

A Consultation Paper providing a review and background of the National Internship Program

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Executive Summary

The National Internship Program (NIP) was introduced in Botswana at a time (August 2008) just preceding the global economic crisis, when it is estimated one in ten people in employment were now required to look for work. In Botswana, this also affected graduates with degree level qualifications, who as a younger age group and without significant experience in the workforce, were particularly affected. As a key economic and social strategy, the NIP has attempted, with some success, to place unemployed graduates into employment to gain valuable work experience that would hopefully lead to full time employment. The issues faced by the NIP have led to the need for a technical report that aims to revitalize and support the program through a policy that will also provide guidelines for other (undergraduate) work experience programs.

The methodology employed in Section 2 is in two main parts:

- An initial phase where theoretical and practical evidence of the NIP's operations was gathered and analysed; and
- Consideration of the evidence and its implications for developing a policy. As such, the technical report provides a further step in the development of the desired policy.

The benefits of the NIP (Section 3) are summarised with NIP being seen as having a broader scope in helping to provide graduates that are flexible, work ready and having the knowledge, skills and competence that employers require. **An explanation and exploration of the term *internship*** is included in Section 4, with international definitions and examples providing a summary of key characteristics of internships and work experience programs. The difference between an internship and an apprenticeship is also explained, with the amount of regulation being a key difference.

Section Five aims to develop an understanding of the current employment context by posing several key questions and providing evidence and information to assist address the possible answers through policy and guidelines:

5.1: Are there enough jobs being created for young people?

5.2: Do young people have the appropriate qualifications?

5.3: Are young people work-ready and do they have the appropriate attitudes for work in the modern workplace?

The aims and objectives of the NIP are outlined in Section Six and this leads into an **overview of the National Internship Program and other work experience programs in Botswana (in Section Seven)**. The key lessons learned from this review are presented in summary form and require further stakeholder debate and decisions before policy directions can be decided. **A review of international work experience and internship programs in Section**

Eight also helps to inform this discussion, by giving practical examples of current working models. A key finding of the international research is that work experience programs are managed and monitored by educational institutions.

Section Nine is focused on providing processes for moving forward to the end goal of developing a Policy for the National Internship Program. The format for the section is to provide questions framed around the key issues that should precede the development of a NIP policy. The questions also help to structure the issues to be addressed through further consultation with stakeholders.

A key recommendation is made for the reform of institutional structures within the Department of the National Internship Program, through a functional analysis of the Department, by identifying changes and reforms to the current structures and systems. The point is made however, that this will not be possible until **a decision has been made about the precise functions of the revised NIP.**

The concluding comments in Section Ten focus on the consultation that needs to occur on the key questions to emerge from this technical report. The questions follow:

- How can increased competition for work-placements be tackled?
- What forms of simulated work experience should be developed?
- How can a more coordinated approach to work readiness skills be developed?
- What strategies should be introduced to make the revised internship program more responsive to the needs of employers?
- What strategies should be introduced to make the revised internship program more responsive to the needs of learners?
- What institutional changes and reforms are necessary to make the DNIP more sustainable?

A suggested framework (Table 5) for putting together a policy and deciding what issues should be addressed concludes the report.

1. Introduction

The serious nature and extent of youth unemployment worldwide is recognised by policy makers, stakeholders and civil society alike. The recent financial crisis has made the employment prospects for young men and women across the globe worse, with an estimated one in ten young people who were previously employed, now looking for work. Originally the impact was on young people who did not have qualifications, but increasingly unemployment is common amongst those with diploma and graduate level qualifications. Currently, the average level of unemployment amongst young people across the globe is around thirteen percent, but this hides significant regional differences, especially in Africa, where levels are more likely to be between eighteen and thirty percent. There are no recent figures on the levels of youth unemployment being experienced in Botswana, but the evidence from employment centres and the number of applications for placements on the country's National Internship Program confirms that Botswana is experiencing an increasing number of young people who are unable to find work, including those who have obtained post-secondary and graduate level qualifications.

Against this background, the National Internship Program was established in August 2008 following a presidential decree. This program is managed by the Department of National Internship Program (DNIP), located within the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs. The program was established *“to provide the framework for transferring skills for youth employment and in doing so provide a seamless integration of graduates into the economy”*. So far a total of 6,708 graduates have enrolled on the program since its inception and according to data from the DNIP 50% have achieved a permanent placement. This performance is relatively good, but now the National Internship Program is under pressure for change.

Perhaps the most significant pressure comes from the increasing number of graduates looking for placements and the difficulty in meeting this demand, due to the country's small industrial base. This is compounded by the fact that some employers are reluctant to follow DNIPs guidelines and there is increased competition from other institutions in Botswana for work-placements. Another important issue is the fact that no record or assessment takes place of the skills graduates have obtained during their placement. In practical terms, this means that graduates cannot claim that they have obtained skills that are certified.

It is against this background that a decision has been made to develop a national policy for internship, helping to ensure that the internship is revitalized and that clarity is provided for the future direction for the program. This is a complex process that will need to take into account the macro-economic frame-work in which the program operates and the important role that human capital plays. This is essential in helping the country move from a resource based economy. to a knowledge based one. The main barrier to realizing this aim is the weakness of the country's human resource base, particularly its work readiness skills and young people's work ethic.

Therefore, the National Internship Program will need to play a more important and expanded role in addressing the above issue. This will require thinking more strategically about the role played by the National Internship Program and how it can be revitalized in response to these new challenges. This may require changes to the way in which the DNIP operates and includes:

- ensuring that placements become more attractive to both graduates and employers;
- working more effectively with partners and stakeholders; and
- ensuring that synergies occur with other government initiatives and strategies for human resource development.

2. Methodological approach used by the technical report

This technical report draws heavily on discussions with colleagues at the Department for National Internship Program (DNIP), discussions with other professionals who work in the sector, as well as material from a draft consultancy on the impact of the NIP undertaken by the University of Botswana.

There were two main stages to developing the technical document. The first stage was analytical and addressed the theoretical and practical evidence surrounding the national internship program. This covered the following issues and questions:

- What are the possible benefits of the National Internship Program to learners and organisations?
- What is the meaning of an internship program?
- The environment in which the internship program operates and the growing problem of youth unemployment, including amongst graduates;
- Evidence on the current performance of the National Internship Program (NIP) and possible areas that need reform;
- What other work-experience programs operate in Botswana and what are the implications for the NIP?
- What lessons can be gained from how other countries' approaches to their internship programs?

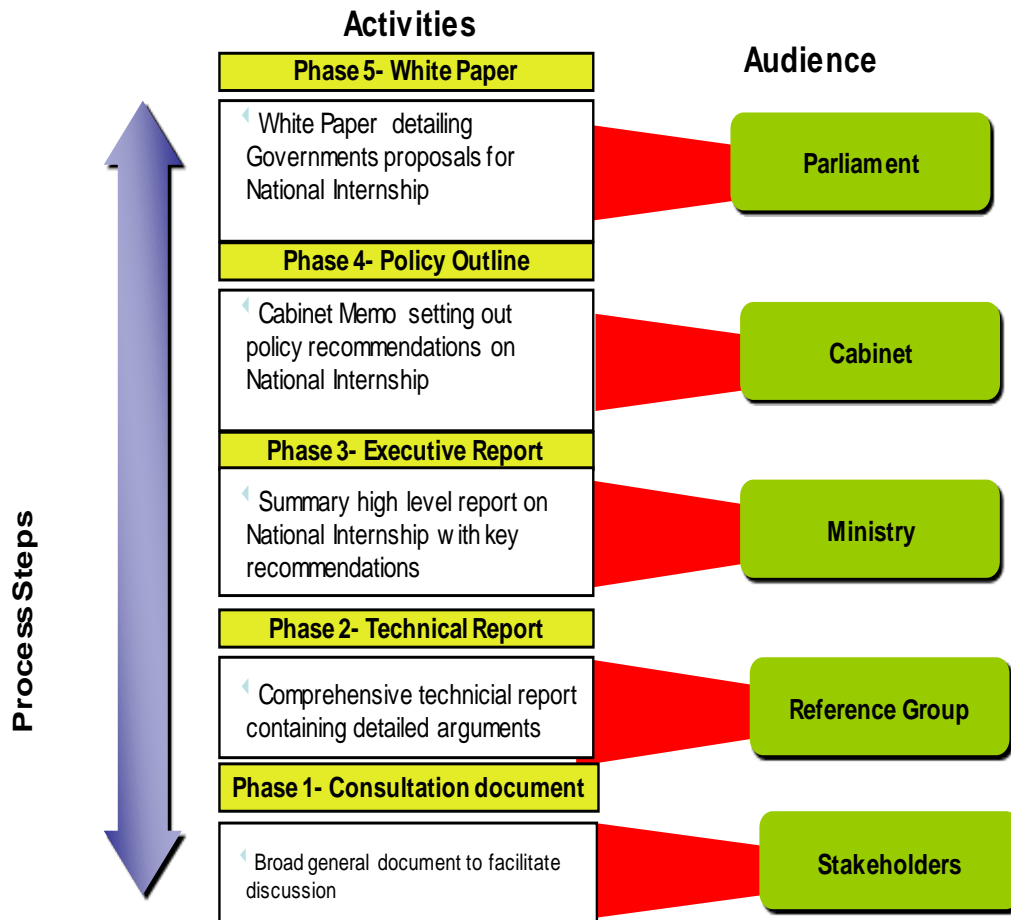
The second part of the technical document considers the implications of the above evidence with a view to moving forward and developing the actual policy. This is a complex process and will require extensive consultation before the process of putting the policy together can begin. There are a number of outstanding questions that must be answered. Therefore, the second part of the document provides guidance to this process by addressing the following questions:

- Is there a justification for the development of a policy for the NIP?

- What are the proposed future functions of the NIP?
- Who are the target group of the NIP?
- Who are the potential partners for NIP?
- What are the policy challenges that must be addressed by the NIP?
- What will the proposed policy look like and what issues will be addressed?

The relationship of the technical report to the actual reform of the internship policy is shown in Figure 1. This process was agreed at an inception workshop and outlines the different phases associated with the development of the internship policy and the target group. Currently, the technical report represents Phase II in the process.

Figure 1: Phases for the development of the white Paper on the Government’s National Internship Policy



3: What are the possible benefits of the National Internship Program?

Before starting the analytical work, it is important to remember the possible benefits of the internship program, for both the learner and organisations alike. For the learner the program provides a valuable opportunity to gain the employability or work ready skills.

