



NATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

IMPACT EVALUATION OF BUSINESS CONSULTANCY SERVICES VOUCHER PROGRAM- REPORT

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Acronyms

Abbreviation	Details
BCSVP	Business Consultancy Service Voucher Programme
CIPC	Companies Intellectual Property commission
IDC	Industrial Development Corporation
GEM	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
NDP	National Development Plan
NGP	New Growth Path
NYP	National Youth Policy 2020
SEFA	Small Enterprise Funding Agency
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
VMS	Voucher Management System
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
TEA	Total Early-stage Entrepreneurial Activity
SEZ	Special Economic Zone

1. Introduction

This impact evaluation report is presented to the NYDA by Phaswane Social Consultants on the Business Consultancy Services Voucher Programme (BCSVP). The BCSVP is a business support programme aimed at assisting young entrepreneurs by providing one-on-one business development support to access quality business development services through NYDA approved business consultancy service providers thereby enhancing their participation in the mainstream economy. Entrepreneurs access these services through vouchers. These interventions are largely provided on a one-on-one basis. The value of the vouchers ranges from R6 600 to R19 800. There is no contribution fee required for young entrepreneurs to participate in the programme although a contribution fee of R200 is paid by young people (YP) to the service provider (SP) of business consultancy services. These services are delivered through a network of NYDA branches in all provinces.

The Voucher Programme was initially operating manually when it was first designed and implemented at the then “Umsobomvu Youth Fund” After the programme evaluation which was done around 1989, it was recommended that the organisation look into using an electronic system to implement the programme in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency, also to eliminate human error and delays in the processing of the vouchers. The system has been functional for years now although there are positives and great improvement on the voucher programme as a result of introducing VMS.

2. Purpose and objectives of the study

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the improved efficiency and effectiveness of the Voucher Management System (VMS) used to implement the voucher programme and to determine the impact of VMS on the users’ especially young people and service providers.

The specific objectives of evaluating the Voucher Management System and its impact include the following:

- a) To determine the effectiveness of VMS on the implementation of the voucher programme.
- b) To determine if there is improved efficiency (quality, time frame) on the voucher process after the introduction VMS the voucher programme.
- c) To determine the impact of VMS on the users especially young people and service providers.
- d) To determine if the VMS has made voucher application process easier.
- e) To determine the relevance (in terms of the design and conceptualisation) of the Voucher Management System in achieving the objectives of the programme and indicate the necessary and required success factors.

The evaluations also aim to focus specifically on the VMS as a system and its effect on the voucher programme in line with the specific evaluation objectives mentioned above. In order to clarify the evaluation the overall objectives of the voucher programme are also mentioned as follows:

- a) To create a conducive environment for youth entrepreneurs to assess relevant technical assistance and managerial support for their businesses;
- b) To empower youth entrepreneurs by providing them with the means to purchase technical assistance and managerial support that they require;
- c) To support the creation of sustainable and competitive youth owned enterprises that are active in growth oriented sectors of the South African economy;
- d) To support service providers to continuously develop innovative and demand driven products through capacity building
- e) To encourage appreciation of business development services that youth entrepreneurs are willing to pay for.

- f) To support and give guidance to young people by providing them with mentorship support services

3. Methodology

The study was conducted using a qualitative research approach in order to analyse direct data from the field in a manner that ensures that the real world setting is enquired more naturalistic. Phaswane Consulting Services applied this methodology to maintain the rich narrative descriptions from users of the VMS and beneficiaries of the voucher programme are unearthed.

3.1. Literature review

The research team reviewed numerous sources of literature to ensure proper theoretical insight on the subject of this study; to also contrast the VMS and its relationship to the voucher programme and impact on users with other similar case studies including best practices at a globally level and in the context of South Africa. The research team of Phaswane Social Consultants reviewed journals on business consulting services and the automation of business consultancy services. Information system books, the NYDA's voucher programme policy and manual document including the VMS manual were also reviewed.

3.2. Data Collection Methods

3.2.3 Key informant interviews

The data collection methodology applied by our research team in terms of interviews both telephonic and face to face interviews of key informants for the evaluation. In total, 120 informants were reached and represent all key players in the usage of the system across all value chains and processes at centre of the evaluation. Informants that were interviewed were selected in relation to their role in the value chain and process flow of the VMS as stipulated in the BCM Voucher Programme manual.

