



PRACTICAL MONITORING, EVALUATION, RESEARCH & LEARNING SEMINAR 2026

Tools, Evidence and Decision-Making for Programme Impact



18–19 November 2026



Holiday Inn Parktown, Johannesburg



**Turn data into credible evidence —
and evidence into better decisions.**

A focused, implementation-led seminar for people responsible for proving impact, improving programmes and helping organisations learn.



6 Sessions

A connected learning journey across the full MERL cycle



Practical Tools

Templates, checklists and usable outputs



Small-Group Seminar

A focused cohort of about 30 practitioners



WHY ATTEND & WHO SHOULD ATTEND

Build a MERL system people actually use.

The real value of MERL is not more data. It is better evidence, clearer decisions, faster learning and stronger programme accountability.



Why Attend

- ✓ Build a practical MERL framework that links strategy, implementation and evidence.
- ✓ Strengthen indicators, targets and evidence sources.
- ✓ Improve data collection, verification and data quality.
- ✓ Produce reporting that supports real decisions, not just compliance.
- ✓ Build learning loops into programme management.
- ✓ Use AI and digital tools responsibly and proportionately.



Who Should Attend

- ✓ Monitoring, evaluation and MERL practitioners
- ✓ Programme and project managers
- ✓ Researchers, data analysts and impact specialists
- ✓ Government departments and public entities
- ✓ NGOs, NPOs, development partners and funders
- ✓ Universities, TVET colleges and donor-funded initiatives



Practical Exercises

Apply each concept to realistic programme decisions



Peer Exchange

Compare approaches across sectors and institutions



Usable Outputs

Take away templates, checklists and working tools



Action Planning

Identify the next improvements for your MERL system



Dates: 18–19 November 2026



Venue: Holiday Inn Parktown, Johannesburg

PRACTICAL MONITORING, EVALUATION, RESEARCH & LEARNING SEMINAR 2026

DAY 1 AGENDA

Wednesday, 18 November 2026 | Holiday Inn Parktown, Johannesburg



Theme focus: **Build the system** | Strengthen the evidence



1 09:00–10:30 | Session 1: Building a Practical MERL Framework



Andries Mangokwana

- Monitoring and Evaluation expert with 20+ years' experience across corporate, public sector, donor and NGO environments
- Expertise in monitoring and evaluation, research, organisational development and policy development
- Holds a Master's Degree in Social Science from UCT and a postgraduate certificate in Financial Analysis from Wits

- Linking strategy, Theory of Change and the results chain
- Translating programme logic into a practical MERL framework
- Clarifying purpose, learning questions and evidence needs
- Defining roles, responsibilities and reporting cycles
- Avoiding frameworks that are too theoretical to be used in practice
- Building a structure that supports implementation, accountability and learning



PRACTICAL OUTPUT

Draft MERL framework blueprint

2 11:00–12:30 | Session 2: Indicators, Targets and Evidence



Jason Bygate

- Social impact and systems-change practitioner with 20+ years' experience across Africa
- Founder of Capacitate Social Solutions
- Works with governments, NGOs, funders and businesses on data, digital transformation, M&E and innovation

- Distinguishing activities, outputs, outcomes and impact
- Designing practical, meaningful and equity-aware indicators
- Setting baselines, targets and evidence sources
- Thinking through disaggregation and data-use requirements
- Avoiding vague, unrealistic or vanity indicators
- Connecting indicators to strategy, performance and decision-making



PRACTICAL OUTPUT

Indicator reference matrix

3 14:00–16:00 | Session 3: Data Collection and Data Quality



Moses Mashingaidze

- Senior MERL, evaluation and digital systems specialist with 15+ years' experience across Africa
- Technical Director at EvalAnalytica and leader of MERL Studio product direction
- Former SAMEA Deputy Chair, AfrEA Board Member and PhD candidate in Evaluation Studies at Stellenbosch University

- Choosing proportionate qualitative and quantitative data-collection tools
- Improving completeness, accuracy, consistency and timeliness
- Applying verification, ethics, privacy and data-quality controls
- Organising evidence files and traceable data flows
- Identifying common data-quality weaknesses and how to correct them
- Building data systems that support reporting, evaluation and learning