The skills of the NIP have typically been characterized as:

Traditional intellectual skills, the so called core or key skills, personal attributes deemed to have a market value, knowledge about how organisations work and how people in them do their jobs.

In the context of Botswana there are a growing number of unemployed graduates who face what is called a chicken and egg situation - in that they cannot gain employment because they lack practical experience and in turn they cannot get practical experience because they do not have a job. The internship program can provide the unemployed graduate with the opportunity to enter the labour market and gain the work ready skills to survive and prosper.

There are equally important benefits for the employer or organization taking on board the intern. There are two main benefits, the first of which is that the NIP can provide an organization with access to a pool of qualified graduates. The second and related benefit is that the internship program provides employers with a cost effective means for screening future employees and assessing whether they are suitable as permanent employees.

Besides the unemployed graduates and the organization, there are also benefits to the national economy from the NIP. As indicated earlier, the NIP can help reduce the economy's dependence on mineral resources and facilitate a move to a knowledge economy, by providing graduates that are flexible, work ready and have the aptitudes that employers require

4: The meaning of the term *internship*

The definition given to an internship program varies from country to country. For instance, in the USA there are two main types of internships, namely a work experience internship and a graduate internship. The work experience internship normally occurs towards the end of a young person's secondary school and primarily focuses upon putting into practice what the young person has learnt at school. The period within industry would normally last between two months and a year depending on the program developed by the school. In contrast the graduate internship is performed by university undergraduates in their third year. Normally, this lasts between 2 and 4 months, and the student undertakes a workplace project that is beneficial to the company and in some cases, contributes towards the student's end of year assessment.

In contrast, within the UK the term internship or work-experience program has also tended to occur at the graduate level. In the past the internship tended to focus upon professional subjects, such as engineering, architecture and medicine and the experience was regulated by professional bodies. For instance, in engineering degree programs a student will spend a specified time period within industry to obtain their chartered status. The length of this period

in the workplace and the content of the structured work experience is regulated by the professional bodies. The former type of work experience still occurs in the UK, but increasingly work experience programs form part of most tertiary education programs. The nature and type of such programs varies from institution to institution and is influenced by a variety of factors, including the opportunities for work experience in the local industry and the strategy of the individual institution.

In most countries there is a recognition that students at all levels of the education system will require “employability or work readiness skills” in order to successfully enter the labour market and obtain gainful employment. This has seen a proliferation of internship and work-experience programs in all shapes and sizes. Nevertheless, whatever the context, an internship program seems to have a number of common characteristics. The definition from *Wikipedia* provides a starting point to define the term

An internship is a system of on-the-job training that is often associated with white collar or professional careers. Generally, an internship works as an exchange of service between the student and his or her employer.

In summary an internship can be viewed as consisting of the following characteristics:

- In most instances the internship is administered by an education institution and in most cases is linked to a program of study at the secondary or tertiary level.
- Normally the internship is a voluntary arrangement between an education institution and employer in which guidelines are developed to outline what is expected between the employer and the learner.
- The internship program lasts for a short period and tends to be centered around a project which can benefit the learner and in some instances contribute towards a young person’s final mark
- With regard to resourcing, the young person does not normally receive a wage and the company is not provided with an incentive. When payments are made they are normally associated with costs such as the use of equipment, protective clothing and travel.

It is also useful to look at definitions of an apprenticeship to help highlight the differences between those characteristics of the internship program. The following two definitions are taken from a recent ILO report:

Systematic long-term training for a recognized occupation taking place substantially within an undertaking, or under an independent craftsman, should be governed by a written contract of apprenticeship and be subject to established standards.

‘Apprenticeship’ is taken to denote training programs that combine vocational education with work-based learning for an intermediate occupational skill (i.e., more than routinised job training), and that are subject to externally imposed training standards, particularly for their workplace component.

The following are a summary of the characteristics of an apprenticeship:

- In most instances occurs in the workplace;
- The apprenticeship is targeted at young people who have left the formal education system;
- The underpinning objective is for the young person to learn a trade/acquiring a skill;
- Normally the training follows an identified plan;
- The apprenticeship is normally governed by legislation;
- At the workplace, a contract is developed between apprentice and employer, outlining the terms and conditions, as well as what the apprentice will get paid,
- In modern apprenticeships the assessment of the learning is based on occupational standards; and
- The apprenticeship occurs over a longer term, normally lasting two or three years.

The evidence outlined above is important for the National Internship Program. This helps demonstrate the characteristics of an internship program and how it differs from more regulated apprenticeship programs.

5: Understanding the employment context

Given the growing numbers of unemployment graduates and the numbers of applications for the National Internship Program, it is important to analyse the environment in which it operates, particularly around the possible reasons for this situation. At the beginning of the 1990s, the unemployment rate in Botswana was around 14% and this rose to almost 24% in 2004, before falling again to 17.8% in 2009/10. However, these figures conceal the different unemployment rates between age groups. Unemployment rates are highest amongst those in the 20 to 24 year old age category and were at around 35% for this group over the 2004 period. This issue is important in the context of the internship program and raises the question of whether graduates are finding it difficult to access the labour market and which of the following questions are more important:

- Are there enough jobs being created for the graduates?
- Are young people not qualified or don't they have the right type of qualifications?
- Is the problem related to other factors such as young people's work readiness or work ethic, or a combination of both?

These are important questions and wherever possible it is necessary to review the available evidence.

5.1: Are there enough jobs being created for young people?

Part of the reason why graduates may face difficulty getting employment is simply because not enough jobs are being created. From the 1980s to the early 1990s the number of formal sector jobs was being created at a higher rate than population growth, but from 1991 onwards it appears that job creation lagged behind population growth. This can also explain why unemployment has been on the rise in Botswana after 1991. Indeed, over the 1991 to

2005 period the labour force grew at a rate of 3% per annum and the growth of formal sector employment was lower at 2.2%.

It is also important to understand the role that birth rates play in the present process. It can be expected that part of the problem relates to the demographic changes and the increased numbers of people coming onto the labour market. Indeed, birth rates increased over the past twenty years and were particularly high in the mid-1990s. The impact of the increased birth rates in the mid-1990s has now manifested itself in the form of increased unemployment, particularly amongst young people and graduates. Therefore, the question that we also need to answer is where are the jobs being created and in what sectors?

The area where jobs are being created can be obtained by looking at the *elasticity of demand*, which measures the relationship between the country's economic output and employment levels. In simple terms this indicates how a one percent increase in outputs can result in employment in percentage terms. Table I shows the elasticity of demand for different economic sectors for the periods 1980 to 1991, and 1991 to 2005¹. Looking at this table helps us to understand the degree to which jobs are being created and in which sectors this is most likely to occur. Overall, the average annual output growth for the first time period was 10.3% and this was matched by an annual growth in employment of 9.1%. This performance was not matched during the second period during which output slowed to 6.3% and employment creation fell even more sharply to 2.2%.

There were large differences between sectors for the two time periods with regard to employment creation. The mining sector, for instance, was growing robustly at 8.9% and 7.8 per cent in the two periods, but recorded only minimal employment growth at 0.8 percent and 0.1 percent – the lowest for all sectors. This demonstrates that the mining sector was growing but did not create any jobs. The main reason for this situation is due to the capital intensive nature of the sector. However, other sectors have similar growth rates but are accompanied by similar growth in employment. For example, the manufacturing sector recorded an annual output growth of 11% and 3.4 % in the two periods and employment increased by 14.3% and 3% respectively. This shows that the sector was increasing employment by almost 1.3% and 0.87% for each percentage increase in output – suggesting a very high elasticity. Other sectors with consistently relatively high employment elasticity include government (0.70 and 0.52), transport and communications (.053 and 0.04) and hotels and restaurants (0.9 and 0.23).

Table 1: Sectoral employment elasticity, 1980 to 1991, and 1991 to 2005

Sector	1980 to 1991			1991 to 2005		
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¹ Note these calculations and this information was obtained from: University of Botswana (2012) Consultancy on the impact analysis study for the national internship program for the department of national internship program, draft report, faculty of social science

	Annual output growth in %	Annual employment growth in %	Employment Elasticity	Annual Output Growth in %	Annual Employment Growth in %	Employment Elasticity
Agriculture	3.6	4.2	1.18	-1.3	1	-.78
Mining	8.9	.8	.09	7.8	.1	.01
Manufacturing	11	14.3	1.30	3.4	3.0	.87
Water & Electricity	12.8	3.2	.25	7.3	.7	0,10
Construction	12	9.5	.79	3.2	--0.2	-0.07
Trade, Hotels & Restaurants	15.6	11.6	.74	9.5	2.2	0.23
Transport and Communications	17.9	9.6	0.53	4.5	1.9	0.41
Finance & Business Services	16	12.4	0.78	5.9	1.2	0.20
Social & Personal Services	17.5	9.2	0.53	5.1	0.2	0.04
General Government	11.5	8.0	0.70	6.7	3.5	0.52
Total Economy	10.3	9.1	0.89	6.3	2.2	0.34

It is also important to look at **the locations where jobs are being created**. According to available data the government accounts for 36% of formal sector jobs, large formal companies 32% and SMEs 32%. Over time, the number of jobs in government can be expected to fall and those in SMEs increased.

So the question of whether enough jobs are being created depends on the sector being considered. The evidence suggests that certain sectors are more likely to create jobs than other sectors. **There are policy implications for the internship program, in that emphasis should be given to placements in sectors that are more likely to result in permanent employment for young people.**

5.2: Do young people have the appropriate qualifications?

One of the other reasons for young people not gaining access to the labour market is because they either lack qualifications, or they don't have appropriate qualifications. A number of empirical studies have shown that the probability of paid employment increases with educational qualifications, with tertiary education graduates being paid the highest salaries. To a certain extent this may be true, but it also needs to take into account the whole area of *qualification inflation*. This refers to the fact that over time people will increasingly require higher level qualifications for the same job that would have required a lower level qualification five or six years ago. Qualification inflation normally occurs when

there is an expansion in the number of people with qualifications and a fall in the number of available jobs. Under such a scenario employers are able to recruit people with higher qualifications than necessary.

