



UNIVERSITY OF  
**KWAZULU-NATAL**™  
INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI



Edgewood  
Campus



Howard College  
Campus



Nelson R  
Mandela Campus



Pietermaritzburg  
Campus



Westville  
Campus



ResearchGate

WFOT CONFERENCE 9-12 Feb 2026

Manuscript submitted to journal for publication

# The occupational therapy evidence-based framework on self-employment for persons with disabilities - The OTeSP Framework

**Student: Luther Monareng**

UKZN PhD Candidate

University College London, UK, visiting student

**Email**

[monarengl@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:monarengl@ukzn.ac.za)

&

[leboganglolo@gmail.com](mailto:leboganglolo@gmail.com)

**Supervisors:**

Prof Shaheed Soeker - UWC

Prof Deshini Naidoo - UKZN

Ethics: BREC/00004655/2022

Supported by a grant from UKZN's i) UCDP and ii) StepUp Programme

**INSPIRING GREATNESS**

# WHAT TO EXPECT

- **BACKGROUND**
- **RESEARCH QUESTION, AIM & OBJECTIVES**
- **METHODOLOGY**
- **FINDINGS & DISCUSSION**
- **CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS**
- **STRENGTH & LIMITATION**
- **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**
- **REFERENCE LIST**
- **CONTACTS**

# BACKGROUND

- **Poverty** reduction and **work** are crucial to well-being [2–7]
- Unemployment **disproportionately** affects persons with disabilities [8,9]
- Persons with disabilities **prefer self-employment** [10,11]
- Occupational therapists facilitate participation in work but **lack comprehensive frameworks** to facilitate self-employment [13,15]
- **Study focus:** Synthesis of components of a contextual framework on self-employment among persons with disabilities using the empowerment and systems theories

# METHODOLOGY

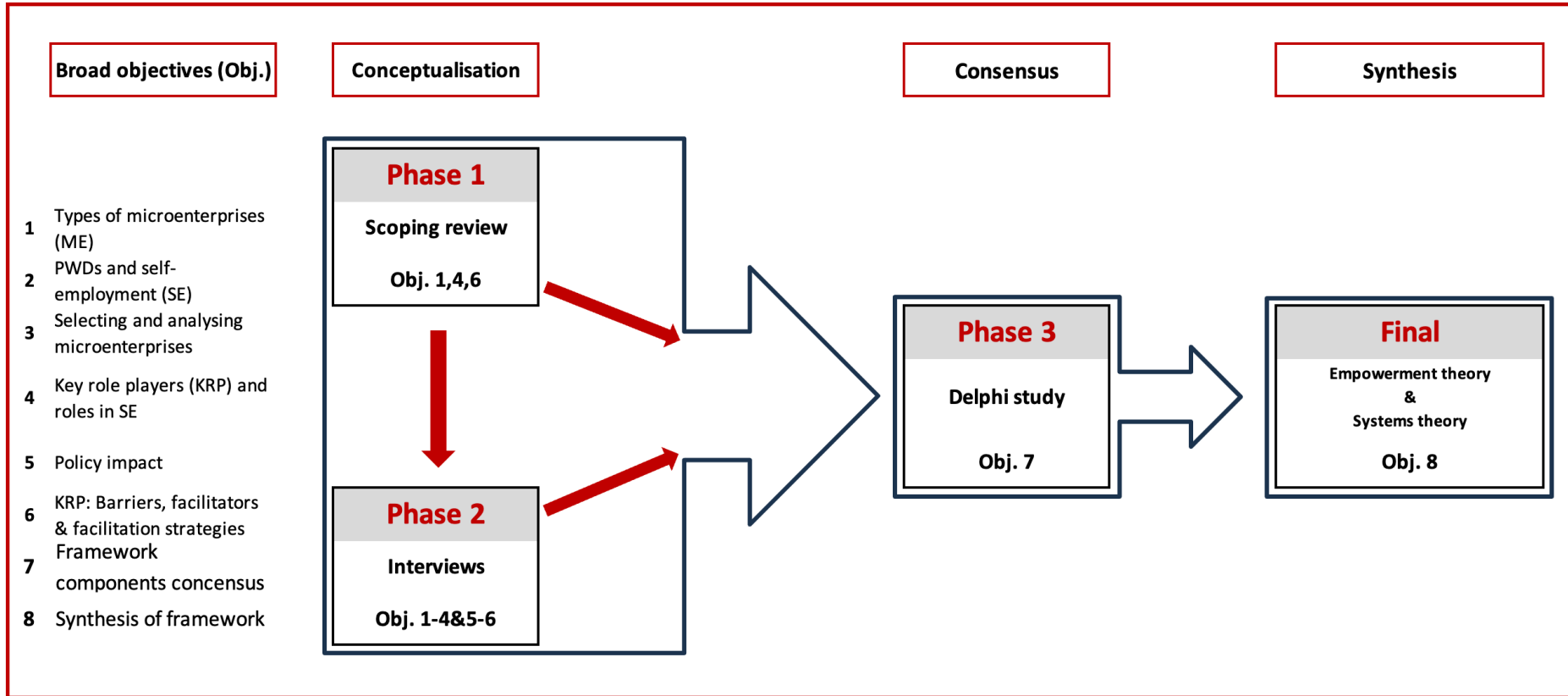
**Design:** Multimethod approach with **three phases + final synthesis phase**