Young People: 100 Young People who received vouchers and participated in the system were interviewed by telephone and by online administered questionnaires.

Service Providers: 20 Service Providers were interviewed telephonically. Service Providers are approved or accredited by NYDA BCS voucher programme and they utilise the VMS to interface with Business Development Officers (BDO), Service Coordinators which are also referred to as Senior Business Development Officers (BDOs) in this paper, BDO officers, the Quality Assurance Officer. The involvement of the SP includes uploading product documents, invoice and compliance documents.

Quality assurance officer: A face to face interview with the Quality Assurance Officer was conducted. Based at national officer, the quality assurance officer quality-checks the workflow from branches at a programme level and facilitated necessary approvals.

Senior Manager BDS (acting): A face to face interview with the senior manager based at head office was also conducted. By designation, the senior manager makes the financial submission on the VMS into Great Plains for submission.

3.2.3 Focus Group Discussions

Focus groups are structured discussions among small groups of people where a homogeneous group within the cohorts of the key informant are coordinated for the Focus Group Discussion. Naturally the features for a focus group discussion is that they are formal, controlled and a pre-arranged time and place (Cochran, 2002). Focus group discussions were held to give respondents to voice out their views freely; and the researcher was able to observe expressions and feelings on the respondents in the process. The structure of our focus group was as follows:

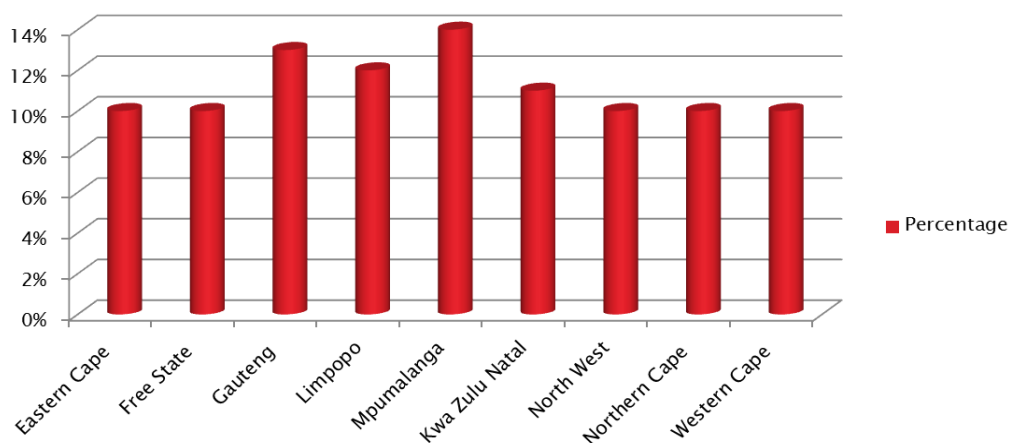
Young people: The number of focus groups that were conducted was 5 and they involved approximately 5 YPs each.

Business Development Officers: 14 BDOs were reached, their involvement in the VMS workflow is to provide quality assurance of the service provided to YP by SPs, and the administrative correctness of available of compliant documents

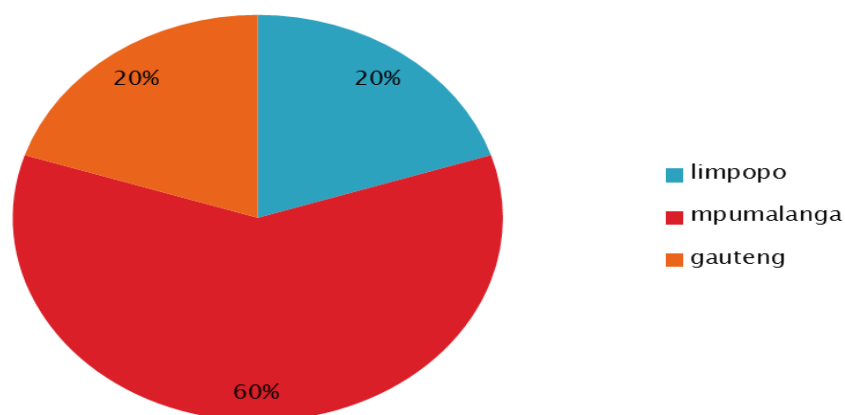
form the administration officer at a branch level and approves for further checks by the Service Coordinator or SBDO.