What does the evidence reveal about qualification inflation in Botswana? The data from the labour force survey shows a number of interesting trends. In the period 1995 - 2004 the number of unemployed was highest for those with primary level education at 40%, followed by those with junior secondary education at 25% and the proportion of unemployed with senior secondary as their highest education level was 7%. However, over time the value of qualifications in the labour market appeared to be gradually losing their value and in 2005 the percentage of those unemployed with primary education was 25% and the proportion with junior secondary was 35% and the proportion unemployed with senior secondary education was around 20%. Similar trends are apparent for tertiary education, where unemployment levels amongst graduates was around 7% in 2009 and now in 2013, the evidence suggests that it would be considerably higher in the light of graduates seeking places on the internship program.

However, what is equally important for the internship policy is the relationship between the type of subjects studied at the tertiary level and unemployment rates (see Table 2). The information in this table shows that unemployment rates amongst graduates vary depending on the type of subjects they studied. For certain subjects, such as law and medicine the unemployment rates amongst tertiary students are 3% and 6% respectively. However, for other programs, such as Architecture and Town Planning, the unemployment rate is 31%. These levels occur despite the fact that the private sector continues to complain about skill shortages. This does suggest that education institutions are not providing employers with the type of qualified workers they require, both in relation to the subject areas being studied and more importantly to the type of skills being acquired by students. In some instances, these skills may be specific technical ones and in others they may be more generic and relate to issues such as work readiness or other soft skills that are important in the workplace.

Table 2: Currently unemployed by areas of training

Total	Unemployed	Employed	Labour Force	Unemployment rate
Total	248812	539150	787962	32%
No. Training	213443	375334	588777	36%
General Training Programs	70	64	134	52%
Education training	1785	23705	25490	7%
Fine & Applied Arts	168	1065	1233	14%
Programs in Languages	173	520	693	25%
Other Humanity	618	2683	3301	19%
Social & behavioral	885	4809	5694	16%

sciences				
Commerce, clerical, business & PA	11629	46151	57780	20%
Programs in Law	46	1403	1449	3%
Natural Science programs	295	2454	2749	11%
Maths & Computer Science	879	3749	4628	19%
Medicine & Health related	550	7965	8515	6%
Construction Trade program	5684	15778	21462	26%
Other Craft, Trades & In	3915	15908	19823	20%
Engineering & Allied programs	1572	9500	11072	14%
Architectural & Town Planning	461	1029	1490	31%
Agriculture & Fishery	1149	5221	6370	18%
Home Economics & Domestic Science	193	754	947	20%
Transport & Comm. programs	2113	10330	12443	17%
Service Trade programs	2695	8665	11360	24%
Mass Comm. & Document	336	1136	1472	23%
Other programs	153	926	11079	14%

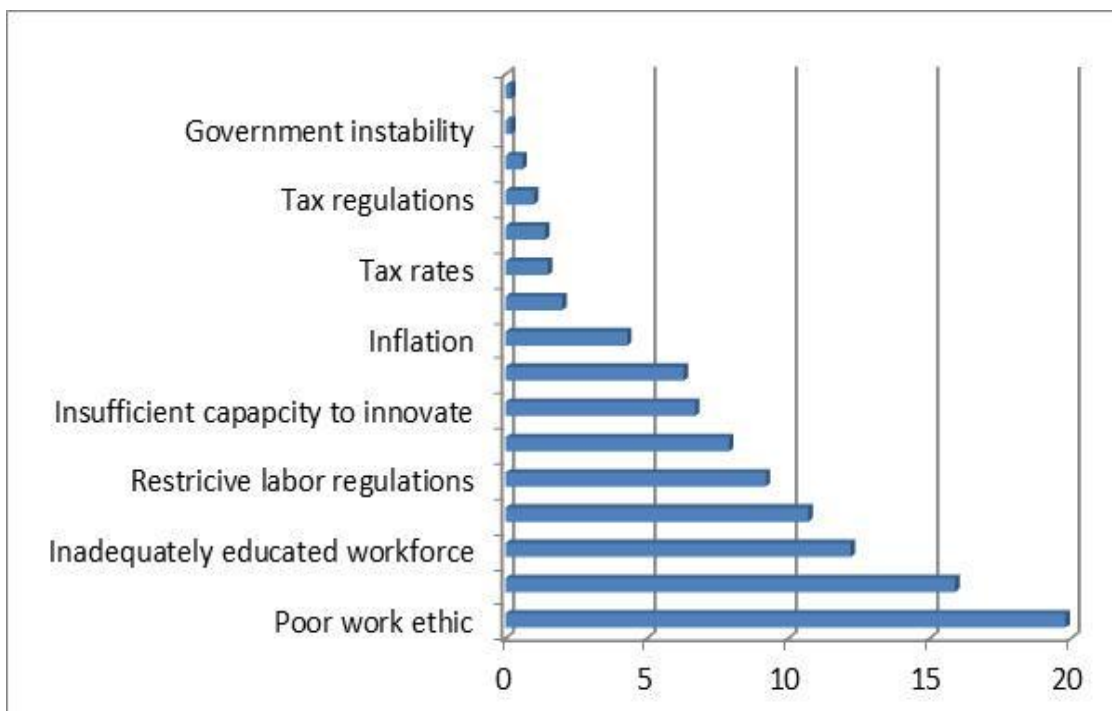
5.3: Are young people work-ready and do they have the appropriate attitudes for work in the modern workplace?

There is a lot of anecdotal evidence to suggest that young people don't have the correct attitudes and are not work ready. What does the term *not work ready* mean? In simple terms it means that the young person does not have a positive attitude to work and this covers a wide variety of behaviours including: being on time, keeping focus, doing your very best, accepting guidance and direction, being flexible, staying and honesty, as well as the whole area of independent behaviour. This list is not exhaustive but is provided to give an indication of the types of skills that a young people should have prior to entering the workplace. The lack of such skills can impact negatively on how a young person behaves in the workshop and ultimately on their productivity.

Although there is limited empirical evidence available on work readiness, it could be argued that this is part of the explanation for the low productivity being experience in Botswana and why this continues to decline. Indeed, according to the Global Competitiveness report for

2011 (See *Figure 2*), two of the most problematic factors for doing business in Botswana are “Poor work ethic” and an “inadequately educated workforce”. These are clearly issues that can be addressed by the national internship program (as well as the education and training system).

Figure 2: Most problematic factors for doing business



Global Competitiveness Report, 2011

6: The objectives and management of the current National Internship Program

The objectives of the National Internship Program (NIP) are:

“to place graduates within different sectors of the economy, collaborate with strategic partners to aid the transfer of skills, explore strategies for the purpose of promoting the

empowerment of interns and to facilitate a conducive environment to mentor and mold graduates into a productive and disciplined workforce²

The National Internship Program targets unemployed graduates (Bachelor's degree) and they are placed in the workplace, enabling them to gain work readiness skills to enhance their employability. The organisations where they are placed include: the public sector (Government Ministries and Departments); government parastatals; private sector; and non-government organizations.

The internship is for a period of up to 24 months of service, within which the Interns are expected to gain the necessary skills to improve their marketability and employability. The Interns are paid an allowance of P2 000 on a monthly basis, with P1 800 payable monthly to the Intern and P200 retained and payable at the end of the internship. As of November 2012, there were 3 243 active interns in the program, out of which 66.26% were in the Public Sector. A total of 2 327 Interns have been able to source permanent employment since July 2009 to date. Absorption for permanent employment by the public sector stands at 45% and other sectors (combined) is 55% (Source: *DNIP Report, 2011*).

A Director is responsible for the management of the Department of Internship and she is assisted by a Deputy Director. Together they are responsible for four of the following divisions (a) research and strategy management divisions, (b) intern management division, (c) human resource management and administrative section and (d) finance division

The research and strategy division is responsible for analysing data and undertaking research on the internship program, as well as the dissemination of this data to stakeholders. Another section of the research and strategy division, called information, education and marketing, covers issues associated with marketing, public relations and other events related to the internship program. The intern management division has related sections: intern placement, M&E and intern welfare. The first of these divisions, intern placement section is responsible for the development and maintenance of a data base for interns, covering issues related to registration, enrolment and monitoring. The M&E division monitors adherence to internship guide-lines, assessment of interns and their performance. The welfare division tackles adherence to labour policies, ensuring that intern welfare is not impacted negatively upon. Finally, the finance division deals with coordination and monitoring of payments of intern's allowances. Similarly, the HRM and administrative division covers issues associated with HRM, general administration, accounting and records management, etc. Issues surrounding the performance of the National Internship Program are discussed below.

7: An overview of the National Internship Program and different work experience programs in Botswana

² See page 3, Faculty of Social Science (2012) *Consultancy on the impact analysis study for the national internship program for the DNIP – draft document*, Dec 2012.

Table 3 provides an overview of the different types of internship and work experience programs that operate within Botswana. A brief analysis of these programs can help us understand how these programs operate, the constraints they face and also issues surrounding how they can be improved, all of which has implications for the revised National Internship Program.

7.1: The National Internship Program

For the first of the programs, the National Internship Program, the management of the program was discussed in the previous section. As previously mentioned, around 6,708 graduates have enrolled on the program since its inception, out of which around 2,327 interns have been able to secure employment. Absorption rates for permanent employment by the public sector stands at 45% and other sectors (combined) is 55%.

Another important issue is where the internship takes place. The evidence showed that nearly half of the interns are placed in the public sector. One of the possible reasons for this situation could be the ease of access to other public institutions. While this is good, overtime the DNIP will need to make sure that placements reflect the opportunities available in the economy, as over the longer term it will cease to be sustainable. As outlined in Table 2, most of the potential employment opportunities outside of government are in manufacturing, tourism and the communication/transportation sector. Specific strategies should be developed to help the DNIP penetrate these priority sectors, including addressing how the internship could become more favourable to SMEs.

Currently, there also are a number of pending applicants trying to gain internships and the evidence shows there is an oversupply of diploma level graduates in the fields of engineering and ICT. There could be some truth to this statement, but it could also suggest that many of these graduates lack employability or work ready skills and this is why they are experiencing difficulties obtaining employment. Indeed, many employers continue to complain that they can't find suitable graduates to work in their sector and at the same-time an increasing number of graduates with technical skills are becoming unemployed.

This suggests that either the quality of existing education and training programs is poor or that they lack the necessary work ready skills, or possibly a combination of both. Whatever the reasons there is no doubt that the internship program should play a role in supporting unemployed graduates to gain skills in these areas.

