

Unpacking the ESD Community of Practice ... what is it, and what's in it for the corporate practitioner?

Gary Joseph
EDSE Technical Assistance Team

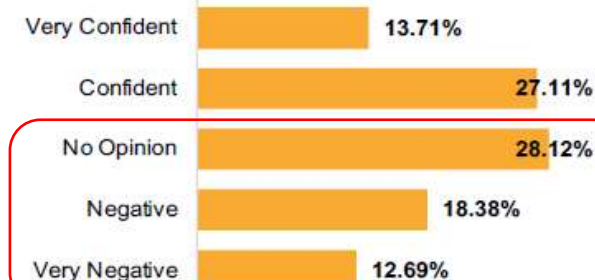
First SMME Development Index Report – February 2022



Confidence on ESD programmes for sustainability

Answered: 985 | Skipped: 107

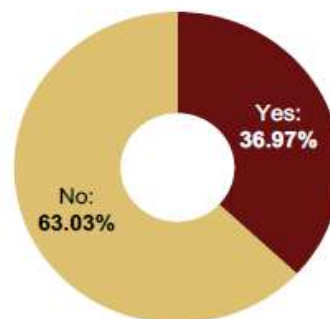
How confident are you that enterprise and supplier development programmes support the sustainability of businesses like yours?	Responses
Very Confident	135
Confident	267
No Opinion	277
Negative	181
Very Negative	125
Weighted Average	3.11



Current programmes support access to markets

Answered: 982 | Skipped: 110

Do you think that the current business support programmes to access market opportunities are effective?	Responses
Yes	363
No	619



Reasons for greater effectiveness

Answered: 615 | Skipped: 477

If no, Choose the most important option from the list below that you believe would make 'market opportunity support programmes' more effective for your business? (Choose one)	Responses	
Reduce compliance (e.g. less forms to fill in)	20,16%	124
I don't really know what programmes are available for my business	16,42%	101
Support programmes should be better designed to match the needs of my business	12,68%	78
Participating in support programmes takes too much time away from my business	1,46%	9
People who provide the support need to be better trained on how business operates	8,29%	51
We need more technically experienced (e.g. engineers, coding professionals, legal etc.) people to help our business to better access market opportunities	5,69%	35
We need more marketing support to access the markets we are targeting	10,57%	65
In order to expand or access new markets my business needs finance	17,07%	105
I would prefer support programmes to be delivered digitally (online)	4,07%	25
I don't need support	3,58%	22

Summary of key findings



- There is a great deal of variation in how ESD programmes are designed, implemented and measured.
- Much ESD activity in corporate South Africa is focused on compliance and scorecard improvement, which does not always reflect measurable transformation and supplier growth.
- The “holy grail” of ESD is to marry and maximize compliance and impact, via long-term supplier relationships allowing for the development of sustainable competencies and value/performance.
- On the one hand, hands-on corporate supplier development builds longer term, relevant supplier capabilities – but where management lacks capacity to do this, outsourced ESD expertise can bring the necessary resources and capacity-building to bear; but the long-term relationship is ultimately still up to the corporate.
- The practice of ESD (internal and external) is not supported by any systematic training, professional standards or skills development, other than some pro-active initiatives.
- There is no aggregated national measurement of the impact of ESD on transformation, SME sector growth or job creation.

Why develop a Community of Practice in ESD?



- The question to what extent ESD is supporting economic transformation through participation, at a national level, is likely to feature when (not if) B-BBEE is reviewed.
- ESD impact is mostly measured at a company level, not a sector or country level – a CoP may support steps towards more meaningful impact measurement.
- Resource sharing and knowledge exchange is an integral part of capacity building effort with SME suppliers – it makes sense to extend this approach between practitioners, via events, case studies, webinars, research and reports, templates and tools.
- A number of speakers at the ABSA SD Awards and experts quoted in the Gauge Report have expressed the need for ideation of new and innovative approaches to SD programmes to enable South Africa's SMEs to be better equipped to navigate and grow in the current economic environment – a CoP can support this.
- Not everybody does everything best – but sharing best practice supports a “rising lake”, so all canoes benefit.

About the ESD Community of Practice



Opening new doors of opportunity
to SMEs through effective
Enterprise & Supplier Development

A public/private collaboration for transformation

**Re-booting Enterprise & Supplier
Development for more effective
transformation and SMME impact**



This is a collaboration between Public & Private Sector and is a joint platform for collective engagement in the interest of common ESD goals and impact being facilitated

A CoP can improve ESD practice and outcomes in various ways:

- ESD practitioners are not organized and no structure in place – Need to UNITE the ESD profession – CoP is foundation thereof and strengthens the ecosystem;
- Becomes a channel for awareness on latest ESD related policy developments
- It enables sharing of “what works”, i.e.:
 - it enables the sharing of information on supporting and contracting capable black-owned suppliers,
 - it can improve practitioner skills and knowledge, and
 - it can be a community where partnerships and joint actions are facilitated and forged.

