

4 – POLICY AND PROGRAMME IMPLICATIONS



OVERVIEW

The findings of this report point to the need for coordinated labour market, skills development and graduate support interventions in KwaZulu–Natal. The evidence suggests that the province’s labour market challenge is not only about unemployment levels, but also about weak labour absorption, declining participation, graduate transition barriers and skills alignment.

This section presents policy and programme implications across four key areas: provincial skills planning, graduate employment support, youth employability and labour market data improvement.



4.1 – PROVINCIAL SKILLS PLANNING

(Insert Section 7.1 narrative summary)

IMPLICATION	ACTION REQUIRED	RESPONSIBLE ACTORS
 Strengthen provincial skills planning	Link labour market statistics, graduate database evidence, occupations in demand and sector skills priorities for more targeted planning	 MKRI, EDTEA, DHET, SETAs
 Align graduate supply with provincial economic priorities	Respond to priorities including public administration, education, agriculture, finance, digital skills, green economy and LED	 EDTEA, Municipalities, SETAs
 Improve coordination between stakeholders	Strengthen collaboration between MKRI, government departments, municipalities, SETAs, institutions of higher learning and employers	 All stakeholders
 Use evidence for programme design	Use the MKRI database to inform district-level matching, field-of-study profiling and targeted interventions	 MKRI, SETAs, Municipalities



KEY MESSAGE

Provincial skills planning should be strengthened by linking labour market statistics, graduate database evidence, occupations in demand and sector skills priorities.

The MKRI Unemployed Graduate Database provides useful information on where registered unemployed graduates are located, what they studied, their qualification levels, gender profile and age profile.



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4.2 – GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

IMPLICATION	ACTION REQUIRED	RESPONSIBLE ACTORS
 Move graduates from registration to practical opportunities	Prioritise workplace exposure, internships, learnerships, mentorship, career guidance, employer matching and work-readiness support.	 MKRI, SETAs, DSBD
 Target support by field of study	Education graduates: link to schools, ECD, tutoring and training; Business/Management/Finance graduates: link to municipalities, public entities, private employers and administrative roles.	 MKRI, SETAs, Employers
 Design gender-responsive programmes	Address barriers that may affect women's access to sustainable employment.	 MKRI, DSBD, SETAs
 Strengthen employer engagement	Build partnerships with employers to create placement opportunities for registered graduates.	 MKRI, EDTEA, Employers
 Support entrepreneurship pathways	Where formal employment is limited, provide entrepreneurship support and self-employment pathways.	 DSBD, MKRI, SETAs



KEY MESSAGE

Graduate employment support should focus on moving graduates from registration into practical opportunities. Since most registered unemployed graduates hold degrees or diplomas, interventions should prioritise workplace exposure, internships, learnerships, mentorship, career guidance, employer matching and work-readiness support.



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4.3 – YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY

IMPLICATION	ACTION REQUIRED	RESPONSIBLE ACTORS
 Support youth transition from education to work	Develop interventions for graduates aged 18–34, including internships, mentorship, career guidance, job-search support and entrepreneurship pathways.	 MKRI, DHET, DSBD, SETAs
 Strengthen employability beyond qualifications	Strengthen digital literacy, communication skills, workplace readiness, job-search skills, entrepreneurship exposure and access to professional networks.	 MKRI, DHET, SETAs, TVET Colleges
 Address prolonged unemployment after graduation	Provide targeted support for graduates in the 25–34 age group who may remain in a difficult labour market transition phase.	 MKRI, SETAs, Employers
 Link graduates to sector opportunities	Connect youth graduates to sector-specific initiatives in education, public administration, finance, agriculture and digital economy.	 SETAs, MKRI, Employers



KEY MESSAGE

The age profile of the database confirms that graduate unemployment is largely a youth and young adult transition issue. Graduates aged 18–34 make up the majority of valid age records (82.7%), showing the need for interventions that support the movement from education into work.

Youth employability interventions should go beyond qualifications and strengthen digital literacy, communication skills, workplace readiness, job-search skills, entrepreneurship exposure and access to professional networks.



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4.4 – LABOUR MARKET DATA IMPROVEMENT

IMPLICATION	ACTION REQUIRED	RESPONSIBLE ACTORS
 Strengthen the graduate database	• Capture more detailed information on work experience, professional registration, digital skills, technical skills, driver's licence status, willingness to relocate, preferred sectors and current employment status.	 MKRI
 Update database regularly	• Confirm whether registered graduates remain unemployed, have found work, are studying further, have started businesses or are participating in internships or learnerships.	 MKRI
 Improve data quality	• Standardise response options, address data anomalies and ensure consistent data entry.	 MKRI
 Develop dashboard reporting	• Create regular dashboard reports for monitoring, placement, reporting and policy support.	 MKRI
 Link database to placement systems	• Use the database for practical matching between graduate profiles and sector opportunities.	 MKRI, SETAs, Employers



KEY MESSAGE

The KZN Knowledge Repository Unemployed Graduate Database is a valuable administrative data source, but it can be strengthened further. Future improvements should include more detailed information on work experience, professional registration, digital skills, technical skills, driver's licence status, willingness to relocate, preferred sectors and current employment status. The database should also be updated regularly to confirm whether registered graduates remain unemployed, have found work, are studying further, have started businesses or are participating in internships or learnerships.



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4.5 – OVERALL, POLICY AND PROGRAMME SUMMARY

INTERVENTION AREA	KEY ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE ACTORS
 Provincial Skills Planning	Link graduate database to occupations in demand, SETA skills plans, municipal IDPs and provincial economic priorities.	 MKRI, EDTEA, DHET, SETAs, Municipalities
 Graduate Employment Support	Expand internships, learnerships, work-integrated learning, mentorship, career guidance and employer-matching programmes.	 MKRI, SETAs, DSBD, Employers
 Youth Employability	Strengthen digital literacy, communication skills, workplace readiness, job-search skills and entrepreneurship exposure.	 MKRI, DHET, DSBD, SETAs
 Gender-Responsive Programming	Ensure graduate support interventions address barriers faced by women; promote female participation in high-demand fields.	 MKRI, DSBD, SETAs
 Rural Outreach and Access	Strengthen database registration, employer linkages and placement support in rural districts.	 MKRI, Municipalities, DALRRD
 Labour Market Data Improvement	Regularly update graduate database; capture detailed employability information and employment outcomes.	 MKRI
 Employer Engagement	Build partnerships with private sector, government departments, municipalities and public entities to create placement opportunities.	 MKRI, EDTEA, SETAs



KEY MESSAGE

Coordinated policy and programme actions across skills planning, graduate support, youth employability, gender-responsive programming, rural outreach, data improvement and employer engagement are essential to improve graduate transitions and strengthen labour market outcomes in KwaZulu-Natal.

