

LITERATURE REVIEW REPORT:

LITERATURE REVIEW FOR DEVELOPING GUIDELINES FOR ORGANISATIONAL COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK FOR DEPARTMENTS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE SECTOR

March 2022

Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority

Literature Review Report

March 2022



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Acronyms

Abbreviation	Description
CBMFM	Capacity Building Model for Financial Management
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA)
HRM	Human Resource Management
LDMSF	DPSA Leadership Development Management Strategic Framework (LDMSF)
LGSETA	Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority
NDP	National Development Plan
NSDP	National Skills Development Plan
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFO	Organising Framework of Occupations
PSETA	Public Service Sector Education & Training Authority
PS-SAMF	Public Service Skills Audit Methodology Framework
QLFS	Quarterly Labor Force Survey
RGA	Registered Government Auditor
SMS	DPSA Senior Management Service (SMS)
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa



Executive Summary

1. Executive Summary

The Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA) is a Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) established in terms of section 9(1) of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 as amended and is classified as a National Public Entity under schedule 3A of the Public Finance Management Act, 1 of 1999. The PSETA and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) have **appointed PwC to develop guidelines to assist government departments in compiling their own organisational competency frameworks**. The purpose of which, serves to **enable departments** to define the knowledge, skills, behaviours, and attributes that are required by the organisation to perform its mandate competently and that can be measured and observed through a skills audit exercise.

This report serves to detail the findings collected through:

- Desktop Analysis

The government has identified building a “capable, ethical and developmental State” as number one priority, where **skilled public servants are committed to the public good and are capable of delivering consistently high-quality services, while prioritising the people in the achievement of the nation’s developmental objectives**. To this end, the PSETA required the development of the Skills Audit Methodology Framework (PS-SAMF). **PwC assisted PSETA in collaboration with DPSA to develop the (PS-SAMF)** for the Public Service. The purpose of the PS-SAMF was to address the challenges experienced by legacy systems, such as HR Connect in an effort to provide a uniformed standardised approach in determining the nature of skills demands and assessment of skills discrepancies and needs within the Public Service departments.

The PS-SAMF identifies various steps which are essential before embarking on a skills audit exercise, one such step is **developing an organisational competency framework**. Before a skills audit exercise can be undertaken in an organisation, there is a need to **define competencies that are applied to multiple occupational roles** within the organisation, independently from incumbents, so that the **skills audit exercise is objective and unencumbered by resistance from personal preferences**.

On the basis of the foregoing background, it has been determined that to compile one common competency framework for the public service would be a daunting task, given the size, department specific employment legislative dynamics, and the costs. There is however a need for the **PSETA and DPSA to assist the public sector departments with a set of common guidelines providing basic knowledge** about organisation competency frameworks, how they work, basic steps to compile one for a specific department, best practices, completed examples and a common template.





Section

2

Introduction and background

2. Introduction and Background

2.1. Introduction

The Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA) is a Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) established in terms of section 9(1) of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 as amended and is classified as a National Public Entity under schedule 3A of the Public Finance Management Act, 1 of 1999. The Public Service Sector Education & Training Authority (PSETA) and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) have **appointed PwC to develop guidelines to assist government departments in compiling their own organisational competency frameworks**. The purpose of which, is to **enable departments** to define the knowledge, skills, behaviours, and attributes that are required by the organisation to perform its mandate competently and that can be measured and observed through a skills audit exercise.

This report serves to detail the findings collected through:

- Desktop Analysis

2.2. Background

The government has identified building a “capable, ethical and developmental state” as number one priority. Flowing from Chapter 13 of the National Development Plan on Building a Capable State, the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) 2019-2024, defines a Capable State as a system with effectively coordinated state institutions, with **skilled public servants who are committed to the public good and are capable of delivering consistently high-quality services, while prioritising the people in the achievement of the nation’s developmental objectives**. This vision requires a State that has the capacity to formulate and implement policies that serve the national interest and address the root causes of poverty and inequality. In order to achieve the above objectives which, the Government has set for itself, in particular “the Building of a Capable State”, the Government has embraced the role of human resource development and its associated instruments in developing the requisite skills. The State has further adopted an approach which seeks to ensure that training and development in the Public Service is needs-based and is driven by the strategic value-add in order for it to contribute to the desired improved performance, capability and ultimately the outcomes.

To this end, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), in partnership with the Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA), has developed a **Public Service Skills Audit Methodology Framework (PS-SAMF)**. The purpose of the PS-SAMF is to provide a uniformed standardised approach in determining the nature of skills demands and assessment of skills discrepancies and needs within the public service departments. The Skills Audit Methodology Framework identifies various steps which are essential before embarking on a skills audit exercise, one such step is developing an organisational competency framework. Before a skills audit exercise can be undertaken in an organisation, there is a need to **define competencies that are applied to multiple occupational roles** within the organisation, independently from incumbents, so that the **skills audit exercise is objective and unencumbered by resistance from personal preferences**.

As outlined in the PS-SAMF, it was established that compiling one common competency framework for the public service would be a daunting task, given the size, department specific employment legislative dynamics, and the costs. There is, however, a need for the **PSETA and DPSA to support the public sector departments with a common guideline providing basic knowledge** about organisation competency frameworks, how they work, basic steps to compile one for a department, best practices, completed examples and a standardised template.

2. Introduction and Background

2.3 Scope of work

To develop a **common and generic guideline on how to compile an organisational competency framework** for a specific department which can be used to monitor capacity development in various fields of the public service employment including to:

- Undertake research, collect and collate data needed to develop the guidelines;
- Describe the approach in the development of the organisational competency framework; and
- Guide the process to determine competencies needed for all functional and technical areas to perform functions or tasks successfully.
- To develop appropriate instruments to guide the development of the organisational competency framework e.g. Blank Template to be used by the departments to develop their own frameworks.
- To incorporate the existing methodologies and instruments (the Public Service Skills Audit Methodology Framework and HR Connect) as the associated manuals, toolkits and reports.

The above common generic guideline must, with due **consideration to the already existing competency frameworks issued at national level**, articulate the strategic purpose, providing the following:

- How to identify and define different pathways and then link them to competencies across the organisation;
- Validated competencies needed for all functional and technical areas to perform functions or tasks successfully in an organisation;
- Descriptors for each requisite competency;
- Competency indicators that are observable and definable actions which show what performance should look like;
- A competency rating scale, which allows for determining the level at which an incumbent has a specific competency in order to determine any gaps and possible developmental needs for improvement in performance.

To provide an illustrated and instructive example indicating identified appropriate competencies for **different performer levels** in a government department:

- Deputy Director-General, Chief Directors and Directors;
- Senior Management: (e.g. Chief Executive Officers, Executive Directors, Heads of Departments,
- Middle Managers: (e.g. Senior professional, policy and project roles, Senior Systems Engineers, Policy Managers, Accountants);
- First Line managers/ team leaders, professional, policy and project officer roles. (e.g. Policy Officer, Business Coordinator, HR Advisor, Public Services Coordinator
- Front-line staff, administrative and entry level policy and professional role (e.g. Project Support Officers, Administrators, Assistant HR Officer, Security, registry and general orderlies (cleaners).

It is envisaged that this assignment will provide the DPSA, the PSETA, departments and other stakeholders with **common guidelines for compiling department specific/organisational competency frameworks** describing a set of knowledge, behaviours, skills, culture and attributes that are essential for effective performance within that specific department, and that can be **measured and observed by a skills audit exercise**.

2. Introduction and Background

2.4 Understanding of the Public Service Skills Audit Methodology Framework (PS-SAMF)

In 2019 PwC assisted PSETA in collaboration with DPSA to develop the Skills Audit Methodology Framework (PS-SAMF) for the Public Service. The purpose of the PS-SAMF was to address the challenges experienced by legacy systems, such as HR Connect in an effort to provide a uniformed standardised approach in determining the nature of skills demands and assessment of skills discrepancies and needs within the Public Service departments. The PS-SAMF identifies various steps which are essential before embarking on a skills audit exercise.

The approach taken to **develop the PS-SAMF was collaborative with extensive focus groups** conducted to gather information and input from key stakeholders from selected **National and Provincial departments** within the Public Service. In addition, a Skills Audit was conducted for the National Department with data collected through individual and departmental questionnaires that focussed on various skills process questions across the 3 key areas (organisational structure, Current Skills and Audit Practices, HR Systems and Tools).