Service Coordinator or SBDOs: 12 SBDOs were also convened for focused groups. SBDOs are involved in the VMS workflow after the approval of the BDO work stream.

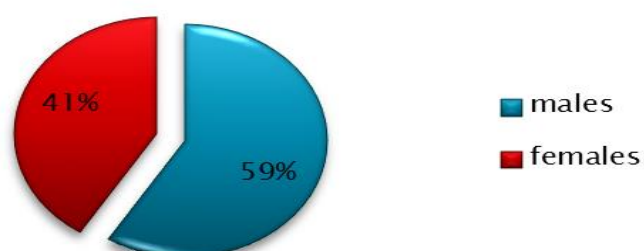
Provincial structure of sample size



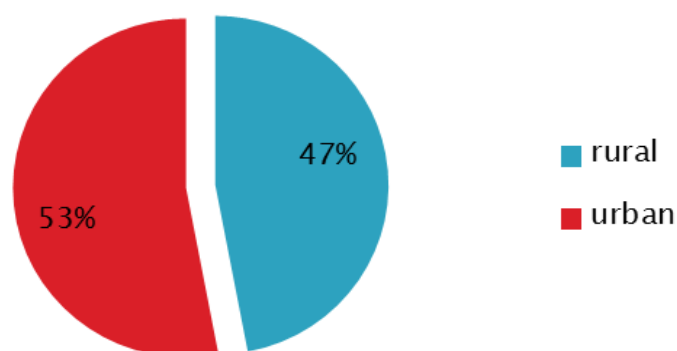
Focus Groups Discussions



Gender



Urban and Rural Structure of YPs



Informant	Methodology	Numbers
BDO's	Focus Group Discussions	14
Coordinators	Focus Group Discussions	12
Beneficiaries	Focus Group Discussions	16
	Telephone interview	100
	Questionnaire	50
Service Provider	Focus Group Discussion	6
	Telephone interviews	30
	Face to face	4
Economic Development Manager	Face to Face interviews	1
Quality Assurance Officer	Face to Face interviews	1
IT specialist	Face to face interviews	1
Finance Administrator	Face to face interviews	1
VMS developers	Telephone interview	1

3.2.4 Site Visits

Site visits were also conducted during the course of the evaluation. The research project team physically visited the NYDA branch and head office to observe the functions of the VMS system to gain first-hand knowledge on what the system constituted of.

3.3 Data Analysis

Information from observations on site, focus groups discussions and telephonic and face to face interviews, data was transcribed and analysed. The process was planned in a manner that grouped responses into categories and themes. Data processing techniques employed by Phaswane Service Consulting arranged data in a manner that guaranteed that was free from misconception.

Audio recordings were transcribed and the responses were put in a sequence that created logical order and in accordance to objectives of the evaluation. Data from interviews and focus group discussions were carefully transcribed and attention to detail was also ensured by allowing team members to quality assure each other.

The researchers and analyst are confident that the process ensured validity.

4. Limitations

There were challenges with accessing beneficiaries who accessed vouchers through the old system prior to VMS for comparison purposes. The research team was unable to gain access into system from other organizations but managed to get an understanding of its functionalities from client which would bring value to our study. Nonetheless, our sample size is representational and Phaswane Service Consulting is confident that the sample size used is adequate for drawing substantive and credible conclusions.

5. Ethical considerations

Our team requested permission on all informants that participated in the study. Respondents were assured of confidentiality on their responses and the questions that were asked ensured that was no biasness, prejudice, gender and racial discriminations. Informants provided the responses freely.

6. Literature review and document review

According to L. Frederiksen (2017), one of the key challenges facing management consulting firms is “Effective use of Technology. According to the author, business development management companies continue to struggle to keep up with evolving technological needs and related client expectations. The rapid development in the use of technological solutions extends to automation of business functions, increasing efficiencies and streamlining of processes. The pace of innovation impacts on the competitiveness of business management consulting firms. As companies get acquainted with the new system they have just installed, a better and faster system is introduced in the market.

If firms seek to keep up with the current and future developments in IT business solutions, they should invest in technology as a resource to leverage on in order to enhance their value proposition. Literature also states that managing the full range of the customer relationship involves two related objectives: one, to provide the organization and all of its customer-facing employees with a single, complete view of every customer at every touchpoint and across all channels; and, two, to provide the customer with a single, complete view of the company and its extended channels”.

