation to universities, the challenge is often an administrative one. Excessive deliberation on and reviewing of SLAs may result in delays with the implementation of programmes. Partnership challenges with employers are often rooted in employers delegating to training providers who are not able to deliver on the mandate of the SETA.

In mitigating these challenges, the SETA responded to the key outcomes as proposed by the NSDP, specifically outcome 5 on promoting the growth of the public college system. As such, the SETA engages in capacity development programmes for TVET colleges including infrastructure and lecturer development. In addition, partnerships are closely monitored by the SETA to ensure that partners are delivering on the agreed upon objectives.

4.3 PROPOSED PARTNERSHIPS

For the MICT SETA there has never been a more important time to focus on collaboration and partnerships that build a more inclusive and resilient response. The MICT SETA thus continuously enters into partnerships with various institutions to advance sector development and growth. The following table highlights the SETA's proposed partnership.

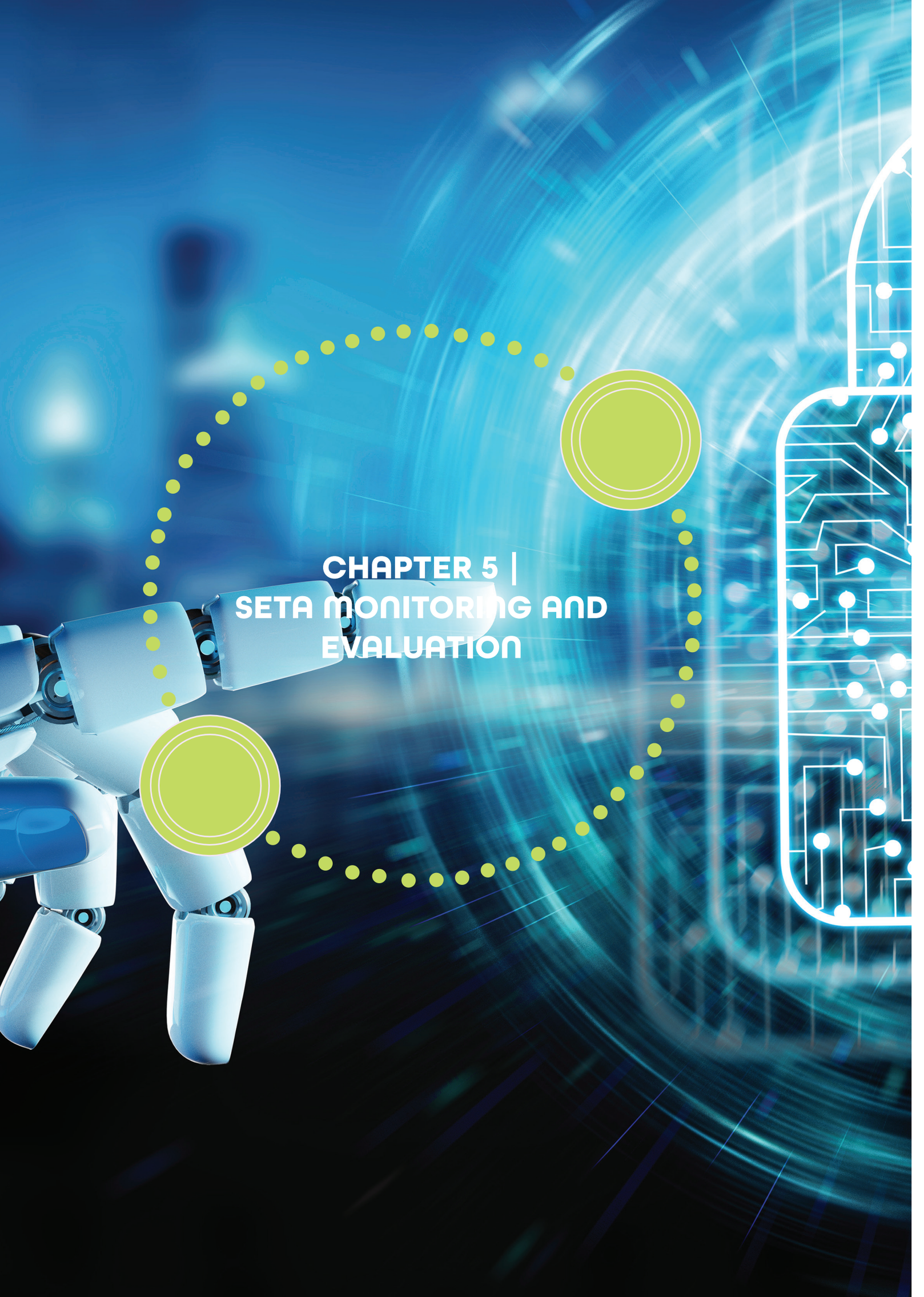
TABLE 23: MICT SETA'S PROPOSED PARTNERSHIP

Industry Partner	Rationale and Objectives of Partnership	Intended Strategic Focus
Mara Phones South Africa	The reason for the partnership is to expand the availability of appropriately skilled individuals in the MICT sector. The partnership will enable students to gain valuable workplace experience in the MICT sector.	The partnership will foster sectoral collaboration and initiatives intended to reduce unemployment in South Africa as set out in the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP). In addition, this will form a strategic partnership as Mara phone is only phone manufacturing in South Africa.
All MICT Sub-sectors employers	The reason for this partnership will be to exploit existing vendor-based training programmes that are being implemented by employers within the MICT sector.	Vendor programmes that are provided by employers are often very attractive for the sector and contributing to significant employment opportunities especially for youth. Funding these programmes will significantly contribute to aspirations of the ERRP and other government priorities.

During MICT SETA focus groups (2024), stakeholders highlighted the need for the MICT SETA to form partnerships with organisations that have the facilities and resources available to address occupational and skills scarcities within the sector. A suggestion was made that the SETA adopts a proactive approach in terms of going out and looking at what is happening in the sector, after which the SETA should directly approach organisations to form partnerships.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The MICT SETA partnerships are crucial for advancing skills development in the sector. They target challenges posed by the 4IR by involving various stakeholders. The MICT SETA commits to these partnerships to leverage resources and expertise, aiming to equip the workforce for the digital age. These partnerships underscore the MICT SETA's commitment to measurable public goals, ensuring transparency and long-term planning.



