

Bergzicht Training: A Formative Evaluation

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1. Introduction and Background

Bergzicht Training in Stellenbosch was established in 1994 with the vision *“to be the leading South African learning facilitator of poor, semi-skilled and unemployed adults in selected vocational areas, resulting in the holistic development of socially and economically productive citizens and in doing so alleviate poverty”*. (Bergzicht Training Strategic Plan 2014 -2016, 2013)

Bergzicht’s **mission** is *“to empower unemployed and/or semi-skilled people with accredited, innovative and affordable learning opportunities, to empower them to start their own business or to secure living-wage employment for them through an in-house employment bureau”*. (In Bib)

This Stellenbosch based NGO was the initiative of an inhabitant of the town that identified a need for the training of domestic workers to be employed by households in the village. Since its inception Bergzicht Training kept to its initial aim, i.e. to develop into an invaluable community resource of empowerment of predominantly unskilled and economically marginalized coloured and black (women).

Bergzicht Training is guided by a set of core values. These are:

- Community-centered with a focus on needs of women and youth
- Quality in development, delivery and assessment of learning programmes
- Honest, reliable and transparent in dealings with relevant stakeholders
- Holistic and sustainable human development interventions (In Bib)

During the past 20 years the facility trained close to 10,000 socially marginalized and economically vulnerable youthful people from mostly so called coloured and recently also increasingly black communities from predominantly the Winelands district. The initial menu of courses presented at the training centre was informed by exploratory research conducted amongst three distinct constituencies, i.e. the needs and preferences of (potential) students/trainees, the specific needs of potential employers of Bergzicht’s graduates and, lastly, the (potential) donor community.

Since the establishment of Bergzicht Training substantial changes occurred in the demographic and social profile of Stellenbosch and its environs. Of particular interest here is the sustained influx of black in-migrants, both local and foreign as well extremely wealthy white migrant families and individuals from the northern provinces of South Africa and Europe.

The local economy, similarly, has undergone significant changes. Specifically, it has become considerably more diversified and sophisticated than the erstwhile strong reliance on the agri – economy. Evidence of this is the strong growth in the (agri) tourism, as well as in the financial and information sectors. In addition, Stellenbosch University has experienced a steady growth in resident student numbers over the last decade. This, in all probability will continue in the foreseeable future.

These changes in the social -cultural and economic ecology of Stellenbosch and the surrounding settlements have brought with it inter alia a more diverse and nuanced local socio economic landscape that will set new demands on an organization like Bergzicht Training to stay relevant in general and specifically in terms of its primary focus, constituency and training programmes.

2. A Fresh Look at Current Needs of Stakeholders

Since its inception in 1994 the programmatic scope of Bergzicht has gradually been expanded to accommodate the changing local socio economic environment in which this NGO functions. However, following two decades of involvement in the community, the Board of Bergzicht has decided that the time is opportune to revisit the programmes on offer and ascertain whether it is still appropriate and aligned to the needs of its main constituencies or stakeholder groupings.

In this regard the 2013 Chairperson’s report states that...*“It is important to ensure that the current and future product and service offerings of Bergzicht Training meet the needs of stakeholders....”*. Such*“needs assessment will.....identify entry level training market gaps focusing on women and youth between the age of 18 and 35 years to meet local priorities and to align with national focus-areas”*.

3. Purpose and goals of the Research

This research initiative explores the areas of uncertainties regarding the relevance of Bergzicht Training’s current focus and identifies possible gaps in training programmes offered.

More specifically the primary goal of the research is to establish current training needs by exploring the following focus areas;

- expectations and preferences of *employers* of Bergzicht Training graduates,
- the needs of students regarding programme content, and
- expectations and attitudes prevailing within the donor community.

4. Research Methodology

In order to collect the requisite information from the respective stakeholders a qualitative design was used. This approach is typically used in studies of this nature and scope as it allows for in depth analysis and allows for nuanced and thick descriptions of phenomena. It gives an insider perspective of respondents' social behaviour, attitudes and opinions, thus allowing for an accurate and comprehensive understanding of behaviour and responses.

The orthodox methodological techniques used when employing a qualitative research design, i.e. in depth interviews and focus groups, were used to gather the required information.

4.1 Sample

Given the qualitative nature of the study, stakeholders were purposefully selected based on their expertise and/or association to Bergzicht Training. The selection of participants was informed by the defined focus areas of the research and included the following broad categories; employers of Bergzicht training graduates, both current and past students of Bergzicht Training, representatives of the donor community, and stakeholders that has either a direct or indirect association with the training centre. Given the limited scope of the research it was decided to focus its efforts on the more differentiated and professional employment sectors that demand high standards of its employees. Subsequently private households that employ Bergzicht students were excluded from the research.