**Participants:** Diverse key role players [N=76]

- Literature – international
- End users (PWDs) – in KwaZulu Natal province
- Service providers (OTs, PWD Organisations) – South Africa
- Government department representatives – South Africa

**Ethics:** UKZN BREC clearance (BREC/00004655/2022); gatekeepers permission and informed consent received

# METHODOLOGY (Overview)



Process overview: broad objectives, **conceptualisation** (of framework components), **consensus** (on framework components) and **synthesis** (of the contextual framework).

# FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

- The framework is the Occupational Therapy Evidence-Based Framework on Self-Employment for Persons with Disabilities (The OTeSP Framework).
- OTeSP is **pronounced** 'o-tesp'.
- The **empowerment theory guides** the process of empowering individuals via ongoing procedures and outcomes across multiple levels [26,27,33], and
- The **systems theory complements** these insights through interconnected units or building blocks [19,22].
- OTeSP Framework - key components:
  - **Macro-level** (key features and legislation)
  - **Meso-level** (key role players and facilitation steps), and
  - **Micro-level** (persons with disabilities)



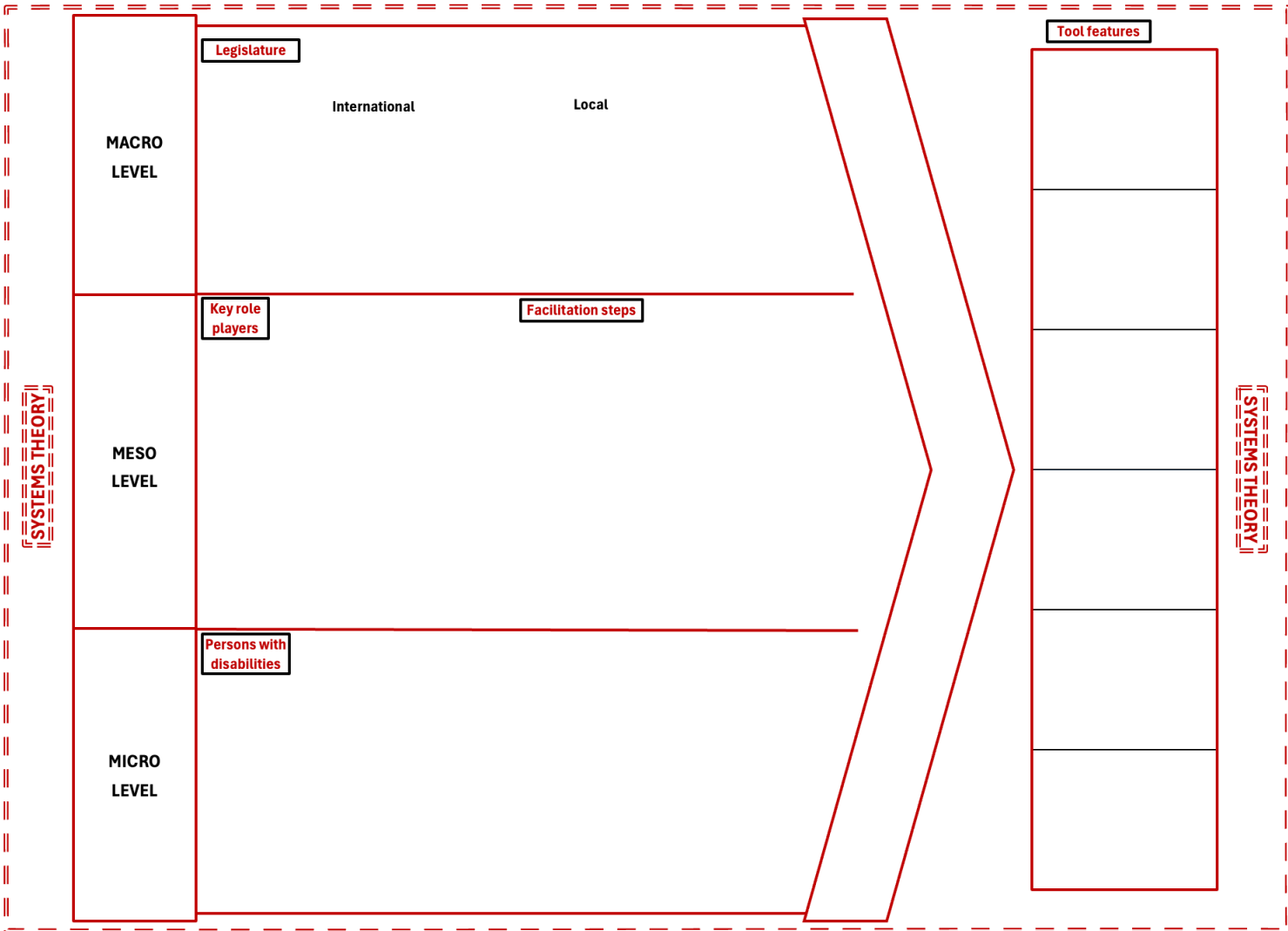
EMPOWERMENT THEORY (EMPOWERMENT of PWDs in SELF EMPLOYMENT)

