Report on the Evaluation of the National Evaluation System

Full Report

15 February 2018

Evaluation of the National Evaluation System

planning, monitoring & evaluation

Department:
Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

G:ENESIS
UNLOCKING VALUE

This report has been independently prepared by Genesis Analytics. The Evaluation Steering Committee comprises representatives from the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results Anglophone Africa (CLEAR AA), the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA), Gauteng Provincial Government, Western Cape Provincial Government, the Department of Basic Education, National Treasury, the Department of Social Development, and the Department of Rural Development and Land Restitution. The Steering Committee oversaw the operation of the evaluation, commented and approved the deliverables and reports.

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Disclaimer

It should be noted that any opinions expressed in this report are the responsibility of the service provider and not of the Evaluation Steering Committee or DPME.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfrEA	African Evaluation Association
AG	Auditor General
AMTS	Advanced Manufacturing Technology Strategy
APP	Annual Performance Plan
BEPP	Public Policy Evaluation Bureau, Benin
BPS	Business Process Services
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements
CASP	Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
CLEAR-AA	Centre for Learning, Evaluation and Results Anglophone Africa
COG	Centre of Government
CONEVAL	Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo (National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy), Mexico
CONPES	Consejo Nacional de Política Económica y Social (National Council of Economic and Social Policy), Colombia
CRDP	Comprehensive Rural Development Programme
CWP	Community Work Programme
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
DANE	Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (National Administrative Department of Statistics), Colombia
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DCOGTA	Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
DDG	Deputy Director General
DEP	Department Evaluation Plan
DERP	Department Evaluation and Research Plan
DfID	Department for International Development
DG	Director General
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DHS	Department of Human Settlements
DJCD	Department of Justice and Constitutional Development
DNP	Departamento Nacional de Planeacíon (National Planning Department), Colombia
DOE	Department of Education
DotP	Department of the Office of the Premier, Western Cape
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
DRPW	Department of Roads and Public Works

DSD	Department of Social Development
DST	Department of Science and Technology
EBPM	Evidence-Based Policy Making
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECM	Enterprise Content Management
ECRC	Eastern Cape Research Council
ECSECC	Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council
EEGM	Effectiveness of Environmental Governance in Mining
EXCO	Executive Committee
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMIA	Export Marketing Investment Assistance
EMIS	Evaluation Management Information System
EPRI	Economic Policy Research Unit
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
ERD&I	Energy Research Development and Innovation
ERU	Evaluation and Research Unit
ETWG	Evaluation Technical Working Group
EU	European Union
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
FLBP	Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme
FSAPP	Framework for Strategic and Annual Performance Planning
FSDM	Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring
GDH	Gauteng Department of Health
GPT	Gauteng Provincial Treasury
GWM&E	Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation
HIPC	Highly-Indebted Poor Countries
HOD	Head of Department
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IJS	Integrated Justice System
IKSP	Indigenous Knowledge System Policy
INEGI	Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografia (The National Institute of Statistics and Geography)
IRDP	Integrated Residential Development Programme
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
ITP	Integrated Transport Planning
KPA	Key Performance Area
KPI	Key Performance Indicator

KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LAIS	Learner Attainment Improvement Strategy
LDoT	Limpopo Department of Transport
LDSD	Limpopo Department of Social Development
LEDET	Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism
LPT	Limpopo Provincial Treasury
MAFISA	Micro Agricultural Financial Institution of SA
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIS	Management Information System
MPAT	Management Performance Assessment Tool
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
MTSF	Medium-Term Strategic Framework
NDP	National Development Plan
NDPSP	National Development Policy Support Programme
NEP	National Evaluation Plan
NEPF	National Evaluation Policy Framework
NES	National Evaluation System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIMES	National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NSG	National School of Government
NSNP	National Schools Nutrition Programme
NYS	National Youth Services
OSJCJ	One-Stop Child Justice
OTP	Office of the Premier
PCC	Policy on Community Colleges
PDP	Provincial Development Plan
PEP	Provincial Evaluation Plan
PME	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSG	Provincial Strategic Goals
PSPPD	Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development
QA	Quality Assurance
RCME	Research Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation
RECAP	Recapitalisation and Development Programme
SAMEA	South Africa Monitoring and Evaluation Association

SAPS	South African Police Service
SDIP	Service Delivery Improvement Plan
SHP	Social Housing Policy
SMME	Small, Medium or Micro Enterprise
SP	Service Provider
SPII	Support Programme for Industrial Innovation
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
the dti	The Department of Trade and Industry
TER	Township Economic Revitalisation
THRIP	Technology and Human Resources for Industry Programme
TMR	Transformation, Modernisation and Re-Industrialisation
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education Training
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
USDG	Urban Settlements Development Grant
VFM	Value-for-Money

POLICY SUMMARY

The National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF), introduced in 2011, recognised that there was "a missed opportunity to (use evaluations to) improve government's effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability" and inform planning, policy-making and budgeting. It adopted a utilisation-focused approach which aimed to use evaluation for programme improvement, enhanced accountability, effective evidence-base decision-making, and the promotion of knowledge creation and dissemination. The evaluation of the NES sought to assess the extent to which the NES is meeting its objectives.