The selection of both past and current students as well as employers of students were done in a manner that ensured the representation of all the programmes currently presented by the training centre. These programmes include Frail Care, Educare and Cater Care training. Table 1 below provides a description of the sample.

From consistency in the responses elicited from the different stakeholders it became evident that the sample used was sufficient to establish data saturation. This is a good indication of the validity and reliability of the data and information generated in this study.

Table 1: Sample of Stakeholders

Participant category	Number of interviews	Number of focus groups
Employers	7	
Donors	4	
Stakeholders	4	
Students current		2
Students past	1	2
Total	16	4

Employers

Here a number of in- depth interviews were conducted with carefully and purposefully selected stakeholders. These included representatives of organized commerce (e.g. Tourism and Hospitality Industry) and agriculture in Stellenbosch as well strategically important local institutions (e.g. University of Stellenbosch, Municipality and Corporate sector).

Past and Current Students

Focus group sessions were conducted with both current and past students of Bergzicht. Students were interviewed following the full spectrum of courses on offer at Bergzicht Training. The main aim of collecting information was to ascertain to what extent the current offering of courses meet (or had met) their expectations and needs in their working environment by ascertaining strength and weaknesses of existing programmes as well as the possible need for new or advanced courses/programmes.

Donors

A sample of current donors was individually interviewed. Issues dealt with amongst other donors' perception/evaluation of appropriateness/relevance of programmes offered considering the national and local market requirements and needs and, possible developments in the market that need new training programme initiatives. The intention of donors to continue their funding or support of Bergzicht Training was also tested.

5. Discussion of Findings

5.1 Donors

The business model currently followed by Bergzicht Training makes it fully dependant on donations. At the moment the activities of Bergzicht Training is supported by a total of 16 donors. Most of the donations are of a monetary kind although donations in kind are also received.

The funders are from different sectors of society, including corporate- financial, international donor organizations, community based organization, national and local government and educational institutions.

Table 2 below reflects the different donor institutions and organizations that are currently funding Bergzicht Training.

Table 2: List of funders as at 2014

Funders	Based
Cluver Markotter	Stellenbosch
Protea Hospitality Group	National
Lotto	National
Dept Social Development	Provincial
Stellenbosch Municipality Grant	Stellenbosch
Distell	Stellenbosch
Community Chest	Stellenbosch
Accenture SA	National
ABSA	National
Het Marais Nasionale Fonds	Stellenbosch
Hanss Seidel Fund	National
Lewis Store	Stellenbosch
Remgro	Stellenbosch
Anglo American	Stellenbosch
Cape Winelands District Municipality	Stellenbosch
Spoor & Fisher	Cape Town

A total of four donor organizations were interviewed. A questionnaire schedule was used to structure interviews.

The one donor interviewed represents a National fund that concentrates on projects that focus on the socio-economic development of the Cape Winelands community and contributes to the fortification of Afrikaans in the community. The fund spends significant amounts on local educational institutions. It has been supporting Bergzicht Training since it is viewed as an important role player in the social and economic development of the local community and especially its vulnerable inhabitants.

The second donor interviewed represented an international funding Foundation. Although the Foundation does not focus on social responsibility spending as part of its donation framework, it has been supporting Bergzicht Training since the late nineties. The decision to continue its support of the training centre was said to be based on the excellent track record of the NGO.

The third donor included in the study was the Stellenbosch Municipality. The local authority does not make a monetary contribution but instead allows Bergzicht Training to use the historical building for its operations at a nominal rent as well as maintains the building. The relationship between the two entities was described as excellent. The representative did, however, recommend that Bergzicht should consider to appoint a representative from the municipality on its Board. When doing this, care should be given to appoint the correct person, i.e. with the requisite passion for and attitude towards the work done by Bergzicht Training and not necessarily a person in a specific position with the local authority.

The fourth donor has educational empowerment of vulnerable communities as part of its main focus and Bergzicht fits perfectly in their enabling paradigm, *“we support Bergzicht because of their specific focus.....they fit our passion for educational advancement of vulnerable young groups in our society....”*

All four funders interviewed are highly appreciative of the work done by Bergzicht Training for the wider community of Stellenbosch, specifically how it assists to transform the life chances of vulnerable young people. One funder articulated it as follows... *“Bergzicht is ideally positioned as it concentrate on empowering those that are often below the formal educational radar. I visited Bergzicht and was very impressed by the enthusiasm displayed by the lecturers and students – they are on the correct path and we are happy with their focus”.*

Another important reason mentioned was the direct and immediate impact this NGO has on its target group..... *“the reason why we still support Bergzicht today is that its impact is so immediate,*

it's very successful with regards to job placements, the learners are so enthusiastic every time we visit, and it focuses mainly on women (which means that whole families benefit)". Funders were complimentary about both the relevance and quality of the different courses offered. Evidence of this is the high success rate that Bergzicht students have in securing employment after their training.