SYSTEMS THEORY

SYSTEMS THEORY

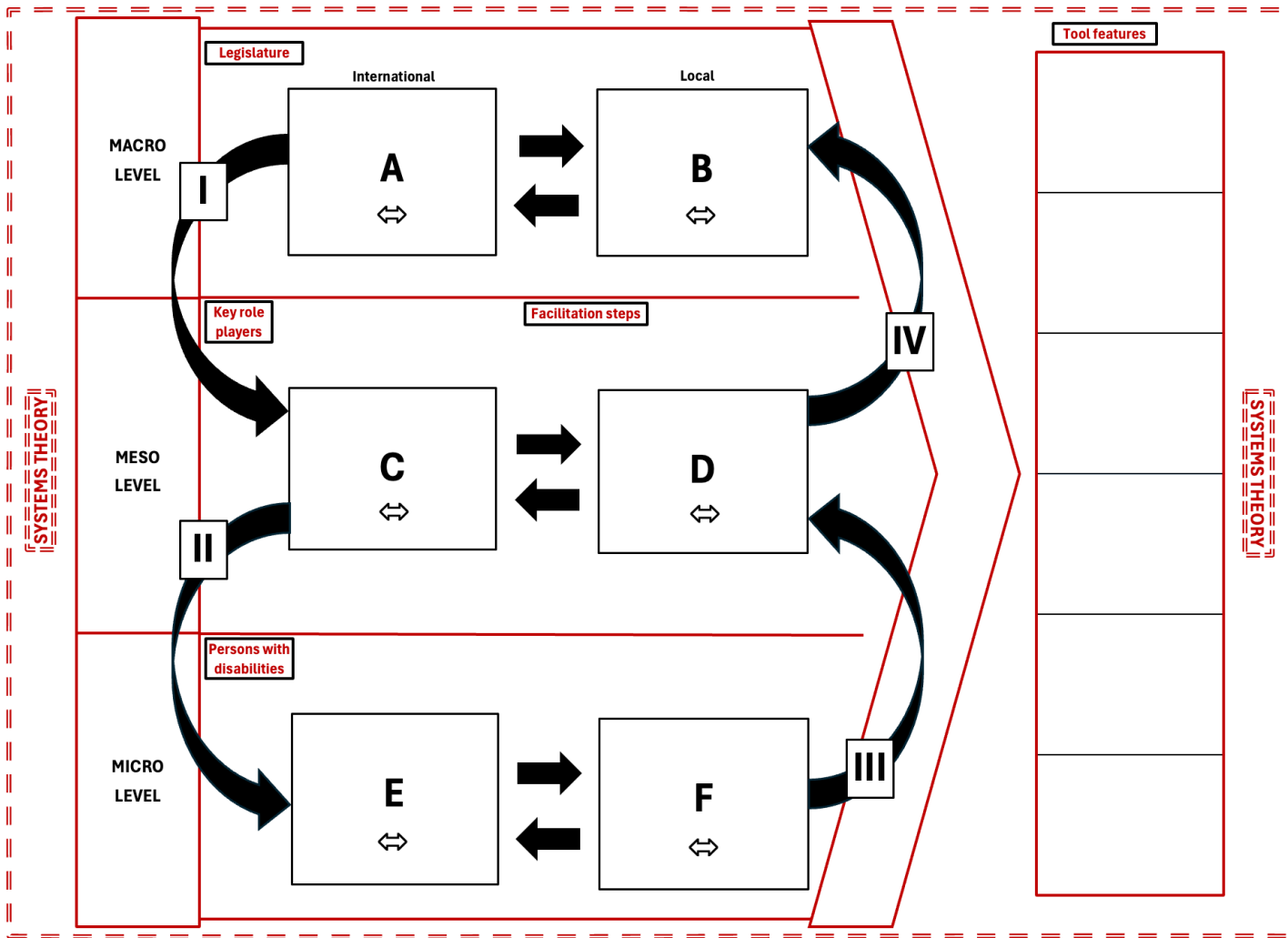
EMPOWERMENT THEORY (EMPOWERMENT of PWDs in SELF EMPLOYMENT)