CHAPTER 5 | SETA MONITORING AND EVALUATION

CHAPTER 5: SETA MONITORING AND EVALUATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter sheds light on the SETA's approach to Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). It further reflects on the previous financial year's strategic priorities and assesses the extent to which these priorities were addressed. It also identifies the mechanisms that are in place to address priorities that were not achieved in the previous financial year. The MICT SETA considers itself as an organisation with a culture of reflective thinking and learning to improve processes and systems. The SETAs M&E approach is intended to aid decision-making through credible, reliable, and useful information generated from M&E reports. This is an approach that has been working for years. Through this approach there has been an increase in transparency and accountability allowing for the implementation of successful skills development interventions.

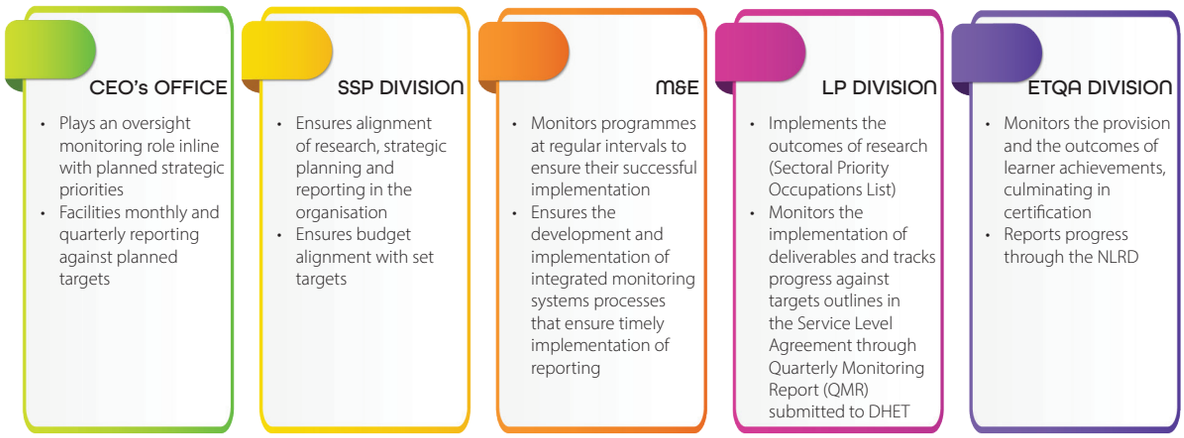
5.2 SECTOR SKILLS PLANNING REFLECTIONS

5.2.1 SETA'S APPROACH TO MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring is the process of continuous and periodic surveillance of programme implementation through timely gathering of systematic information on work schedules, inputs, delivery, targeted outputs, and other variables of the programme, in order to have the desired effects and impact. Evaluation on the other hand is the "systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, program or policy including its design, and implementation results (The National Advisory Council on Innovation (NACI), 2020).

The MICT SETAs approach to Monitoring: Figure 23 below illustrates the practicality of the SETA's approach to monitoring.

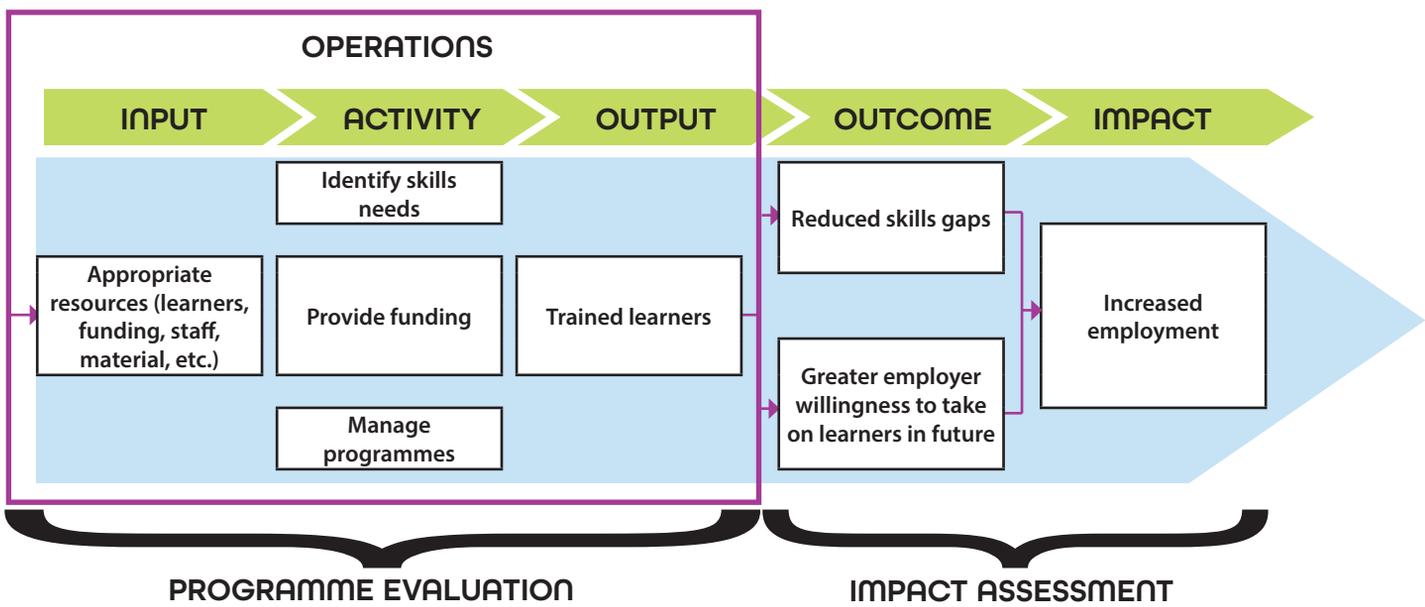
FIGURE 23: MICT SETA'S APPROACH TO MONITORING