As far as the assessment of the current range of programmes is concerned all funders pointed out that the initial focus of Bergzicht, i.e. to train domestic workers to clean (initially mostly white) households is still extremely relevant and valuable. According to one donor, *"the programmes are still very relevant in their focus – the skills development focus on young adults with no chance of entering formal educational institutions fill a strategically important void in the educational landscape"*. However, since the establishment of Bergzicht Training two decades ago, a stronger need has gradually developed for educare and frail care workers, although, donors are not necessarily passionate about these services. The vogue areas to support currently are rather youth and social development.

The need for a partial paradigm shift was expressed by one donor. This is necessary insofar that the focus of all programmes must move from currently primarily preparing students to become good employers to assist them to develop into successful entrepreneurs. Students should be given the requisite skills to establish small businesses and thus create more employment within the local economy. However, another donor, described the entrepreneurship course (along with the frail care and educare courses) as outstanding.

It was stressed during interviews that Bergzicht should continue with its present focus, because, for example homes for the aged prefer to rather appoint staff with basic competencies and discipline than unskilled people, while the educare course sensitizes students to approach their work holistically and thus instils in students the importance of intellectual and emotional stimulation and development of the child apart from merely caring for the physical wellbeing of the toddler.

One donor made special mention of the outstanding work done by Bergzicht Training with regards to the practice of keeping in touch with both the employer and employed once the training is done. These follow-up contacts are invaluable insofar as it helps to smooth over the relationship between the two parties and thus keep conflict to a minimum. This practice, according to one respondent, sets Bergzicht apart from its competitors and it should be strengthened, if possible¹.

¹ Interestingly though, this aspect was highlighted as a current shortcoming of Bergzicht by other respondents

Changing Existing Courses and Future Programmes

A number of interesting ideas were mooted regarding future programme development. A general but strong sentiment regarding the students that was voiced was that although many are impoverished they all have many latent talents and that their potential should not be underestimated.

Funders expressed the opinion that caution must be applied not to change something that is producing results. In this regard, a fundamental question that needs to be answered revolves around the important changes that have occurred in the market place that might impact on the relevance and appropriateness of existing programmes offered by this NGO. For example, what is the contemporary environment within modern households – what innovations, e.g. an increased and more sophisticated technical and information technology milieu, as well as sociological and lifestyle modification have been introduced lately in typical modern middle and upper class households that might impact on the training demands and specific curricula requirements of the different programmes Bergzicht Training are offering.

Following this, a very strong sentiment, closely related to the above comment, concerns changes in the market place requiring an expanding of the skill-sets of students. Consequently Bergzicht should consider to expand existing courses in order for students to develop adjacent or associated competencies alongside the basic - or core skills – sets taught in the different courses. For example, domestic workers and frail care workers should be given basic computer skills – a basic commodity in middleclass households - and driver licence courses, an indispensable skill required in certain situations.

Donors identified and used the local tourism industry as an example of a sector that, due to fundamental transformation, requires the instilling of new skills and competencies amongst students. This sector is dynamic and is characterized by rapid changes. New knowledge and approaches need to be taught periodically in order to ensure employability of students in this important employment creator in the village of Stellenbosch. It has developed and diversified to such an extent that tourists expect more than mere sightseeing. New and different standards are continuously set in this sector at present. This has a direct impact on Bergzicht programmes insofar that a need now exists to improve the life skills dimension of all programmes. Examples of additional competencies needed are improved communication skills and an enhanced awareness of and sensitivity towards cultural diversity.

A specific recommendation made related to the introduction of a programme that will specifically target the youth to counter the bulging youth unemployment challenge in the local economy.

Bergzicht is encouraged to consider the introduction of refresher courses as part of its programme menu. The purpose of these will be to hone existing skills and in some instances, to add value to existing curricula in order to be able to react speedily to new demands set in a changing local market environment as discussed above.

When considering the introduction of new courses the guiding principle should be the probability of sourcing and securing funding for such ventures. New courses will place additional financial demand on the budget. Therefore it will be important to first ensure funding is available before launching a new initiative in this regard.

Bergzicht should strengthen the process of placement of students that have successfully completed their course(s). In addition, the NGO need to keep Bergzicht's successful alumni involved in the organization. It was pointed out that this is of critical importance as it will offer current students much needed positive role models of what is possible to achieve in life with a programme qualification of this NGO. This will also provide a mechanism for Bergzicht Training to keep in touch with ex - students.

Although all donors interviewed indicated that they plan to continue their support of Bergzicht Training, essentially because of its excellent performance, a general sentiment was expressed that the NGO should revisit its current funding model. One funder stated it as follows "*. . . already before last year's financial problems we pointed out that Bergzicht should build independent income streams in order to be less vulnerable to a decrease in donor funding. We are happy to see that first steps in this direction have been made this year (2014)*".