EMPOWERMENT THEORY (EMPOWERMENT of PWDs in SELF EMPLOYMENT)



EMPOWERMENT THEORY (EMPOWERMENT of PWDs in SELF EMPLOYMENT)

**EMPOWERMENT THEORY (EMPOWERMENT of PWDs in SELF EMPLOYMENT)**



**Dynamics:** interrelated, interconnected and interdependent.

\***Within a level (horizontal)**, i.e., macro level (between A and B); meso level (C and D); or micro level (E and F).

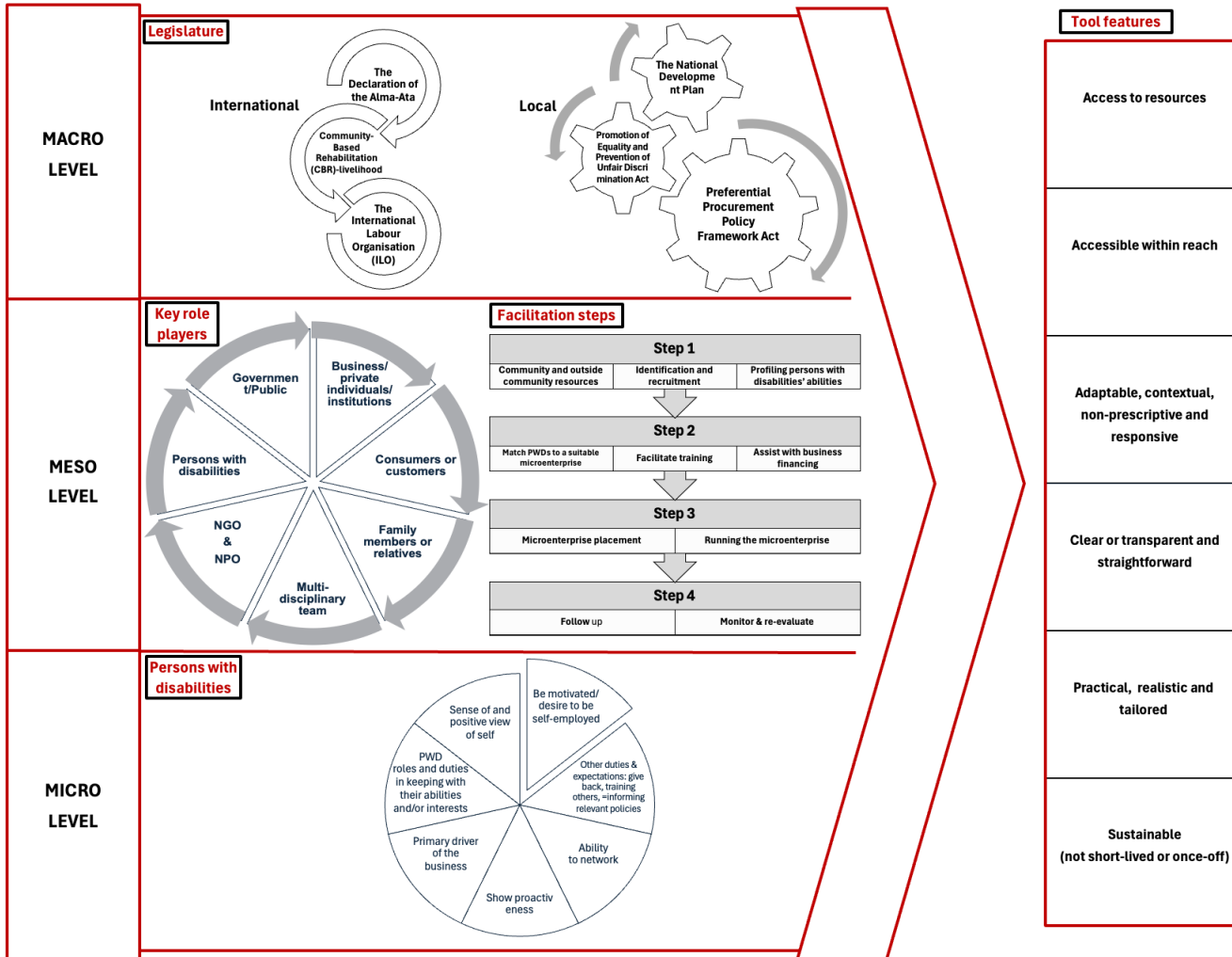
\***In a section within a level** (shown by the symbol ⇔ in A, B, C, D, E and F, respectively).