- The CEO's Office plays an oversight monitoring role, which goes hand-in-hand with the principles of risk management. The governance role played by this office is premised on the understanding that without proper risk management, the MICT SETA will not be able to achieve its goals. There is thus an inter-relationship between all the divisions, with the SSP division and the M&E division working closely with the CEO's office to define measurable strategic outcomes for the SETA.
- The SSP Division is responsible for the research and strategic planning function in the organisation. The division ensures the alignment of the three strategic documents: Sector Skills Plan, Strategic Plan, and Annual Performance Plan. The division also develops the organisational operational plan.
- The M&E Division ensures a more systematic and objective approach to implementation and attainment of outcomes and the assessment of their impact. The Division plays the role of evaluating programmes at regular intervals to ensure their successful implementation, before reporting on lessons learnt from the rollout of the programmes. The Division is also expected to measure the impact of learning programmes. This is done through the annual tracer and impact (medium- to long-term) studies.
- The LP Division implements the outcomes of research (Sectoral Priority Occupations List). It monitors the implementation of deliverables and tracks progress against targets outlined in the Service Level Agreement through Quarterly Monitoring Reports (QMR) submitted to DHET.
- The ETQA Division monitors the provision and the outcomes of learner achievements, culminating in certification. Other monitoring functions performed by the ETQA include monitoring of accreditation, the delivery of learning programmes, learning outcomes of learner achievements, verification processes, and reporting through the NLRD.

The MICT SETAs approach to Evaluation: The evaluation approach is nested in a Logic Model. A Logic Model is a visual representation that outlines the sequence of events or components of a programme or intervention. The Model describes the process whereby specific activities are conducted to convert inputs into outputs which then translate into outcomes that result in intended impacts. Through this model, products of reporting are evaluation studies such as tracer or impact studies which are critical for the organisation to be as reflective as possible. The Logic Model typically consists of five main components: inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact, as shown in the figure below.

FIGURE 24: MICT SETA ADOPTED EVALUATION MODEL



- Inputs are the resources (such as funding, staff, materials) that are invested into the programme.
- Activities are the actions or interventions that are carried out using the resources.
- *Outputs are the direct products or results of the activities.*
- *Outcomes are the changes or benefits that result from the outputs.*
- *Impact is the long-term effects of a programme.*

5.2.1.1 REFLECTION ON M&E FUNCTION OVER THE PAST 5-YEAR PERIOD (2020-2024)

The MICT SETA established a dedicated M&E Division on 1 March 2022. Before the establishment of the Division, the M&E functions were divided across two Divisions within the MICT SETA - the Sector Skills Planning and Learning Programmes Divisions. Currently the M&E Division includes a Senior Manager, two Advisors, and two Administrators.

The SETA intends to incrementally expand the M&E Division overtime to optimally perform the M&E functions. In the main, the Division oversees the overall performance of the SETA on implementation of its programmes and initiatives as well as verification and reporting thereof. The reporting function is performed to account to the DHET to meet national imperatives proclaimed by the Executive Authority. The M&E Division is consigned with the responsibility to design and implement performance management systems including business processes that define how performance is planned for and how data is collected, collated, verified, and validated to promote accountability and transparency on delivery of skills development.

In addition, the SETA developed a Learner Management System (LMS) which promises to enhance data consistency, credibility, and integrity at the implementation level, thereby enhancing the quality of monitoring data generated. The M&E Division is currently conceptualising an online M&E system through the development of an M&E module aligned to the MICT SETA LMS. Currently, M&E is still a physical process. Once this module is fully functional, it will assist in tackling issues of double dipping on programme stipends and others.

Furthermore, the M&E Policy Framework that guides the M&E activities within the SETA was approved by the Accounting Authority for institutionalising within the organisation. The Framework is aligned and well positioned to deal with M&E. The Framework will inform the aspects of an Evaluation Plan that is presently being conceptualised. Capacity-building workshops on this framework were held and will continuously be undertaken to ensure its seamless integration into the organisation.

Moreover, the M&E Division has institutionalised the M&E function in 2023 through not only the review of M&E Policy Framework, but also by developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for M&E.

5.2.2 MONITORING AND EVALUATION DATA TO SUPPORT RESEARCH AND PLANNING

The following table demonstrates the data used by the three core divisions and the CEO's office:

TABLE 24: DATA USED BY THREE CORE DIVISIONS

Division	Monitoring and Evaluation Data
CEO's Office	• Divisional Management Committee (MANCO) reports • Risk Management Quarterly reports • Internal Audit Review Reports
Sector Skills Planning	• Workplace Skills Planning/Annual Training Reports (WSPs/ATRs)
M&E Division	• Quarterly Monitoring Reports (QMR), Fact file reports • Quarterly Performance Report (DPME) • Divisional Management Committee (MANCO) reports • Learning Programmes Impact Study reports
Learning Programmes Division	• Quarterly Monitoring Reports (QMR) • Learner Placement reports
Education, Training and Quality Assurance Division	• Quality Assurance on delivery of learning outcomes • Accreditation/Re-accreditation reports

The performance data generated from the four (4) core Divisions is used for strategic planning. Through data submitted, management identifies and prioritises critical risks (both operational and strategic risks) that may have an adverse impact on the SETA. Where risks are identified, strategies are conceived and executed to guard against these risks.

Monitoring data generated from all the SETA Programmes including Administration, SSP, LP and ETQA is submitted to the M&E Division for verification, analysis, and reporting.

Furthermore, for organisational performance and reflectiveness, Administration business units submit governance-related reports for tracking of related outputs, and the LPD submits QMR to the M&E Division for the purpose of tracer and impact studies. ETQA data is used in research documents such as the SSP - an example of this data is the NLRD data. These studies help the SETA to determine if the programmes implemented are producing the intended results.

The SETA uses the recommendations obtained from M&E to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its learning interventions and their implementation. Learning from past implementations, the SETA prepares mitigation strategies for future implementation.

Moreover, ETQA monitors the relevance of qualifications and works with the Quality Council for Trades & Occupations (QCTO) in this regard. This exercise of reporting complements the QMR produced by the LPD, as it allows the SETA to distinguish which qualifications are relevant, thus informing the SETA's funding priorities for qualifications.