Another related issue is the number of outstanding applications and the DNIP faces a severe difficulty in coping with the sheer volume of applicants. This seems to suggest the DNIP should either increase their capacity to manage the number of applications, or restrict the focus of their activities only to graduates and not to diploma holders. At first glance it would appear unfair for the DNIP to deny diploma holders the opportunity for workshop experience. A possible solution would be for the internship program to focus their efforts on finding placements for graduates and for apprenticeship programs to focus upon unemployed diplomas. Obviously, this would need to be discussed with stakeholders, but it

could represent a way of ensuring that more young people obtained access to work related experience or training. Another option that is discussed in Section 9 *Moving Forward* is the reduction of time unemployed graduates spend on their internship program. For example, if the time was reduced from 2 years to 6 months, four times as many graduates could participate in the program, helping to reduce the outstanding number of applicants.

At the same time the Department of National Internship faces difficulties in persuading graduates to have internships in rural or remote areas. The reason for this difficulty is because young people prefer to live in urban areas and are reluctant to accept placements outside of Gaborone. One possible way of reversing this situation would be to provide interns with a higher remuneration for placements in rural or remote areas. Alternatively, those who are offered a placement in the rural areas and refuse, could (under certain circumstances) be denied the opportunity to participate in the program.

Another measure of the performance of the internship program is obtained by looking at the recent destinations of interns exiting the system over the period July 2012 to September 2012 (see Table 3). This highlights a number of positive outcomes regarding the final destination of interns. Overall, the evidence suggests that around 63% of participants were able to gain employment or entry into further studies as a result of their internship. This does suggest that the internship is facilitating career development amongst participants. However, only 20% of the interns were absorbed by their host organization for permanent employment. Additional data would be required to make sense of this figure, particularly in terms of trends over time and whether participants obtained employment in the public or private sectors.

Table 3: Destination of those exiting the National Internship Program July to September 2012

Reason	Number of Interns	% of Interns
Absorbed by host for permanent employment	88	20
Entrepreneurial activities	5	1.8
Expiry of contract	145	33
Further studies	88	20
Medical reasons	1	-
Other	15	2
Permanent employment elsewhere	91	21
Total	433	100

Another serious concern facing the internship program is a lack of information on what participants have achieved once they completed their period in the workplace. Log-books are

used to record their activities, but they don't track or summarise the type of skills or competencies they have gained during the two year internship.

An issue related to effectiveness, concerns the administrative structure for managing the implementation of the internship program. One of the most important issues surrounding effectiveness relates to the area of staffing, particularly for the monitoring of placements. There are only three members of staff to monitor the current 3000 registered interns. In practical terms this means that each staff member has over 1000 interns to monitor each year, which means that probably around a quarter of interns are not monitored and three quarters only have minimal support from monitoring officers.

According to the work undertaken by the University of Botswana there is some duplication of functions between the different divisions that make up the Department of National Internship. The Monitoring and Evaluation Division is doing a number of similar functions to the Welfare Division, suggesting that some rationalization might need to take place. There is also some duplication of work in the area of report production which is supposed to be the responsibility of the Research and Development divisions, but in reality is undertaken by all divisions. There is also an understaffing in most divisions, making it difficult to achieve their objectives, particularly in relation to the Monitoring and Evaluation section which only has two staff. Therefore, this points to the need for some rationalisation of structures and the provision of targeted resources.

7.2: The Internship Program administered by the University of Botswana

Another program that has similar aspirations to the National Internship Program are the internship programs administered by tertiary institutions, the most well-known being the internship program of the University of Botswana. However, there are a number of differences from the NIP. The UB program differs in that the target group is undergraduates, especially those in professional and applied subjects like engineering, education, health sciences and for those studying to be social workers. There are other significant differences, particularly around the length of the program, the way in which this is managed and the accreditation of their training. The internships at UB are normally shorter in duration, lasting around 3 months. The internship is also voluntary and so employers don't have to contribute towards the cost of the intern. The coordination of the program rests with an Intern Unit at UB whose specific functions are to coordinate placements and liaise with employers. However, the actual implementation and monitoring of the placement is the responsibility of individual academic departments at UB. The thinking behind this approach is that the individual Departments can help define what is expected during the assignment in terms of skill development, particularly in developing technical skills. Each department is supposed to define the skill attainment expected from the undergraduate during the assignment. A mentor is appointed within the company where the intern is placed. They are responsible for monitoring what the intern learns and for providing the final assessment of their achievements, all of which contributes toward their final degree.

Like the National Internship Program, the internship program delivered by UB also faces a number of problems. The first constraint relates to the actual monitoring of interns which is often neglected because of the high work load experienced by lecturers. However, the most significant constraint is finding placements in companies due to the small size of the country's industrial base. This has been made worse by the increased competition from the NIP (and other programs). According to those working at the UB this is creating significant difficulties for their undergraduates to obtain work readiness skills. The problem is that companies receive funds in kind under the National Internship Program and so there is a financial incentive to give priority to unemployed graduates, as opposed to those from the university. Moreover, it could be argued that this is making it difficult for undergraduates studying applied subjects to obtain the work experience they need to complete their program of study. This does point to the need to coordinate activities and define each organisation's roles and responsibilities.

7.3: The apprenticeship program

Another initiative that plays an important role in supporting learning in the workplace is the country's national apprenticeship program. The apprenticeship program now comes under the responsibility of BOTA, but is administered by the Madirelo Training and Testing Centre (MTTC). There was an Apprentice Act that is now defunct, but from discussions with those working at MTTC this continues to provide the basis for the operation of the apprenticeship program. Essentially, the apprenticeship program combines on-the-job training experience with institutional based training, and the target groups are those who have left school with a junior certificate (minimum).

There are 11 institutions that participate in the apprenticeship program and each academic year they approach the MTTC with requests to place their students on the apprenticeship program. Normally, there are around 1000 apprentices per year, with around 200 apprentices per industry area. The apprenticeship program lasts around 4 years for most technical subjects, but for certain subjects (e.g. hospitality and tourism) the length is three years. Each year the young person will spend 9 months in industry and 3 months in technical colleges. The progress of each trainee is tested at the end of the nine months in industry by MTTC, and their theoretical knowledge is tested by the technical college where they are placed for three months. At the end of the three or four years the successful apprentices obtain a National Craft Certificate.

The constraints facing the apprenticeship program are numerous. The program was originally set-up to target those with a minimal academic background, but due to the lack of jobs and qualification inflation, most of the applicants now have at least 0-level qualifications and sometimes higher. Like the other programs they also face severe competition from other programs, particularly the technical colleges that deliver the BTEP programs that also have work experience programs.

7.4 Botswana Technical Education Program (BTEP)

The Botswana Technical Education Program (BTEP) was originally funded in its development phase with assistance from the European Union. It is based in six regional Technical Colleges and offers a broad suite of technical education courses of 3 or 4 years duration. The BTEP is currently under review with one of the aims being increased flexibility to be able to respond more directly to industry needs.

The work experience program occurs in the final three years of a student's program. Work experience at the first (Foundation) level of BTEP has been discontinued after employers expressed concerns re level of students' skills (unclear expectations of what they could do and expected them to be more experienced). The duration of work experience in other years is now:

- 2nd year – 40 hours
- 3rd year – 3 months
- 4th year – 3 months

Interestingly, DTVET reports that Diploma/Advanced Diploma level students are preferred for work experience as they are regarded as well-skilled. There are no difficulties in placing these high level students and employers are prepared to take 3-4 students at a time in many cases.

7.5 Brigades

Brigades were originally established as community-based and managed training organisations with a focus on developing artisan and craftsperson skills. While the original target group was students who did not gain entry into other tertiary programs, this has changed to a situation where there is now competition from students with O levels and apparently from BTEP graduates who are unable to find employment. The Brigades' focus has continued on mainly traditional trade areas (e.g. construction, mechanical, electrical, agriculture) although there is potential to expand their focus into other areas of training (e.g. aquaculture and different agricultural crops).

There are plans to upgrade the Brigades, but this is proving to be an expensive exercise. However, work has commenced (through BOTA) to develop new curriculum and courses built around Unit standards.

The management and funding of Brigades now comes from DTVET with some changes as a result e.g. the production and training arms of the Brigades have been separated. The main implication of this for work experience is that in some locations there are now less opportunities for practical experience – albeit on-site work experience rather than a placement in industry. There is evidence to suggest that NCC graduates in construction and specialized industrial skills (including those from Brigades) were achieving higher levels of employment (particularly in the private sector) than other comparable TVET courses (*BOTA Report, 2010*)³

7.6 Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES)

A recent (commencement in August 2012) addition to the work experience programs in Botswana is the Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES). This targets young people aged 18 to 35 years who are unemployed and usually have very few education and training attainments. All unemployed people with less than degree level qualifications⁴ are welcome to apply for the program which has an average intake of 500 participants (spread over three intakes thus far). Churches in Botswana are providing the major form of dissemination for the program and also giving support to young people who join the scheme, usually through a local church. The program's content includes two major components:

- A 6 week “boot camp” in which information is given to participants on job seeking, entrepreneurship, aiming to maximise their business and work readiness skills; and
- A one year work placement with an employer in public, private and volunteer organisations

The YES program is funded by the Government of Botswana through the Department of Youth. It has an anticipated initial life of three years after which a review will determine its continuation and/or revision.

A particular strength of the YES program is in its partnerships with other government (MoLHA, Education, Youth, Housing and Lands) and private (Microsoft) agencies. The program refers participants to the appropriate agency, sometimes before they receive a placement, to boost their technical and work readiness skills e.g. literacy programs as a prerequisite for gaining access to employment.

The YES program reports little difficulty in placing participants in the work experience component of the program. It is unclear why this is the case, as this has not been the experience of other work experience/internship programs. Perhaps the main reason is the focus on participants being encouraged to find their own work placements in their home

³ Tracer study on the employment outcomes of the vocational training graduates, BOTA, June 2010

⁴ Degree holders are referred to and encouraged to participate in the National Internship Program

villages. It remains to be seen how effective this approach is in terms of work experience quality, duration and subsequent long-term employability.

It is too early to undertake an evaluation of the YES program (after only 5 months in operation) but this is planned as part of the ongoing operations.

7.7 Other work experience programs

Other work experience programs include the graduate development programs administered by the private sector. These are not regulated by government and are totally the responsibility of a private company. There is a tendency for these programs to be run by large companies and the emphasis is on preparing graduates for professional or managerial careers in the company. Most of the jobs are open to external competition and companies try to recruit the cream of the graduates. There is not much information about these programs, but the number of opportunities for graduates in Botswana is probably limited to the mining sector, banking and areas of finance. Nevertheless, there could be an opportunity for collaboration with public institutions, particularly in terms of accreditation of the program and theoretical input.