The Departments listed below reflect the National Departments that actively participated in completion of Skills Audit questionnaire:

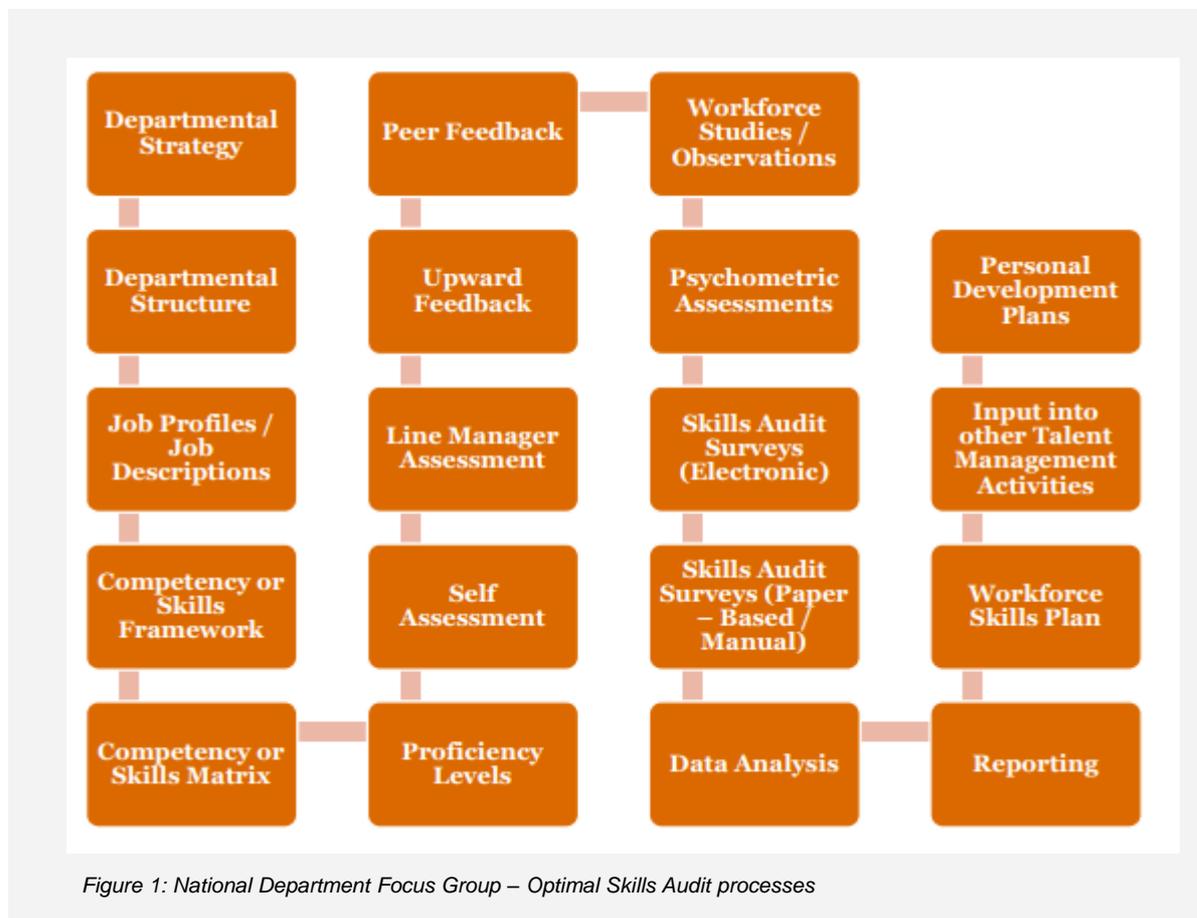
- Department of Basic Education
- Department of Correctional Services
- Department of Defence
- Department of Health
- Department of Home Affairs
- Department of International Relations and Cooperation
- Department of Justice & Constitutional
- National School of Government
- South African Police Services
- Department of Water and Sanitation

Key Challenges from focus group sessions included:

- Skills audits are currently conducted to fulfil operational requirements and/or changes to the structure but the process does not appear to be aligned with the strategic intent of the departments.
- Skills Audits are conducted as a once off activity and not necessarily aligned with other components within the HRD and Talent Management framework.
- Job profiles are not always accurate/ updated; hence it becomes difficult to extract the required data for the skills audits. This appears more prevalent for the lower level job posts (below SMS and non OSD posts).
- Skilled HRD practitioners are required within the departments to facilitate the process of conducting skills audits.
- Line Managers roles/ responsibilities relating to skills audits are not always clear resulting in lack of support and buy-in to the process.

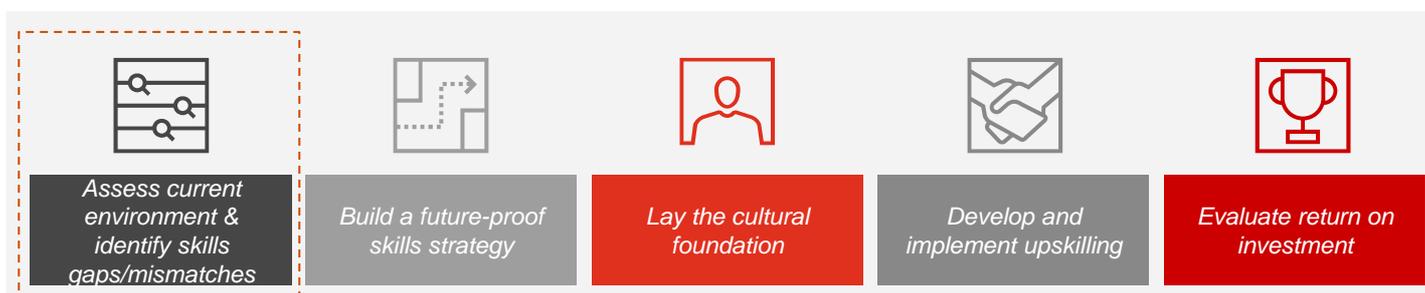
2. Introduction and Background

In PwC's extensive engagements with National and Provincial departments, the PS-SAMF was designed to assist departments in practically assessing skills. An optimal skills assessment was mapped and consolidated into a process flow below:



The process flow above indicates the importance of the departmental strategy in informing the development of each departmental structure. Misalignment between strategic objectives and structure, which informs the job descriptions, results in a misalignment in the skills required to deliver on strategic KPI's. Job profiles/ descriptions furthermore form a critical input into the development of Departmental Competency Frameworks against which skills are assessed. It was noted from the focus group session with the National Departments that the lack of effectiveness of legacy systems could be attributed to misaligned information / inputs into the system which produced poor outputs in the form of management information that could inform training and development requirements.

Building blocks to organisational skills development:





Section

3

Desktop Analysis Findings

3.1. Key Trends Impacting the Public Sector

3.1. Key Trends Impacting the Public Sector

3.1.1. Skills and Competencies for the Future

PwC conducted a study on the trends currently affecting the workforce in which a number of these are listed below. Further, it was also found that skills of the future requires that the Public Sector provides wide core skills, behaviours and attributes lense; Identifying which jobs will be impacted by automation; and Designing the new organisational blueprint including the shape of the future of the Public Service workforce.



Technological breakthroughs
Rapid advances in technological innovation



Demographic shifts
The changing size, distribution and age profile of the world's population



Rapid urbanisation
More people moving to live in cities



Shifts in global economic power
Power shifting between developed and developing countries



Resource scarcity and climate change
Depleted fossil fuels, extreme weather, rising sea levels and water shortages

The Department of Home Affairs critical skills list of 2021 indicates that investment needs to be made into the skills development of the South African public from Education systems as well as in workforces. While this is a matter addressed at different levels and by both public and private sectors, the State as an employer has a role to play in this through focusing on upskilling the current workforce as well as improving recruitment and selection of new public servants. This can be achieved through a common framework of competency, as it will define the required and successful incumbent for a job, one that is based on an individual's ability to competently perform a job.

Some of these skills for the future are listed below:

1. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development(OECD) is an **intergovernmental economic organisation** with 38 member countries including the US, Germany and Greece. The organisation conducted research into the Core skills for Public Sector Innovation (2015). This research follows a need for the associated countries to respond to the complex issues that its Governments' are constantly grappling with. Yet again, in driving the skills and workforce of the future, emphasis will be placed on the competencies of the workforce as this will directly impact the initiatives of the organisation.



3.1. Key Trends Impacting the Public Sector

3.1.2. Skills and Competencies for the Future

2. Technology

Technology Researcher Luke Dormehl (2018) on digital trends found that the country's national post office worked with a Tech company to deliver mail to recipients through the use of a Bot. The recipient will find notification of an incoming mail (delivered by the Bot) through a mobile app. The Bot is said to travel 6 kilometres per hour, reaching about 100 recipients in a day. These are just some of the new technological innovations where the public sector is involved. This echoes the importance of digital skills for the public service workforce. The skills span across degrees and levels and also enable the public servants to work flexibly from home because of their ability to do so without impacting productivity. Ultimately, investing in digital competencies is important if the public sector will respond successfully to the constant change in the immediate and global environment. Therefore, defining the digital acumen required by public servants will assist Government to employ and upskill public servants with digital competencies that will be required for the current and future demands.

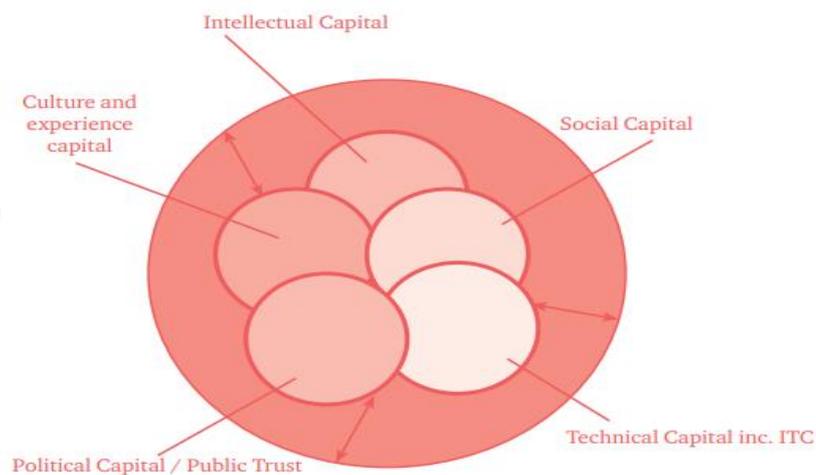


Source: The OECD Framework for Digital Talent and Skills in the Public Sector, 2021.

