



NORTH WEST PROVINCE

Skills Development Needs in North West

Identifying MMS-related skills development needs in mining communities, taking into account the unique economic landscape, PGM-rich mineral endowments and sectoral challenges of the North West Province.

Commissioned by the Mining Qualifications Authority.

PROVINCIAL UNEMPLOYMENT VS NATIONAL



30%

MINING'S SHARE OF PROVINCIAL GDP

308

COMMUNITY MEMBERS SURVEYED ACROSS 4 DMS

113K

PEOPLE EMPLOYED IN MINING SECTOR

8

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS PROPOSED

3.8M

TOTAL POPULATION (2022)

53%

FEMALE PARTICIPANTS

41.3%

UNEMPLOYMENT Q2 2024

54.2%

EXPANDED UNEMPLOYMENT



The North West Province is ranked **7th by population share** (3.8 million, 2022) and home to the world's richest platinum deposits in the Bushveld Igneous Complex. Mining contributes **30% to provincial GDP**. The study surveyed **308 community members** across all 4 district municipalities; community workshops held in Klerksdorp and Rustenburg.



EDUCATION PROFILE · AGES 20+

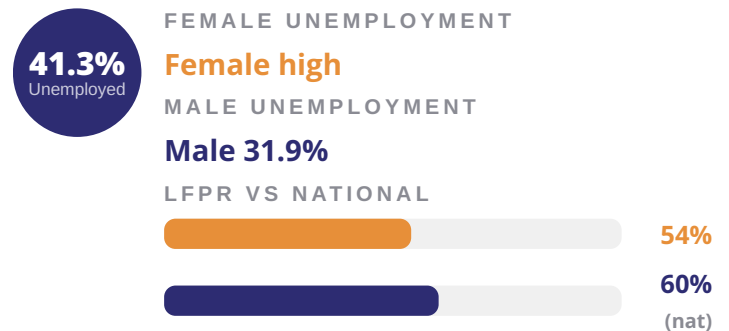
Qualification Attainment



Only **10%** hold post-school qualifications — the most critical bottleneck to skilled employment.

LABOUR MARKET · 2024 Q1

Unemployment Snapshot



Discouraged work-seekers declined by 67,000 between Q2 2023 and Q2 2024, but expanded unemployment remains at **54.2%** — among the highest nationally.

NEET — NOT IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION OR TRAINING



Total NEET in province: **~2.3M**

PROVINCIAL SKILLS PROFILE (EMPLOYED)



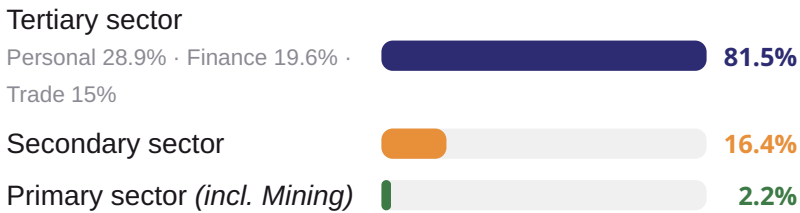
Engineering LFPR: **82% employed** — strong absorption where qualifications exist.

"The lack of vocational training colleges and community libraries is affecting education. Career guidance is inadequate — a considerable percentage of young people do not pursue further education. "Not all individuals are talented in academic subjects, but some are good in vocational fields like baking, carpentry, and computers."

Mining Sector Profile & Skills Gaps

PROVINCIAL ECONOMY — GVA CONTRIBUTION

GVA BY SECTOR (2024 Q1)



KEY MINERAL DEPOSITS IN THE PROVINCE

Platinum (PGMs) — World's Largest Reserve

Gold — Witwatersrand Basin

Chrome — Western Bushveld (32% of SA)

Diamonds — Lichtenburg area

Uranium, Vanadium, Fluorspar

HARD-TO-FILL VACANCIES · PRIMARY CAUSE



The province produces **64% of SA's platinum, 25% of gold, 46% of dimension stone** and 32% of chromite.
Major operators: Impala, Sibanye-Stillwater, Anglo American.