One of the most sort after system is the Enterprise Resource Planning, which according to J.A. O’Brian and G.M. Marakas 2017:307 means “an enterprise-wide transaction framework with links into sales order processing, inventory management and control, production and distribution planning, and finance”. The system shows brings together different functions and processes in the organisation for the betterment of the organisation and its clients.

However, a system cannot succeed without the support of management and everyone in the organisation. As E.J.G Wang and J.H.F. Chan: 2006:308 put it top management support indirectly enhances system quality through its positive effect on conflict resolution in the consulting process. The results also show that high user support enhances communication effectiveness.

These abstract foundations underpinned and informed our evaluation approach and information that we found in the field was connected to these conceptualisations.

Effective business turn around solutions through business consulting 'supports the creation of sustainable and competitive youth owned enterprises that are active in growth oriented sectors of the South African economy' as set out in the objectives of the voucher programme. It is therefore important for organizations to facilitate an environment that nature's prudent business consulting service providers. Thinklikcentre (2015) states that service providers that stand the test of time possess the following qualities.

- Professionalism – Consultants should always keep in mind that the client relationship should remain at a professional level.
- Time management – Consultants should look for ways to adjust their work style to accommodate the schedule, budget and overall requirements of the project.
- Judgement – Consultants are required to have good judgement when confronted with a problem.
- Team player – Consultants must demonstrate that they are team players and are willing to learn from team members, genuinely valuing the input and expertise of others.
- Good communication skills – The consultant should have excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Expert knowledge - Clients typically approach external consultants for two reasons: 1) The client expects the consultant to have more expertise than the organisations internal resources and 2) because clients do not have sufficient time to solve their own problems or implement their own projects. As consultants, our level of knowledge should be broad enough to know when to ask questions and/or where to research to find solutions.
- Good listening skills – During the consulting process, consultants will meet different people with unique characteristics. Having excellent listening skills will encourage all to talk freely.

- Roles and responsibilities – It is important for consultants to understand the responsibilities of their role, as well as the practices and parameters of the job.
- Involve other consultants – Saying “I don’t know” Is often very good answer to a question. An even better answer is “I don’t know, but I know people who do know”. Consultants do not know everything, and should not be expected to know everything.
- Reputation – Protect your public reputation above everything else. If necessary, walk away from situations or contracts that could potentially damage your reputation. Consulting is not simply contracting by another name; it involves duties of care and levels accountability, responsibility and integrity that may well be greater than those of the client.

The CIPC has introduced an online platform that enables an interface with too many clients and service providers by far compared to the VMS. The services Seta also introduced a Learner management system similar to the VMS where learners can download their certificates and service providers can transact. By comparison, the VMS system is paper heavy and requires mandatory visits to NYDA offices for registration. The VMS processes does not offer notifications for users compared to both systems. A lot could be benchmarked from the integration of the CIPC system with the banks, Sars and Cipc systems.

Functions	VMS	CIPC online transacting system	Service Seta LMIS
Creating an account	CRM number is created by the branch administrator and information is populated to the VMS	All users create their accounts with no hustle	All users create their own accounts but ID could be duplicated.
User-friendliness	Easy to use for most users	Some client users find it difficult to activate and use	LMIS is user-friendly for most users
Communication and notifications	Limited notifications especially for SPs after redeeming of voucher. SP payment notification is absent t	Available throughout all processes.	The system needs improvement some challenges but it works fairly well
Turnaround time and escalation process	The turnaround of transacting is 3 months and work flows of all processes are defined like in the case of CIPC.	3 days to attend to a query and manager of business unit intervenes and senior manager will then intervene	The process may be subject to down time
Presence of papers in the	Voucher administration form, assessment form, time	None except when the client needs a BEE	It is relatively paperless more than VMS

process	sheet and other paperwork at head office Application	certificate.	
Functions	VMS	CIPC online transacting system	Service Seta LMIS
Down time	Almost none	There are regular system upgrades but on weekend	Not accessible at times
Need for a physical visit to the organization	No account can be created without visiting the office	CIPC service point is visited when the client only needs to generate a BEE certificate	It is not necessary
Integration with other systems	Can only migrate some information into great plain	Integrated to Banks and SARS systems.	Unclear
Relevance of content	Tools have not been reviewed for many years. Minor system review have been conducted	Highly relevant and informative and reviewed every 6 months.	That system has been upgraded in 2017
Payments	Built-in facility that fees into user account	Uploading of proof of payment to service provider	Not necessary
Information available	No information about other business for networking.	Any registered business can be traced by all users.	Users may view service providers as soon they register
Tracking of process	Visible and live workflow for clients.	Tracking number is issued but is not live.	Unclear
Speed of the system	System is fast enough to safe download and upload	System is fast enough to safe download and upload	It is fairly acceptable

