



**FINANCIAL LITERACY TRAINING FOR THE  
EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME**

**FINAL EVALUATION REPORT**

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Prepared by



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## **List of Abbreviations**

DAC	–	Development Assistance Committee
DPWI	–	Department of Public Works and Infrastructure
EPWP	–	Expanded Public Works Programme
FSCA	–	Financial Sector Conduct Authority
FSPs	–	Financial Services Providers
HSRC	–	Human Science and Research Council
KII	–	Key Informant Interviews
M&E	–	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOA	–	Memorandum of Agreement
OECD	–	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PATMT	–	Pan Africa TMT
SPSS	–	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Financial Sector Conduct Authority (FSCA), through the Consumer Education Department (CED), is mandated to provide, promote, and facilitate consumer education and financial literacy training within South Africa. In 2016, the FSCA entered into an agreement with the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI), and since then, the FSCA has been working in collaboration with the DPWI to provide consumer financial education and financial literacy training workshops to participants involved in the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

The EPWP is an initiative of the DPWI, which is a government programme that aims to provide disadvantaged and unemployed people with work opportunities and income support through the labour-intensive delivery of public and community assets and services. It is aimed at poverty alleviation through economic development by creating short-term employment opportunities.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

The FSCA entered a three-year (April 2020 to March 2023) Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the DPWI to provide “financial literacy training” in the form of structured training sessions designed by the FSCA. The aim is to capacitate participants by increasing their financial knowledge and financial literacy skills. This programme was designed to enable and empower EPWP participants in terms of financial literacy knowledge and personal financial management.

In the EPWP, training is a cross-cutting function that supports all EPWP sectors and is implemented in all nine provinces in South Africa. The nature and types of courses offered to participants are informed by the project activities, resulting in increased participant productivity throughout the duration of the EPWP projects.

The FSCA is the market conduct regulator of financial institutions. It regulates and supervises compliance with laws, regulating financial institutions, providing financial customers with financial education programs, promoting financial literacy and financial consumers’ ability to make sound financial decisions. The EPWP training, which includes budgeting and debt management topics, is intended to assist EPWP participants in making informed financial decisions and increasing their financial literacy skills.

Pan Africa TMT was commissioned to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the financial literacy training. The report highlights a brief introduction, methodology, key findings, and recommendations. The purpose of the evaluation was to gain insight into the planning process, implementation approach, and value of the training workshops. The evaluation will serve as a valuable tool in informing future programmes by

highlighting the programmes' successes, challenges, and ways to improve them going forward.

### 3. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE EPWP FINANCIAL LITERACY TRAINING

The program's core objectives were to increase financial awareness and equip EPWP participants with skills to better manage their finances, plan for retirement, and make informed financial decisions when purchasing financial products and services.



**Figure 1: Core Objectives**

Initially, when the MOA was signed, the agreement was to train 20,000 participants per year. However, due to the COVID-19 national lockdown, the objectives of the programme were not reached. A revised proposal for the 2021/2022 financial year was developed to reach 1,376 EPWP participants in all nine provinces. The target number was exceeded, and over 8,000 participants were reached.

The key training topics that were covered included Financial Control, Financial Planning, Financial Products and Financial Service Providers (FSPs), Financial Recourse Mechanisms or Complaint Processes, and Knowledge of Consumer Rights and Responsibilities.

#### **4. EVALUATION APPROACH**

The purpose of this evaluation was to determine the effectiveness of the financial literacy training for EPWP participants. The evaluation sought to determine and understand the extent to which participants benefited from the training and how they applied what they learned.

A mixed-method approach comprising of quantitative and qualitative research techniques in measuring the effectiveness of the financial literacy training was applied by the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) team.

The pre- and post-surveys were used to assess the participants' knowledge and skills in financial literacy before and after the training was delivered. The two results were compared for evaluation.

The key stakeholders, which include FSCA staff, DPWI officials, Municipal Coordinators, and participants involved in the implementation of the EPWP training were interviewed via Microsoft (MS) Teams or Zoom. The interviews focused on the planning, execution, challenges, successes, and logistics of the training amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, the M&E team conducted site visits where possible to observe the implementation of the training and to engage with the project team as well as the participants.

##### **Data Collection**

The table below displays the key areas of data collection, including tools, target audience, and when the instruments were implemented.

Data Collection Tools	Target Audience	Indicators	Administration of instrument
<b>Questionnaire to be administered before and after the workshop</b>	Workshop participants	-Relevance of the programme -Effectiveness of the programme -Knowledge acquired	-Immediately before the workshop -Immediately after the workshop
<b>Observation Tool</b>	M&E Field Workers	-Logistics -Facilities -Learning/ facilitation approaches	-Immediately after the workshop
<b>Key Informant Interviews (KII)</b>	FSCA staff, DPWI officials and all identified key stakeholders.	-Planning and implementation -Outcomes of the collaboration	-Following the project implementation schedule

**Table 1: Key Data Collection Points**

### **Data Capture and Processing**

**Qualitative Data:** A general inductive thematic approach was used to analyse the responses from the in-depth interviews. This involved the transcribing and coding of data and the categorisation of common themes.

**Quantitative Data:** The data was captured using the public domain software package Census and Survey Processing System (CSPPro) to ensure accuracy and speed of capturing data, and the data was cleaned and exported to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis.

### **Research Protocol**

PATMT has exercised due care when interacting with participants and interviewees, and conducted this evaluation in accordance with the Human Sciences Research Council's (HSRC) Code of Research Ethics when gathering, processing, and disseminating information related to this evaluation.

## **5. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

This section presents the key evaluation findings aligned to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Evaluation Criteria developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). A summary of key findings for each criterion is outlined at the end of the respective section for ease of reference.



The findings are aligned with the guidelines for project and programme evaluation published by the OECD: DAC. This will be achieved as follows:

Criterion	Description
<b>Relevance</b>	Whether the training was relevant to the audience, aligned to the strategic objectives of the EPWP project and that of the implementing parties.
<b>Effectiveness</b>	Measured the extent to which the objectives of the EPWP project were met, as well as the programme reach and feedback.
<b>Efficiency</b>	Whether activities were carried out in a cost-efficient manner and according to the time frames.
<b>Sustainability</b>	Future implementation for similar projects and expansion of learning programmes for participants.