5.2 Employers

Bergzicht training is acclaimed for its high placing success and has successfully placed students in a variety of work places including private households, institutions and both small and large business enterprises.

The hospitality industry, particularly hotels and guesthouses, apart from private households, are important employers of students that have completed the programme in home management and cater care at Bergzicht Training. In this section responses by employers in the tourist and hospitality industries as well as the fast food industry are summarised. The consistency in issues that were

highlighted was fascinating. Respondents reported mixed experiences regarding the work performance of employed students, ranging from *fantastic* to *a great flop and a huge disappointment*.²

5.2.1 Evaluation of knowledge and work performance of employed students

There was general agreement amongst respondents that the knowledge and skills displayed by workers as well as their work performance is to large extent dependent upon the individual worker and less on the training received. Satisfaction was expressed about the basic level of knowledge and skills displayed by students and their overall level of work performance was described as *fair*. When asked about students' ability to solve unexpected problems, responses ranged from excellent to fair. It was, however, acknowledged by employers that problem solving ability is often related to a person's work experience and knowledge about the work he or she has to do and the work environment in which they work.

The general work ethic displayed by students (e.g. self motivated, efficiency and punctuality) ranged from satisfactory to fantastic in one case; "*...cleaners easily tend to create negativity amongst the workers and their work. She never allowed herself to be drawn into a mood of mediocrity.*" One respondent, who unfortunately has had a number of negative experiences with students from Bergzicht, indicated a lack of loyalty displayed by the students to the employer. In this specific case the employer employed six students from Bergzicht who all, with the exception of one, work only one day. . They did not come to work again and sent the employer a message to pay them their outstanding salaries.

Although all the respondents were satisfied with the basic skills acquired they thought that the total skills sets students bring to the work space are inadequate, although, it were described as significantly better than that of the average cleaner they appoint. The specific skills that were lacking in students include:

- The lack of specialist knowledge regarding a hotel's linen rooms. This was mentioned as a serious shortcoming. One respondent declared that.... *I had to re-train her virtually from scratch to be effective in terms of knowledge and operations in the linen room. She lacked specialist knowledge required in the hospitality environment- e.g. not a sufficient level of*

² The frail care sector is discussed separately following this section, given the specialised nature of this sector.

knowledge of safety and hygiene – also how to work industrial machines –an industrial ironing and washing machine – also she did not have the requisite knowledge of chemicals to be used or not in cleaning and washing specific materials.....”

- The level of knowledge in the fast food industry and the ability to work in this very fast - paced environment. It was mentioned by both respondents from this industry that the Bergzicht students seemed not to have had enough practical training to operate at the required pace independently.
- A number of respondents referred to the lack of so called soft skills that the Bergzicht students exhibited. One respondent referred to the student she employed as a *rough diamond* that needed substantial polishing. This is specifically a matter of concern to employers in the tourist and hospitality industry. In general, students seem to find it difficult to work in a team context and do not have the stamina and skills to ‘*work themselves into the acceptance of a group*’. All respondents indicated that they realise that older staff are not always inviting to new appointees, but that the students must understand/ be prepared for such a scenario and possess the skills to persevere and earn the acceptance of the other workers.

When asked if they *would continue to appoint Bergzicht students* rather than other work seekers, the respondents responded positively. They felt it to be preferable to appoint staff that had training, even if not sufficient, especially from a reputable training agency or institution rather than someone with no training or reference. *“I was more comfortable to appoint a person that comes with some reference; there is more a sense of security attached to the person than appointing someone from Gumtree for e.g. I also assumed that she had some exposure to practice in this field as part of her training that will make her more productive and professional in her work. Due to the sensitive nature of the work in a hotel, trustworthiness and security in the worker is of paramount importance to the employer”.*

In addition, employers assume that students are trained in the importance of adhering to a proper work ethic and relevant labour legislation and are informed about the consequence in instances of non - adherence to it. These qualities are important and make Bergzicht students an attractive option. It was also mentioned that a Cape Town based competitor of Bergzicht Training asks exorbitant fees to train existing staff, therefore the latter mentioned was chosen.

5.2.3 Existing Gaps and Need for New Initiatives in the tourism and hospitality industry

A number of suggestions were made on how to improve and strengthen the programmes offered and Bergzicht as an institution.