Table 4 provides an overview of internship and work experience programs in Botswana, as outlined above. The table does not include the final category (*Other work experience programs*) given the diverse nature of the programs in this category.

Table 4: An overview of internship/work experience programs in Botswana

Type	Target group	Content of program	Qualification	How is it management & financed	Number of participants and main sectors	What organisations are involved	Problems associated with the program
National Internship Program	Graduates with a degree and scarce skills diploma	24 months, Semi structured, work-plan, performance plan – devel. by supervisor and learner over objectives and agree what is going to be learned and there is an assessment every quarter. Based on technical and soft skills – all practical	Not yet, but plan to develop standards and learning materials with BQA	Responsibility rests with the National Internship office within the Ministry Labour and Home Affairs. Currently the VTF is financing 1000 internships.	Since it started a total of 6708 graduates have been enrolled on the program	None	Lack of staffing, unable to place graduates, duplications of functions of different divisions
Graduate development program	Graduates	Very dependent on the requirements of the business	In some instances it will lead to a professional qualification	This is managed totally by the company and does not involve government	Not known	Company specific and sometimes regulated by a professional organization	Unregulated and Limited role for government to influence
Apprenticeship program	Junior certificate level entry	Four year program, with 9 months per year in industry and 3 years in college	National Craft Certificate (NCC)	Responsibility of BOTA, but managed by MTTC	Around 1000 are enrolled each year	MTTC, technical colleges & industry	Limited industry places
University attachments	Under graduates in applied subjects	The program lasts for between 6 and 12 weeks	Part of their degree programs	An internship unit exists at UB, but the management of program is the responsibility of individual departments	Not known	UB and individual companies	Competition from the government's internship program and finding places. Problems of monitoring students
Brigades	Students complete a Nat. Craft Certificate	Four year program with traditional trades the main focus (e.g. construction, electrical, mechanical, agri.)	NCC	Now managed by DVET (previously by Community Boards). Part of DVET budget covers staff and some operating costs	35 Brigades – numbers not known	Brigades and local industries	Production side of Brigades has been separated from the training side – issue of reduction of practical skills. No life skills focus

Botswana Tech. Educ. Program (BTEP)	Students can progress to Adv. Diploma level	Four year program based in 6 regional Technical Colleges	Diploma/ Adv. Dip.	EU funds used to develop the program. Now managed and funded through DVET.	6 Colleges – numbers not known	Tech. Colleges arrange own work experience. Also provide simulated work experiences	Need for more flexibility to meet industry demands. Some concerns re some course lengths. Some employers want more practical skills
Youth Empowerment Scheme	Certificate will depend on focus of the training	The program has two components: a 6 week “boot camp” and a one year work placement in open employment	No formal qualification	GoB funding through the Ministry of Youth	3 intakes of 500 people (average) thus far	YES works in partnership with other public (e.g. MoLHA, MoY, Lands & Housing) and private (e.g. Microsoft) agencies	YES has only been in operation for 5 months. No difficulties experienced at this point. An evaluation is planned as part of the program.

Lessons from the work experience programs in Botswana

- There is severe competition between the different programs and initiatives for work placements, suggesting there are not enough work-placements for applicants.
- The DNIP needs to re-think the focus, target and possible length of NIP. In the light of the different programs, there is a need to define what are the functions and focus of the NIP. Should the focus of the NIP be on tackling unemployment amongst graduates? Alternatively, should the NIP be a placement agent for graduates, or more concerned with development of work readiness skills?
- The NIP also needs to ensure that the participants are provided with some form of certification, possibly leading to a qualification. In order for this to occur there will be a need to work with education and training providers and to identify what form this would take.
- The NIP must identify how to introduce a rigorous quality assurance system, ensuring that their interns are assessed and obtain certification at the end of their period. This will require that more attention is given to monitoring and helping to ensure that compliance is obtained from companies and organisations.
- The NIP must be integrated more into other policy/frameworks, including the HRD plan and be more aligned to changing economic priorities.
- The internal structures and management and governance structures, must reflect the changing functions of the DNIP. However, the functions and focus of the NIP will need to be confirmed before structures or management arrangements are changed.

8: International best practice

There is limited literature on international best practice for internship programs. However, the following is based on what information is available, drawing on the work undertaken by the University of Botswana and the experience of the consultants working on this assignment. This covers the following countries: Australia; the UK; Greece and the experience from Indonesia.

Australia

Internships in Australia are usually referred to as *work experience* (particularly at 1) the upper secondary school levels or 2) *industry experience* in TVET or 3) University programs

- 1) **Secondary schools** offer short term work experience programs of short duration to provide extra information on careers that students may be considering. There are also community service programs that offer an opportunity for the development of mainly work readiness skills. Australian students can commence TVET courses (Certificates I and II) while still at secondary school. These students are required to undertake work-based experiences as part of these qualifications.

- 2) **TVET: Australia's Technical and Further Education (TAFE) system:** Most TAFE courses offer work internships (work experience placements) as a requirement, particularly after the first year of the course. The increasing competition for work placements from schools and private training institutions means that in some cases only simulated workplace experience is possible (e.g. institution creates own restaurant), students participate in projects being managed by individual TAFES. Internships are formally assessed based (usually) on joint TAFE-industry ratings of student performance of soft skills (attendance, initiative, contribution and signed log book) and some form of formal assessment (e.g. report, small project). The length of internships varies and generally increases over the duration of the course, culminating in a recognized qualification. .

There is consistency of practice in TAFE because of common registration procedures for training organisations, qualifications built around agreed occupational standards, common training packages and agreed assessment practices. Monitoring of student performance in internship programs occurs primarily at the TAFE College staff level, and often in collaboration with the employer e.g. signed log books, evaluations by the employer and interviews

3) University internships

Internships in Australian higher education institutions (universities) have traditionally been organised as specific programs in individual universities and by individual faculties i.e. some universities have run well-developed programs and some faculties have been more active than others in viewing internships as more relevant to their students' knowledge and skills acquisition and future job prospects. A broad range of internships have been organised through this model for students in a wide range of courses (e.g. medicine, Australian studies, social work, painting or music, economics, law, geography, linguistics, environmental studies, science, psychology, journalism and recreation). This model continues where it is possible to find suitable placements - usually dependant on alumni, goodwill or university sponsors. Credit is given in most cases for the internship that is part of the course requirements. In some cases an internship are a professional requirement for completion of an award (e.g. medicine, law, architecture).

An innovative (and entrepreneurial) model that has been developed at the Australian National University in Canberra is to offer work experience/internships for students studying either in Australia or at overseas universities. The *Australian National Internships Program (ANIP)* is a hands-on opportunity for a student to go into a workplace and undertake a research project for which they receive significant academic credit. As part of this practical experience students have the opportunity to gain work readiness skills and also to undertake a research project. A project report is the outcome, with the amount of credit decided by the length of the required report and linked to the length of the internship. Monitoring is jointly arranged between the ANIP supervisor and the employer. The credit can be used to replace other modules in a program.

Each student receives a Certificate of Participation at the conclusion of the Program. In addition to the Certificate, each student's final grade is included on their official academic transcript.

Greece

The Greek economy has been characterized by high youth unemployment. This has also been experienced at the higher education level where graduates take an average of at least 24 months of find their first job. In part, this reflects poor links between the education system and labour market. In a response to this problem the Greek government has introduced a series of measures at the upper secondary and higher education levels.

Upper Secondary level

Greece has a range of internships or traineeships at the upper secondary school level, including one called STAGES. This program aims to familiarize young people with the world of work across the board and was first introduced in 1998. The initial aim was to enable young people to develop improved links with the labour market and acquire work experience as an effective way of combatting youth unemployment. The duration of this program ranges from 6 to 36 months. The short periods for traineeship focus upon the familiarisation of trainees with the workplace and the theoretical training, and the longer traineeships focus upon the acquisition of knowledge and practical work experience in the field of study. However, subsequent criticisms of the internship is that they have been used as cheap labour when budget constraints prevent the recruitment of full time staff, particularly in the public sector.

At the University level

Perhaps the most well-known internship scheme in higher education is called “the operational program for Education and Lifelong Learning”. The central objective of this program is to forge closer and more effective links between the education system and the labour market, not least the promotion of traineeships as part of the university curricula. This program offers financial support and incentives to higher education institutions and technical education institutions to establish offices for managing and coordinating internship programs and supporting internships of part of the curricula for undergraduates. This type of traineeship is monitored and coordinated centrally and has a formal quality assurance program, that is underpinned by a legal framework.

Indonesia

Within Indonesia there are extensive examples of work-experience programs at the upper secondary level, in vocational schools and at polytechnics. What is interesting about the Indonesian experience is that they bring work experience or forms of simulation into the institutional based setting

Upper secondary schools

Within Indonesia, the concept of linking training with production can be found in the country’s senior secondary schools. These schools are divided into vocational senior secondary schools (Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan – SMK) or general senior secondary schools (Sekolah Menengah Atas – SMA). The curriculum of the SMK focuses solely on the development of job related skills. There are around 30 of the SMK engaged in a concept known as training factories. Under this arrangement an SMK will form a partnership with a company to engage in activities that resemble an assembly line. Essentially, the SMK will be provided with equipment, technical know-how and the material to assemble the product. The type of production tends to focus on mechanical or electronic goods, ranging from motor bikes to computers. The SMK students work on the production line for a semester to gain industrial experience, but they receive no payment for their work. The only benefit is that the student will receive a certificate for their work experience. On the downside it could be argued that the students are being used as a form of cheap labour and it is questionable whether they could acquire new skills or competencies as a result of engaging in these activities.

Polytechnic level

Examples at the polytechnic level can be divided into business incubators and support for entrepreneurial development

Business incubators

The idea behind business incubators is to provide the conditions to enable students, with the support of lecturers and local industry, to establish their own business. At the very basic level these consist of classrooms that attempt to resemble the office environment, with telephones, faxes, computers and photo-copiers. However, more complex laboratories may include advanced level equipment to help graduates engage in R&D activities. There is no doubt that these are helping to produce entrepreneurs and in some instances provide an opportunity to engage with industry. Around 20% of students participate in business start-up programs during their final year, but no information is available on how many businesses have been established, or the sustainability of these businesses.