5.2.3 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES THAT WERE INCLUDED IN THE STRATEGIC PLANS AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

In the previous financial year, the key strategic priorities were captured in the Strategic Plan (SP) and Annual Performance Plan (APP) which forms the basis for implementation. The table below highlights the Strategic Priorities in the previous SSP that were captured in the SP and APP:

TABLE 25: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FROM THE 2024/25 SECTOR SKILLS PLAN CAPTURED IN SP AND APP

Strategic Priorities
1. Support for SMMEs, Entrepreneurship and community-based organisations
2. Improve labour market information that accurately identifies occupations in high demand.
3. Skills development for rural and marginalised communities to ensure inclusivity through technology skills development.
4. Support initiatives that prioritise the provision of agile, flexible and demand-led skills development programmes, retraining/ upskilling being a priority.
5. Enablement of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)
6. Support growth of the public college system through sectoral partnerships in the delivery of learning interventions.
7. Increase access to, and delivery of industry and occupationally directed priority programmes and work placements

5.2.4 STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION ON STRATEGIC SKILLS PRIORITIES AND MEASURES IN SUPPORT OF NATIONAL STRATEGIES AND PLANS

The MICT SETA supports the national strategies and plans as informed by relevant policy developments. In this regard, the ERRP, NSDP and other government plans are supported in alignment with the strategic priorities of the SETA as presented in the table below.

TABLE 26: STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION ON STRATEGIC SKILLS PRIORITIES AND MEASURES IN SUPPORT OF NATIONAL STRATEGIES AND PLANS

<table>
<tr><th>Strategic Priorities</th><th>NSDP Outcomes</th><th>ERRP Interventions</th><th>ERRP Skills Strategy Intervention</th><th colspan="2">Description of MICT SETA 2024/25 Outcomes/Priority Areas</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">1. Support for SMMEs, Entrepreneurship and community-based organisations</td><td rowspan="2">Outcome 6: Skills development support for entrepreneurship and cooperative development</td><td rowspan="2">Intervention six: Supporting entrepreneurship and innovation.</td><td rowspan="2">Intervention 7: Strengthen entrepreneurship. development programmes.</td><td colspan="2">Highlights: MICT SETA support SMMEs and entrepreneurial activities. Some of the programmes implemented over past planning cycle include Trail Blazers Digital Hub and Mobile. There was also SAMDDRA project that aimed in implementation of skills programme focusing of Mobile Repair training.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Five-year target:
• 550 people/beneficiaries in cooperatives
• 550 people/beneficiaries in small businesses
• 550 people/beneficiaries in entrepreneurial skills</td><td>• Progress:
• 784 people/beneficiaries in cooperatives
• 1030 beneficiaries in small businesses
• 1325 beneficiaries in entrepreneurial skills</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">2. Improve labour market information that accurately identifies occupations in high demand.</td><td>Outcome 1: Identify and increase production of occupations in high demand</td><td rowspan="2">Intervention one: Embedding skills planning into sectoral processes.</td><td rowspan="2">Intervention 8: Embed skills planning in economic planning processes and vice versa.</td><td colspan="2">Highlights: Since the financial year 2020/2021 to date, four Sector Skills Plans have been developed. These critical research-based documents have been and remain instrumental in shaping MICT approach in the achievement of the skills development agenda. In addition, MICT SETA has partnered with Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) to improve the system used to administer the submission of the WSP/ATR.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Outcome 8: Support career development services</td><td>Five-year target:
Five approved SSPs</td><td>Progress:
Four approved SSPs have been developed.</td></tr>
</table>

Strategic Priorities	NSDP Outcomes	ERRP Interventions	ERRP Skills Strategy Intervention	Description of MICT SETA 2024/25 Outcomes/Priority Areas	
3. **Skills development for rural and marginalised communities to ensure inclusivity through technology skills development.**	**Outcome 4:** Increase access to occupationally directed programmes	**Intervention four:** Access to targeted skills programmes **Intervention three:** Increased access to programmes resulting in qualifications in priority sectors.	**Intervention 3:** Expand the provisioning of WBL opportunities. **Intervention 4:** Increase enrolments in qualification-based programmes that respond to the occupational shortages identified in this strategy.	A number of programmes to support rural areas have been implemented since the commencement of the previous cycle. The SETA provided career and vocational guidance to rural communities and collaborated with TVETs and industry in implementing programmes, some of which were 4IR focused. Furthermore, the SETA assisted aspirant skills development providers to attain accreditation and deliver on MICT SETA programmes.	
4. **Support initiatives that prioritise the provision of agile, flexible and demand-led skills development programmes, retraining/ upskilling being a priority.**	**Outcome 3:** Improving the level of skills in the South African workforce	**Intervention seven:** Retraining/up-skilling of employees to preserve jobs.	**Intervention 1:** Expand the provisioning of short skills programmes	Highlights: The implementation of the programmes for the employed in the MICT has been evident in its planning documents.	
				Five-year target: • 650 learners in skills programme • 200 learners in short programmes	Progress: • 1044 workers in skills programmes • No workers enrolled/completed in short programmes during this financial year

Strategic Priorities	NSDP Outcomes	ERRP Interventions	ERRP Skills Strategy Intervention	Description of MICT SETA 2024/25 Outcomes/Priority Areas	
5. **Enablement of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)**	**Outcome 4:** Increase access to occupationally directed programmes Outcome 8: Support career development services	**Intervention one:** Embedding skills planning into sectoral processes.	**Intervention 8:** Embed skills planning in economic planning processes and vice versa	The SETA has been successful in addressed this strategic priority, the focus has been on the identification and development of occupational qualifications through the QCTO for occupations in high demand in consultation with the sector. Moreover, putting in place mechanisms to prioritise 4IR-related qualifications, the SETA has developed 52 4IR qualifications. Technology is the biggest enabler for MICT operations. In enabling and embracing technology, over the past two years, the MICT SETA has partnered with Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), wherein TUT provide expert services for the development of the Workplace Skills Plan (WSP)/ Annual Training Report (ATR) system. This system has proven to be user-friendly in service MICT SETA employers. In addition, programmes such as the Mobile Repair training programme is being implemented. Finally, the MICT SETA has become a trend setter by being the only SETA with a 4IR dedicated unit that is responsible for projects that are oriented towards responding to new high end technology skills that have come to the fore as a consequence of 4IR.	
6. **Support growth of the public college system through sectoral partnerships in the delivery of learning interventions.**	**Outcome 5:** Support the growth of the public college system	**Intervention ten:** Strengthening the post-school education and training system	**Intervention 10:** Strengthen the PSET system	Highlights: Established offices in TVET colleges, TVET college lectures exposed to industry and, together with CET lecturers, afforded bursary opportunities. College managers trained in financial and leadership management for this strategic planning.	
				Five-year target: • 49 offices • 460 TVET lecturers exposed to industry • 340 TVET lecturers on bursary programmes • 230 CET lecturers on bursaries programmes • 230 managers on management programmes	Progress: • 81 offices established in TVET colleges • 540 TVET lecturers exposed to industry • 412 TVET lecturers on bursary programmes • 306 CET lecturers on bursary programmes • 301 managers on management programmes
7. **Increase access to, and delivery of industry and occupationally directed priority programmes and work placements**	**Outcome 2:** Linking education and the workplace **Outcome 7:** Encourage and support worker-initiated training	**Intervention four:** Access to targeted skills programmes	**Intervention 2:** Enable the provision of targeted skills programmes	Highlights: Increased enrolments on WIL, internships, learnerships, candidacy, skills programmes, and short programmes for unemployed learners in TVETs and HET institutions	
				Five-year target: • 951 learners on TVET WIL programme • 2046 learners on HET WIL programme • 8050 interns • 15079 learners on learnerships • 260 candidacy • 6333 learners on skills programmes • 4637 learners on short programmes	Progress: • 4941 learners on TVET and HET WIL programme • 17483 learners on learnerships • 5659 learners on internship • 256 candidacy • 7796 learners on skills programmes • 4914 learners on short programmes