**Table 2: Data Analysis**

## 5.1. Relevance

The Relevance criterion investigated *“Whether the course material was relevant to the participants and aligned to the strategic objectives of the campaign and the implementation team.”*

### Training programme survey

The EPWP participants who attend the training workshops are generally poor, low-skilled individuals working on a contract basis for the duration of the specific project. They face a range of financial challenges stemming from poor financial management and a lack of experience in budgeting with limited resources.

A sample of 427 participants completed the pre-survey and the post-survey. The EPWP participants are a suitable target audience for the financial literacy training, given that they earn a low level of income and are more likely to be in a better position to act on some of the financial messages imparted to them.

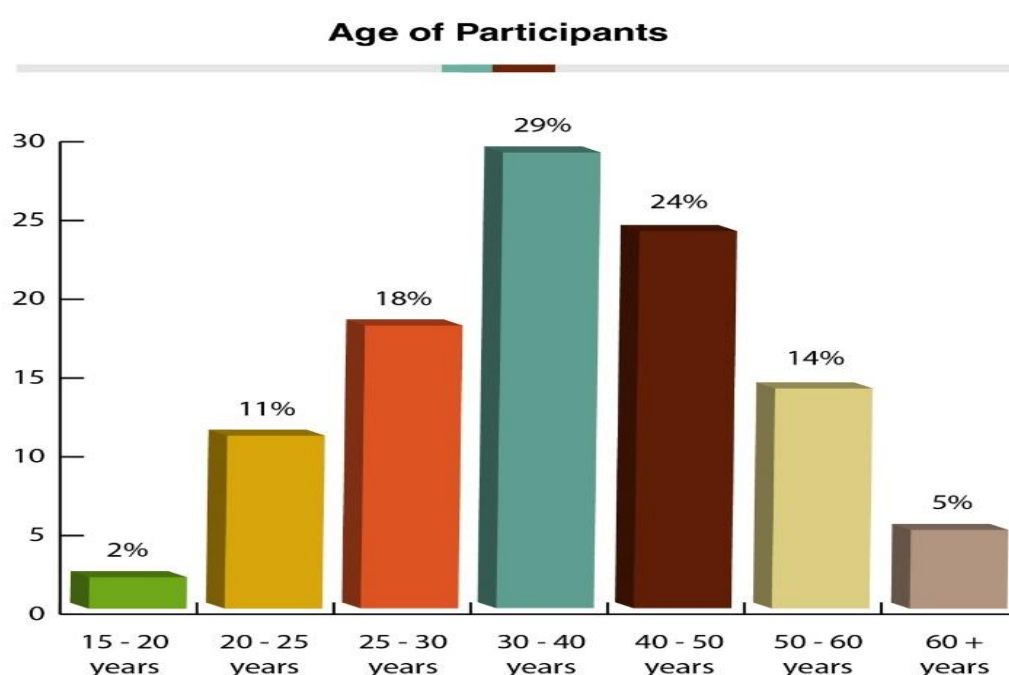
The question with the most responses was whether one had a budget or not. This was answered by 98% of the participants. On the other hand, the question that had the least responses pertained to whether it was essential to have long-term financial plans. This was answered by 86% of the participants.

## Demographic information of participants

The survey used four leading demographical indicators to profile the participants. These included age, sex, race, and educational level.

### Age

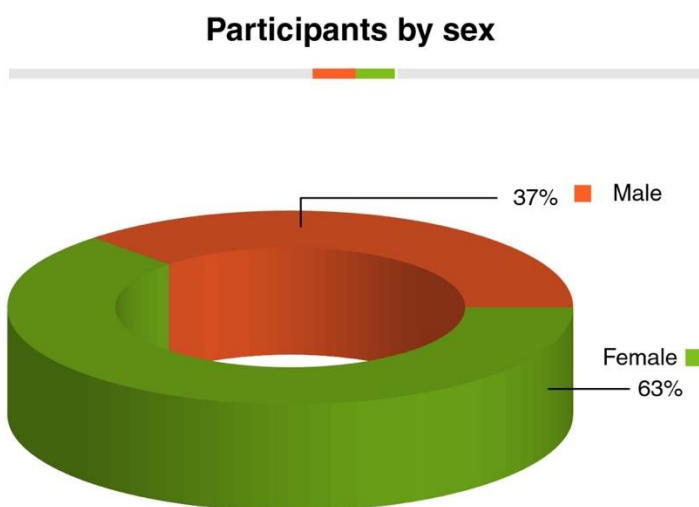
The age distribution of the participants ranged from 15 years old to 60 years and above. The group aged 30 to 40 years was the modal class with 29% of the participants. The second largest group was those aged 40 to 50 years, with 21%. This suggests a balanced spread amongst the age groups. This is a typical display of the range of working-class participants, supported by the EPWP training and is represented by different partner departments.



**Figure 2: Age of participants**

### Participants by sex

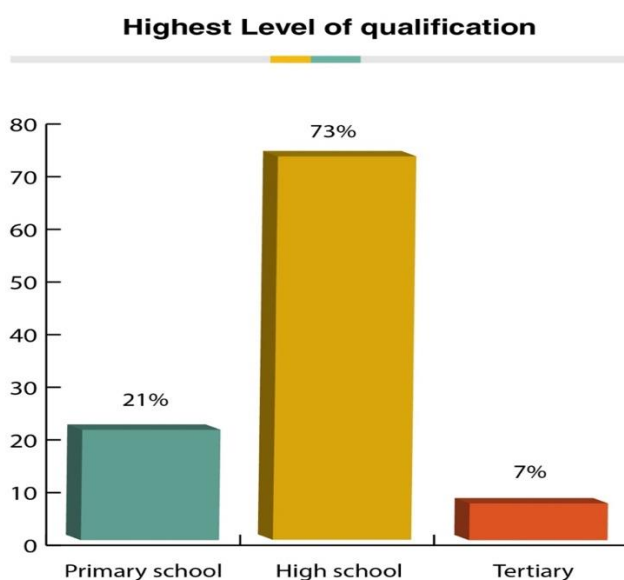
The results show that the majority of the participants were women with 63%, while men were in the minority with 37%. According to the 2011 census results for the population of South Africa, a ratio of 0.99 males to females, which means that South Africa has more females than males. The outcome indicates that there are more female participants in the programme and further shows that more women participated in the financial literacy training.