- Programmes in housekeeping should be developed and structured in a way that is suitable for employment in the hotel and guesthouse industry. In the training course equal attention should be given and emphasis placed on technical, practical and so called soft skills. Soft skills refer to the human aspects of working in this environment, including how to work in group settings, how to deal with bullying tactics and an overall toxic environment, and specifically of importance in the hospitality industry, the proper way to approach and interact with clients (tourists).
- Consideration should be given to develop a substantially stronger and more prolonged practical component as part of the general training programme. This will allow for a more diversified training modality which could include preparation for a diversity of work settings that would introduce students to different demands. For example cater care students must be exposed to (that is both theoretically and practically) to the fast food and fine food industry, as well as coffee shops etc as they all represent very different sides and dimensions of the food industry, each with its own set of skills required and unique work environment. Students working for significant periods in real life conditions will reduce the burden on employers to retrain students when they assume employment.
- An urgent need exists to offer specialised courses, for example supervisory skills of housekeepers and front – of - house staff. Two reasons were offered in this regard; firstly there is a strong need in the hospitality industry for staff with these skills as at the moment no training institute is offering this. Secondly, and very importantly, this initiative will create the possibility of upward mobility breaking the current tendency of workers being stuck in the same position in the employment hierarchy for prolonged periods. Such an initiative could translate in workers becoming more goal-orientated, motivated and consequently more efficient.
- Due to substantial and continuous changes in the hospitality and tourism industry a strong need exists for the *multi skilling* of workers. Hotels and particularly guesthouses and bed and breakfast establishments are increasingly demanding employees to perform a multitude of functions. Apart from cleaning rooms they need to be able to welcome and book guests, prepare and serve breakfast, and be able to answer the phone, make reservations and communicate with guests. Computer literacy is also needed, as increasingly reservations are made electronically

- A need exists for refresher courses. These courses should revisit the maintenance and internalisation of soft skills, focussing on general work ethic, attitude and presentation of the self in the work place. Specifically cleaners seem to lack an appreciation of the strategically important role they play within the hospitality industry. In addition, they must be taught team building skills to offset the often fractious and toxic nature of group dynamic amongst workers.
- Another aspect that needs urgent attention mentioned by employers is a pervasive lack of urgency in students. This seems to be primarily a function of an unprofessional and inappropriate attitude towards their work.
- There was a strong motivation from respondents that Bergzicht should evaluate the appropriateness and relevance of its course content against the needs of industry. This should be done in consultation with the various industries where Bergzicht students are placed.
- This industry urgently needs highly trained top class waitresses and waiters with the requisite people and communication skills; Bergzicht should fill this gap.
- Bergzicht should develop an up to date data base of available workers that stakeholders in the hospitality industry can use to when a need for workers arises. This will be especially useful as this industry is seasonal and subsequently the demand for (extra) workers fluctuates.
- According to respondents there exists a need for in-house training of existing staff. Subsequently a gap exists for Bergzicht to adapt its current course to also accommodate in-service training. This could also act as a significant additional source of income for the training centre.
- Following the above Bergzicht could as an extra service, develop a supporting function guiding employers in the process of claiming training expenses from SETA. A dedicated well trained employee of Bergzicht should be available to assist employers in this regard. Such a service could also constitute a source of additional revenue.
- Urgent attention should be given to the institutionalization of an effective selection and screening system of prospective students. The present lack of such a system or protocol has (potentially) serious consequences for prospective employers which again can have a tarnishing impact on Bergzicht's reputation. A proper screening protocol should be used as a strong marketing tool to promote the employability of its students.
- Employers indicated the need to receive a profile of each student with employment. Such a profile should show the different skills students were trained in as well as their level of competencies in the different modules. This will assist employers to select the appropriate candidates and also assist them to use workers optimally. .

- Finally, employers asked Bergzicht to maintain contact with employers. This will allow Bergzicht to keep track of the performance of their students and also facilitate feedback from employers regarding training needs and shortcomings in existing programmes.

5.3 Frail care

In depth interviews were conducted with the senior management of one of the well established and reputable home for the aged in Stellenbosch. This institution currently employ six ward assistants (all employed for more than two years) and a number of housekeepers (cleaners) that were trained by Bergzicht. The majority of these students applied for work, while two were send for practical training to Bergzicht and stayed on after completing their course. The frail care section of the institution regularly makes use of Bergzicht trained assistants in a temporary capacity.

At the service centre appointments typically take place through word of mouth advertising. This is an intimate group of workers that exhibit strong cohesion which makes this manner of recruiting the most effective.

5.3.1 Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

The respondents held a positive opinion of Bergzicht Training and pointed out that its recent temporary absence was felt.

Generally the management of the home experienced the level of required knowledge and skills as good. However, it was also acknowledged that ultimate work performance is more often than not dependant on the character and motivation of the individual employee. *“Some land here running, while other take two weeks to become productive”.*

5.3.2 Gaps in Training

Similar to the tourism and hospitality industries, respondents in this sector mentioned a strong need for training in so-called soft skills. Such skills are probably even more essential in this sector given the specific clients involved as well as the unique group dynamic that exists in this occupational cohort. Other than understanding the general needs of the elderly, students need to be

taught how to interact in a more civil and gentle fashion and tone. The blunt style of interaction that workers adopt is often evident amongst frail care and housekeeping staff.