It is evident from the table above that the SETA committed itself to the implementation of its key strategic priority areas. The MICT SETA ensured that the above-mentioned key strategic priorities interphase with its key strategic outcomes, and that all these priority areas were integrated with performance indicators and targets, enabling measuring, and reporting on their achievement on a regular basis.

5.3 PLAN OF ACTION – AREAS WITHIN THE M&E FUNCTION THAT NEED TO BE PRIORITISED OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS

5.3.1 MECHANISMS THAT NEED TO BE IN PLACE TO ADDRESS KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS

M&E plays a crucial role for organisations like the MICT SETA, enabling the organisation to measure the effectiveness of their programmes and initiatives in achieving desired outcomes and impacts. Embedding the M&E function as an integral component of the organisation's core business facilitates evidence-based decision-making and enables this function to be treated as key focus areas like any other.

The operationalisation of the newly developed Learner Management System (LMS) promises to enhance data consistency, credibility, and integrity at the implementation level, thereby enhancing the quality of monitoring data generated. The MICT SETA will capitalise on the benefits offered by M&E, including the SETA being able to track, analyse and report on relevant and reliable information and data throughout programmes implementation, as a result creating greater transparency and accountability.

Concurrently, the M&E Policy framework that guides the monitoring and evaluation activities within the SETA was approved by the Accounting Authority for institutionalising within the organisation. The Framework will thus inform the aspects of an Evaluation Plan that is presently being conceptualised. Capacity-building workshops on this framework were held and will continuously be undertaken to ensure its seamless integration into the organisation. Furthermore, refinement of the M&E Policy will be reviewed annually as it is necessary to ensure alignment with the SETA's M&E mandate, strategic focus, and policy developments from the external environment.

5.3.2 MEASURES TO ENSURE CURRENT PRIORITIES ARE ACHIEVED

The SETA has overachieved by 54% of the planned targets in the 2023/24 financial year with only a 4% underachievement. Efforts will continue to be implemented to strengthen the partnerships, support SMMEs, monitor learning programmes and evaluate the success of learning interventions being implemented. The SETA will establish innovative and strategic partnerships with public institutions, centres of specialisation, SMMEs and industry at large for maximum impact on sectoral growth and sustainability. Key Priority Areas will continue to be aligned to the APP and SP.

5.3.3 MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SETA PLANNING DOCUMENTS

The MICT SETA continuously monitors and evaluates programmes through the M&E Division to ensure that lessons are captured for future reference. During the MTEF period (2023/24 – 2025-26), 24 monitoring reports and 3 evaluation studies are planned. Key to improve the implementation of the SETA planning documents include the following:

Development of the Organisational Operational Plan that outlines comprehensive details including, amongst others, resources required to execute the SETA interventions - budgets and human resources. In addition, the Organisation Operational Plan includes annexures that outline the Demand Plan and the Operational Risk Register. All of these are key initiatives through which the main planning documents (Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plan) are a guaranteed success. Above these internal-based measures, the SETA has Committees, both internal and external, at which different departments present and account for the work underway and plans to improve the implementation approach where required. These committees include: MICT SETA Board, Executive Committee, Audit and Risk Committee, Governance and Strategy Committee, Finance and Remuneration Committee, ICT Steering Committee, Management Committee, and the Risk Management Committee.

5.3.4 MEASURES INITIATED TO IMPROVE SKILLS PLANNING

The MICT SETA prioritises the enhancement of skills planning initiatives, demonstrating a steadfast commitment to this endeavour. As part of this strategic focus, the SETA has recently formalised a partnership, exemplified by the signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and subsequent Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). This collaborative effort aimed at delegating the development and management of the Management Information System to TUT, is yielding notable improvements. Evidence of this progress is reflected in the diminished number of queries raised by employers during the WSP/ATR submission season.

Furthermore, the SSP Division has actively participated in updating the Discretionary Grant policy to allocate a budget for skills planning activities. Consequently, this policy revision has resulted in an augmented budget allocation to fund such initiatives.

Moreover, to mitigate the risk of brain drain, efforts have been made to strengthen human resource capacity within the division. Presently, the SSP Division boasts a Senior Manager: SSP, Acting Manager: SSP, Researcher: SSP, two Skills Development Advisors, and two Administrators.

5.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter investigated the M&E approach adopted by the SETA, elucidating its practical application and pivotal role in decision-making processes. By scrutinising the utilisation of data within the context of M&E, the chapter offered invaluable insights into the decision-making mechanisms and evaluated the efficacy of the existing M&E function. Furthermore, it provided illumination on the SETA's execution of interventions outlined in the NSDP and ERRP.

It is evident that the M&E framework embraced by the SETA serves as a cornerstone for strategic planning and performance management, fostering enhanced reporting mechanisms and bolstering accountability measures. The consistent improvement in performance metrics over successive years underscores the effectiveness of this approach, substantiating the SETA's attainment of objectives delineated in the NSDP. This alignment with national priorities underscores the SETA's meticulous research and pragmatic planning strategies.