\***Between levels in a top-down** approach (vertical), i.e., macro and meso level (I); or meso and micro level (II).

\***Between levels in a bottom-up** approach (vertical), i.e., micro and meso level (III); or meso and macro level (IV).

**EMPOWERMENT THEORY (EMPOWERMENT of PWDs in SELF EMPLOYMENT)**

**EMPOWERMENT THEORY (EMPOWERMENT of PWDs in SELF EMPLOYMENT)**



SYSTEMS THEORY

SYSTEMS THEORY

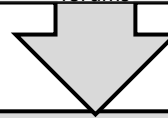
**EMPOWERMENT THEORY (EMPOWERMENT of PWDs in SELF EMPLOYMENT)**

## Step 1

**Community and outside community resources**, e.g., make a list of key role players and initiatives such as available microenterprises

**Identification and recruitment** of suitable persons with disabilities, e.g., using existing platforms such as health care settings, schools, church and community business forums

**Profiling persons with disabilities' abilities**, e.g., level of function, microenterprise interests or assessing their work abilities/abilities to own a microenterprise

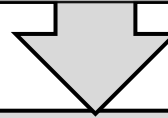


## Step 2

**Match persons with disabilities to a suitable microenterprise**, e.g., retail (buy and sell), rendering a service, manufacturing/production

**Facilitate training** (upskill) and educate through, e.g., place and train approach, apprenticeship or incubation

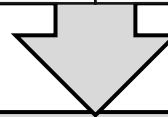
**Assist with business financing**, e.g., application process, securing and management of a grant



## Step 3

**Microenterprise placement**, e.g., by setting up a new or building on an existing microenterprise – securing tools, material, site and human

**Running the microenterprise**, e.g., opening the microenterprise daily, making sales, transacting, and closing the microenterprise daily



## Step 4

**Follow up** by, e.g., offering ongoing support through coaching and mentoring

**Monitor, re-evaluate and repeat** steps 1, 2 and 3 or terminate the process

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## The OTeSP Framework

- Promotes **active involvement, self-awareness, and autonomy** of persons with disabilities.
- Positions individuals as **central agents** in their own empowerment.
- **Enhances their ability to take charge**, use personal strengths, and access community resources.
- When implemented well, it **supports economic empowerment, social inclusion**, and overall **well-being**.
- **Emphasises collaboration** with diverse key role players to address complex needs.
- **Provides a comprehensive, contextual framework** for supporting self-employment.
- **Includes practical tools (user's guide and forms)** for implementation