Figure 4: Priorities for Future Government Leaders

3. Leadership

“Leadership in government is different from leadership in the private sector and needs unique motivation and skill...”
Quote from a publication by PwC Middle East Public Sector Institute



Source: PwC Middle East Public Sector Institute

3.1. Key Trends Impacting the Public Sector

3.1.3. The impact of the fourth industrial revolution on Public Sector departments

68% of CFOs in Africa want to accelerate their plans for **automation**.

63% of CFOs globally are looking at offering new or enhanced products or services as the most important means to rebuild revenue streams. Skills such as **creativity** and **problem solving** will be crucial to achieve this innovation.

Source: PwC's COVID-19 CFO Pulse survey, June 2020

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is catalysing immense change, driven by forces of artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things (IoT), network-based logic, augmented and virtual reality and quantum computing, which are expected to shape the next decade. The unprecedented speed of change will bring **more advancements in the next ten years**, than in the last 250 years. **This has led to many CEOs making digital initiatives their number one priority.** In a study conducted by PwC to identify global trends challenged by African realities, Africa will be home to more than a quarter of the world's population of under 25s, which will make up 60% of the continent's total population. By then, 15% of the world's working population will reside in Africa. This change suggests that Africa will need to **expand its pool of highly-skilled employees** through the development of **cognitive STEM-based skills** (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and **non-cognitive soft skills** such as **sense-making and social intelligence competencies**.

3.1.4. The Impact of COVID-19 of Public Sector departments

The COVID-19 pandemic pressed the fast-forward button on the **global shift to e-government**. According to the United Nations, there has been overall unpreparedness of National and Local governments to deal with the pandemic. The pandemic fundamentally changed the situation in three aspects, it has pushed the transition forward at great speed, shifted many workers to a work-from-home environment, and made clear who the essential workers are. The pandemic has also **exposed the immense need for investment in public services**, including **digital infrastructure**, which proved critical especially for services such as transport, education, and tax collection, among others. As organisations move fast to plan and implement automation initiatives, many jobs continue to be remote. This disruption has contributed to citizen's anxiety about the future and their work. Training is paramount to acquire digital capabilities and proficiency, however, with the generation of digital natives joining the public sector the acquisition of such skills will be easier to acquire.

Honesty, courage, commitment, service vocation, are still among key skills and are always needed to become a good public servant, whether it is in digital context or not. Employees across industries will need to acquire **new skills that enable them to think and work in different ways**. This will require dynamic ways of planning and will be imperative for government and organisations to train and **re-train employees to fill the skills gaps** and deficits across our country. With a GDP increase of 7.8%, Sub-Saharan Africa could enjoy one of the biggest boosts to GDP from the increase in productivity achieved through upskilling and investment in digitisation. Governments must play a crucial role in developing and promoting the skills needed for a **successful shift to 4IR**. Adapting to the digital revolution will require government to focus specifically on their digital strategies which should be included in all **Integrated Development Plans**.

PwC economists' scenario forecasts for 2022:



GDP in 2022 will range from **1.5 - 3.0** depending on the scenario.



The South African economy will only return to its pre pandemic size by 2023 or even later.



The unemployment rate will oscillate around 32% over the long term.

3.1. Key Trends Impacting the Public Sector

3.1.5. Skills and Competencies for the Future

From blockchain to flexible working hours and virtual work spaces, the African workforce of 2030 will emphasise innovation and empathy and embody a purpose-driven cohort. Africa will be housing a new workforce that is unique in its composition, demographic and mindset. This workforce will not be confined by degrees or titles and their expectations of employment will be different to previous generations. As a result, employers will not be seeking rigid qualifications, but behavioural competencies. Fundamental paradigm shifts are already taking place regarding how talent is defined in fulfilling organisational requirements.

The top-ten most sought after skills for the future workforce:



Source: PwC Workforce of the future 2030, Global trends challenged by African realities, October 2019

3.1.6. Upskilling journeys of governments around the world

In recent years, upskilling has become a focal point for many countries. **COVID-19** and rapid digitalisation have further exacerbated growing skills gaps and underlined the importance of upskilling. Governments around the world are acknowledging this fact, pursuing various initiatives to **prepare citizens** and employees to face the inevitable rise of a digital future with confidence. PwC has summarised the key upskilling themes seen globally, learnings from various countries, and provided examples of public sector upskilling initiatives being implemented. While some of the initiatives may be unique to specific countries, they have a common, steadfast intent to ensure people have the opportunities to develop new skills.

 <h3>Singapore</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The government has been fostering a learning society, driving upskilling initiatives at both the citizen and public sector levels.• Unveiled initiatives such as SGUnited, which subsidises on-the-job training opportunities in order to ensure jobs are protected during the pandemic¹.	 <h3>Malaysia</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The government aims to attain high-income and developed nation status by 2025.²• The government is looking to implement integrated government interventions to nourish lifelong learning (e.g. set up of TalentCorp).³• Upskilling initiatives are geared towards achieving those goals.
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3.1. Key Trends Impacting the Public Sector



Australia

- The government recognises that jobs in Australia are rapidly evolving.
- Intends to reform its Vocational Education and Training (VET) systems (through a new national skills agreement) to ensure upskilling funds are well-invested in relevant and high quality trainings for all Australians.⁴



Western Europe

- The European Union Commission has launched the “European Skills Agenda”, with quantitative and qualitative goals set out clearly⁵.
- Skills mismatch⁶ and high unemployment rates are observed in several types of skills and regions (e.g. Spain⁷).
- Governments are implementing initiatives to understand the baseline skills of learners, and how to cater upskilling programmes to them.



Middle East

- In 2019, youth unemployment was more than twice as high⁸ as overall unemployment rates. Yet, many Middle Eastern countries continue to seek talent to fill their vacancies, suggesting a mismatch in skills.
- Initiatives to tackle this mismatch are being made by governments; for example, the UAE government partnered with LinkedIn to upskill 2,000 women for private sector jobs.⁹



South Africa

- High unemployment rates are high amongst citizens, especially youths (64% in July 2021¹⁰).
- South Africa is faced with the issue of creating jobs that are relevant for its citizens¹¹.
- While the government has limited upskilling plans to address this situation, they had pockets of upskilling success within the SA government, especially in managerial and leadership skills development.

Source: PwC Upskilling efforts by the public sector, New World New Skills, October 2021

3.1.7. Public Sector of the future

Building the right skills can help **improve economic prosperity and social cohesion**. Research shows that by 2030 the Public Sector workforce will likely consist of technologically advanced generations with different employment expectations. Employees may be less attached to “career tenure” and will expect to work on short-term, specialised projects where they can apply their **innovative technology skills**. Employees will likely be interested in performing **meaningful work** with tangible evidence of social responsibility and impact, and leaders need to be prepared to respond.

Based on existing trends, the employees within the Public Sector will be:

- Tech savvy individual permanently connected to advanced open source technology and seeking validation and input from collective, digital “wisdom”.
- Highly collaborative and flexible public servants familiar with working in ad-hoc, anonymous project team environments.
- Mobile, available to work from everywhere at any time.
- Data-centric, analytics-driven, at home with big data and visualisation techniques.
- Highly educated and striving for continuous development.
- High degree of autonomy.
- Looking for opportunities to make a social impact.
- Not specifically attached to one career.

Burning platforms in government:



Increased demand in service delivery



Biggest employer of SA citizens



Increasing unemployment



Shortage of relevant skills

3.1. Key Trends Impacting the Public Sector

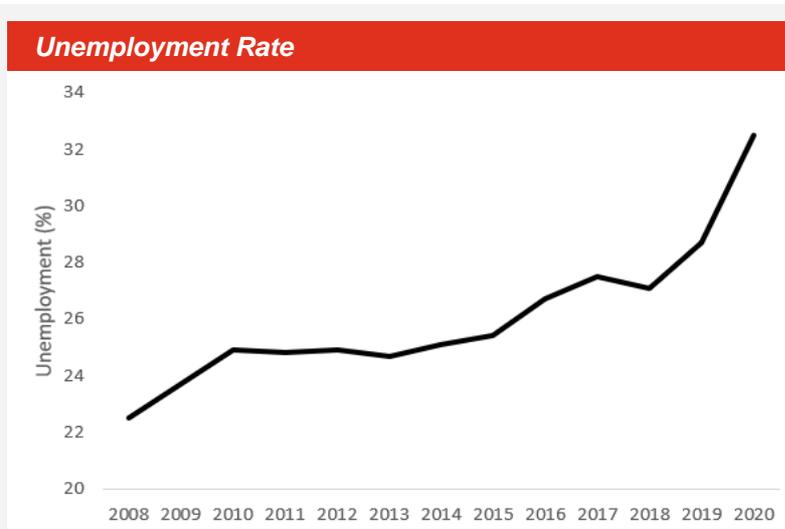
3.1.8 South Africa's Economic Recovery

South Africa's socio-economic context is one of high unemployment and high inequality. According to the StatsSA Quarterly Labour Force Survey, The official unemployment rate was **34,9% in the third quarter of 2021**. In addition, the Gini Index indicated that South Africa is one of the **top 10 most unequal countries in the World**.