**Figure 3: Participants by sex**

#### **Highest Level of qualification**

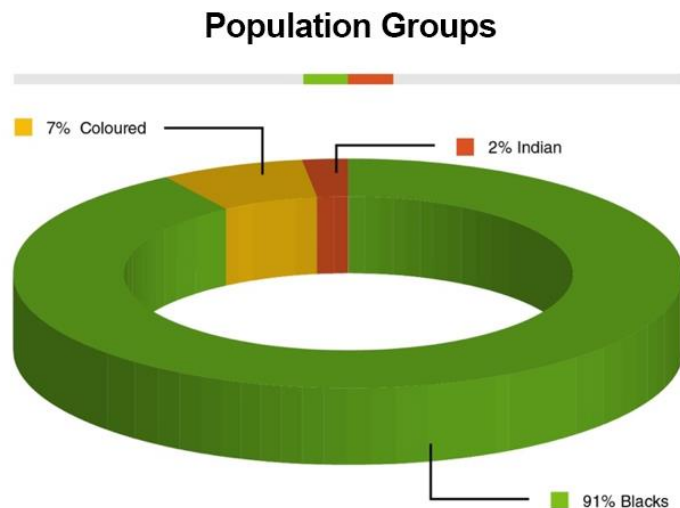
Most of the participants (73%) were mainly people who had completed high school, as represented in figure 4 below. The participants who had a tertiary education were only 7%. The participants with only primary school level education were 21%. The results show the EPWP participants' literacy levels, which can help guide facilitators on the appropriate levels to pitch the learning material to accommodate the various comprehension levels amongst participants.



**Figure 4: Highest Level of qualification**

### Population (ethnic) groups

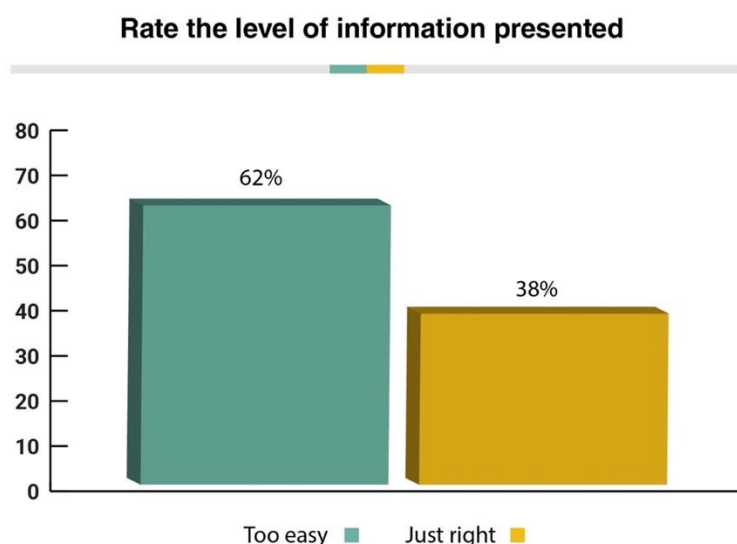
The racial statistics indicate that the majority of the participants who responded (91%) were African natives, while 7% were Coloured and 2% were Indian. There was no white representation among the participants who completed the survey.



**Figure 5: Population Groups**

### Level of information presented

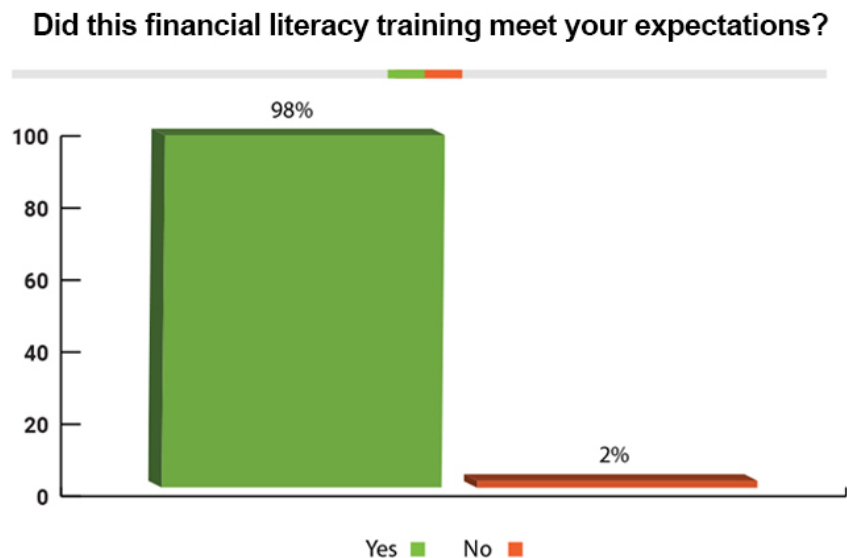
The participants were asked to rate the information that was presented during the training. The training was well received by the participants, with the facilitators playing a critical role, particularly by being adaptable with the use of dominating vernacular languages spoken within the training where possible.



**Figure 6: Level of information presented**

### Meeting Expectations

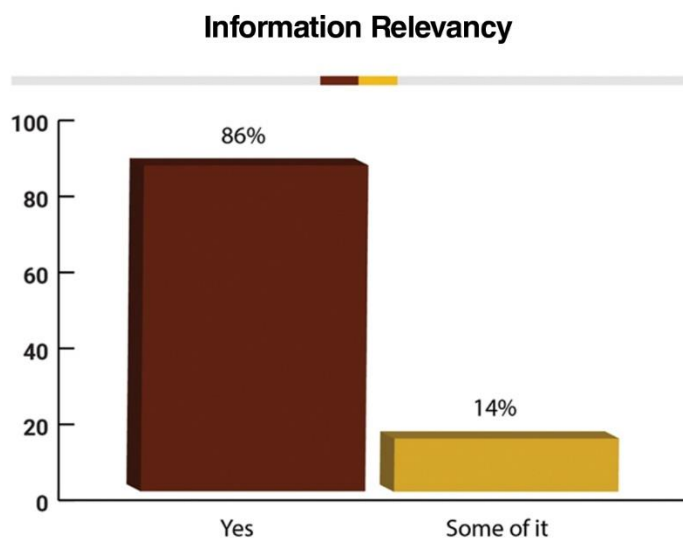
On whether the participants' financial literacy training expectations were met, an overwhelming 98% of the participants indicated that their expectations were met. This further demonstrates that the content was pitched at the right level.