CRITICAL ROLES UNFILLED

Mine Manager

Mine Planning Manager

Mining Engineering Manager

Boilermaker

Chief Safety Officer

Diesel Mechanic

MOST PROMINENT SKILLS GAPS — TOP-UP SKILLS ACROSS OCCUPATIONS

Occupational Health & Safety
Most prominent

Planning & Organising
Multiple roles

Communication Skills
Cross-cutting

Computer Literacy
Operations roles

Project Management
Coal/Mining roles

PEOPLE EMPLOYED IN MINING (2024 Q1)

113,000

MINING GVA CONTRIBUTION

R3B+

CRITICAL TRAINING IMPLEMENTATION GAP

3

of 15
PROGRAMMES
DELIVERED

7

of 192
INDIVIDUALS
TRAINED

Only 3.6% delivery rate. 15 programmes planned · 3 delivered · 192 targeted · 7 trained. MQA must urgently investigate barriers with PGM and gold mining companies.



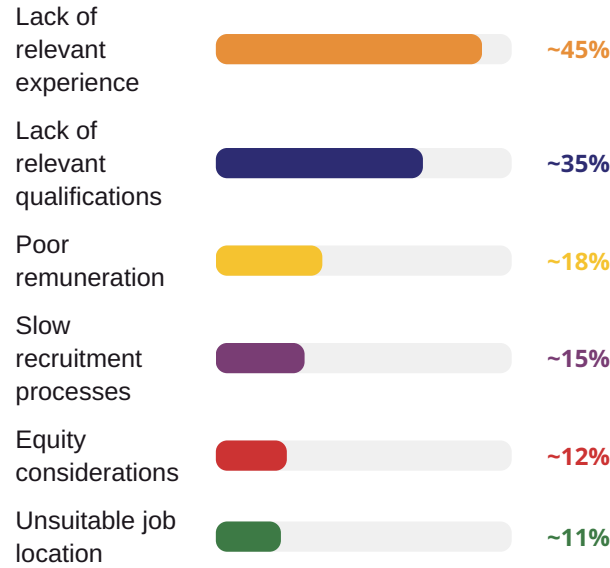
Hard-to-Fill Vacancies (HTFV) Analysis

Hard-to-fill vacancies are occupations that an employer was unable to fill within 12 months or took longer than 12 months to find a suitably qualified and experienced candidate (WSP-ATR 2024 definition). Data drawn from submissions by mining companies operating in the North West province.

OCCUPATIONS IDENTIFIED AS HARD-TO-FILL

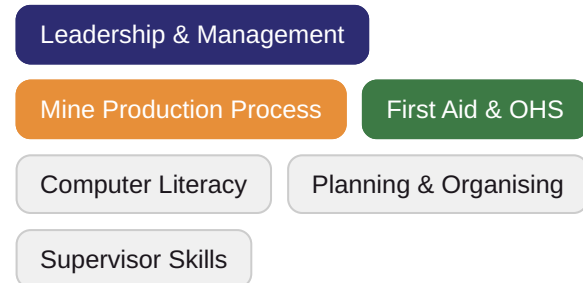
Occupation	OFO Code	Primary Reasons
Works / Workshop Manager (Manufacturing)	2021-132102	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of experience Lack of qualifications Poor remuneration Equity considerations
Mining Engineering Manager	2021-132104	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of experience Lack of qualifications Poor remuneration Equity considerations Slow recruitment Unsuitable location Unsuitable hours
Mining Manager	2021-132201	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of experience Lack of qualifications Poor remuneration
Mine Planning Manager	2021-132202	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of experience Lack of qualifications Poor remuneration Slow recruitment Unsuitable location
Chief Safety Officer Mining	2021-226302	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of experience Lack of qualifications Poor remuneration Equity considerations Slow recruitment Unsuitable location
Mine Planning Technician	2021-311701	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of experience Lack of qualifications Poor remuneration Equity considerations Slow recruitment Unsuitable location
Mine Operations Foreman	2021-312101	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of experience

PRIMARY RECRUITMENT BARRIERS

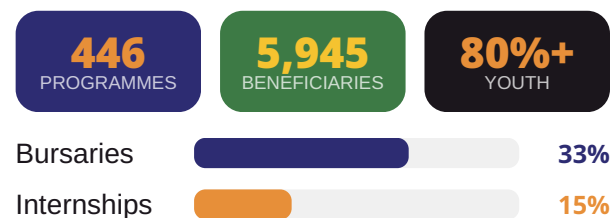


Lack of experience is the largest barrier — creating a cycle where unemployed community members cannot gain experience without employment. Mine Overseer (Production) has the most extensive skills gaps across 10 competency areas.