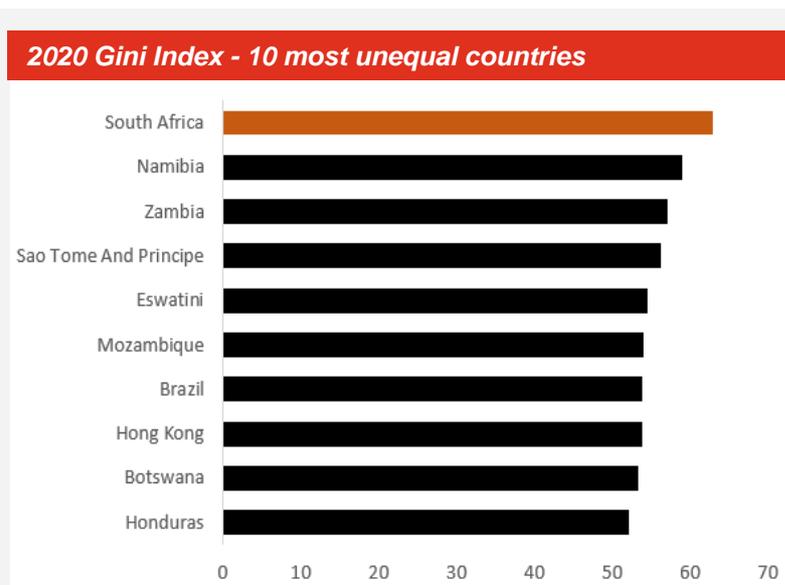
The **Human Capital Index (HCI)**, constructed by the World Bank, measures which countries are **best in mobilising the economic and professional potential of their citizens**. The index ranges between 0 and 1 with 1 meaning maximum potential is reached. According to the Human Capital Index for 2020, South Africa was **low with a score of between 0.30 - 0.40**.

Improving skills and capabilities is key for:

- Economic growth and development
- Innovation and competitiveness
- Reduce poverty and to improve personal well-being

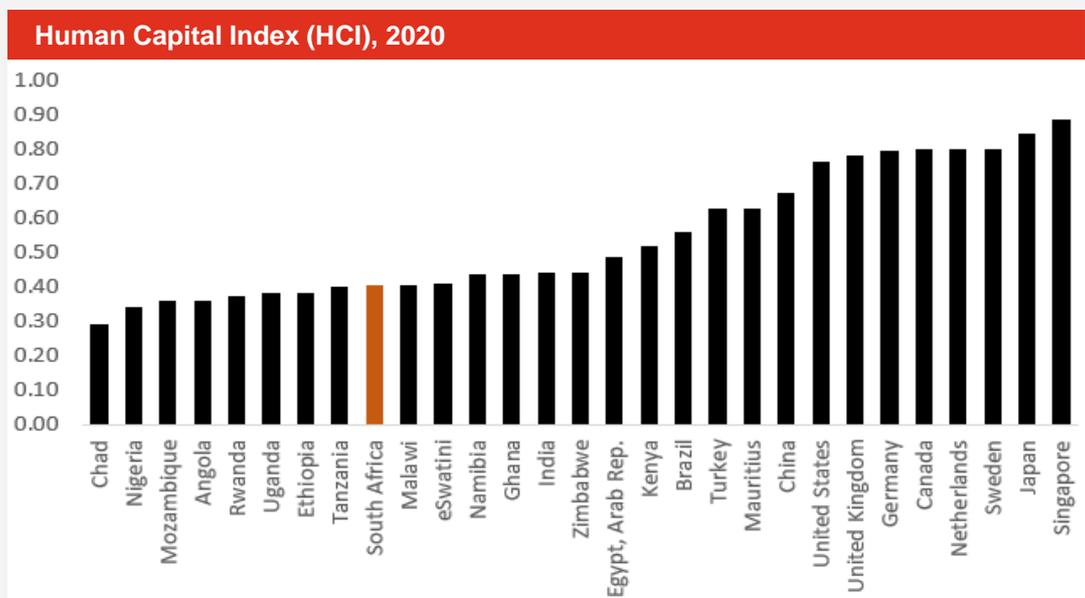


Source: StatsSA Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2008-2021



Source: World Population Review

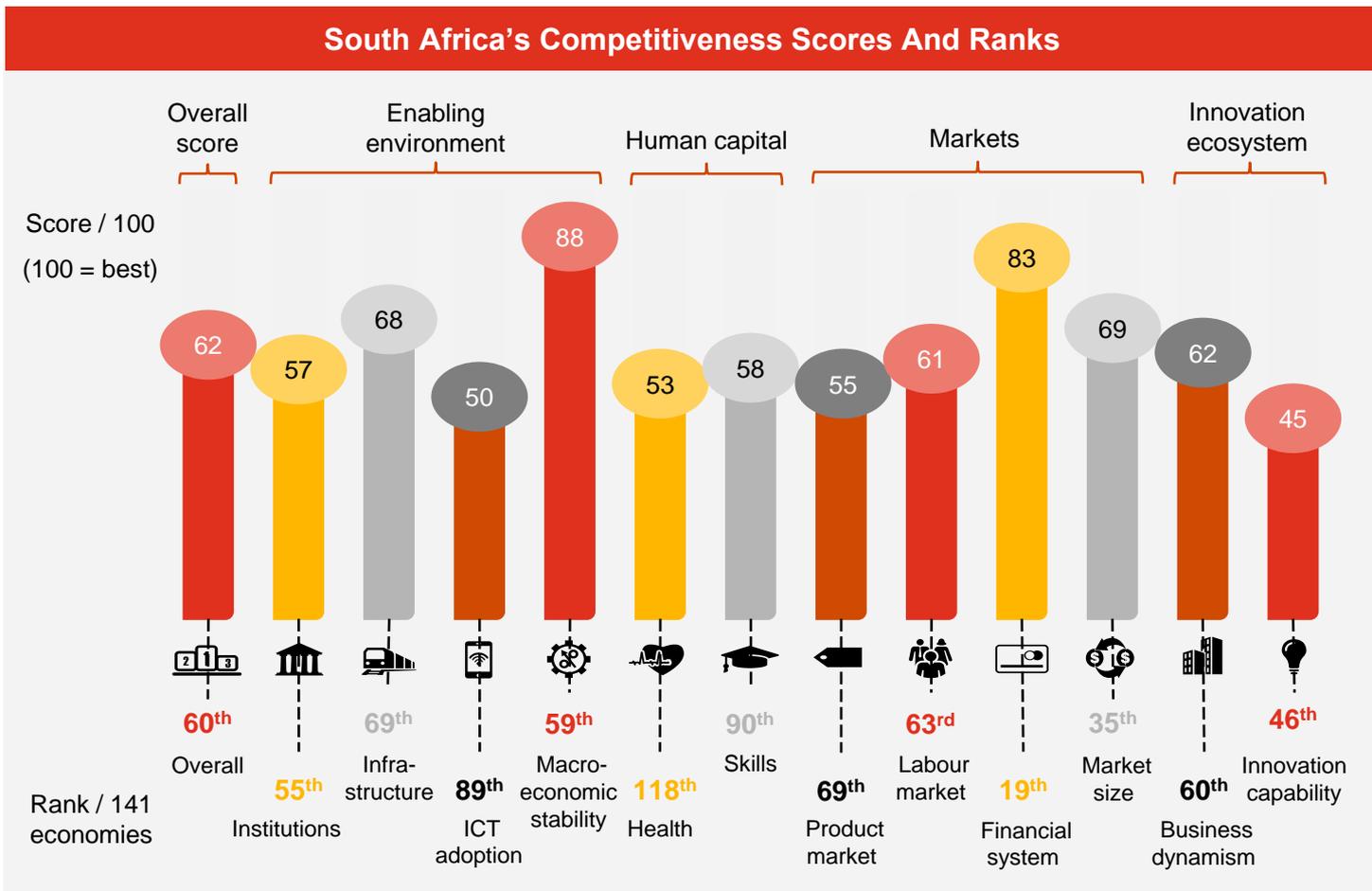
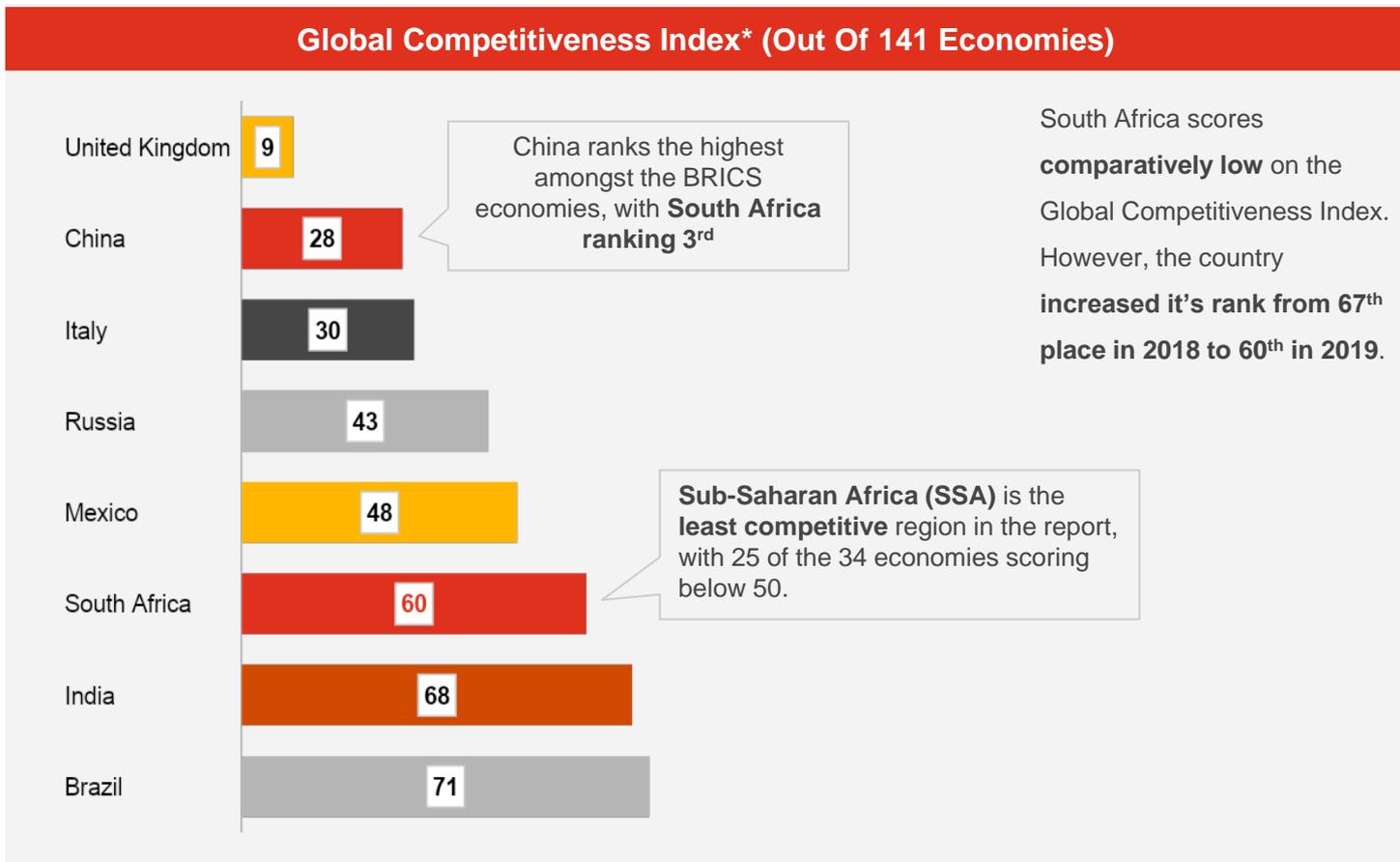
Upskilling is an economic investment in an organisation's survival and a social investment in our society's survival.