**Figure 7: Financial literacy training meeting expectations**

### Relevancy of the information

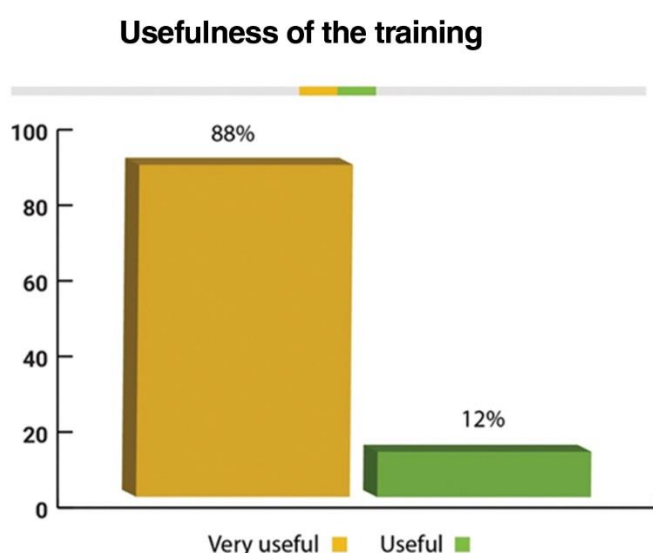
The majority of the participants (86%) found the content to resonate with them or their experiences. This further indicates that the training sessions provided the participants with relevant skills that were appropriate and well targeted.



**Figure 8: Information Relevancy**

## Rating the training

The participants were asked to rate the usefulness of the training. They responded as follows: 88% found it very useful and 12% found it useful. The overall rating was 100% positive, as shown in the graph. The training results, as per the post-training survey outcomes, demonstrate that the content was relevant and pitched at the appropriate level for the participants.



**Figure 9: Usefulness of the training**

## Engagements and Observations

The evaluation team interviewed various stakeholders, including participants, who attested that the training met its intended objectives of improving and increasing financial skills of EPWP participants through promotion of consumer education in order to make an informed financial decision when buying financial products and services.

The course content was developed by the FSCA, which was also responsible for training the facilitators. On enquiry about the training material being sufficient for the course, those asked this question responded with a yes. However, one individual expressed the view that there needs to be an expansion of content on pyramid schemes and unclaimed benefits.

An enquiry from the facilitators on whether the course material was simple enough for the participants to understand the content fully received a “yes” response. Two replied negatively, with one of them indicating that the course material should “be in all languages as not everyone can understand English.”

In general terms, there was an understanding of the learning material content. Those who replied “no” showed a preference for the content to be provided in other languages, while others are said to have followed the content in pictures. On whether

the course material was interesting and entertaining, the response to this question was a resounding “yes” from all the respondents.

## **SUMMARY ON RELEVANCE**

The participants were all beneficiaries of the EPWP sponsored project from various government departments and associated institutions. The majority (63%) of the participants were women, and most (94%) had an education level of matric or below.

The survey completeness ranged from 97% to over 99%. Generally, there was a notable change in perceptions and plans regarding the approach to financial management. Most of the respondents committed that they would use budgets in future that they would stick to.

The course content developed by the FSCA was pitched at the right level, and the examples provided to support the content were relevant to everyday cases as the beneficiaries’ responses indicated their need to engage in the basics of money management and specifically budgeting. There was, however, an exception with the request to expand on the pyramid schemes topic. The facilitators revealed that the course content was pitched at the right level and was suitable for the participants to understand fully.

The training proved to have met its intended objectives of improving and increasing financial awareness and was pitched at the appropriate level in terms of reach and content.

## **5.2. Effectiveness**

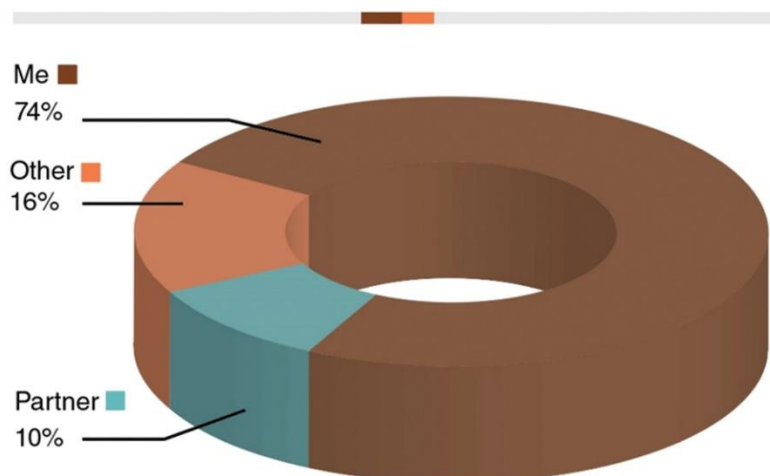
The Effectiveness criterion provides *“Measures the extent to which the objectives of the financial literacy training were met, feedback and knowledge acquired.”*

When feedback was sourced on various subjects prior to and after the learning intervention, the participants responded as follows:

### **Management of money**

A question was posed to the participants on who was responsible for the day-to-day management of the money; 74% of the participants indicated that they were responsible for controlling their money. While 10% responded that their partners were mainly responsible for managing their money, 16% indicated “other”, which excluded the questions given alternate options. In future, the question may need to be expanded to obtain better insight into other variables composing the number.

### Money Management Responsibility

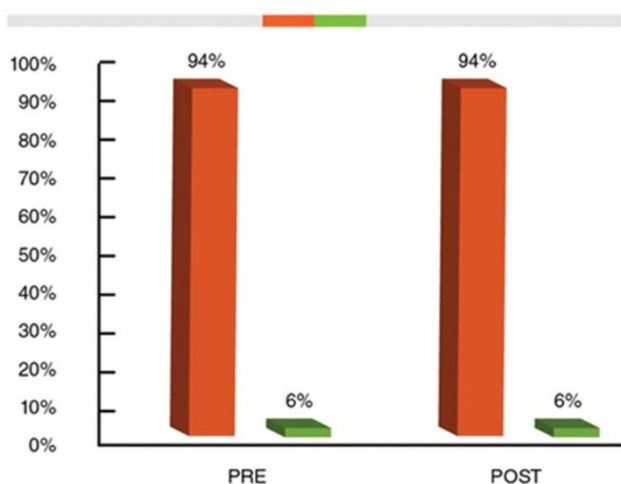


**Figure 10 Money Management Responsibility**

The participants were given the assertion that everyone needed to learn how to manage money and were asked whether the statement was true or false. The results show that, in both cases (pre- and post-survey), 94% agreed that everyone needed to learn how to manage money.