7. Findings

OBJECTIVE 1: To determine the effectiveness of VMS on the implementation of the voucher programme

- 1) The VMS system is in line with the operating manual and the programme policy notwithstanding few adjustments needed to enhance its effectiveness.
- 2) The system has the ability to assist in the implementation of the programme in accordance to consulting professional standards, value for money and proper financial controls for achievement of desired programme outputs.
- 3) The VMS is not adequately interactive for key stakeholders throughout the voucher programme value chain.

- 4) There is a need to improve the management support and high user support to improve the effectiveness of the system in realising the objective of the voucher programme.

OBJECTIVE 2: To determine if there is improved efficiency (quality, time frame) on the voucher process after the introduction VMS the voucher programme

1. The introduction of the VMS improves the process lead-time compared to the manual system although there is a need for improvement.
2. The impact of the relationship between the CRM, VMS, and Great Plains in the process often contributes adversely in the efficient implementation of the voucher programme.
3. In order to enhance the quality of products, the system requires regular updates on its functionalities and the content thereof.
4. The usage of paper alongside the system in the voucher programme value chain is excessive.
5. The efficiency of the VMS is affected by lack of timeous technical support and access to the VMS.

OBJECTIVE 3: To determine the impact of VMS on the users especially young people and service providers

1. The impact of the VMS on YPs, SPs and NYDA staff is susceptible to low morale, poor productivity and stifled continuous innovation for the system and programme improvement.
2. The voucher management process is not perceived to be reliable and transparent enough.

OBJECTIVE 4: To determine if the VMS has made voucher application process easier.

1. The VMS has not made the application process easier to acceptable levels by users.

OBJECTIVE 5: To determine the relevance (in terms of the design and conceptualisation) of the Voucher Management System in achieving the objectives of the programme and indicate the necessary and required success factors.

1. Users of the VMS have mixed feelings about its relevance.
2. The content used, the processes involved and the configuration of workflow is perceived as poorly designed and requires attention.
3. The system may be assisting the programme to implement its objectives to a wider population however it lacks self-improvement measures by users to stimulate continuous competitiveness of businesses of YPs.

8. Key discussion points

OBJECTIVE 1: To determine the effectiveness of VMS on the implementation of the voucher programme

Findings	Discussion points
1. The VMS system is in line with the operating manual and the programme policy notwithstanding few adjustments needed to enhance its effectiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The VMS enables the voucher programme to achieve most objectives i.e creation of a holistic range of business support services and the creation of a competitive youth owned business. ❖ Some of the policy and manual update issues needed include guidance on online interface amongst YP s and SPs. ❖ Empowerment of clients to enhance their understanding on assessing the quality of the product offered by the SP. ❖ The VMS workflow ensures due diligence, transparency while avoiding fraud, system process incorporates.
2. The system has the ability to assist in the implementation of the programme in accordance to consulting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Through the system workflow, the BDOs, SBDOs, head office product and finance personnel are able to provide quality assurance using the product guideline and other applicable operational procedures to approve or to decline the product. ❖ The system also consists of a functionality to input aftercare information that is useful for reporting progress on the business of the client for 1 year post intervention. This information then assists

professional standards, value for money and proper financial controls for achievement of desired programme outputs.	<p>in the effective reporting of the programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Most beneficiaries that were interviewed have received a product that they need therefore the system is fit for purpose (effective). ❖ There was a general feeling that business plans that were created were able to secure funds within NYDA. ❖ The system facilitates remunerate for services while, ensuring due diligence, transparency and avoiding fraud.
3. The VMS is not adequately interactive for key stakeholders throughout the voucher programme value chain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The VMS does not have an interactive platform amongst the YP and SP in during their initial meeting to the presentation of the final stage of product offering except when YP assesses the system. ❖ The system does not forward a notification the YP when the BDO or SBDO declines the quality of the service in accordance to the product guidelines. ❖ When BDOs or Service Coordinators raise concerns over the quality of the product offered by the SP, this process is not visible to the resultant client on the VMS. ❖ If there are amendments required on the document by the branch, such discussions and the amended document are accessed by the branch official and the YP has no access to same in the system. ❖ In essence, the client remains with essentially a draft while the document keeps on changing.
4. There is a need to improve the management support and high user support to improve the effectiveness of the system in realising the objective of the voucher programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Most users classified the reactivation of login details as the highest obstacle to effectiveness of the programme. ❖ The branch staff members also highlighted that their input on improving the system provided at contact sessions are not put into effect. conducted by head office affected the effectiveness