With the advent of the M&E unit, the SETA has fortified its capacity to diligently monitor performance indicators and streamline reporting processes, ensuring the accuracy and timeliness of data dissemination. This institutional advancement signifies a pivotal milestone in the SETA's evolution, empowering it to proactively adapt to dynamic operational landscapes and optimise resource allocation strategies. In essence, this chapter underscored the SETA's unwavering commitment to operational excellence and its resolute alignment with national development agendas. Through the effective implementation of M&E frameworks, the SETA is poised to navigate future challenges with agility and foresight, thereby fortifying its position as a catalyst for sustainable socioeconomic development within the MICT sector.

CHAPTER 6 | STRATEGIC SKILLS PRIORITY ACTIONS

CHAPTER 6: STRATEGIC SKILLS PRIORITY ACTIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarises the key findings that have emerged from the research. The findings will guide how the SETA responds in the 2025-2030 financial years, aligning priorities or strategic outcomes to the researched evidence presented. This chapter is informed by the 5 preceding chapters, which are in turn informed by consultations and literature review. The recommended priority actions were drafted in alignment with the national priorities, mainly the NSDP, the ERRP and its supporting Skills Strategy.

6.2 KEY SKILLS FINDINGS FROM PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

CHAPTER 1 SKILLS IMPLICATIONS:

The chapter investigated the employer and labour market profile of the MICT sector over the past 5-year period. Whilst the number of employers increased in the sector, the number of levy payers remain low. This significantly impacts the funding available to the MICT SETA to address skills development needs within the sector.

Furthermore, the analysis in the chapter revealed that the African population group is underrepresented in the manager and professional occupational categories of the MICT sector. Highlighting the need for the SETA to focus its skills development efforts on this demographic group. In addition, the proportion of female employees in the sector declined between 2023 and 2024, signifying the need for the SETA to focus its career awareness initiatives on this demographic group.

CHAPTER 2 SKILLS IMPLICATIONS:

Chapter 2 provided an in-depth analysis of the factors shaping the landscape of skills supply and demand within the MICT sector. Central to this exploration is the profound influence of emerging technologies associated with the 4IR, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), Cloud Computing, Big Data analytics, 5G telecommunications, and the Internet of Things (IoT). These technologies are identified as pivotal change-drivers, fundamentally altering the nature of work, business operations, and economic paradigms within the sector.

The chapter underscores that the advent of 4IR technologies heralds a paradigm shift in skills requirements, necessitating the MICT SETA to adopt a proactive and agile approach to skills planning. The rapid pace of technological advancement demands swift responses to evolving skills demands, compelling the SETA to remain vigilant and adaptive in its strategic initiatives. This imperative underscore the critical need for the SETA to cultivate robust partnerships with industry stakeholders, educational institutions, and relevant authorities to ensure the alignment of education and training programmes with global standards and emerging industry needs.

Lastly, the introduction of the 7th Administration of Government is another key change driver which has necessitated MICT SETA to change its approach to the targeted programmes in order to respond to the three (3) priorities of the MTDP 2024/2029.

CHAPTER 3 SKILLS IMPLICATIONS:

This chapter investigated the occupational shortages, skills gaps and emerging occupations within the MICT sector. In addition, the chapter investigated the extent of occupational supply in the sector.

The chapter highlighted a collective recognition on the importance of skills development as a strategic lever to capitalise on the transformative potential of 4IR technologies. Specifically, the chapter highlighted that there is a need to emphasis on cultivating cognitive skills, Artificial Intelligence (AI), big data analytics, and systems thinking competencies. These skill sets are identified as indispensable for navigating the complexities of the modern digital landscape and leveraging emerging technological innovations to drive sustainable growth and competitiveness. Furthermore, the chapter identified the critical role of soft skills in facilitating career advancement and professional success within rapidly evolving fields. Effective communication, team work, adaptability, and problem solving are highlighted as indispensable attributes for thriving in dynamic work environments characterised by rapid technological advancements and interdisciplinary collaboration.

In summary, Chapter 3 elucidates the nuanced skills landscape within the MICT sector, highlighting the imperative for strategic skills development initiatives tailored to address the sector's evolving needs and capitalise on emerging opportunities presented by 4IR technologies. By prioritising the cultivation of both technical proficiencies and soft skills competencies, stakeholders can effectively position themselves to navigate the complexities of the digital age and drive sustained innovation and growth within the MICT sector

CHAPTER 4 SKILLS IMPLICATIONS:

Chapter 4 delved into a detailed examination of partnerships forged by the SETA within the dynamic landscape of the MICT sector. Through a meticulous analysis, the chapter scrutinised the effectiveness of existing partnerships, identified areas of collaboration that were not yielding optimal results, and strategically outlined a proposed partnership aimed at addressing the evolving skill demands of the sector.

A central theme that permeated throughout the chapter was the paramount importance of collaboration in addressing the intricate skills challenges posed by the 4IR. Recognising the transformative potential of collaboration, stakeholders were urged to forge strategic partnerships aimed at investing in education, upskilling the workforce, and promoting digital literacy. By leveraging collective expertise and resources, these partnerships were poised to play a pivotal role in bridging the skills gap and equipping individuals with the competencies needed to thrive in the digital age.

CHAPTER 5 SKILLS IMPLICATIONS:

Chapter 5 focused on the MICT SETA M&E approach, sector skills planning, strategic priorities, and the extent to which previous priorities were addressed. The chapter further discussed a plan of action, highlighting how the M&E function will be improved in the next 5-years. Key within this plan of action, is capacity development of MICT SETA staff in terms of the M&E Policy Framework that guides the monitoring and evaluation activities within the SETA.