A question was also asked about whether everyone needed to learn to manage money. The results showed that 94% agreed with this assertion pre and post the training, compared to only 6% who disagreed.

### Learning about Money Management



**Figure 11: Learning about Money Management**



## **Participants' Engagement with the Content**

The participants were given a list of questions pertaining to the training content to answer before and after the training session. The responses showed some of the key responses from the participants and indicated variations in the level of knowledge acquired.

The results clearly showed that there was a general shift in perceptions before and after the training. The question regarding whether one had a budget or not was answered positively by 71% of the respondents in the pre-survey, and then it increased to 98% in the post-survey. This means that some did not consider what they had as a budget before the session, and after training, they had a better understanding of what makes a budget and could provide an appropriate response.

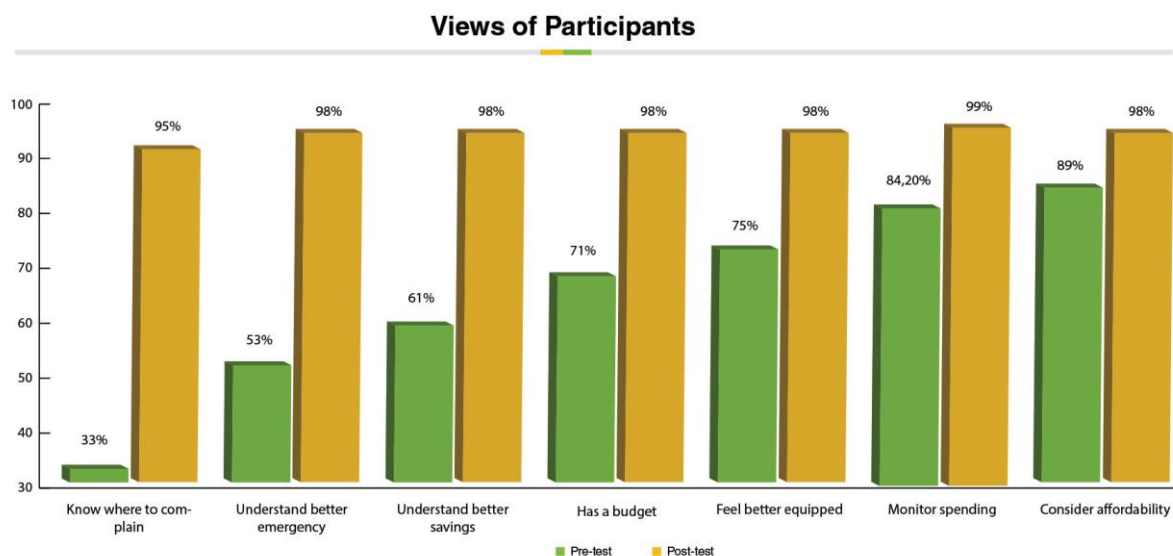
It was also found that 89% considered affordability before buying anything in the pre-survey, which increased to 98% in the post-survey. In the pre-survey, 84% indicated that they monitored their spending, which increased to 99% in the post-survey.

The question on whether the participants understood the types of savings or investment products sold by financial service providers received positive responses from 61% of the participants in the pre-survey and 98% of the participants in the post-survey. The post-survey results show that knowledge of the different investment types was either discovered or enhanced as a result of the training.

In the pre-survey, 75% of participants indicated that they were better equipped to shop around for financial products, and in the post-survey, the percentage increased to 98%. This means that an additional 23% of those who were not equipped before the training felt that they were now well equipped after the training.

The participants were asked whether they understood the importance of having an emergency fund. The results showed that 53% answered positively in the pre-survey, whereas the responses in the post-survey demonstrated a significant increase of 98%.

In terms of the participants' knowledge of where to complain, 33% knew where to complain in the pre-survey, and the percentage increased to 95% in the post-survey.



**Figure 12: Views of Participants**

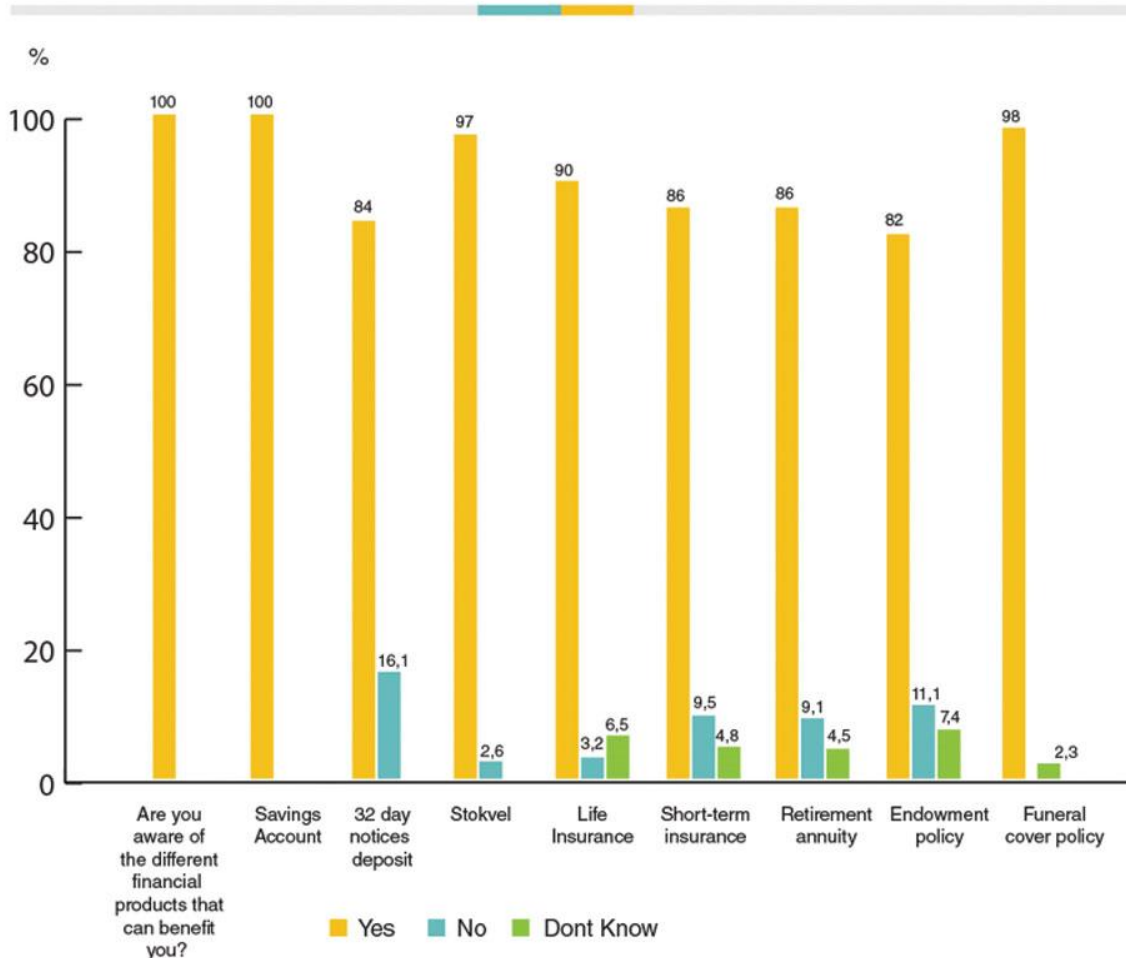
### **Awareness of Financial Products and Services**