OBJECTIVE 2: To determine if there is improved efficiency (quality, time frame) on the voucher process after the introduction VMS the voucher programme

Findings	Discussion points
1. The introduction of the VMS improves the process lead-time compared to the manual system although there is a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The majority of all users confirmed that the confinement of the workflow of the VMS as follows: input of application form 3 to 5 days, assessment of the application 10 days, approval letter is 2 days, then issuance is within a day, 3 months has improved the lead-time of the process value chain

<p>need for improvement.</p>	<p>compared to a manual system previously used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ However some respondents are of the view that other products such as web designed should be assigned a lesser cycle to enhance efficiency. ❖ The accuracy of information that is processed in the workflow is current and has generally improved. ❖ 76 of the users interviewed said that quality checks measures and instant notifications of SPs improve the quality of the product. ❖ Initiation of communication and interaction between SP and YP has resulted in improved efficiency. ❖ More than half of the SPs, BDOs SBDOs feel that there are too many people and processes involved in the workflow.
<p>2. The impact of the relationship between the CRM, VMS, and Great Plains in the process often contributes adversely in the efficient implementation of the voucher programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The VMS is operated through external servers and is online almost 100% all the time whereas Great Plains and CRM are often offline. ❖ The NYDA officials that were interviewed confirmed that when the CRM is offline; young people cannot be loaded on the VMS due to the VMS' dependence on the CRM number allocated by the administrator. ❖ During down time of the Great Plains no vouchers and payments of service providers can be generated.
<p>3. In order to enhance the quality of products, the system requires regular updates on its functionalities and the content thereof.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Application form for voucher - 4 pages of paper ❖ Assessment of young people - Some BDOs simply print the questionnaire because they feel is the quicker way to service about 20 clients or so a day. ❖ Hard copy of time sheet- This is used by SP as part of the invoicing ❖ Supply chain compliance by finance – printing of tax clearance, proof of banking and statement. ❖ Paper pack – the product manager at national office generates paper and attach to the pack for signing off by the executive.
<p>4. The usage of paper alongside the system in the voucher programme value chain is excessive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Application form for voucher - 4 pages of paper ❖ Assessment of young people - Some BDOs simply print the questionnaire because they feel is the quicker way to service about 20 clients or so a day. ❖ Hard copy of time sheet- This is used by SP as part of the invoicing ❖ Supply chain compliance by finance – printing of tax clearance, proof of banking and statement.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Paper pack – the product manager at national office generates paper and attach to the pack for signing off by the executive.
5. The efficiency of the VMS is affected by lack of timeous technical support and access to the VMS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ One user said it took about 3 months to have login details reactivated. Reactivation of login details is conducted at head office and there is only one dedicated person who is not available in the office at times. ❖ Most clients that are based in rural communities are subject to internet connectivity challenges and long distance travel between their homes and branches. ❖ To access the system, young people need to visit NYDA offices at least 2 times and has potential to discourage YPs from the voucher offerings due to distance or transport costs.

OBJECTIVE 3: To determine the impact of VMS on the users especially young people and service providers