In one of the incubators a Japanese company had formed a partnership with the university to develop a program that tests software. This relationship has been on-going for three years and involved the implementation of three major projects. The benefits have included employment opportunities for a small number of graduates and a monthly income to the university of between 10 and 25 million Rupiah a month (around 10,000 dollars per month). Another business involved the development of management information systems (MIS) software for the higher education institutions. This software is now being used by administrators at the polytechnic as part of their drive to introduce a more performance based decision making processes. Subsequently, they have been marketing this product to other polytechnics and so far three polytechnics have purchased this software.

The message to emerge from the business incubators is the importance of the lecturers in providing the appropriate support and also having established contacts with industry. It is also important to point out that it has taken years to build up these links and it based on their own expertise in the sector. Clearly, this is not something that can be done overnight.

Support for entrepreneurial development

The government of Indonesia is keen to support self-employment and entrepreneurship, particularly amongst young people who are coming onto the labour market for the first time. The unemployment level for young people continues to remain at around 25%. Part of the explanation relates to the fact that the Indonesia economy has not experienced high enough growth rates to absorb all the young people leaving the education system and as a consequence around 60% of young people are forced to earn a living in the informal sector. Understandably, the government wants young people to become entrepreneurs and the education system is one of the vehicles for developing such values.

The Ministry of Education believes that the creation of an entrepreneurial culture is a pre-condition for “achieving progress, employment, growth, competitiveness and innovation”. Against this background the Directorate of Development for Secondary Schools (PSMK) has

improved teaching methodologies and also provided new curriculum materials to support improved learning outcomes in entrepreneurial education. The government also recognizes the important role that Higher Education can play in this process. The contents and objectives of these different programs are shown as follows:

Creativity program – This program is primarily aimed at graduates from higher education who want to establish their own business. Under this program graduates, or group of graduates, are invited to submit a proposal before their last semester. The proposal must focus on one of the following five areas: research, application of technology, entrepreneurship, devotion to the community and scientific writing. A successful proposal can receive around 7 million Rupiah and in 2009 nearly 60 higher education institutions benefited from such grants, allowing around 180 small SMEs to be established. At present no information is available concerning the sustainability of these enterprises.

Cooperative program – The objective of this program is to support internship programs and provide funds to enable undergraduates to rent accommodation near the company they are working. The lack of funds for accommodation has been identified as one of the constraints facing undergraduates during their work experience. It is anticipated that this program will encourage young people to work for SMEs and to change their mind set towards working in a small business. At present a total of 22 institutions have benefited from this initiative, each receiving around 100 million Rupiah per year. No information was available about the impact of this program.

Lessons from international best practice

- The evidence shows that overwhelmingly work experience programs are managed and administered by education institutions. As far as we know there are minimal examples of where schemes have been administered outside of education and training institutions.
- The location of the internship program varies and tends to occur at the upper secondary, TVET and university levels. There are few examples where an internship program has been developed for unemployed graduates. Where there have been programs for unemployed graduates these have tended to involve voluntary services schemes or been part of the services provided by employment centres.
- There are examples of legislation underpinning work experience programs, but this is not common. This is more likely to occur amongst apprenticeship programs. However, the introduction of legislation does not necessarily result in more compliance by industry. What is important is the effectiveness of monitoring and ensuring that this process is resourced more appropriately
- The government role in this process of the internship program appears to be limited to providing funding, particularly around travel and the costs of administering the internship program by institutions. Where emphasis is given to simulated internship programs, the government tends to provide seed money to establish business incubators or support entrepreneurship programs
- Given that most internship programs or even simulated programs are managed by institutions, they are normally accredited and form part of a student's final assessment. In some instances this is based on occupational standards and in others it appears to be determined by the education department in conjunction with the company where the student is placed.
- The common problem experienced by most countries is the lack of placements for applicants. It appears that in most countries there are not enough placements to meet the demand. Nevertheless, education institutions are attempting to overcome this problem through simulation

programs. These take different forms, but in the majority of instances either involve support for entrepreneurship or some form of virtual internship.

9. Moving forward with the process of developing a Policy for the National Internship Program

There are a number of issues that need to be tackled and decisions made before the policy can be developed. This should be accompanied by lots of consultation and discussions with stakeholders. Figure 3 helps to outline the questions issues and how they should be tackled. Once these issues tackled and decisions made, it will be possible to move forward and develop a policy.

The following questions need to be addressed:

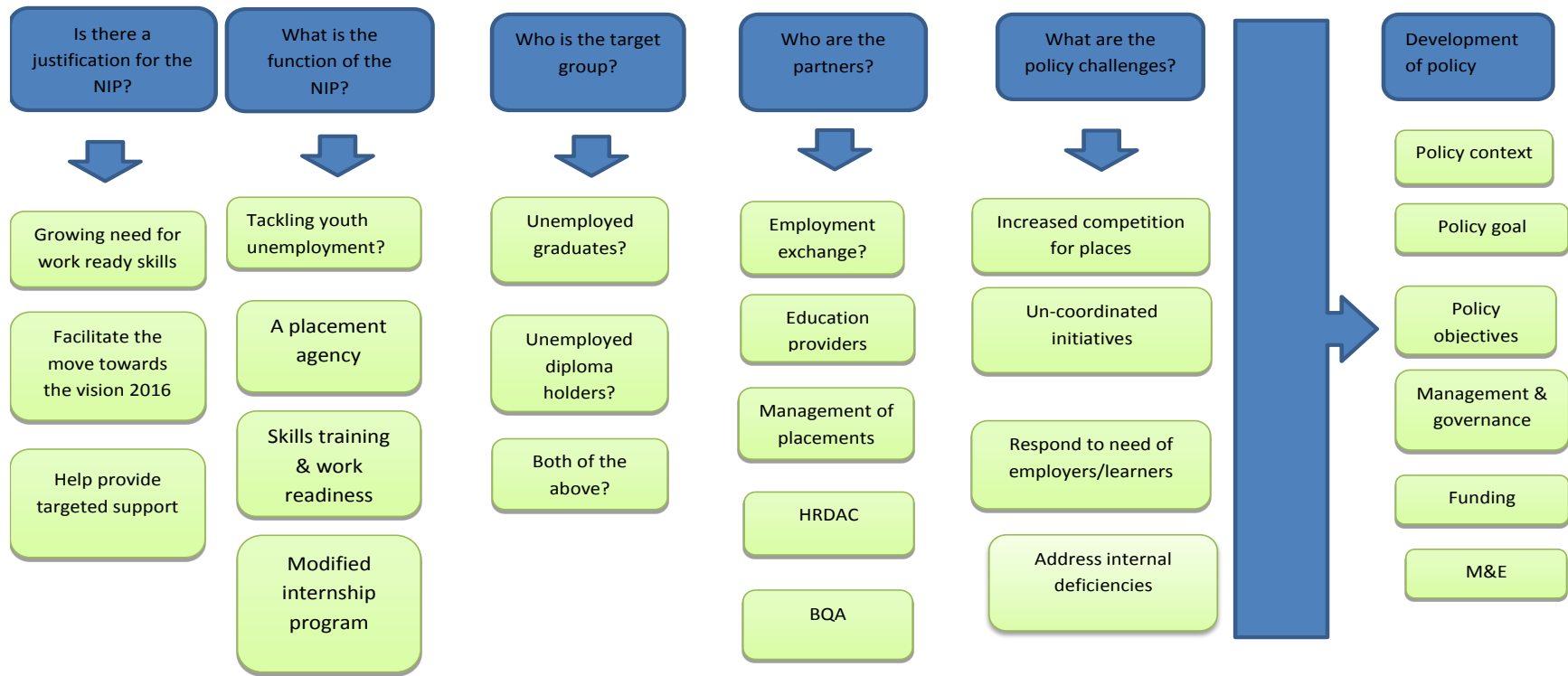
- Is there a justification for the development of a policy for the National Internship Program?
- What are the proposed future functions of the NIP?
- Who is the target group of the NIP?
- Who are the partners?
- What are the policy challenges that must be addressed by the NIP?
- What will the proposed policy look like and what issues will be addressed?

Each of these question areas are discussed below and a number of questions are identified at the end that will need further consultation with stakeholders. It should be pointed out that the statements presented below are not definitive ways forward and are more intended to generate further discussions during the consultation process.

Once further consultation has taken place and answers obtained, it will be possible to move onto developing the draft policy. A suggested framework for the policy is outlined below:

- The policy context
- Challenges facing the policy
- The overarching policy goals
- Objective 1:
- Objective 2:
- Objective 3:
- Objective 4:
- Objective 5:
- Funding and sustainability strategies
- Management and governance
- Monitoring and evaluation

Figure 3: Methodology used to guide further discussion and to develop the policy for the national internship program



9.1 Are there justifications for a National Internship Policy?

The evidence in the first analytical part of the report identified a number of reasons why the National Internship Program should be developed. Amongst the most important reasons are the following:

There is a growing demand for work readiness skills. The importance of work readiness skills cannot be underestimated. The analysis showed that lack of work readiness skills are one of the main constraints for doing business in Botswana. Unless this issue is tackled the country will experience difficulties in making the transition to a knowledge based economy. This is one of the key justifications for the continuation of the National Internship Program. In order to tackle this issue it will be important for the revised National Internship Program to support the development of work readiness skills and ensure that these are assessed (these issues are outlined in the next section). However, it is equally important to point out that work readiness skills should be developed throughout the education system, particularly for those coming through the system and also for the increasing number of 16 to 19 year olds who are unable to find employment.

Benefits for employers and unemployed graduates: Another important justification for the National Internship Program is the benefits that the program offers to unemployed graduates and companies. For the unemployed graduate the program provides an opportunity to gain work experience. Most unemployed graduates face the circular problem that they can't gain a job because they don't have experience and they can't gain experience because they don't have a job. The internship program helps resolve this dilemma and also provides the graduate with the opportunity to assess if they want to enter a particular career, or not as the case may be. For the employer, the National Internship Program provides access to a pool of skilled workers and also with the opportunity to screen potential employees.

Improved alignment between the needs of the economy and the National Internship Program: Under the current internship program the majority of opportunities and placements are to be found in the public sector. However, the majority of new jobs are being created in the private sector and in the future SMEs will have an even more important role in employment creation. The National Internship Program will need to be aligned to such opportunities and the proposed policy can help achieve this goal.

Facilitate the achievement of Vision 2016: Part of the long term 2016 vision for Botswana is to develop "...an educated and informed nation". The proposed internship policy, along with other policies, will contribute towards the development of the country's human resources through support for improving work readiness skills and an improved work ethic in the workplace.