Participants were given a list of financial products to determine whether they were aware of the various financial products and services.

The results show a general awareness of the products. Savings deposits, stokvels, and funeral policies were the most common products the participants were aware of.

Even though there were good responses to the different types of insurance products, there were a number of participants (86%) who were not aware of retirement annuity and endowment policy insurance. The topic of insurance may need to be further expanded on in the future.

## Knowledge of Financial Products and Services



**Figure 13: Knowledge of Financial Products and Services**

### KII Engagements and Observations

All the interviewed respondents equally agreed that the training content was appropriate to achieve the aims and objectives of the training. The same view was held regarding the language content and its ability to be understood by all the participants. All the respondents, but one agreed that the course material was easily understood by the participants. However, the odd respondent out was of the view that providing the content material to some participants in a language other than English would go a long way in ensuring that all the participants fully understood the content.

In relation to whether any content was not easily understood by participants during the training sessions, the respondents indicated that the content was easily understood. Some respondents highlighted that the areas of difficulty were in the proper categorisation of items or the differentiation of items under fixed or variable costs. However, it was highlighted that this eventually became clearer as more examples were given and the training sessions became more interactive. There was also an indication that some were less interested in insurance.

Different age groups participated in the financial literacy training, and it emerged that not all of them had the same level of understanding of the content. Those in the affirmative indicated that the reaction from participants ranged from finding it interesting to relevant, and one highlighted that the interactivity of the training sessions enabled participants to ask clarity seeking questions. Some stakeholders highlighted that the various age groups bring different experiences that reflect on the understanding of the content. Another respondent indicated that she tried to simplify the content to make it easily understood by everyone. In one of the KIIs, a stakeholder raised the issue of illiteracy among some of the EPWP participants as a challenge.

During the training program, facilitators had an opportunity to engage and interact with the participants about the training content. The majority of the facilitators strongly agreed that participants freely and willingly participated in question-and-answer sessions. Furthermore, all KIIs asserted that the participants understood the training content.

Time is usually a factor in the delivery of learning material to those who are not familiar with the content. It therefore becomes appropriate that some effort is made to ensure that sufficient time is allocated for the training material to be delivered. Regarding whether there was adequate time to present all the training material, the majority (66%) of the KII respondents disagreed and thought there wasn't adequate time for the content to be delivered effectively. It also emerged from the interview interactions that some training material had to be compressed due to challenges with the non-provision of lunch packs.

The majority (77%) of respondents strongly agree with the statement that participants require more time to fully understand some of the concepts presented. This was supported by a stakeholder who highlighted that the training material could easily be taught over 2–3 days, and that it would be helpful to also provide the learning material in other languages other than English.

Furthermore, all the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that “participants’ financial knowledge and skills improved after attending the training.”

## **SUMMARY ON EFFECTIVENESS**

There was an overall positive reaction received from the participants in their responses to several subject matters put to them. The topic of budgeting was the most engaged with by the participants. The outcomes show a significant shift in learning key concepts of budgeting and how to use the budget as a critical tool for money management in general.

The participants were made aware of the critical steps to take to tackle any challenges encountered and were further made aware of the public institutions that assist with dealing with consumer financial concerns. The overall outcome of the survey indicates that the participants have gained some information on the primary steps to take to tackle challenges they encounter and the institutions that are available to assist with dealing with consumer financial concerns. The training further provided them with a foundation on which to build further awareness going forward. In addition to the surveys, participants were interviewed to obtain direct, in-depth data. Most responses highlighted that most of the content material was easily grasped, and where there were challenges, the topics became clearer through the use of examples and interactive facilitation methods.

It also emerged, as supported by the different levels of education, that not all the participants are at the same level, and thus others would benefit from the course material being provided in other languages other than English. The learning material was also highlighted as being loaded with relevant information and that time should or could be managed better to enable the participants to engage better with the intervention.

In summary, the financial knowledge and skills were cited as having been enhanced. Further, most of the participants made the commitment or desire to be more in control of their own finances.

### **5.3. Efficiency**

The Efficiency criterion investigates *“Whether planning and implementation activities were carried out efficiently and according to the timeframes.”*

#### **Planning, Logistics, and Implementation**

Engagement with stakeholders revealed some positives as well as challenges in the implementation of the financial literacy training amid the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the areas of concern was the inability to meet as often as was initially planned to strategise on the project.

The various lockdown regulations introduced by the government over the previous two years presented challenges in planning. For example, one stakeholder shared that the “train the trainer” programme typically conducted face-to-face had to happen virtually. The virtual sessions made it challenging to interact with the facilitators and advise on the dynamics of adequately running a training session. In contrast, the training in the provinces was set to be face-to-face physical interaction. Additionally, the KII also indicated that “not sufficient physical monitoring of the training could be done either.”

Although most objectives were said to have been met, as has been suggested by another KII, such as “the right type of material disseminated to the participants,” it was

mentioned that it was challenging to receive schedules timeously. In the rural areas, the weather was also a factor, as heavy rains and floods rendered roads inaccessible.