Source: The World Bank HCI, September 2020

3.1. Key Trends Impacting the Public Sector

South Africa's global competitiveness is low, particularly in ICT adoption, human capital, and innovation capacity



Source: WEF Global competitiveness Reports 2018 and 2019, *A composite index measuring the competitiveness of a particular jurisdiction using a range of relevant criteria

3.1. Key Trends Impacting the Public Sector

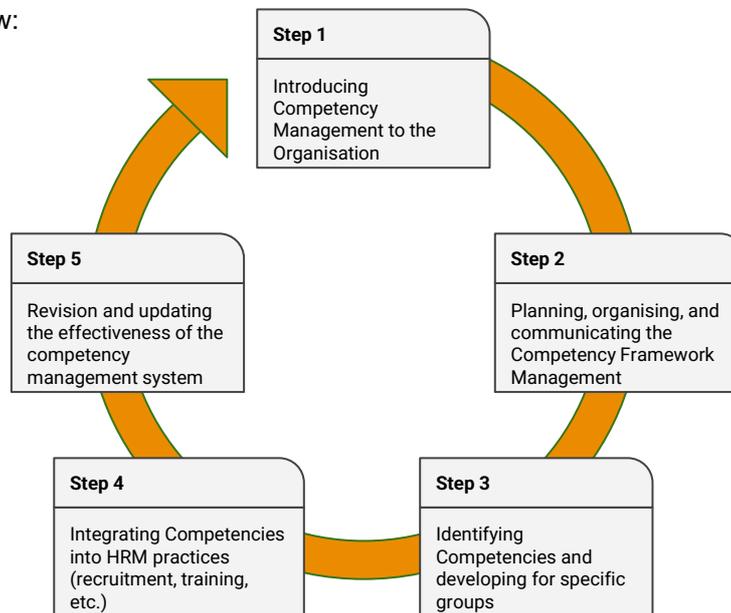
3.1.8 Competency Frameworks

In the following Competency Frameworks section, a discussion of the literature review around Public Sector frameworks is presented. Reference is made to those frameworks that may assist with developing and implementing common guidelines that align with building performing cultures and a competitive workforce of the future.

The public sector needs public servants that possess the right skills to address increasingly complex problems. **Competency management** therefore helps governments clarify the required **skills, knowledge, and behaviors** needed for a given position, and creates a standard against which to measure effective employee performance.

Effective competency framework implementation occurs at three levels/dimensions. These are the **vertical integration** which refers to the competency framework supported by the broad organisational strategy; **horizontal integration** in which the competency framework is aligned to the various HR processes of the organisation; and lastly **implementation throughout the organisation**. This is seen as a holistic approach to competency framework implementation and fosters a common language and understanding across all departments of what competencies lead to high performance. (Managing competencies in Government, Annie Hondeghem, 2010).

Roadmap for effective implementation of competency management that combines **guidelines** that are crucial to the **introduction, development and implementation of competency frameworks and management**. The steps of the roadmap are illustrated below:



Source: *Managing competencies in Government*, Annie Hondeghem, 2010

Competency management is used in the public sector and has shown to be **effective** in **defining the abilities and behaviors** needed for **public service employees** to do their **jobs well** and **linking several key human resource management activities** such as skills audits, performance management, training and development, and succession planning to ensure that government is staffed by people who perform well (Managing competencies in Government, Annie Hondeghem, 2010).

3.1. Key Trends Impacting the Public Sector

In the Kenyan Public Service Competency Framework, there are **4 main competencies**, 3 of which are commonly recited within competency frameworks namely, **core, technical and managerial competencies**. However, this framework also includes **leadership** as a main competency. Additionally, the guiding values and principles of the framework are taken from the **Kenyan Constitution**, namely professionalism; transparency; accountability; respect for diversity; treating all people equally and with dignity; and impartiality (Competency for the Public Service: Republic of Kenya, 2017). This framework indicates that **individuals in leadership positions** should possess or develop **leadership competencies** which can translate into **effective and efficient service delivery** in public service.

According to **Osabiya & Ikenga (2015)**, use of appropriate leadership competencies is one of the strategies that can be used to restore employee performance and prosperity of departments.

In the department of Education in England, a common competency framework was developed for use for all boards as related to the scale and complexity of their organisation/department. This competency framework was developed for use in the department however, it is the responsibility of the sub-departments to determine which competencies are relevant to them. Furthermore, the framework outlines the culture, values and ethos that is required to run the department successfully in such a manner that there is a positive impact for the pupils the department serves as well as the wider communities it operates in (A Competency Framework for Governance, Department of Education: England, 2017).



Source: A Competency Framework for Governance, Department of Education: England, 2017

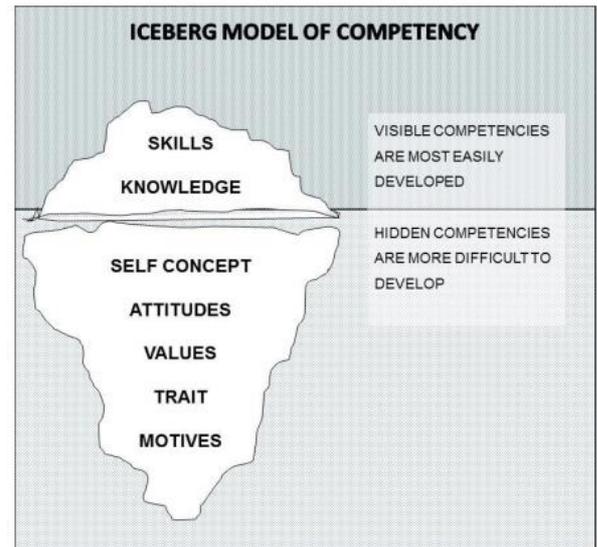
There are **3 significant attributes** to the above framework. Firstly, it is a common competency which can be adapted and used in relation to the specific needs of a department, rendering a common/standardised framework feasible in an entire Government. Secondly, it includes setting a culture, values and ethos within the department. Thirdly, the successful implementation of the framework should be seen in the impact it has on the department's main stakeholders - children.