In addition students need to be prepared for and empowered to work in a team context. Students are reported to often find themselves confronted by existing (negative) staff and in a sense forced to adhere to a mediocre work performance. This mentality is said to stem to a large extent from a limited prospect of upwards mobility in work status resulting in staff becoming "*stuck in a rut*". Consequently the lowest common denominator tends to become the norm with a tendency to accept mediocrity.

Another void mentioned is an insufficient level of practical prowess. For instance, frail care workers generally struggle to turn patients in the correct manner and need substantial re-training in this regard. This is said to be partially due to a too short practical component in the curriculum and partly to an overemphasis on working with dolls instead of actual patients during training. A further quality sorely missing amongst workers is the ability to *think out of the box*, read and interpret the particular situation and take the appropriate action. Carers sometimes do not react appropriately to episodic or temporary immobility of the aged (for example due to an operation) and would rather doggedly stick to a well entrenched routine.

According to the respondents there is an urgent need in the frail care course to give more attention to the importance of human resource aspects in the curricula. This constitutes a huge challenge to the employer. Students simply do not understand basic aspects of human relations within the work context. The abuse of the sick leave system by carers and cleaners was mentioned as an example in this regard.

In relation to work ethic workers tend not to do that little bit extra, or walk that extra mile. This seems to be an attitudinal issue and is closely related to a worker's motivation for working at the institution, "*do they do it because they have a passion for the elderly or rather to put bread on the table tonight*" It was mentioned however, that in general, Bergzicht students do have a higher level of work ethic than their peers with no such training.

Another shortcoming in the current training relates to their inability to effectively and responsibly work with and maintain various (and expensive) cleaning and other domestic machines (e.g. dishwashers, washing machines and vacuum cleaners). Currently the home for the aged has a service that weekly cleans houses of elderly persons. This requires housekeeping staff to responsibly use different machines as is available at client's homes. According to the coordinator staff has to be trained and frequently reminded to respect and to care for the equipment of their clients.

5.3.3 Recommendations

- Much stronger emphasis should be placed on developing the soft skills of students, specifically concentrating on inculcating appropriate communication skills and a more professional work ethic.
- The practical dimension of the frail care programmes should be extended and the methodologies presently used should be modified to better meet the demands of the real life challenges.
- Students must be empowered to interpret specific contexts and situations in their work and to act beyond routine tasks if required. They must be sensitized to interpret situations that demand additional attention and subsequently act accordingly.
- Refresher courses should be offered to address gaps and shortcomings in training as discussed above. Refresher courses can act as an incentive to quality members of staff to hone and improve their skills level.
- The capacity of the frail care programme needs to be expanded due to a continuous increase in the local *greying population*. This will increase the demand for available professionally trained frail carers to assist the elderly. It is imperative for all concerned that the independence of the elderly is prolonged as far as possible. The availability of local frail carers will ensure this.
- Students must develop greater understanding and respect for the operation of cleaning apparatus of clients
- Of paramount importance is to have a strong emphasis on the safety and security aspects relating to the selection of prospective students that will do the frail care course
- Finally but most importantly for this course is the accreditation of the frail care course. This recommendation stems from a legal requirement set by current legislation for the accreditation of all frail care workers.

5.4 Past and Current Students

Since 1994 Bergzicht Training has trained close to 10, 000 socially marginalised individuals, the majority women, between the ages of 19 to 50 years. For the period 2010 to 2013 alone Bergzicht trained a total of 358 individuals, with the overwhelming majority (94%) women (table 3). Although the training centre has seen mostly students from the Coloured population successfully followed

their courses, a slow but steady increase in the number of Black African (mostly women) enrolling for its courses has been evident. Table 4 shows a general increase in the number of Black African individuals with this group representing 29% of graduates in 2010, 40% in 2012 and, 23.5% in 2013.

In considering the feeding areas of students enrolling at Bergzicht Training table 5 provides a summary of the areas of origin of students that studied at the training centre for the period 2010 to 2013. According to the table just more than half of students (53%) indicated their home to be within the Stellenbosch area. Sixteen percent are from the Eerste River area, followed by 9% that indicated their home area along the N1 towards Cape Town. Areas that are poorly represented include the City of Cape Town, the Paarl/Wellington district and settlements skirting the N2.