Venue availability is important, and its accessibility for most of the participants of the EPWP project, who are most likely poor and based in rural areas, is equally beneficial. When questioned on whether the venue was easily accessible to the participants, all the respondents but one indicated that the venue was easily accessible.

The stakeholder engagements highlighted that the collaboration and partnership was providing mutual benefit and further appreciated the outcomes provided to the participants. However, some areas in which support can be provided were identified, with one such area being in instances wherein DPWI facilitators can be said to be lacking in terms of training, where the FSCA could step in. Due to the diversity of the individuals that participate in the EPWP project, it has emerged that some of the participants are illiterate and using other languages other than English in the training material could be useful.

Certain facilitators highlighted the challenge of the vastness of their provinces and the travel requirements, considering that the programme is implemented widely. This matter was also raised by some coordinators from the partner departments, as some of their programmes are coordinated from provincial capitals, and it was their responsibility to ensure that all logistics were in place in the remote venues, hence the necessity to travel extensively.

The annual target number of 20,000 was adjusted accordingly due to the challenges posed by the pandemic and associated lockdown regulations, with the new target set at 1,376 for the 2021/2022 financial year. Overall, the 2021/2022 FSCA/EPWP Project has reached 8,403 and conducted 214 workshops

Initial Annual Target	20,000
Adjusted Target (Due to COVID-19)	1,376
Overall Reach	8,403
Training workshops conducted	214

**Table 3: Number of participants and training workshops**

### General Monitoring Observations

The monitoring of the implementation activities was undertaken to provide a first-hand account of the engagements at the training venues.

PROVINCE VISITED	VENUE
Eastern Cape	Bizana
Western Cape	Athlone
Western Cape	Philippi

North West	Potchefstroom
Limpopo	Xihoko
Limpopo	Burgersfort

**Table 4: Site Visits**

Furthermore, the monitoring visits enabled the platform for direct engagement with the organisers, facilitators, and participants.

**Venue Facilitation:** The sourced venues were appropriate and, in most cases, within easy reach of the participants. All the venues visited had the supporting tools to assist facilitators with their work. These included overhead projectors, flip charts, and other devices. Some workshops were postponed due to COVID-19.

**Timekeeping:** There was a general adherence to the starting times for the workshops. In very few instances, facilitators were delayed due to factors relating to travel issues.

**Training Facilitation:** The training was varied as some workshops were conducted by one facilitator, and others were conducted by a team of facilitators. In the case of the team, the topics were shared among the DPWI officials, with one lead facilitator managing the process.

**Language:** The facilitators were cognizant of the language issue, especially where the elderly were involved. The facilitator used English as a primary language and that of the learning material, but in most cases, if not all, the facilitator used a mixed approach with local languages to entrench concepts and facilitate active participation. There were isolated cases where the language was an issue, but not to the detriment of the training engagement.

**General interaction between Facilitator and Participants:** There was cordial engagement, and this contributed to enhanced learning by participants. The interaction was achieved by encouraging the participants to provide their examples and interpretations of topical discussions. In other instances, participants were grouped into teams to facilitate collaboration and promote participation. The sessions on budgeting were the most popular, with a high level of participation and interaction.

**COVID-19 Protocols:** As the training was happening during COVID-19, all the venues observed the COVID-19 protocols in alignment with the national regulations.

**Pre- and Post-Training Engagement:** The partner department officials, facilitators, and participants introduced themselves. The officials provided the background of the workshop, and the participants shared their expectations of attending. The facilitators guided and aided when needed to fill out the pre-training and post-training questionnaires.

## SUMMARY ON EFFICIENCY

The opportunity of operating in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic has meant the adjustment of the implementation of the programme. The training of the facilitators has had to take effect online, unlike face-to-face as previously done, which has proven to be a challenge to interact with and advise on some dynamics such as facial features and gestures when facilitating.

The partner departments played a critical role in the facilitation of appropriate venues, ensuring the attendance of their EPWP participants, as well as managing cordial communications with the DPWI facilitators and officials.

Lack of sufficient physical monitoring of the training is another area that has been identified as a challenge under COVID-19 and subsequent lockdowns, as it also affected the number of participants in some areas. Although most objectives were said to have been met, such as the right type of material being disseminated to the participants, it was mentioned that consideration should also be made to provide content in other languages other than English.

The financial literacy training, like other government plans, was negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown regulations. The challenges posed by lack of face-to-face training, as well as regulations limiting the number of participants in some public spaces, are some of the factors that influenced the set target of not reaching 20,000 participants per annum. Consequently, the quantity had to be re-adjusted to more practical numbers. Consequently, the amount had to be re-adjusted to more practical numbers. The numbers were subsequently exceeded due to the agility in planning and risk management by the implementation team. So, despite some concerns raised about the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, adjustments were made accordingly.

### 5.4. Sustainability

The sustainability criterion seeks to measure *“Whether the campaign has potential to continue in the future for similar projects and expansion of learning programmes for participants.”*

The financial literacy training within the framework of EPWP has the potential for sustainability if consideration is taken on the responses from the various stakeholders. In answering the question on how the learning experience can be improved, some notable responses from some KIs highlighted that the training should be presented over a full day with further inputs if it was possible to run over two days.

That would allow other topics, especially those that are not very popular in terms of awareness, like life insurance and other forms of investment, to be allocated enough



time to explore with the participants. Topics like insurance and retirement fund were viewed as not interesting for the target audience; this was indicated by the facilitators in their engagement with participants but further observed during the site visit monitoring sessions.

Other areas that support the sustainability of the training were: ensuring the reach of the programme in the language that the participants can best understand and being innovative on topics presented to participants. Getting learning material in all languages, providing entertaining learning videos on topics that learners are less interested in, e.g., insurance, and “providing more information on important and “relevant” topics like pyramid schemes.” Developing flyers in a native language was also highlighted as an area that would enhance broader understanding, and the use of videos might interest participants who are illiterate.

In responding to whether some participants may need further guidance after attending the training programme, the responses received were mixed. Some indicated that some guidance was required, while others indicated that none was needed. Those that responded in the affirmative advanced the critical argument that getting out of financial trouble is a long-term exercise, and it cannot happen overnight.