Therefore, a common framework not only establishes a common understanding and language for effective performance and the behaviours associated with it, but it also **establishes a culture** in which **desirable behaviours** are **defined and socialised**. These behaviours set the organisation apart and ensure effective running of the department. Lastly, a measurement of success for the framework is through ascertaining the impact the department has on the people it serves.

3.1. Key Trends Impacting the Public Sector

A standardised competency framework or model can be a tool for strategic human resource development. It can also allow government to have common core competencies across departments that can be defined as desirable standards of performance across government, thereby institutionalising a culture that is aligned to the future that Government envisions. Such core behavioral competencies can include **ethical values and morals and professionalism**, that can translate to a **culture** of high ethical and professional standards across all public service departments.

The Iceberg model of competency indicates that competencies are like an iceberg in that they have a small, visible section above the water's surface and a large, hidden section underneath the water's surface. Just as with competencies, skills and knowledge are visible, and can be developed, while competencies such as self-concept, traits and motives are hidden and difficult to develop. However, the premise is that competency-based management, when implemented effectively, can lead to skilled workforces where competencies can be developed.



Source: Spencer & Spencer (1993; Jody Fuchs, (2018)

In summary, it can be said that the emerging trends of competency-based management is on the premise that a workforce needs to possess or develop those competencies that lead to performance. Competency frameworks help departments to share a common language, a language of competence. The benefits of a competency based management approach are several, these include, but not limited to, standardised ways of carrying out HRM activities like recruitment & selection; performance management; training and development; as well as succession planning. Furthermore, competency-based management enables public servants to be motivated for growth and skills attainment thereby impacting the skills levels of the labour force in the Public service and ultimately general public when public service employees exit the organisation.

It can also be said that competency-based management organisations ensure high performance and attainment of strategic goals by virtue of having employees that are competent in carrying out work in complex situations both internal and external to the organisation. These benefits substantiate the case for a common and standardised competency framework for the South African Public service as it will enable high performance and motivate of the workforce that impacts departments ability to deliver to their mandate.

“It is my hope that competencies will provide us with a shared language for talking, in concrete terms, about high performance and managerial excellence” (UN, 2019).

Former Secretary General - Kofi Anan

Research by the United Nations in 2019 indicates that successful development and implementation of a competency framework is through participatory processes where employees and managers are involved in identifying the core and managerial competencies. This is because this participatory nature translates into shared values and common standards of behaviour and performance for the organisation.

3.2. National and Provincial Department Findings

National Department Findings

3.2.1 Consolidated Findings from Desktop Analysis of PSETA Documents

A desktop analysis has been conducted to review the current processes used in the development of Competency Frameworks, as well as key challenges and specific mandates across the Public Sector. The desktop analysis further highlights the importance for PSETA and DPSA to develop guidelines on the development of Organisational Competency Frameworks across the Public Sector.

Below are key documents that have been reviewed:

- PSETA Strategic Plan 2020-2025
- PSETA Understanding the Skills Gaps in the Public Service Sector
- PSETA Skills Audit Methodology Framework for the Public Service to ensure alignment with broader skills audit exercise mandate
- PSETA Terms of reference for the development of Guidelines on the Compilation of an Organisational Competency Framework for the Public Service departments to adequately understand the mandate of the assignment
- DPSA Senior Management Service (SMS) Leadership Development Management Strategic Framework (LDMSF) as a competency framework for Senior Managers to identify existing competency frameworks and their potential gaps
- Brookings Understanding the skills gap and what employers can do about it
- SMS Handbook - Chapter 5
- SMS Competency Framework_April 2015

National Department Findings

Key insights from the PSETA Strategic Plan 2020-2025:

PSETA's overarching strategic imperative is **building the skills required for a capable, skilled and developmental state**. The scope of coverage includes National and Provincial Government departments, identified Public Entities, and Parliament and Provincial Legislatures. The PSETA sector encompasses approximately 804 049 employees (PSETA Strategic Plan). PSETA shares the responsibility of HRD in the Public Service with the DPSA as a policy department that issues directives on HRD across the Public Service, and with state and sector academies, including the National School of Government (NSG), that provide the sector-specific training.

An **analysis of the external environment** was conducted using the PESTEL (political, economic, social, technology, environment and legal) tool to analyse and monitor the macro-environmental factors that have a profound impact on PSETA. Key factors have been identified below:

- A key enabler for the SETA is the **policy stability** over the longer- term with the National Development Plan (NDP) and National Skills Development Plan (NSDP). The National Macro Organisation of Government has resulted in a number of departments being **merged or reconfigured**. Ministries have been reduced to 28 and departments to 34. The restructured departments are aligned with the strategic priorities, and some core functions will be moved to departments that are more appropriately aligned to their delivery mechanisms. The reconfiguration has **provincial impacts** as well, given the alignment of powers and functions. This will require **reskilling and up-skilling of the affected public servant**.
- The evolution of the **Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)** has a profound effect on the Public Service Sector and has thus been identified as a **key change driver which is impacting skills demand and supply in the sector**. ICT advances impact the nature of work profoundly by **shaping the types of skills** required, and the **modes of service delivery** in the Public Service Sector. The digitisation of the Public Service Sector marks a shift from physical technologies towards adaptive social technologies in order to create a favourable environment as a critical success factor in this era. To this end, the ongoing research priority areas for the PSETA are understanding the impact of 4IR in the Public Service Sector as well as the role of the PSETA Sector in 4IR.
- Based on the increased use and accessibility of ICT systems and platforms in the Public Service Sector, the opportunity for the utilisation of technology-enabled learning platforms to build greater efficiencies in the delivery of training is crucial. Over the short term, PSETA will develop a **policy framework to assure quality e-learning and provide a platform** for the sector to use this mode of delivery and assessment. This ties in with the use of technologies to enhance the learning environment and promote access to learning opportunities.
- From an economic perspective, high levels of **unemployment, poverty and inequality continue to persist**, with the **youth impacted the most**. This can partly be attributed to the prevalence of irrelevant or low skills levels. The spillover effect is negative in the social sphere, exemplified by **high crime, rural-to-urban migration**, and the challenges the latter brings to **skills imbalances between urban and rural areas**.

National Department Findings

- Demographic data on gender distribution in the Public Service Sector has remained constant over the past few years with more women employed than men across the sector. The proportion of disabled people employed in the sector remains low at approximately 1.10%. Based on some of the overall findings from the Gender Equality Strategic Framework (GESF) reports, in the forthcoming five-year period, PSETA will focus on **leadership development for women** and pursuing collaborative projects aimed at benefiting women, youths and people with disabilities. PSETA has established strategic partnerships with the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, as well as the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA). These partnerships will be leveraged over the five-year period to deliver skills development programmes aimed at empowering these targeted groups

Based on the analysis of the external environment, PSETA is required to build a performance and organisational system that is **capable of anticipating, modelling and innovating programmes** that are responsive to the needs of the sector, and that is capable of consistently delivering high-quality skills for effective and capable Public Service.

Key Insights from Understanding the Skills Gaps in the Public Service Sector:

PSETA conducted a study aimed at analysing, and understanding the skills gaps in the public service at a sectoral level, with focus on identifying the required skills at the major occupational level in the sector and compare them to the employee's actual skills set. The study further aimed at indicating whether the present workforce of the public service sector have the required skills and competencies for their respective jobs and, if not, which skills need further development. The findings shows that there are various deficient skills for various public service sector organisations to meet their strategic objectives.

Key factors have been identified below:

- Demand for **skills varies across occupations and size of the organisation**, this study determined that whilst some skills gaps are cutting across the various departments, some are unique to particular departments **depending on the mandate and objectives of the specific department**.
- The public service moratorium by the National Treasury has led to an increase number of acting arrangements when some occupations become vacant in certain organisations. This at times gives rise to the emergence of skills gaps as the workforce has to take on **new responsibilities without the necessary attributes or capabilities** to become effective in their new roles.
- The **line managers need to provide added effort in the compilation of PDPs** for the individual employees in their sub-directorates/units. If this process is comprehensively done, it will assist the line managers in understanding the skills gaps of their subordinates.
- **Talent-spotting and succession planning** in the public service may assist in closing the future skills gaps, this requires identifying suitable candidates and providing them with formal training and on-the-job training in the identified area.
- For the organisations to decide upon the appropriate approach to closing their skills gaps, they need to establish the wideness of the identified skills gaps per employee and then decide whether to **hire new talent or up-skill the existing workforce** through learning programmes or on-the job training