Findings	Discussion points
1. The impact of the VMS on YPs, SPs and NYDA staff is susceptible to low morale, poor productivity and stifled continuous innovation for the system and programme improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 68 % of the SPs, BDOs and SBDOs informants lacked ownership of the VMS owing to its inability to provide proper diagnostic solutions for business consultancy services. ❖ Duplication of tasks in inputting the information twice on the CRM and the VMS by the administrator perpetuates unnecessary monotony for the administrator. This also extends to the 'criss-cross' movement of the finance administration pack for payment at head office. ❖ The inefficiencies on the value chain post approval result in low morale and poor productivity on SPs and this leads to poor productivity of other users. post approval. ❖ Delayed payments contribute to disturbances on operations of the SP thus affecting their performance.
2. The voucher management process is not perceived to be reliable and transparent enough.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The rate at which paper is used and clients are contacted telephonically means the process is not perceived as reliable. ❖ YP have indirectly expressed their discontent over their less involvement compared to other stakeholders in the value system workflow. ❖ Most YP do not understand the back office end of the system including intentions of the 'tedious' process. ❖ Most BDOS and SBDOs are of the view that quality assurance and time spent is thorough and fluid.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ There are concerns over the 2 days visits to the branch in order to complete the application process. ❖ The VMS system captures information of YP faster and there are no notable challenges with regard to uploading and downloading of attachments in the workflow. ❖ There process may improve drastically if the information of the YP in the CRM can be ported into the VMS without repeating capturing of data.
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OBJECTIVE 4: To determine if the VMS has made voucher application process easier

Findings	Discussion points
1. The VMS has not made the application process easier to acceptable levels by users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Most YPs who either received a grant or attended the EDP training regarded the system as unnecessarily complex. The process requires them to re submit the EDP training certificate, all company compliance documents. ❖ The process of reapplication for subsequent vouchers is lacks and needs innovatory solutions. ❖ Some of the YP interviewed preferred a manual system due to absence of training on the system and low computer literacy especially in rural areas. ❖ Most BDOs and SBDOs are of the view that the VMS did reduce paper and lead time in the application process.

OBJECTIVE 5: To determine the relevance (in terms of the design and conceptualisation) of the Voucher Management System in achieving the objectives of the programme and indicate the necessary and required success factors.

Findings	Discussion points
1. Users of the VMS have mixed feelings about its relevance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 40% of the users regard the use of the system in its current form is not really relevant. The majority of YPs, BDOs, feel that the disintegrated relationship of the system is not adding enough value.
2. The content used, the processes involved and the configuration of workflow is perceived as poorly designed and requires attention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The majority of BDOs feel that consultation relating to content takes place at a higher level and key users are not involved. BDOs and service providers agree that the assessment may produce different results with more impact on the programme than what is currently available.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The YP is not notified when the product is declined at any stage of the workflow and they also feel that the client cannot gauge the quality of the product as well. ❖ Some YP expressed the need for training on the system however the majority of YP felt that the system is user somewhat user friendly compared to applications.
3. The system may be assisting the programme to implement its objectives to a wider population however it lacks self-improvement measures by users to stimulate continuous competitiveness of businesses of YPs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Users have indicated that there is no option for comments on the user friendliness of the system against objectives of the programme. ❖ The ratio of cost to benefit of the system does not proof that the organization attains value for money on this system. ❖ The absence of an interface between the ongoing communication between the YP and SP on the system result s in a missed opportunity to enhance the quality of consultation in progress thus impacting on optimal business performance improvement.

9. Recommendations

OBJECTIVE 1: To Determine the effectiveness of VMS on the Implementation of the Voucher Programme.	
FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
The VMS system is in line with the operating manual and the programme policy notwithstanding few adjustments needed to enhance its effectiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Institute an all-inclusive stakeholder process to source inputs for the voucher policy in order to put in effect the necessary updates that will address the impact of the system tools and reduction of criss-cross processes at head office.

The system has the ability to assist in the implementation of the programme in accordance to consulting professional standards, value for money and proper financial controls for achievement of desired programme outputs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Aftercare support function on the system should be improved: enable the system to notify YPs even after the redeeming the voucher. ❖ Revisit the product evaluation guideline with the intention to enhance quality assurance during the product development stage by the SPs.
The VMS is not adequately interactive for key stakeholders throughout the voucher programme value chain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Ensure YP gain access on all communications between branch and SP and national office regarding queries to their service.
There is a need to improve the management support and high user support to improve the effectiveness of the system in realising the objective of the voucher programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Introduce an expedient solution that would resolve reactivation of login details for all users.

OBJECTIVE 2: To determine if there is improved efficiency (quality, time frame) on the voucher process after the introduction VMS the voucher programme	
FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>The introduction of the VMS improves the process lead-time compared to the manual system although there is a need for improvement.</p> <p>The efficiency of the VMS is affected by lack of timeous technical support and access to the VMS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Consider the introduction of a flexibility time frame for various products in order to save time or extent time to encourage improved quality on products offerings by SPs.