PRACTICAL OUTPUT

Data-quality checklist



By the end of Day 1, delegates will have:

- ✓ A practical MERL framework blueprint
- ✓ A stronger indicator and evidence structure

- ✓ A data-quality checklist for verification and improvement
- ✓ Better alignment between programme design, evidence and implementation



Theme focus: Use it to decide | Learn | Modernise



4 09:00-10:30 | Session 4: Reporting for Decisions



Dr Margaret Roper

- MERL Specialist and Director of the Education and Development Division at Khulisa Management Services, Johannesburg.
- Senior monitoring, evaluation and learning practitioner with leadership experience in education and development.
- Joined Khulisa in 2017.
- Holds a PhD in Education Research, Evaluation and Enhancement from Lancaster University, United Kingdom.

- Moving from data dumps to concise, decision-ready reporting
- Building evidence narratives supported by clear visuals
- Reporting differently for leaders, funders, teams and communities
- Using reporting to surface insights, risks and corrective action
- Translating findings into actionable recommendations
- Making reporting a strategic tool for accountability and management decisions



PRACTICAL OUTPUT

**Decision-ready
report blueprint**

5 11:00-12:30 | Session 5: Learning and Adaptive Management



Lebohang Letsela

- Head of Monitoring, Evaluation, Research & Learning (MERL) at Tshikululu Social Investments, Johannesburg.
- Leads impact measurement, strategic research and evidence-driven social investment strategies.
- Expertise in social impact measurement, adaptive management, organisational learning and empirical research.
- Works across sectors including health, education and sustainable livelihoods.
- Focuses on ensuring community voices inform and shape social investment strategies.

- Turning findings into reflection, action and follow-through
- Building learning questions, reviews and feedback loops
- Adapting programmes while protecting accountability and intent
- Embedding learning into team culture and management practice
- Connecting evidence to course correction and continuous improvement
- Strengthening learning systems that help organisations respond to change



PRACTICAL OUTPUT

**Learning and
adaptation cycle**

6 14:00-16:00 | Session 6: AI and Digital Tools for MERL



Kudzai Chinoda

- Technical Director at EvalAnalytica and Information Management, Digital Systems and Data Analytics Specialist
- More than 15 years' experience in digital platforms, software systems, data analytics, e-learning and organisational digital transformation
- Supports practical digital solutions connecting strategy, monitoring, reporting, dashboards and organisational learning

- Safe uses of AI in coding, synthesis and reporting support
- Digital platforms, dashboards and evidence-management systems
- Managing bias, confidentiality, traceability and human oversight
- Applying practical digital solutions to support MERL workflows
- Connecting strategy, data, reporting and organisational learning
- Knowing where technology adds value and where human judgement remains essential



PRACTICAL OUTPUT

**Responsible
AI use-case plan**



**By the end of Day 2,
delegates will have:**



A stronger
decision-ready
reporting
approach



A practical
learning and
adaptation
cycle



A responsible
AI and digital
tools use-case
plan



Clearer ways to
turn evidence into
decisions, learning
and action



Delegate Booking Form

Practical Monitoring, Evaluation,
Research & Learning Seminar **2026**

MAR

Tools, Evidence and Decision-Making for Programme Impact

18–19 November 2026 | Holiday Inn Parktown, Johannesburg

**BOOKING
FEE**

Face-to-Face Fee:
ZAR 9 999.00

Virtual Fee:
ZAR 7 999.00

Delegates will receive seminar hand-outs and supporting materials.

Email booking form to: admin@skillingsa.co.za

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- Entry will be refused if payment is not received
- Orders from public institutions are accepted



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The signatory confirms authority to register and accepts personal liability for payment if this is breached.



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Our team of experts is passionate about knowledge sharing and delivering innovative solutions that drive positive change in the business environment.



We are dedicated to creating platforms that bring together top executives, thought leaders, and industry experts to share their knowledge, insights, and experiences.



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