National Department Findings

Skills Gap: Managerial level

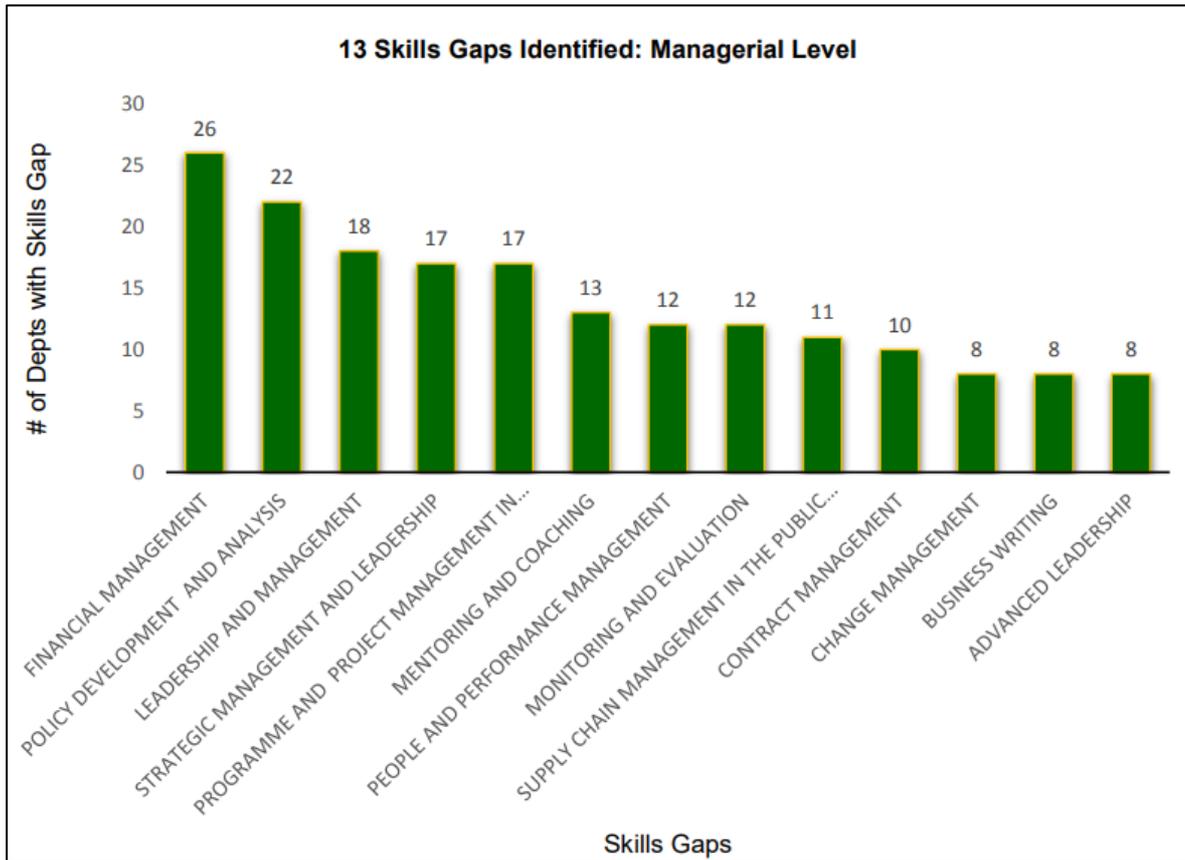


Figure 2: Top 13 Skills Gaps Identified Managerial Level
Source: Understanding the Skills Gaps in the Public Service Sector. September 2017

Figure two above is a display of common skills gaps at a Senior Management Service (SMS) level that came out repeatedly from the research analysis. These skills gaps are in line with Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) SMS Competency Framework and SMS Handbook which requires managers to be competent in the aforementioned skills in the public service. Through running the frequency analysis, the data indicates that financial management is a skill gap which the majority of the research participants identified as being existent in their respective organisations/departments.

National Department Findings

As displayed in figure two, policy development and analysis, leadership and management, strategic management and leadership, as well as programme and project management in the public service were all identified by a number of organisations as key skills gaps. The skills that were identified by the few government departments that are displayed in figure two above and table two below are also significant to note, as they may be affecting numerous employees from the few organisations that have identified them. The skills gaps list that were identified by the few organisations (as displayed in table two below) may not be dominant across a number of government departments but are also vital skills for the efficiency of the public service

Table 2: Various Skills Gaps Identified at Managerial Level

Skills Gaps Identified	# of Depts. with the Skills Gap
Research ¹	7
Human resource management and planning	7
Ethical conduct	6
PFMA	5
Information technology	5
Governance and public leadership	5
Communication	5
Knowledge management	4
Management development	3

There are other skills gaps identified as Professional and Administrative skills which need to be considered across various public sector departments in a managerial role:

- **Skills Gaps at a professional level**
 - Change management-
 - Financial Management -
 - Governance and public leadership -
 - Management development-
 - Mentoring and coaching -
 - Policy development and analysis-
 - Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)-
 - Policy development and analysis-
 - Project management in the public service

National Department Findings

- Record management and basis archives
- Supply chain management in the public service
- Foreign service
- Bid evaluation
- Mission administration

The information above presents the analysis of the skills gaps at the professional major occupational group as identified by the respondents. It is important to note that some of the skills gaps identified at the professional occupational major group level overlap with the ones identified at the managerial occupational major group level.

- **Skills Gaps at a administrative Level**

- Emotional intelligence
- Business admin
- Business ethics
- Essentials of budget formulation
- Microsoft office suite of applications
- Basic project management
- Administration
- Basic computer skills
- Business writing
- Records management

The list of skills gaps analysed from the respondents of the North West government department presents the identified skills gaps at the administrative level major occupational group category. The above mentioned skills gaps were generally mentioned as affecting most employees at administrative and elementary levels in the public service sector.

Identified Challenge in closing skills gaps

- The KZN Department of Roads and Transport purported that the directive that the departments need to only use the KZN Office of the Premier's Provincial Public Service Training Academy and NSG for some of their training interventions. The arrangement presents the department with challenges and limitations in terms of the available training to close their skills gaps and time delays in the implementation of training.
- The moratorium by National Treasury on the public service vacancies presents the departments with challenges in closing their identified skills gaps through recruitment. The Mpumalanga department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) noted that the moratorium means that the workforce currently employed stand the risk of not being retained come end of their contracts, this presents the department with dismal skills gaps. To deal with the backlog, the department relies on the interns

National Department Findings

- The department of Community Safety and Transport Management in the North West noted that some of the programmes are only provided by the NSG countrywide which presents a challenge for the public service as it results in delays for the departments to receive training aimed at closing their identified skills gaps. The NSG requirements (e.g. an established minimum number of attendees required before the training may take place) presents a challenge to smaller departments.
- One respondent noted that their department using the NSG as the training provider allows the department to avoid the tedious SCM internal processes. The respondent further noted that the quality of NSG training is questionable at times as the facilitators are outsourced by the NSG.
- It has been identified from the interview with the National Department of Home Affairs that the skills gap in Information Technology are a challenge due to the lack of modern technology that is being used in the department. As a result, it becomes a huge challenge for the department to attract the right talent that would allow the department to close the IT skills gap.

Implications for the future of work

- The nature of work is rapidly changing due to emerging technologies and disruptive forces, such as artificial intelligence, the gig economy, and automation (Brookings. December 2019). According to a study made by the US government, the skills gap may leave an estimated 2.4 million positions unfilled between 2018 and 2028, with a potential economic impact of \$2.5 trillion.”
- How can employers play a role in addressing skills gap? What measures can be taken to adequately anticipate and prepare the workforce to meet the demands of the future world of work?
- It is important to train the SMS across all public sector departments for them to understand the vision of that particular department and what it seeks to achieve. It is equally important to also think innovatively and apply ideas that are relevant to the future world of work as mentioned above. SMS can also ensure consistency in the future competencies applicable a particular department. SMS also need to have a clear understanding of the work carried out by that department in order to attract the right talent that possess the skill that will be able to address the skills gap and apply future technologies. Fundamentally, employers must identify and signal the skills they need, as well as develop mechanisms to recruit, train, and retain employees.
- In addressing the skills gap and developing a competency framework for employees to be well fit to operate in the future world of work, employers must make skills development a priority. This may include providing training for the specific skills emerging market firms need most, such as managerial, technical, professional, and soft skills. This may include providing training for the specific skills middle market firms need most, such as managerial, technical, professional, and soft skills. It can also include streamlining and expediting the process of accessing and using the services, as well as actively seeking out metro-area and regional middle market companies (Brookings. December 2019).

National Department Findings

Behavioral Competencies framework

The definition of a behavioral competency has been aligned with the DPSA Competency Framework for Human Resource Management and Development. Behavioral competencies refer to the ideal personal attributes or characteristics required for performing a particular job. They are considered essential for all roles across the organisational levels in the public service, regardless of their function. According to the DPSA framework behavioural competencies are categorised into the following two main groups as illustrated in the table below.

- **Key challenge**

This can be a huge challenge for department if there are no processes that enables the organisation to clarify expectations and identify standards of performance at every organisational level. It may be a huge challenge for staff to understand the general values, guiding principles and leadership priorities of the organisation.

Technical Competencies

The research carried out by the CBMFM project has identified the following technical competencies across the ten occupational functions (asset management competencies are in two dictionaries – movable asset management and immovable asset management). Each function is divided into a series of competency clusters representing a major component of the function. Each competency cluster is then broken down into one or more sub-components (competency titles) against which the individual competencies have been defined

- **Key challenge**

It is evident that the world of work is changing and more importantly moving a more technological way of working. Fundamentally, employers must identify and signal the skills they need, as well as develop mechanisms to recruit, train, and retain employees. However, many employers are not prepared to do so.