## Recommendation

- Implementation and validation of the OTeSP Framework

# KEY STRENGTH & LIMITATIONS

## Strength

- **New insight** to the field
- **Multiple key role players** involved - viewpoints and insights

## Limitation

- Some key role players (e.g., government departments) **did not participate**, limiting generalisability.
- Only persons with **physical** disabilities were involved

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & COMPETING

- **Thank you** to all the participants who contributed by sharing their experiences
- There are **no conflicts** to report by the authors

# KEY REFERENCES

1. Lebogang Monareng L, Shaheed |, Soeker M, Deshini Naidoo |, Monareng LL. PROTOCOL: Evidence-based frameworks used to promote self-employment with persons with disabilities: A scoping review. 2023; Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1002/cl2.1350>
2. Griffin C, Hammis D, Keeton B, Sullivan M. Making self-employment work for people with disabilities. Paul H. Brookes Baltimore; 2003.
3. Nations U. Disability -inclusive 2030. 2015;1.
4. Valodia I. Informal employment in South Africa. Human Sciences Research Council. 2007;(August):1–21. .
5. Rogan M, Skinner C. The size and structure of the South African informal sector 2008–2014: A labour-force analysis. *The South African informal sector: Creating jobs, reducing poverty*. 2018;77–102.
6. Maziriri ET, Madinga W, Lose T. Entrepreneurial Barriers that are Confronted by Entrepreneurs Living with Physical Disabilities: A Thematic Analysis [Internet]. Vol. 9, *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies*. 2017. Available from: <https://www.google.co.za/maps/place/Sebokeng/>
7. Charman AJE, Petersen LM, Piper LE, Liedeman R, Legg T. Small Area Census Approach to Measure the Township Informal Economy in South Africa. *J Mix Methods Res*. 2017 Jan 1;11(1):36–58.
8. Daniel O. Barriers and facilitators to self-employment of persons with disabilities in Gulu district, Uganda By. 2019.
9. Shakespeare T, Mugeere A, Nyariki E, Simbaya J. Success in Africa: People with disabilities share their stories. *Afr J Disabil* [Internet]. 2019; Available from: <https://doi.org/10.4102/ajod>.
10. Gamielidien F, van Niekerk L. Street vending in South Africa: An entrepreneurial occupation. *South African Journal of Occupational Therapy*. 2017;47(1).
11. Witchger Hansen AM, Blaskowitz M. From dependence to interdependence: A holistic vocational training program for people with disabilities in Tanzania. *Annals of International Occupational Therapy*. 2018;1(3):157–68.
12. Osman CA, Rahim HL, Yusuf MM, Noor MZH, Lajin NFM, Jalaluddin J. Empowering disabled youth with entrepreneurial values. In: *Proceedings of the ASEAN Entrepreneurship Conference 2014*. Springer; 2014.
13. Thoresen SH, Thomson A, Jackson R, Cocks E. Meaningful social and economic inclusion through small business enterprise models of employment for adults with intellectual disability. *J Vocat Rehabil*. 2018;49(2):161–72.
14. International Labour Organisation Sub-regional Office for East Asia. Replicating success tool kit. ILO; 2009.
15. Galle Jr WP, Lacho KJ. A model for self-employment training for people with disabilities. In: *Allied Academies International Conference Academy for Economics and Economic Education*. Jordan Whitney Enterprises, Inc; 2009. p. 5.
16. Balcazar FE, Kuchak J, Dimpfl S, Saripepella V, Alvarado F. An empowerment model of entrepreneurship for people with disabilities in the United States. *Psychosocial Intervention*. 2014;23(2):145–50.
17. Shaheen GE. “Inclusive entrepreneurship”: A process for improving self-employment for people with disabilities. *J Policy Pract*. 2016;15(1–2):58–81.
18. Gilman K. Lessons from the trenches: How to make self-employment work for people with disabilities. *Work*. 2014;48(1):137–40.
19. Griffin C, Hammis D, Keeton B, Sullivan M. Making self-employment work for people with disabilities. Second Edition. Paul H. Brookes Baltimore; 2014.
20. Dotson WH, Richman DM, Abby L, Thompson S, Plotner A. Teaching skills related to self-employment to adults with developmental disabilities: An analog analysis. *Res Dev Disabil*. 2013;34(8):2336–50.