By supporting more effective practitioners and encouraging ESD partnerships, better SMME access to supply chains and thus their growth and ability to create employment is enabled



A Brief Guide to Communities of Practice

– Contextualising the ESD CoP

Community of Practice – the “what”

- Definition:
 - Communities of practice are groups of people who share a passion for something they know how to do and who interact regularly to learn how to do it better. They enhance learning and empower people in their work. They have become an accepted part of organizational development.

*The **Enterprise & Supplier Development Community of Practice (ESDCoP)** is a joint initiative between the public and private sector aimed at addressing the pronounced lack of information and best-practice sharing in the ESD practitioner sector by establishing a community of practice for ESD practitioners and policy enablers to improve how enterprise and supplier development is done, all within the strategic intent and framework of B-BBEE.*

Community of Practice – the “what”

General Characteristics:

1. **The Domain** - “A shared area of interest”
2. **The Community** – “In pursuing their interest in their domain, members engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other, and share information.”
3. **The Practice** – “A community of practice is not merely a community of interest-people who like certain kinds of movies, for instance. Members of a community of practice are practitioners. They are committed to developing a shared pool of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems-in short a shared practice.”

ESD CoP Characteristics

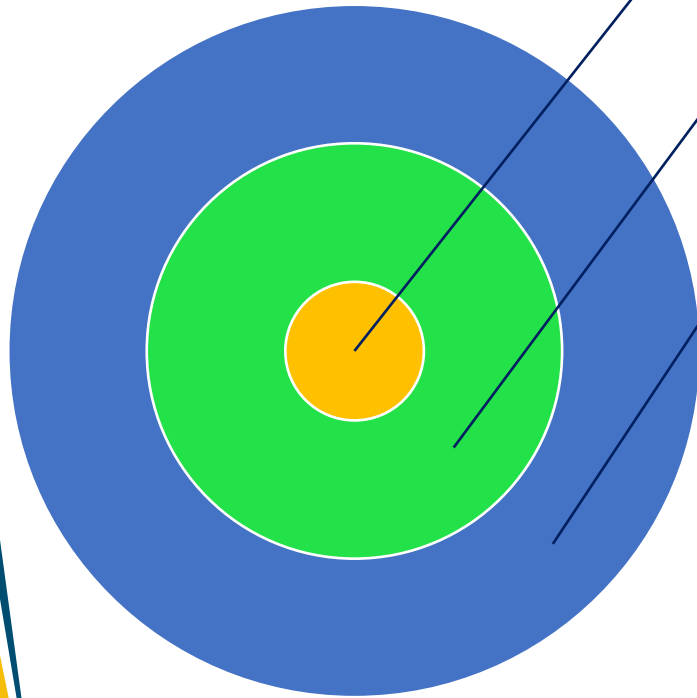
Domain	Support ESD efforts to deliver meaningful economic empowerment and job creation
Community	Membership of the CoP will be open to employees of companies having in excess of 100 employees and whose role is ESD practitioner, i.e. the development and implementation / oversight of enterprise and supplier development programmes and related activities within the B-BBEE framework
Practice	Develop the practice of ESD to effectively support and grow the SMME sector in South Africa by collectively work towards joint knowledge-generating and sharing activities, as well as professional skills and practitioner development

Community of Practice – the “why”

- ✓ • **Learning** - Emphasis is on learning, developing new ideas and strategies within the ESD environment
- ✓ • **Spontaneous** - Group formation tends to be spontaneous where a need is identified.
- ✓ • **Shared Problems** - Activity happens around a set of shared problems.
- ✓ • **Mutual Engagement** - Members act as sounding boards for new ideas & help each other.
- ✓ • **Reciprocal Process** - CoP chooses members, and members choose whether to participate or not.
- ✓ • **Connected** - People who may never come in contact are otherwise connected.
- ✓ • **Best-Practice Sharing** - Knowledge about specific practices flows from individual insights to documented, verified, used best practices—and from location to location.
- ✓ • **Knowledge Stewarding** - Body of knowledge is collected, connected with members, organized, upgraded, and re-deployed.
- ✓ • **Innovation** - Boundaries are crossed to generate new ideas.

Community of Practice – the “who”

Basic Structure



The core group manages the CoP based on an agreed co-ordination mandate. It provides secretarial support as necessary.

ESD CoP Technical Task Team

The inner circle serves as a steering committee with an informal structure, meeting once or twice a year. (Individual members may contact the core group on demand.)