Core Competencies Framework

Core competencies are shared across all financial management roles and are categorised into the following two clusters. This level of competency focuses on:

- Category
- Competency cluster- e.g Senior Management Service, Generic skills
- Competency title- Management competencies and required skills, for example, management skills, communication skills, computer skills and customer service skills.

National department findings

Generic Competencies

The generic Competencies have been categorised into four skills categories

- Management Skills
- Communication Skills
- Computer Skills
- Customer Service Skills

Skills for the future

- **Leadership**

In the changing and evolving public service, what is needed is dynamic leadership acumen that can transform count in an operating environment of the public service. It is in this content that public service leaders are challenged to demonstrate high ethical standards and shared values to perform well by doing the right things, at the right time, in the right way, capitalising on technology, investing in developing required skills and encouraging both innovation and collaboration to achieve results for South Africa.

- **Leadership response in Management**

Effective managers usually influence leaders in equivalent roles. The table below shows the generic complementary roles drawn between leadership and management roles. According to the LDMSF on SMS research by DPSA, Management and leadership works together as follows:

How leadership behaviours enriches the management role

Management role involves developing and communicating vision and strategy of the organisation. Therefore, the leadership adds value by communicating the vision in a way that generate motivation, enthusiasm and commitment. In the management role also involves shaping the organisation's culture to reflect the desired values. Modeling and finding other creative ways to champion all aspects of the desired culture and values would be a leadership behaviour that can add value. Management should be able to build a high performing workforce and recognising the aims, aspirations and employment requirements of all staff. A leader would be expected to treat all people at all times in ways that reflects ethics, values and standards expected across the organisation. As a manager, one must enable people from different backgrounds to work together effectively. Actively promoting the value diversity should be a behaviour that a leader must demonstrate. It is important from a managerial perspective to manage multiple working relationships with the client and stakeholders to enhance understanding and cooperation. A leader must therefore, connect with people in ways that build a constructive external relationships. Lastly, from a management role is to demonstrate functional and skills appropriate for achievements and leaders to encourage and empower others to lead in the technical areas.

3.2 Provincial department findings

3.2.2 Provincial department findings

Provincial department AS-IS competency framework inception data was collected through a literature review of competency frameworks in the Public Service (South African government departments). This was done to understand the current landscape and identify any commonalities, potential gaps, or areas of development across the departments' competency frameworks. In this way, pave a way for the case for the benefits of a common guideline in developing competency frameworks for departments that ultimately achieve the organisation's strategic goals.

Senior public management competencies in the South African public service departments can be found in legislation and official documents, including but not limited to, the Public Service Act; the Senior Management Service (SMS) Competency Framework; Municipal Performance Regulations for Municipal Managers and Managers directly accountable to Municipal Managers; and the Municipal Finance Management Act and the Competency Regulations associated with it.

In an analysis study of the competency levels of senior managers in South African municipalities by the local government sector education and training authority (LGSETA), it was indicated that there are gaps around these competency frameworks. The survey results found **incorrect combination** of competencies in carrying out work for senior management roles which **inhibited performance**. The concluding remarks of the analysis study stated: ***“A careful balance should be struck between functional and general management competencies and more intangible competencies such as emotional intelligence and cognitive flexibility. Such a more balanced approach is indispensable to equip senior managers for the complexities associated with dynamic environmental, political, technological, economic and social contexts.”*** (An analysis of the competency levels of senior managers in South African municipalities: LGSETA, 2020). This challenge indicates that a standardised competency framework may be beneficial in eliminating inadequate combinations of competencies. As a common language and understanding of competencies across all job levels in public service departments would be established.

With South Africa generally struggling to find the critical skills required in organisations, skills development will be a critical HRM practice. The **department of Home Affairs** published a draft of the **critical skills list in 2021** where a number of critical occupations have been identified, these include civil, industrial and mining engineers; senior phase educators; software developers, etc. This list not only sheds light to the skills of the future, but emphasises the importance of a competency based approach for organisations, in which skills and competence are crucial. Thus, a competency framework should take into consideration the skills Government needs to meet the changing needs of the global economy and workforce.

The **National Development Plan (2010 - 2030)** articulates that there is a plan to **professionalise the Public Sector** for **efficient service delivery**. This and similar goals and objectives can support and needs to be embedded in core competencies for the guidelines of public sector competency frameworks as it will directly address a challenge prevalent in the Public Sector today. Lastly, a competency-based management approach may assist in **addressing the challenges faced today of burgeoning low-semi-skilled jobs in the country**. Statistics South Africa's latest Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) shows that almost **1 out of every 5 (19%) semi-skilled jobs that existed before Covid-19 are currently lost**. This sheds light to the fact that **skills development** will be crucial in **advancing the skills, knowledge and abilities** of South Africans in the workforce.

3.2 Challenges and Recommendations

3.2.3 Identified challenges and recommendations from the Public Service Competency Frameworks findings

Frameworks findings



Core competences:

- Not all frameworks have core competencies.
- Core competencies are crucial in ensuring that prospective and current employees have the required skills, knowledge and abilities to cultivate a desired culture and standard of performance in the Public sector.



Leadership competences:

- It would be beneficial to separate managerial competencies from leadership ones as leadership differs from management. Harvard Business Reviews defines management as managing a set of entities to accomplish a goal while leadership refers to motivating and encouraging others to success.
- Leadership is more about building motivation for organisational goals and strategy while the management refers more to the day-to-day management of employees.
- It may therefore be beneficial for any leadership role to have leadership competencies in addition to managerial ones.



Ethics as a core competency:

- Ethics is crucial to have as a standard and core competency for all departments to adopt.
- This ensures that a standard of moral behaviour and expectation is emphasised in Government.



Lifelong learning:

- Lifelong learning, defined as a process of learning throughout one's life (Encarta, 2008), is not a common competency across the frameworks.
- It is a benefit to have it as a core competency as it can foster continuous improvement in departments thereby ensuring high standards of performance in Government.
- Lifelong learning can also help improve skills development.
- When people invest in their growth and development, they will likely increase their employability prospects.
- With a high rate of semi-skilled - unskilled workers in South Africa (Statistics South Africa), it is crucial to prioritise lifelong learning as an organisation, while motivating people to take ownership of their own learning.



Critical skills:

- The **2021 Critical Skills List of occupations** and changes in the skills list were noticed (South African Department of Home Affairs);
- The list indicated that the same or new set of skills (IT, multimedia, etc) have become all the more important in the labour market;
- This also indicates that skills development in the new Covid-19 world or hybrid world of work will take a different form;
- Workplaces, including the Public sector workplaces, will need to invest in skills development that focus on Technological competencies;
- A competency that does not seem evident in the current competency framework yet may be required as a standard competency across most if not all departments.



Limited frameworks and skills of the future:

- Very limited competency frameworks are specific to provincial departments which may indicate that national departments provide the guidelines for competency management.
- However, with the limited competencies found at national level, this reinforces that a standard competency framework will go a long way in ensuring a movement towards a more competency-based workforce in the Public sector.
- Additionally, other competency frameworks are aged and may not speak to the competencies that relate to the skills of the future..



Section

4

Conclusion and Way Forward

4. Conclusion

PwC has carried out this desktop review to establish familiarity and gain an understanding of the objectives and strategic goals set out by PSETA. The purpose of this report is to detail the findings identified in the strategic reports provided by PSETA and provide a recommendations and way forward to successfully deliver on the development of the Organisational Competency Framework for the various departments within the Public Sector.

Based on the research, and what PSETA and DPSA have set out to achieve in their Strategic Plan 2020-2025, PwC will further explore the identified areas by conducting an interactive workshop with key individuals across the National and Provincial departments. The key purpose of the collaborative and interactive workshop will be to gain greater insights on the process undertaken by departments in developing their Organisational Competency Frameworks and identified challenges as well as their understanding of improvements that need to be made to enhance the process.

Below are key research areas that PwC will further explore through the interactive workshop with the National and Provincial departments:

Strategy

- Alignment to National strategic requirements and plans
- Alignment to relevant frameworks and organisational processes(i.e. HRD and Talent Management)

Structure

- Identification of scarce and critical skills and competencies for the future world of work
- Identification of roles and responsibilities and organisational/departmental structure
- Identification of proficiency levels

People

- Departments / individuals responsible for the development of the Competency Framework
- Socialisation, communication and training on Competency Frameworks

Process

- Guidelines and approach used to develop a Competency Framework for the National and Provincial departments

Technology

- Technological tools used for the development of the Competency Framework

Based on the mandate to undertake this assignment, it is apparent that PSETA and DPSA have a clear strategy that needs to be realised across the Public Sector. In addition, the PS-SAMF has been developed with the aim of providing a uniformed standardised approach in determining the nature of skills demands and assessment of skills discrepancies and needs within the public service departments. However, the internal and external factors are continuing to disrupt the way in which organisations and their employees operate. Therefore, it is critical to further assess the way in which Competency Frameworks have been developed to ensure that fit for purpose guidelines are provided for organisational and employee success.

Appendix

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APPROVAL OF RESEARCH REPORT BY CEO	
Recommendation(s)	Approved/Not Approved ✓
Comments: Report approved.	
Signature	
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Date	31 March 2022

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