Table 3: Gender distribution for the 2010-2013 student groups

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	337	94.1
Male	21	5.9
Total	358	100.0

Table 4: Racial distribution for the 2010-2013 student groups

Study year		Race			Total
		Black African	Coloured	White	
2010	Count	50	122	0	172
	% within Year	29.1%	70.9%	0.0%	100.0%
2011	Count	33	67	1	101
	% within Year	32.7%	66.3%	1.0%	100.0%
2012	Count	18	27	0	45
	% within Year	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	100.0%
2013	Count	13	27	0	40
	% within Year	32.5%	67.5%	0.0%	100.0%
	% within Year	31.8%	67.9%	0.3%	100.0%

Table 5: Area distribution of students, 2010-2013

Home are of students	Frequency	Percent
Stellenbosch	190	53.1
Somerset west	12	3.4
Eersterivier	56	15.6
Kuilsrivier	30	8.4
Along N1 towards CPT	33	9.2
Along N2 towards CPT	14	3.9
Paarl/Wellington	7	2.0
Outside CPT/CWD	14	3.9
CPT	2	.6
Total	358	100.0

Frail care seems to be the most popular course at Bergzicht in terms of preference by students with the majority (40%) of students completing their training in Frail Care for the defined period. This is followed by 25% that completed their training in Educare, 20% in Home management and 12% in Cater care (table 5).

Table 6: Distribution of courses completed by students, 2010-2013

Course	Frequency	Percent
Catercare	44	12.29
Educare	92	25.70
Frail Care	145	40.50
Home Management	75	20.95
Missing	2	0.56
Total	358	100.0

5.4.1 Evaluation of course experience by students

In assessing the perception and experience of the training offered at Bergzicht training, discussions were facilitated with both current and past students from the training centre. A total of two focus groups and one in-depth interview were conducted with past students and two focus groups with current students.

From student responses it is clear the Bergzicht training offers a unique opportunity for economically vulnerable persons who would otherwise not have been able to complete any kind of training due to the associated cost involved.

Asked why they decided to come to Bergzicht responses centred around three themes, mostly mentioned in combination rather than individual reasons. The first related to respondents' wish and need to better their own circumstances by completing some kind of training that would allow them a qualification that would assist them to be better employable and thus enter the economy. Secondly, respondents indicated to have come to Bergzicht to follow a passion to work in a specific field. Not being able to pay tuition fees at other training facilities such as Boland College, students enrolled at Bergzicht to follow their dreams. Thirdly respondents chose Bergzicht following its reputation for the successful placement of students following the completion of their course.

"I came here to learn more skills and I came here to learn about frail care because I love people and I like to care for people. Because it is free here and I don't have money to go for training at any other place".

"I came to Bergzicht to have something behind my name. To be successful"

"Ek het gewerk maar was toe werkloos. EK het CVs oral rond gestuur maar kon nie werk kry nie. Ek het net gese 2014 gaan ek iets doen met my lewe ek gaan nie so sit nie."

". . .want as jy klaar is met die kursus weet jy , jy het iets agter jou naam. Jy kan nou gaan aansoek doen vir 'n werk."

(Respondents during focus group discussions, August 2014)

Awareness of Bergzicht as a training facility and the courses it offers seems to be mostly spread via word of mouth with nearly all students indicating to have heard from either a family member, neighbour or friend. One student mentioned to have learned about Bergzicht at a career exhibition that was held at her school in her Grade 12 year.

When asked if the training they receive(d) in their respective courses met their expectations, responses were overwhelmingly positive. Not only did students report to learn much more than they expected to learn, they also reported to have gained much more than just mere training. The Bergzicht experience was described as a time and opportunity of personal growth initiated and facilitated by dedicated and committed staff and teachers for whom the personal growth and character development of each individual student is as important as their intellectual development.

"I didn't learn what I thought I would. I learned way more than I expected to learn."

"Vir my het dit baie gehelp. Toe ek hier begin het met die Entrepeneurskap was ek baie stil gewees. Maar die kursus het vir my baie selfvertroue gegee. Now I know my place and I am confident in my place. "

"Dit is 'n ander mens wat hier uitgestap het as wat hier ingestap het. Voor die tyd het ek net hier ingestap en gedink wel ek is hier om nie by die huis te sit nie. Nou het ek my talent en my passion ontdek."

(Respondents during focus group discussions, August 2014)

With such an experience of the training environment it comes as no surprise that students indicated to thoroughly enjoy their time at Bergzicht, coming to class each day excited and in anticipation of what is set out for them to learn for the day. Students also seem to particularly enjoy the practical element of their training although they indicated to also enjoy the theoretical aspects as they learn about new things as well as aspects they are genuinely interested in.

Students were also asked if they had any recommendations on how the respective courses they were/are currently enrolled for could be improved. The comments here related primarily to the practical component of the courses, specifically the placing of students for their practical training, and how this links with the theoretical part. Students, more specifically frail care students that have completed their training, commented that they felt somewhat ill prepared for their practical placing and that this could be addressed by incorporating more practical lessons in their theoretical training.