6.3 STRATEGIC PRIORITY ACTIONS

6.3.1 REFLECTION ON SETA STRATEGIC PRIORITIES OVER THE PAST 5-YEARS

Two changes were made to the MICT SETA Strategic Priorities over the past 5-years:

1. One priority was replaced with another. The priority: "Improved quality of education to address programmes in high demand within the MICT Sector" was replaced with the priority: "Support initiatives that prioritise the provision of agile, flexible and demand-led skills development programmes, retraining/upskilling being a priority". The priority on "Improved quality of education to address programmes in high demand within the MICT Sector" is directly linked to the identification and development of occupational qualifications through the QCTO for occupations in high demand in consultation with the sector. This is also addressed in the priority "Enablement of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)". Hence, the decision to replace it with a new priority: "Support initiatives that prioritise the provision of agile, flexible and demand-led skills development programmes, retraining/upskilling being a priority".

2. Digital skills development within rural areas, particularly within rural schools was highlighted during the 2024 stakeholder engagement sessions. As such, the priority on "Increased and focused skills development for rural and marginalised communities to ensure inclusivity through technology skills development" was edited to include "... This includes improving digital literacy amongst rural townships with a particular focus on rural schools".

Progress in relation to the SETA Strategic Priorities are as follows:

1. Credible labour market information that accurately identifies occupations in high demand.

    - Throughout the 5-year period, the SETA continued to ensure that the labour market information signalling the demand and supply of skills is thoroughly triangulated to improve the trustworthiness of data used for skills planning purposes. Since the financial year 2020/2021 to date, four Sector Skills Plans have been developed. These critical research-based documents have been and remain instrumental in shaping MICT approach in the achievement of the skills development agenda.

    - In addition, the MICT SETA has partnered with Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), wherein TUT provide expert services for the development of the Workplace Skills Plan (WSP)/Annual Training Report (ATR) system. This system has proven to be user-friendly in service MICT SETA employers.

2. Enablement of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

    - Over the past 5-years, the SETA partnered with the University of Johannesburg to upskill lecturers in TVET colleges to align their programmes to 4IR.

    - In addition, the SETA partnered with Deviare and the Department of Communications & Digital Technologies (DCDT) in providing Short and Skill programmes in cybersecurity, data science, drone piloting, digital media, 3D printing and software development.

    - The SETA has been successful in addressing this strategic priority. Putting in place mechanisms to prioritise 4IR-related qualifications, the SETA has developed 52 4IR qualifications.

3. Increased access to, and delivery on occupationally directed priority programmes that link education and the workplace.

    - Over the past 5-years, the SETA has successfully achieved this priority. This can be attributed to high enrolments and the collaboration with the industry.

4. Support initiatives that prioritise the provision of agile, flexible and demand-led skills development programmes, retraining/upskilling being a priority.

    - The SETA consistently met this priority.
    - In 2023/24: 685 employed learners entered learning programmes.
    - In 2022/23: 383 employed learners entered learning programmes.
    - In 2021/22: 235 employed learners entered learning programmes.
    - In 2020/21: New target.

5. Increased and focused skills development for rural and marginalised communities to ensure inclusivity through technology skills development.

    - Since the implementation of the MICT SETA Rural Development Strategy adopted by the Board, the SETA supported 377 rural development projects. This level of achievement is attributed to the high demand by stakeholders to implement programmes in rural areas.

6. Support growth of the public college system through sectoral partnerships in the delivery of learning interventions.

    - To date, the SETA has established 216 partnerships with TVET, HET and CET colleges. Furthermore, 113 SETA offices were established and maintained.

7. Support for SMMEs, entrepreneurship and community-based organisations, particularly in relation to 4IR cross-sectoral partnerships and projects for sustainable growth.

    - In 2023/24: the SETA supported 1 030 beneficiaries in SMMEs, 1325 beneficiaries in entrepreneurial skills, and 784 beneficiaries in Cooperatives
    - In 2022/23: the SETA funded 452 beneficiaries in SMMEs, Entrepreneurship, Cooperatives, and community-based organisations.
    - In 2021/22: the SETA funded 802 beneficiaries in SMMEs, Entrepreneurship, Cooperatives and community-based organisations.
    - In 2020/21: the SETA funded 385 beneficiaries in SMMEs, Entrepreneurship, Cooperatives and community-based organisations.
    - In 2019/20: the SETA had 309 agreements with SMMEs to implement various learning programmes.

6.3.2 CURRENT SETA STRATEGIC PRIORITY ACTIONS

The table below sets out the strategic skills priority actions for the sector.

TABLE 27: STRATEGIC PRIORITY ACTIONS

MICT SETA Outcomes/ Priority Areas	NSDP Outcomes	ERRP Interventions	ERRP Skills Strategy Interventions	Description of MICT SETA 2025-2030 Outcomes/Priority Areas
Credible labour market information that accurately identifies occupations in high demand.	**Outcome 1:** Identify and increase production of occupations in high demand	**Intervention one:** Embedding skills planning into sectoral processes.	**Intervention 8:** Embed skills planning in economic planning processes and vice versa	The MICT SETA will ensure that the labour market information signalling the demand and supply of skills is thoroughly triangulated in order to improve the trustworthiness of data used for skills planning purposes. Of equal importance will be the management and dissemination of research outcomes on occupations in high demand and incremental building of career guidance in partnership with industry and various learning institutions. The idea is for skills planning to incorporate issues pertaining to skills supply and demand, and for skills planning to be demand-led and responsive to the needs of the economy. In this way, skills are part of a package of industrial interventions, together with incentives, trade agreements and other interventions, instead of a separate or parallel "add on". Furthermore, in response to the change brought about by 4IR, the SETA will provide support to enable the sector to play a key role in the development of technologies and products related to 4IR.
Enablement of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).	**Outcome 4:** Increase access to occupationally directed programmes **Outcome 8:** Support career development services			
Increased access to, and delivery on occupationally directed priority programmes that link education and the workplace.	**Outcome 2:** Linking education and the workplace **Outcome 7:** Encourage and support worker-initiated training	**Intervention four:** Access to targeted skills programmes	**Intervention 2:** Enable the provision of targeted skills programmes	The SETA will set realistic targets in collaboration with industry, ensure implementation through the allocation of discretionary grants and monitor delivery of Service Level Agreement deliverables as a way of addressing sectoral occupational shortages and skills gaps. This will prioritise the development of skills that enable 4IR occupations and specialisations such as network and systems engineering and cybersecurity specialists.
Support initiatives that prioritise the provision of agile, flexible and demand-led skills development programmes, retraining/ upskilling being a priority	**Outcome 3:** Improving the level of skills in the South African workforce	**Intervention seven:** Retraining/ up-skilling of employees to preserve jobs.	**Intervention 1:** Expand the provisioning of short skills programmes	The SETA, through this priority/outcome, will focus on the provisioning of short skills programmes that respond directly to the skills gaps identified in this research. The emphasis is on those that are driven by industry, rather than supply driven. Through this priority the SETA will ensure that there is provision of agile, flexible and demand-led skills development programmes. A special focus will be on employed persons who require reskilling and or/upskilling; new entrants to the labour market who may require work readiness, foundational, digital and other types of short skills programmes to improve their chances of employment (including self-employment); and other unemployed persons whose chances of employment (employability) need to be improved (including for self-employment).