TOP-UP SKILLS — RECURRING GAPS



TRAINING PROGRAMMES DELIVERED (2024)





TOP SKILLS NEEDED BY COMMUNITIES (SURVEY)



MQA COMMUNITY AWARENESS

38%

Familiar with MQA

Familiar with MQA	38%
Somewhat familiar	9%
Not familiar	53%

Only **3%** participated in MQA programmes · **75%** unaware of any MQA skills programmes

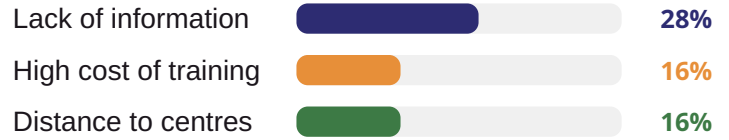
BARRIERS TO ACCESSING TRAINING (SURVEY)

51%

SAY ACCESS IS "VERY DIFFICULT"

62%

UNAWARE OF ANY MMS TRAINING PROGRAMME



EMERGING OPPORTUNITY SECTORS

Renewable Energy

Solar installation · Wind energy · Green hydrogen

Province-wide

Agriculture & Agro-processing

Maize · Livestock · Poultry · Fish farming

37% priority

Manufacturing

Food processing · Mining-related goods production

29% priority

Artisanal & Small-Scale Mining

PGMs · Gold · Chrome · Industrial minerals

Formalising

PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT FOCUS AREAS (SURVEY)

27%

Prepare Youth for Mining Careers

20%

Economic Diversification Skills

20%

Support Local Mining Businesses

19%

Upskill Current Mine Workers

SMART Framework — 8 Recommendations. Each recommendation is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound — drawn directly from community surveys, workshops and WSP-ATR data analysis in the North West.

1

Design Integrated Youth Development Programme

Commission research into skills needs of young people in mining communities. Develop training framework covering technical, digital, mentorship, soft skills and entrepreneurship.

🕒 Year 1 (research) → Year 3 (implementation)

3

Launch Career Guidance Campaigns

Organise roadshows, workshops and information sessions across the province. Motivate matriculants to access PSET opportunities at NWU, Taletso, Vuselela and ORBIT TVET.

🕒 Within 1 Year

5

Cross-Sector Skills Assessment with AgriSETA

Commission a joint study with AgriSETA to identify transferable skills between the MMS and agricultural sectors — addressing the province's top cross-sector collaboration priority.

🕒 2026/2027 Financial Year

7

Develop Targeted Upskilling Programmes

Create accredited short courses in planning, project management, leadership, supervisory capabilities and computer literacy — aligned with CPD frameworks.

🕒 Discussions 2026 · Programme launch 2026/27

8

Assess Impact of Short Course Offerings

Evaluate the effectiveness of portable skills short courses in engineering, construction, agriculture and machinery operation on employment outcomes in the province.

🕒 2026/2027 Financial Year

2

Assess Gender-Responsiveness of MQA Programmes

Evaluate inclusivity of all MQA training programmes. Identify barriers hindering women's participation and provide actionable recommendations.

🕒 2025/2026 Financial Year

4

Partner with Government for Entrepreneurship Support

Collaborate with NYDA and local government agencies to integrate business training into MQA programme offerings, targeting self-employed community members.

🕒 Next year (discussions) → Year-end (partnerships)

6

Community Outreach for MQA Visibility

Launch roadshows and annual community information sessions in mining regions. Collaborate with local municipalities, traditional authorities and CBOs.

🕒 Roadshow 2026 · Sessions from 2026/27

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

1

IMMEDIATE
Year 1

3

SHORT-TERM
2026

4

MEDIUM-TERM
2026/27