The impact of the relationship between the CRM, VMS, Great Plains in the process often contributes adversely in the efficient implementation of the voucher programme.	❖ Integrate all systems and ensure all the information of clients is saved for at least 3 years in order to address long term tracking for assess the full impact of the voucher programme.
In order to enhance the quality of products, the system requires regular updates on its functionalities and the content thereof.	❖ Request some of the approved SPs and relevant NYDA staff to provide various business development assessment tools for consideration.
The usage of paper alongside the system in the voucher programme value chain is excessive.	❖ Create a repository of compliance documents and a functionality that flags and notifies SPs of expiry date on the system before loading invoices. Reduce the amount of paper that circulates in the value chain.

OBJECTIVE 3: To determine the impact of VMS on the users especially young people and service providers	
FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
1. The VMS system is in line with the operating manual and the programme policy notwithstanding few adjustments needed to enhance its effectiveness.	❖ Engage the finance department and product staff members on how to efficiently process claims. Introduce a notification feature for SPs.
2. The system has the ability to assist in the implementation of the programme in accordance to consulting professional standards, value for money and proper financial controls for achievement of desired programme outputs.	❖ Aftercare support function on the system should be improved: enable the system to notify YPs even after the redeeming the voucher. ❖ Revisit the product evaluation guideline with the intention to enhance quality assurance during the product development stage by the SP.

3. The VMS is not adequately interactive for key stakeholders throughout the voucher programme value chain.	❖ Ensure YP gain access on all communications between branch and SP and national office.
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Objective 4: To determine if the VMS has made voucher application process easier	
FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
1. The VMS has not made the application process easier to acceptable levels by users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Consider a self-help automation system that facilitates the creation of login and the administration of the application form which will then create appointments. ❖ Integrate all systems particularly the CRM with the VMS and reduce assessment paperwork that is used by other BDOs at times.

OBJECTIVE 5: To determine the relevance (in terms of the design and conceptualisation) of the Voucher Management System in achieving the objectives of the programme and indicate the necessary and required success factors.	
FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Users of the VMS have mixed feelings about its relevance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Improve synergies within the programme staff at national office to enhance ownership of the programme by all. ❖ Aftercare support function on the system should be improved: enable the system to notify YPs even after the redeeming the voucher. ❖ Revisit the product evaluation guideline with the intention to enhance quality assurance during the product development stage by the SP.
2. The content used, the processes involved and the configuration of workflow is perceived as poorly designed and requires attention.	

3. The VMS is not adequately interactive for key stakeholders throughout the voucher programme value chain.	❖ Ensure YP gain access on all communications between branch and SP and national office.
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10. Conclusions

The VMS is not achieving its intended purpose adequately in its current form. Follow ups are poorly conducted and as a result recording of business and personal development progress of YPs after accessing the services is missed. The impact of the voucher programme is usually felt after sometime and currently young people do not access the system once they have accessed their services.

The system may well have a potential of 30 to 50 percent underutilised capacity that needs exploration. The cost to benefit ratio is not favourable to the NYDA in terms of current output versus.

There is no sense of ownership of the VMS by most branch staff members owing to the outdated system tools, absence of tracking the process once the workflow complete the branch office circle.

The IT department and voucher programme officials should facilitate password reset administration rights to more staff members in order to decrease underutilization levels of the system. The system is still effective but there voluminous measures that should be put in place to improve its effectiveness and efficiency and these should take priority.

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Annexure 1

Questionnaire: YOUNG PEOPLE AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

1. Do you find the voucher management system user friendly? Please provide reasons for your answer.
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.....
.....
2. Is the voucher application process efficient voucher management system through the VMS process paperless or are there still some papers involved in the application process.....
3. Do you think the application process (from walk in to approval) is quick and effective ?
YES/NO

Reason
.....
.....

4. Have you at any stage found yourself having to download files from the system? If so, what were the files for?

5. Is there a time you found the system off-line when you needed to do something on it? If so, how did that affect your work/application?
.....
.....

6. How far do you get involved in the system?
.....
.....

7. Have you ever been trained on the system before?
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8. How have benefited from the use of this system?
.....

9. Do you think the VMS is working well towards the process of redeeming your voucher?
Please provide reasons for you answer
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10. If we were to improve on the system, what recommendations would you give?

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