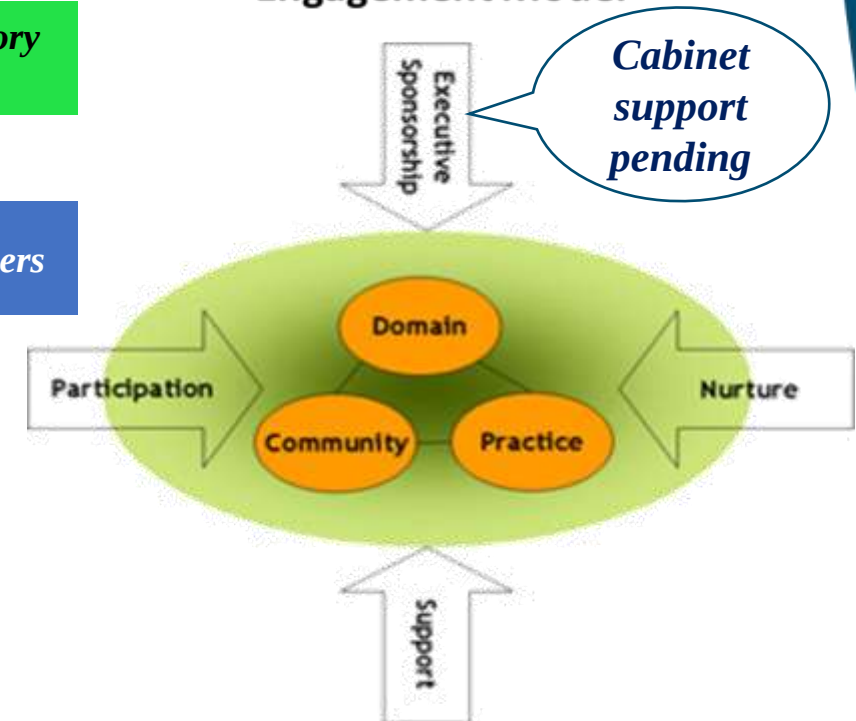
ESD CoP Advisory Committee

The outer circle embraces interested members, contributors, and readers in a loose network.

ESD CoP Members



Engagement Model



Supported by:

Community of Practice – the “how”

What CoPs Do

- Facilitate collaboration/communication
- Develop/Identify Subject Matter Experts
- Filter out incorrect information by peer groups
- Capture knowledge (intellectual capital)
- Prevent re-inventing the wheel by sharing knowledge and experiences
- Share successful (best) practices
- Decrease learning curve
- Increase organizational learning

What the ESD CoP will Do

- Create platforms and activities that foster knowledge and best-practice sharing and research
- Develop Training programmes through which ESD practitioners can be upskilled in line with professionalising the ESD field of practice
- Facilitate workshops covering ESD related content that is fresh and relevant to ESD practice
- Develop, manage and maintain a Knowledge repository to support the work of the CoP and its members
- Establish special interest groups that would focus its attention on ESD matters common and applicable to such groups
- Recognise ESD commitment and best practice at an individual and organisational level

Community of Practice – the “how”

Benefits of a CoPs

- Access to knowledge and experience
- Build relationships with those who have expertise in a particular domain
- Develop best practices through discussions and sharing of ideas
- Learn how others have solved problems, instead of reinventing the wheel
- Keep up-to-date at the time and pace of the individual member
- Develop a community spirit.

Benefits of the ESD CoP

- Move from pockets of excellence to collaboration for excellence
- Provide a knowledge exchange and repository
- Support technical knowledge and skills development through upskilling activities.
- Allow for sharing of “what works”, ie results-based good practice.
- Build private-public sector understanding and partnerships at strategic and project levels.
- Build a more comprehensive data picture of the role of ESD in transformation

ESD CoPAC Key Priorities

- Continue the roll-out of CoP Activity Roadmap
- Working Groups commence with activities under work groups
- Develop and sign-off on operating model
- Support and promote the roll out of the CoP activity plan
- Providing inputs, direction and sign-off on the CoP's sustainability strategy;
- Promote the CoP as well as recruiting practitioners that drive ESD operations in public institutions and private companies.

CoP Activity Roadmap

May 2023	June 2023	July 2023
✓ 17th - ESDCoPAC Meeting ✓ 30th – Workshop on the B-BBEE Commission ESD Report	✓ 6th-7th - ESD Policy Dialogue Conference – Formal launch of ESDCoP 19th – 20th – ESDCoP Working Group Meetings 22nd – ESDCoPAC Meeting	10th – 11th – ESDCoP Working Group Meetings 19th – Public Procurement Bill + PPR 2022 workshop 21st – Knowledge & Practice Workshop 1
August 2023	September 2023	October 2023
17th - Localization Masterclass 30th – ESDCoPAC Meeting	7th – 8th – ESDCoP Working Group Meetings 15th - SEDA new Supplier Development Programme masterclass 23rd – Knowledge & Practice Workshop 2	12th - Aligning ESD to ESG Masterclass 19th – Knowledge & Practice Workshop 3 26th – ESDCoPAC Meeting



Are you a ESD Practitioner responsible for the development and implementation / oversight of enterprise and supplier development programmes and related activities within the B-BBEE framework within your company?

REGISTER ONLINE at <https://esdcommunity.net>

Or contact us for more information:

secretariat@esdcommunity.net