MICT SETA Outcomes/ Priority Areas	NSDP Outcomes	ERRP Interventions	ERRP Skills Strategy Interventions	Description of MICT SETA 2025-2030 Outcomes/Priority Areas
Increased and focused skills development for rural and marginalised communities to ensure inclusivity through technology skills development. This includes improving digital literacy amongst rural townships with a particular focus on rural schools.	**Outcome 4:** Increase access to occupationally directed programmes	**Intervention four:** Access to targeted skills programmes **Intervention three:** Increased access to programmes resulting in qualifications in priority sectors.	**Intervention 3:** Expand the provisioning of WBL opportunities **Intervention 4:** Increase enrolments in qualification-based programmes that respond to the occupational shortages identified in this strategy	The MICT SETA's rural strategy is aimed at increasing access to occupationally directed programmes for rural and previously disadvantaged communities (including townships). The MICT SETA strategy aims to respond to the President's Youth Employment Initiative, which is known as the "YES initiative". It aims to address the most pressing socioeconomic challenges in the country, particularly around poverty and unemployment amongst the youth. This priority intends to scope the skills development needs and priorities of rural communities, as well as provide career and vocational guidance.
Support growth of the public college system through sectoral partnerships in the delivery of learning interventions.	**Outcome 5:** Support the growth of the public college system	**Intervention ten:** Strengthening the post-school education and training system	**Intervention 10:** Strengthen the PSET system	The SETA will identify TVET colleges with the potential for meaningful collaboration and enter into partnerships with them. These partnerships will recognise some of the TVET colleges as Centres of Specialisation, linking them with industry and ensuring that programmes offered are aligned to identified occupation and skills gaps for ease of learner placement on programmes. Furthermore, the SETA will award bursaries to college lecturers and training opportunities on curriculum-related studies to college managers for their continuous development and for them to be adept with industry technological advancements. The SETA will continue to establish offices in TVET colleges to ensure accessibility and reach, ensuring that those TVETs are duly accredited to offer the SETA's high-demand occupational qualifications. In all this, the development of skills that enable 4IR occupations and specialisations will be the main focus.
Support for SMMEs, Entrepreneurship and community-based organisations, particularly in relation to 4IR cross-sectoral partnerships and projects for sustainable growth.	**Outcome 6:** Skills development support for entrepreneurship and cooperative development	**Intervention six:** Supporting entrepreneurship and innovation.	**Intervention 7:** Strengthen entrepreneurship development programmes	The SETA through this priority will focus on the need to provide the skills required for entrepreneurship development in ways that enable entry-level entrepreneurial activities (private and social) through to higher-end enterprises that rely on innovative research and development. Moreover, the focus will be on the skills required to grow income-generating opportunities in local economies through the establishment of private as well as social enterprises. In developing interventions for SMMEs and community-based organisations, the SETA will make considerations such as: the ability of an SMME to obtain funding for skills development.

6.3.3 MEASURES PLANNED IN SUPPORT OF SETA HIGH IMPACT PROGRAMMES

The following are the SETA High Impact Programmes:

- Rural Development for Community Impact
- Infrastructure development and public sector Institutional Delivery capacitation
- Significant reduction of unemployed people including graduates
- Sustainable entrepreneurial, SMME and Cooperatives development
- Holistic digitisation and advancement of technological infrastructure, research and development
- Effective and efficient shared services on Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for SETA-wide Learner Information Management system

The ultimate goal of the MICT SETA is to ensure that its implementation of skills development initiatives continuously contribute to the achievement of the NDP, NSDP, ERRP which is to be achieved through the SETA High Impact Programmes. To achieve this, the SETA will proactively plan and implement measures which directly position itself for success amidst uncertainty and disruptions. Through partnerships, the SETA will build resilience, drive innovation, and capitalise on emerging opportunities. The points below illustrate the SETA's efforts in facilitating the implementation of SETA High Impact Programmes:

1. The MICT SETA through partnerships with various stakeholders will continue to ensure that SMMEs, NGOs, NLPEs, and CBOs are supported in all the corners of all provinces in South Africa. Research will be the foundation of all interventions, which will guide the SETA to make evidence informed decisions around skills development. The SETA's SP discusses the provision of financial and non-financial support to SMMEs, NGOs, NLPEs, and CBOs. Partnerships with stakeholders like SEDA to encourage incubation would play a key role in achieving sustainability and growth of small businesses in the sector.

2. The MICT SETA will introduce and/or emphasise unit standards on soft skills and business management skills for all courses. This is expected to improve learners' employability and entrepreneurship skills.

3. The MICT SETA in collaboration with the QCTO and SAQA will continue to develop and realign qualifications to be 4IR aligned and be future forecasting.

4. The SETA will continue to implement its Rural Strategy to further the skills development agenda within marginalised communities. The aim is to provide career awareness and guidance as well as to develop the digital literacy skills within rural communities with a particular focus on rural schools.

6.4 CONCLUSION

Over the next five years, the MICT SETA will remain dedicated to the ongoing enhancement of planning and implementation endeavours, alongside the vigilant monitoring of sector-related changes and developments. In the 2025-2030 financial period, the MICT SETA's priorities will persist in alignment with key national agendas, including the response to the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP), Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP), and their supporting Skills Strategy. Emphasising interventions related to the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) will also remain a priority. The priority actions identified in this research will be integrated into the MICT SETA Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plan, serving as a compass for the SETA to effectively support national and sectoral objectives. This strategic approach ensures that the MICT SETA remains agile and responsive, driving sustainable growth and innovation within the MICT sector whilst contributing to broader national development goals.

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