21. Fane T, Ramugondo E, Leshoel M, Coker I. The value of beadwork for women living with HIV/AIDS. *South African Journal of Occupational Therapy*. 2010;40(2).
22. Silaule O, Nkosi NG, Adams F. Service providers’ perspectives on the challenges of informal caregiving and the need for caregiver-orientated mental health services in rural South Africa: A descriptive study. *PLoS One*. 2024;19(8):e0309090.
23. van Niekerk L, Claassens N, Fish J, Foiret C, Franckeiss J, Thesnaar L. Support factors contributing to successful start-up businesses by young entrepreneurs in South Africa. *Work*. 2024;(Preprint):1–12.
24. World Federation of Occupational Therapists. Vocational Rehabilitation: position statement [Internet]. 2012 [cited 2023 Dec 25]. Available from: <https://wfof.org/resources/vocational-rehabilitation>
25. American Occupational Therapy Association. Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process (4th ed.). *American Journal of Occupational Therapy* [Internet]. 2020 [cited 2022 Dec 13];(74). Available from: <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2020.74S2001>
26. Renko M, Parker Harris S, Caldwell K. Entrepreneurial entry by people with disabilities. *International Small Business Journal*. 2016;34(5):555–78.
27. Tong A, Sainsbury P, Craig J. Consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ): a 32-item checklist for interviews and focus groups. *International journal for quality in health care*. 2007;19(6):349–57.
28. Hennink MM, Kaiser BN, Marconi VC. Code Saturation Versus Meaning Saturation. *Qual Health Res* [Internet]. 2017 Mar 26;27(4):591–608. Available from: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1049732316665344>
29. Cutcliffe JR, McKenna HP. When do we know that we know? Considering the truth of research findings and the craft of qualitative research. *Int J Nurs Stud*. 2002;39(6):611–8.
30. Fereday J, Muir-Cochrane E. Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *Int J Qual Methods*. 2006;5(1):80–92.
31. Koch T. Establishing rigour in qualitative research: the decision trail. *J Adv Nurs*. 1994;19(5):976–86.
32. Aroni R, Goeman D, Stewart K, Sawyer S, Abramson M, Thein F. Concepts of rigour: When methodological, clinical and ethical issues intersect. In: *Association for Qualitative Research Conference*, Melbourne. 1999.
33. Lebogang Monareng L, Soeker SM, Naidoo D. Persons with disabilities’ perceptions on self-employment barriers, facilitators and solutions in a rural setting—an exploratory qualitative study.
34. Monareng LL, Casteleijn D, Franzsen D. The occupation of self-employment in South African informal microenterprises. *South African Journal of Occupational Therapy*. 2024;54(1):22–33.
35. World Health Organization. Livelihood component: CBR Guidelines. World Health Organization. 2010;
36. Charman AJE, Petersen LM, Piper LE, Liedeman R, Legg T. Small Area Census Approach to Measure the Township Informal Economy in South Africa. *J Mix Methods Res*. 2017;11(1):36–58.
37. Monareng LL, Franzsen D, van Biljon H. A survey of occupational therapists’ involvement in facilitating self-employment for people with disabilities. *South African Journal of Occupational Therapy*. 2018;48(3):52–7.
38. International Labour Organisation. Sub-regional Office for East Asia. Replicating success tool kit. ILO; 2009.
39. Joss M. The role of functional capacity evaluations in occupational therapy vocational evaluations. *British journal of occupational therapy*. 2011;74(9):450–2.
40. Monareng LL, Franzsen D, van Biljon H. A survey of occupational therapists’ involvement in facilitating self-employment for people with disabilities. *South African Journal of Occupational Therapy* [Internet]. 2018;48(3):52–7. Available from: <http://www.sajot.co.za/index.php/sajot/article/view/527>

**END...**

**Āhxbkhuṇ māk!**

**Thank you very much!**

**Ke ya le leboga, kamo ga lune!**

# CONTACTS

---

Cell/WhatsApp

+27 78 172 4521



---

[leboganglolo@gmail.com](mailto:leboganglolo@gmail.com)

&

[monarengl@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:monarengl@ukzn.ac.za)

---

Google Scholar



---

ResearchGate