Furthermore, another key point was that due to insufficient time in delivering the content and, more importantly, some participants might aspire to be entrepreneurs following the end of their EPWP contracts, it was essential to provide more guidance and engagement during their term with the departments. The need for continued support will provide the necessary and entrenched impact of the programme.

One respondent was of the view that in circumstances where it may have been detected that further guidance was necessary, then there should be follow-ups. The respondent stated that those who communicate their challenges with relevant principals after the training sessions must be taken through and be guided further. One other respondent was of the view that “participants need an after-care session as a budget is not easy to put together, and monitoring the expenditure needs to be taken care of in order to realise the impact of the workshop in the long term.”

## **SUMMARY ON SUSTAINABILITY**

The financial training intervention provided through the EPWP has been identified by both the coordinators and participants as being beneficial and empowering to those who received the training. As such, there is sufficient motivation from those that took part in the training to encourage others to partake in the programme. However, as advised by KII responses, the learning experience can be further improved with minor adjustments, such as the provision of further learning on content material, i.e., pyramid schemes; how beneficial the various types of insurance could be to the participants,

and the provision of lunch or lunch packs. The addition of this could further enhance the sustainability of the programme.

Regarding the issue of lunch, it has emerged during KIIs that the lack of provision of lunch for the participants became a factor in that some training sessions had to be rushed or content cramped to avoid going over lunchtime. This suggests that not only can this turn out to be a disadvantage to the participants in their learning and understanding, but also suggests that it can dissuade others from attending further training sessions. One of the limitations of a cramped programme could be that participants may not be able to retain the information but extending the time would go a long way in assisting in the retention of the information as anything unclear can be clarified and examples provided.

Given that the EPWP focuses on the least privileged in the community, the provision of lunch has been identified as one of the areas in which a difference can be made to motivate participants in their learning, both in terms of concentrating further as well as encouraging others who may show interest in participating.

## **6. SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES**

### **SUCCESSES**

The collaboration between the FSCA and DPWI is working well in combining and augmenting financial literacy with the technical skills provided by the EPWP. The training has improved from being provided by a specialised service provider to being provided by training coordinators from DPWI, who understand the target audience better and cover a much broader base.

The content material has been acceptable to all the stakeholders, including the participants. The commitment by all the parties concerned in partaking in the financial literacy training intervention, including the participants, can be noted as one of the success factors.

The planning and implementation by the project team have throughout the project taken into consideration changes along the way. i.e., on challenges brought about by COVID-19, the reporting has now been broken down into a quarterly basis to mitigate the risk.

### **CHALLENGES**

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about a unique set of dynamics in the implementation of the Financial Literacy Training within the framework of the EPWP project. Unlike pre-COVID-19, when the FSCA conducted train-the-trainer face-to-face, during COVID-19, virtual training had to be conducted. As much as it worked, some challenges, such as body language and other physical features, could not be adequately demonstrated virtually.

The pandemic also affected the number of participants from the learning intervention. Due to regulations imposed by the government, some of the venues had a limit in terms of the number of participants that could attend. An element of fear of contracting COVID-19 from some of the participants in attending sessions physically also influenced the numbers. Insufficient monitoring of the project and a lack of face-to-face meetings, which would influence timely scheduling, were also a challenge.

The evaluation team had planned to conduct two visits per province but due to constant challenge of receiving provincial training schedules late, could only manage to visit four provinces. The matter was raised with the FSCA and EPWP project team and was mitigated by conducting interviews with the relevant stakeholders using virtual means.

Some learning interventions had to be speeded up and some content bunched up to accommodate the issue of time. Being unable to provide lunch packs to the participants forced the learning programme to be altered so as not to proceed beyond lunchtime. The EPWP project also caters to some of the poorest of the poor who are based in rural areas. The result has been that some have had to drop out of school owing to socio-economic challenges. This meant that some of the participants had difficulty relating to the content as it was in English.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations have been developed based on the findings of the evaluation and are intended to provide support to the FSCA's work towards improving the training workshops for the EPWP participants.

**Consider providing the training over at least one full day.** The participants were mostly given an entire day off to attend the training. Noting the other recommendation on the provision of lunch, it would be of greater benefit to provide the training at a steady pace to allow more participation and engagement with the learning matter. The training has rich content and can be made more beneficial by looking at practical ways to implement this recommendation.

**Consider the provision of lunch packs.** The provision of lunch packs will assist to enable concentration on the learning by participants, considering that some learners have to leave their bases early and travel to training venues. Furthermore, the general outcome from all parties indicated that some learning interventions had to be rushed or even cramped to finish before lunchtime. Participants tended to lose concentration, especially towards lunchtime, and the intervention in the provision of lunch packs could assist in many ways.

**Consider expansion of the train-the-trainer programme.** Although the latest training was online, it has emerged that due to the vastness of other provinces, and reliance on DPWI officials for training, some challenges were still experienced, including fatigue as some facilitators had to travel long hours in some instances to congregate at one central venue. Extending the train-the-trainer programme to a pre-determined number of district officials might assist in providing facilitation support, especially considering the immense interest in the programme.

**Consider providing the learning material in a language other than English.** It has emerged that most of the participants are from rural areas, and some are not well educated. Participants would benefit from receiving the learning material in their native languages.

**Consider accreditation of a training programme with SETA.** Getting the training programme accredited with SETA might provide some value to participants in the form of a certificate other than that of participation. The program has been identified as containing rich content that could easily be covered over several days. Learning at a steady pace and engaging further with the content requires a more extended period.

**Encourage the completion of the surveys (both pre and post) across all provinces to enable consistent responses.** The survey results received indicate that there were inconsistencies with the completion of the survey questionnaires. Participants opted to complete only the pre-survey or the post-survey, while some completed both.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

The collaboration between the FSCA and DPWI in empowering participants in personal financial management has proven to work well within the ambit of the EPWP framework. Despite the COVID-19 challenges, which have impacted a number of participants that were to be trained as per the MOA, both parties have expressed satisfaction regarding the commitment shown by the parties and in terms of the content material provided to the participants. The relaxation of COVID-19 regulations came at a time when the MOA is due to expire in the next year. However, an opportunity exists for further collaboration.

The programme is a great initiative and has even greater potential to be extended even further as the financial literacy content has been identified as being rich and was well received by participants. The consideration of the recommendations, as well as other ideas on how best to expand it, can be further explored by the parties concerned.