Ensuring that resources are utilised in a more effective and efficient manner. There are a number of new demands being placed on the National Internship Program. These come from the changes in the economy, as well as the needs of the employers and unemployed graduates. In the near future it can be expected that these demands will increase and the current Internship

Program will need a policy framework to help ensure resources are utilised in a more cost effective and targeted manner.

9.2 What are the future functions of the National Internship Program?

This is the key question that must be answered by stakeholders before the development of the policy. At the heart of the debate is the need to understand more precisely what should be the precise functions of the National Internship Program. From the analysis presented previously, the National Internship program will need to perform a combination of the following:

Tackling Graduate Unemployment. This would appear to be at the heart of the current Internship program and it will be important to question whether this should be at the heart of the revised program? On a critical level, it could be argued that for some of the unemployed graduates the program has been acting as a warehouse. This can be borne out by the fact that initially the program lasted for one year and now it has been extended for two years. Similarly, the program was also extended to cover unemployed diploma holders in specific subjects. If the program is to continue supporting unemployed graduates there could be a strong argument for involving the Department of Labour's and Home Affairs' Employment Exchange. The Employment Exchange could provide the unemployed graduates with additional services, such as advice on training, career guidance and also improved matching of supply and demand for skills.

A Placement Unit for Graduates: Another function of the revised National Internship Program could be a graduate placement unit. This would specifically place professional graduates within companies. Understandably, this would require the DNIP to have a different set of strategies than those identified above, particularly in improved links with employers and finding out what employers want. This might involve a considerable re-orientation of focus, and more emphasis given to client-orientated services and reaching out to employers, including those in the Southern Africa region.

A provider of work readiness and technical skills: This is perhaps one of the most important, but difficult, tasks that the internship program will have to tackle. If this is to be an important issue that should be tackled by the revised internship program, it will be important that improved partnerships are formed with an education or training providers. Adopting such an approach would help determine the learning outcomes that were expected by the unemployed graduates during their placements. It also includes issues associated with assessment, the development of learning and support materials for the interns and also the employers' needs. This would have to be a sub-contract arrangement, possibly with a number of providers who are familiar with employer engagement and supporting workplace learning. This will have resource implications that need to be taken into account.

If a decision is made about the need to develop technical skills amongst the unemployed graduates, the above processes would also apply. However, if a decision was made that skill upgrading was to occur for unemployed graduates it will be important to ensure that a market demand exists for such skills.

A modified internship program: A final option could be a modified internship program, with a mix and match of the above elements. However, in order to make the existing internship program more effective, a number of changes would be required. The first would centre on the need to work with different partners to help deliver the program. The Department's Employment Exchange could help provide more targeted support for the unemployed graduates, particularly in terms of providing career advice and help to improve the match of the supply and demand for graduates. Another important partner will be training providers to help develop work readiness skills. This would have to be delivered on a sub-contract basis. Under such an arrangement the Department of National Internship Program (DNIP) would adopt a coordinating or clearing house role and be concerned with facilitating the effective implementation of the program. This might cover a number of new roles, including the management of provision at the Employment Exchange and also the performance of the training or education providers. In addition, the DNIP would have to develop improved systems for assessing the unemployed graduate, particularly in terms of what skills they need to develop, whether they need counselling and a personal development plan that will be implemented during their placement.

The Department of National Internship would also need to re-think their placement services and links with employers. This needs to become more professional and to target employers in expanding sectors, particularly SMEs. The program could also benefit from being shorter. Under the current arrangements it lasts for two years. This might be too long and would probably not appeal to SMEs. Some further work would need to be undertaken to determine the most suitable length of the program.

Questions that need further consultation:

- What should be the prime focus of the National Internship Program?
- Should emphasis be given to finding jobs for unemployed graduates?
- Should the focus be upon the placement of graduates using a more professional service?
- Should more emphasis be given to the development of work readiness skills and training?
- Alternatively, should the National Internship Program be revitalised and be concerned with finding unemployed graduates jobs, placing graduates in companies, as well as providing training?
- Should the length of the internship program be reduced?
- How can the program become more attractive to employers, particularly SMEs?

9.3: Who should be the target group for the National Internship Program?

This is possibly a more straight forward question to answer. When the program was originally started it was focused upon unemployed graduates and later it was extended to include unemployed diploma holders, specifically those with ICT and Engineering qualifications.

Therefore, the question that must be answered is whether the current program will continue to focus upon the existing target groups or just focus upon unemployed graduates. There is also the issue of whether the program should have other target groups? If the program is being revised and resources are being spent on improved systems and procedures, there could be arguments for spreading the net wider and including new target groups?

Who should be the target group for the revised National Internship Program?

- Should the target group be unemployed graduates?
- Should the target group include unemployed diploma holders?
- Should other target groups be included?

9.4: Who are the future partners for the revised National Internship Program?

Given the pressures for Labour market responsiveness and work readiness skills there will be a need for the Department of National Internship Policy to develop formalised relationships with a number of partners, helping to ensure effective implementation. However, the important questions relate to who the partners will be and their respective roles.. These issues are discussed in more depth below.

Employment Exchange

The previous section pointed to the role of the DNIP in reducing unemployment amongst graduates and possibly diploma holders. In most countries the role of reducing unemployment rests with employment exchanges or employment offices. Normally, such offices provide a range of specific services to help place unemployed people in employment. As outlined earlier this would centre on an assessment of the individual's needs, particularly in terms of their current requirements for guidance and counselling, a personal development plan and their skill matching with a suitable employer. Therefore, this raises the question whether the Employment Exchange could play a role in helping to implement a more effective and efficient internship program

Education Providers

The key part for the reform of National Internship Program will be the development of work readiness skills. This is not a simple process and will require the DNIP to work with an education or training provider to identify the learning outcomes, put together the modules, decide the qualification and develop the assessment process. The revised internship program would combine on-the-job training and attendance at a formal program of learning at an education or training institution. Therefore, it is vital that the DNIP identifies how this process would be addressed. This could take the form of a framework contract with a number of providers who compete for the right to deliver learning packages for the interns.

HRDAC

One of the key issues affecting the successful implementation of the future internship policy will be the need for improved coordination with other initiatives with similar goals. The evidence shows that there a large number of programs within Botswana that are competing for workplace experience and there is a need to ensure coordination. However, it is not necessarily the role of the DNIP to perform a coordination role. However, it will be important for the DNIP to work with the HRDAC on the issue of policy coordination and to ensure that synergies occur with other internship policies, as well as other policies and strategies concerned with skills development and youth employment.

Beside the importance of policy coordination, it will be equally important that the DNIP to work with the HRDAC sector committees. Currently, HRDAC sector committees have been established in the fields of mining and health, and more are expected to be established in the near future. One of the responsibilities of these committees is to determine skill requirements in the sector and to forge improve links between employers and the education system. Therefore, at the sector level these committees and the sector HRD plans could help provide an indication of the areas that could be targeted by the internship program for placements.

BCQF and the BQA

The anticipated implementation of Botswana's Credit and Qualifications Framework (BCQF) provides an opportunity for the NIP to establish a further linkage. The BCQF will provide a framework for determining the levels of qualifications, all of which will have a credit value. This will also include a record of occupational standards that apply at different levels and are the building blocks for different kinds of qualifications. An issue to be determined by NIP is whether credit should be applied to the internship and how this translates into a *partial qualification* (e.g. a module, or part module, as credit towards a post-graduate program). As mentioned earlier, many *undergraduate* work experience or internship programs in other countries count towards an overall qualification. If this is to apply to an unemployed graduates program like NIP, it will require partnerships with education and training providers as well as the planned Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA) that will manage the BCQF.

The changing function of the DNIP

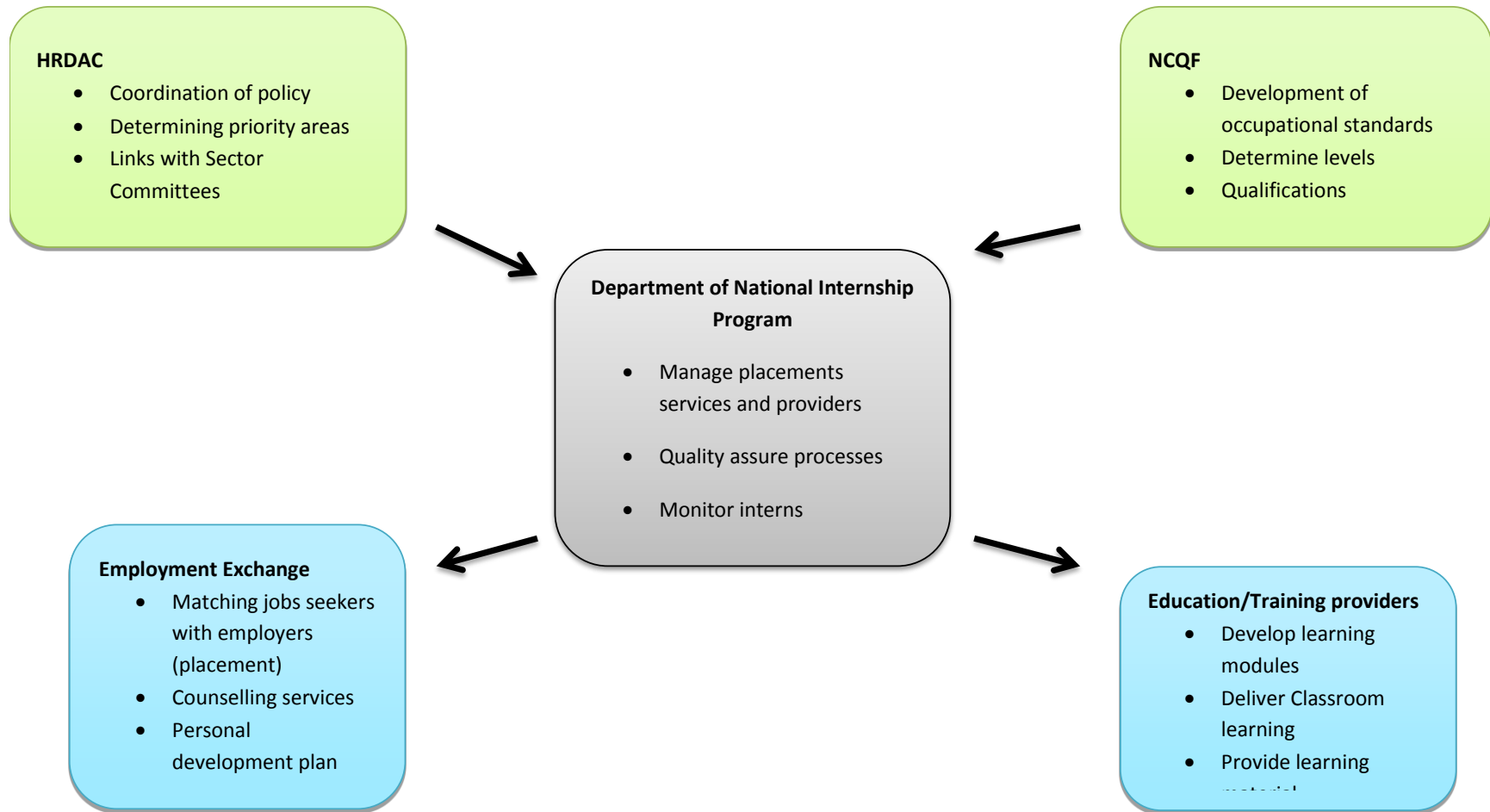
Given the need to engage with new partners, the DNIP will have to manage this relationship. However, this raises the question of how this relationship will be managed. This is a difficult question and figure 4 outlines what this relationship might look like and the possible functions of the different partners.