Another aspect mentioned by both frail care and cater care students, is the disjuncture between what is trained at Bergzicht and the practices and work methods followed at the institutions where they are placed. Entering the practical environment for the first time the students had an expectation that the practices at the institution would match with what they were taught during their theoretical and practical training. This is, however, not always the case as institutions often have their own institutionalised approaches and practices. In addition, and this seems particularly applicable to frail care students, that are confronted with staff at the institutions who are not following protocol, mostly due to poor discipline. In such cases the students find themselves isolated, victimised and sometimes forced to conform to the institutionalised practices of their peers.

In the case of the cater care students, the disjuncture between the theoretical training and the practical placing seems to be a 'matching' issue rather than difference in institutional practices. Students reported for instances to have been placed in a fast food environment that did not match the training they received from the chef at the Knorhoek training centre.

“Wat ek het hier geleer het, het nie by die ouetehuis so gebeur nie. Hier het ek die regte manier geleer en toe ek by die ouetehuis kom toe se hulle vir my ‘moet nie dinge hier kom deurmekaar maak nie’.”

“Die ondervinding wat ek hier gekry het, as jy kom by die ouetehuse en kindertehuse – elk het ‘n eie manier wat die beste werk vir hulle – soos sy sê as jy in Rome doen maak jy soos die Romans doen. Wat ek hier geleer het pas meer as jy op jou eie is as ‘n privaat versorger. Dit is ‘n bietjie confusing as jy by die prakties kom en dit is so anders as wat jy geleer het.”

“Die prakties waarop ons gegaan het en wat ons hier geleer het was nie dieselfde nie. Die Knorhoek opleiding en die prakties was nie dieselfde nie. Die equipment was alles dieselfde, maar die way van dinge doen was nie dieselfde nie. Die prakties was nie op dieselfde vlak as wat opleiding in Knorhoek was nie. Ek was by die fastfood afdeling en dit het nie gematch met die opleiding nie.”

From the above comments it would seem necessary that students prior to their practical placing receive an induction session where they are mentally prepared for this part of their training. In the case of the frail care and educare students, such a session should also include procedures and strategies of reporting misconduct and victimisation should this occur in the institution they are placed in. Another suggestion specifically mentioned by cater care students is to extend the period that they do the practical component of their course. According to the students the current two week period is not sufficient time to become acquainted with and practice the diversity of aspects they were taught during their training.

The students also offered some general suggestions toward the improvement of the training offered at Bergzicht, these include;

- To decrease the waiting period between the different modules. Students indicated that they would like to complete the respective modules applicable to a specific course in close succession of each other and not have protracted waiting periods, which is currently the case.

- Present modules for both languages (Afrikaans and English) simultaneously – this could also reduce the waiting time between modules.
- There is a need for courses that are more focussed on males such as electrician, plumbing or carpentry courses.
- Allowing older people to also attend the training (currently only students up to the age of 35 is accepted)
- The introduction of advanced courses that would allow students who are employed to do their work better but also that would give them an opportunity for promotion.

Finally students were asked if they would ever recommend Bergzicht Training to their friends, all students responded positively.

5.5 Core finding and recommendations

This report provided a summative discussion of the interviews conducted to determine the relevance of, and gaps in the existing programmes offered by Bergzicht Training. This was done according to the main sectors that employ Bergzicht students.

Although each section discuss in detail existing gaps and some recommendations pertaining to the different programmes the following recommendations reflect the main themes established in this research:

1. Current programmes are relevant and should in actual fact be expanded
2. The basic skills levels of students are acceptable, however, there is a definite need in the diversification of training including both theoretical and practical components.
3. Recent changes in specifically the tourism and hospitality industries increasingly demand employees that possess a multitude of relevant skills. In addition, employees must exhibit a preparedness to perform different functions, i.e. cleaning, cooking and interacting with guests.
4. The need for much more intensive investment in and training of so-called soft skills in all programmes offered was unequivocally established.
5. The practical dimension of courses should be fortified, both in terms of their depth and alignment with current practices followed in the different sectors of the market that typically employ students from Bergzicht Training. This was mentioned by both students and employers.

6. Another aspect mentioned by nearly all respondents was the issue of screening of students. Such screening includes history of substance abuse and criminality. Given the increasing reality of crime in the Winelands, prospective employers are increasingly demanding such clearance and assurance.
7. Towards the aim of continuous programme evaluation and monitoring, Bergzicht Training needs to follow up with employers of placed students enquiring on their work performance. Such a system will allow Bergzicht to evaluate the sustainability of employment placements as well as detecting of needs and short comings in their training.
8. Finally and probably most importantly the research established a serious under-selling of the training centre. What is required is an aggressive and well targeted marketing campaign. Such an initiative should not necessarily focus on recruitment of students, but rather concentrate on informing the broader Cape Winelands Community and beyond of its presences and functions. Such an initiative must also include a focus on the undoubted many success stories of Bergzicht. This could facilitate the process of ownership by the broader Stellenbosch community of this valuable NGO.