Question Areas

- Who are likely to be the main partners for helping to deliver the revised National Internship Program?

- To what extent should the Employment Exchange play a role in placing unemployed graduates?
- What services could the Employment Exchange provide to unemployed graduates?
- Should education or training providers played a role in the development of work readiness skills?
- How can formalised links be made between the DNIP and HRDAC and the BCQF?
- How can the relationships between the different partners and the DNIP be managed?

Figure 4: Possible management and functions associated with revised National Internship Program



9.5: What are the policy challenges?

The following represent the main challenges that will need to be addressed by the internship policy:

Increased competition for places

The most significant challenge facing the National Internship program, as well as other internship programs, is the increased competition for workplaces. In part this reflects the small industrial base within Botswana and the rising demand for work readiness skills. This is not an easy problem to solve.

One of the most cost effective ways to tackle the lack of placements would be to reduce the amount of time that current unemployed graduates spend on their placements. As outlined earlier, unemployed graduates used to spend one year on their internships, but this was extended to two years. However, the experience of overseas countries shows that most work experience programs last for between 2 and 8 months. Therefore, the DNIP should think about reducing the time that unemployed graduates spend on their internship.

Another possibility is overseas internships. This is proving popular in some countries, but there are lots of implications that need to be addressed. The intern will need to have the appropriate insurance and also preparation for living away from home in a different culture. The costs may outweigh the benefits.

Other countries have attempted to address this problem through simulated work experience programs. These tend to focus upon a number of issues related to small business development. At one end of the spectrum are initiatives that attempt to develop entrepreneurial values amongst young people. However, these are normally delivered as part of the curriculum in formal education programs. At the other end of the spectrum are strategies that attempt to encourage the development of entrepreneurs or small businesses. Often, the latter strategies involve the development of a business plan that provides a targeted service or product to a niche market. The young person(s) are normally provided with training or counselling, access to incubation services and in some instances finances in the form of a loan. The success of such approaches depends upon the quality of services that are provided to the young person to establish their small business, as well as the degree of demand within the local market.

In between the previously outlined two approaches is the idea of the *virtual or simulated* internship program in which the young person is based in an education institution, but works for a company through providing a service or by producing a product e.g. in Indonesia, where graduates were testing software for a large multinational. Such approaches will become increasingly common in the near future.

Obviously, the DNIP will need to make a decision about how to tackle the lack of placements. There seem to be a number of options, ranging from a reduction in the time allocated for the internship, to support for simulated work experience.

Uncoordinated initiatives

Another equally significant constraint that is closely related to the lack of placements, is the increasing number of internship programs in Botswana and their lack of coordination. Unsurprisingly, this has resulted in severe competition between the different programs, with each institution trying to persuade employers that their program is better than others. Even, during the write-up of the current report we discovered another initiative that has been launched by the government, called the Junior Achievement Program (JAB). One of the underpinning objectives of this program is to improve the work readiness amongst learners at technical colleges.

It is clear that there is a need to improve work readiness amongst learners at all phases of the education system, as well as amongst graduates who have left the education system and are unable to find jobs. There are numerous benefits that can be achieved through the coordination of the different initiatives and programs at the various levels. This could help ensure that a continuous and systematic approach to developing work readiness skills occurs at all levels. This will ensure that by the time young people leave the education system they have the appropriate skills and are ready to enter the workplace. In addition, through cooperation it will help ensure that resources are used more effectively, particularly through the sharing of learning materials and reducing the duplication of effort.

However, the coordination of strategies is not the function of the DNIP. Any future policy will have to ensure synergies with other policies and this can only be achieved through working closely with HRDAC.

Respond to the needs of the employers and learner

The revised National Internship Program will have to respond to the needs of both learners and employers. Both of these target groups have been touched upon in earlier parts of the report. In the case of the learner, the revised National Internship Program will need to provide participants with a statement or preferably a qualification (or partial qualification) that is recognised and has a value in the market place. This will be difficult to achieve for a post graduate employment program and will ultimately depend on the development of appropriate credit, qualifications and assessments systems, as well as improved monitoring of students. The DNIP will only be achieved through working with education providers and eventually the BQA, in its administration of the BCQF.

For employers the National Internship program will also need to become more suited to their needs. Obviously, this is not an easy task to fulfil. The DNIP may have to become more business orientated and make the internship programs more appealing to employers. This could involve a more strategic approach to certain sectors through career fair type activities and involve improved preparation of their graduates for their placements. In addition, support could be provided for employers' recruitment process through providing them with a profile of the graduates who want to work in that sector. A final issue to think about is that the internship program could be tailor made to the needs of the company. For instance, in the UK there was

an internship program that depended on a particular employer's needs and was centred on a project. This involved identifying a task or problem that needed to be addressed in the company and developing a project that could be tackled by the internship during his placement. This approach proved very successful and was attractive to employers, but it required a considerable amount of resources and support from the coordinating body.

The DNIP will need to make a decision regarding the most appropriate strategy or means of responding to the needs of employer or participants. This will require additional resources and also require working closely with other partners, such as education providers.

Sustainability

Any program or initiative must be sustainable over the long term. Normally, the question that must be asked is can those who benefit pay? Under the current programs the beneficiaries are the unemployed graduates and the companies. Under the current arrangement this might prove difficult, since the introduction of any form of payment would reduce the incentive of employers to participate in the scheme. Similarly, it is questionable whether the unemployed graduates have the funds to contribute towards their own placement.

If the proposed reforms outlined above are implemented, then the quality of the internship would improve and become more attractive to employers, as well as graduates. When the quality of the Internship program improves there might be justification for transferring some of the costs to the employers or graduates. However, under the current arrangements this is not possible.

Nevertheless, the issue of sustainability still needs to be tackled. This raises the question of what measures could be introduced to make the delivery of the National Internship Program more cost effective? One of the ways is to reduce the length of the program. As outlined previously, this will help ensure that more graduates pass through the system, ensuring that the ratio between costs and the number of participants improve.

Other measures for improving sustainability centre on the reform of institutional structures within the DNIP. This would involve the need to reduce the duplication of functions of the different divisions within the Department, as well as possible improvements of their performance. In order to carry out these changes it will be necessary to conduct a functional analysis of the Department, with a review to identify changes and reforms in the structures and systems. This will not be possible until a decision has been made about the precise functions of the revised NIP.

Question areas:

- How can increased competition for work-placements be tackled?
- What forms of simulated work experience should be developed?
- How can a more coordinated approach to work readiness skills be developed?
- What strategies should be introduced to make the revised internship program more responsive to

the needs of employers?

- What strategies should be introduced to make the revised internship program more responsive to the needs of learners?
- What institutional changes and reforms are necessary to make the DNIP more sustainable?

10. Concluding comments

The next stage of the process for the development of the National Internship Program will be consultation around the question areas outlined above. This must involve extensive consultation with and feedback from employers, education and training providers, participants in the scheme, education planners and also those involved in the delivery of other internship programs. This consultation process cannot be done overnight and will require extensive discussion around the issues outlined above in order to achieve a consensus on the ways forward. Once this has been achieved it will be possible to move onto the next stage and develop the policy. There are no set procedures or approaches for developing a policy, but the following provides a parameter for putting together a policy and what issues should be addressed (see Table 5).

Table 5: An outline of the main issues to be addressed by the revised National Internship Policy

Main issues in the policy document	Issues to be addressed by the policy documents
Introduction	
Setting – the context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background to the development of the internship program • Growing demand for work ready skills • Need to support the transition to a knowledge economy • Meet the needs of <i>Vision 2016</i> • Justification for the reform of the NIP in the light of these changes
Policy challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased competition for places • Large number of uncoordinated programs • Meeting the changing needs of employers and participants as learners • Ensure that improved quality is achieved • Tackle the long term sustainability of the program • Organisational reform to improve service delivery
Overriding Policy Goal	<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve labour market access for unemployed graduates, provide them with work readiness skills to address skill gaps/shortages and facilitate the economy's move towards knowledge status
Policy Objectives	<p>Example:</p> <p>Objective 1: Revitalisation of the program and redefine its objectives</p> <p>Objective 2: Improve the quality of learning outcomes and ensure participants receive credit e.g. a recognised qualification or partial qualification (eventually one that is included on the BCQF)</p> <p>Objective 3: Ensure that all graduates are provided with a placement or a meaningful simulated work experience</p> <p>Objective 4: Identify more effective partnership arrangements for the planning and implementation of the internship program</p> <p>Objective 5: Develop an internship program that responds more effectively to the needs of employers and the labour market</p> <p>Objective 6: Improve the institutional structures and quality assurance structures of the DNIP</p>
Management and Governance Structures	<p>This should identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What role would employers play in the planning and management process? • Could the HRD sector councils play a role in this process? • Would there be a need to involve education providers? • How could the HRAC be involved?

Sustainability strategies	<p>This will address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are alternative mechanisms of resourcing? • Will there be a reduction the length of the internship? • Should an improved internship be based on the premise of who benefits pays? • Alternatively, should the program continued to be supported by the government over the longer term? • What other options for funding are available?
Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to ensure that the DNIP has enough resources and staffing to play a role in this process • If the program is decentralised then which offices could play a more important role in this M&E process? • There might be a need for education providers to play a role in this process • Currently information is collected, but this needs to collated a reporting system developed to inform planners and stakeholders about the performance of the system