Overall the evaluation found that since the inception of the National Evaluation Policy Framework in 2011, great strides have been made in developing the system. The DPME has established itself as the champion of evaluation in the public sector, providing considerable support across provinces and departments, and is a strong advocate for evaluation. Guidelines on evaluations have been developed and made public, quality assurance systems have been developed and capacity building has been provided across the system. Since the establishment of the NES, 69 evaluations were included in National Evaluation Plans (NEPs), of which eight were cancelled. In addition to NEPs, eight provinces, through their Offices of the Premier (OTPs), have developed Provincial Evaluation Plans (PEPs), and 68 departments have developed Departmental Evaluation Plans (DEPs). Evaluation has however not been consistently undertaken across the public sector, and work needs to be done on institutionalising evaluation and streamlining it into planning, budgeting and management.

The conclusions of the evaluation are that considerable progress has been made in terms of establishing the system particularly through the evaluation plans, capacity building, quality assurance mechanisms and communication. From a cost perspective, the bulk of DPME's budget has been put toward conducting evaluation. Going forward, a better balance between conducting evaluation and institutionalisation activities, should be achieved. From a stakeholder perspective, the role of DPME needs to be clarified, while the roles of DPSA, National Treasury and NSG, need to be strengthened. There are encouraging signs of evaluation use in the system. However, improvement plans need to tracked more systematically to better understand use.

The following are the key policy recommendations:

Evaluation Mandate

R1   Evaluation should be embedded in legislation as a mandatory component of public management and improvement, with DPME as the custodian, and the roles of Offices of the Premier and departments defined.

R2   Planning and budgeting must systemically draw from the results of monitoring and evaluation. This should be monitored through APPs, quarterly and annual reports, and performance agreements.

R3   New phases of programmes should not be funded until an evaluation of the previous phase is completed.

R4   The role of impact evaluations needs to be strengthened and considered from the beginning of a programme.

R5   The role of key stakeholders in the evaluation ecosystem including DPSA, National Treasury, SAMEA and civil society, notably think tanks, needs to be clarified.

Budgeting for Evaluative Processes

R6   DPME should initiate and develop guidelines for rapid evaluative exercises which can be conducted internally and when budgets are limited or time is limited.

R7   Programmes must be required to budget a % of programme budgets for evaluation, or M&E. Typically this should be in the range 0,5-5% depending on the size of the programme.

R8   DPME/national departments should promote the sharing of evaluation plans across spheres of government so that evaluation resources can be pooled across government departments, for evaluations that examine similar programmes, or cross-departmental evaluations.

R9   DPSA with technical input from DPME should develop clear requirements for specific evaluation staff with competences, job descriptions, and posts in standard M&E units. M&E units should have at least one evaluation specialist.

Capacity Development

R10   DPME must strengthen its investment in capacity development, including working with Treasury and PSETA to ensure that budget is available for courses/learnerships, and with additional dedicated staff time to focus on capacity development.

R11   DPME to work with NSG, DPSA and SAMEA to ensure that suitable post-graduate courses and continuous professional development opportunities are available for evaluation professionals within the public sector (and the extended evaluation system).

R12   DPME to work with stakeholders to establish a Community of Practice for learning and sharing around evaluation for government.

R13   The national Evaluation Technical Working Group should suggest how internal evaluations should be encouraged to encourage learning, bearing in mind the need for independence for major evaluations.

R14   Build-in specific skills transfer elements into Service Level Agreements with evaluation service providers.

R15   DPME needs to use both capacity development and procurement tools to ensure that emerging evaluators are brought into the system, and encourage a broader variety of universities to participate in the system.

Managing and Tracking Evaluations

R16   DPME to work to strengthen the quality of foundational documents including TORs. This requires expanding the training, refinements to the guideline and more consistency in application of the guideline

R17   DPME to work to strengthen the quality of foundational documents including TORs. This requires expanding the training, refinements to the guideline and more consistency in application of the guideline

R18   The management information system is the 'backbone' of the NES and it needs to be strengthened and used across all evaluation in government, not only for the NEP. This will allow transparent monitoring of the state of the system, as well as extraction.

R19   DPME must use the results of this tracking to ensure that departments are following up on improvement plans, reporting to Cabinet, and naming and shaming departments who are not doing so.

Strengthening use through communication and improvement plans

R20   DPME, provinces and departments need to allocate significant resources for evaluation communication, both financial and human. This will ensure full value is obtained from the investment currently being made, and that stakeholders are aware of the findings. This will also help to build trust in government.

R21   DPME should hold some resources to be used during the improvement plan stage of NEP evaluations to enable funding of exercises such as costing. The same would be beneficial for OTPs for provincial evaluations.

R22   DPME should develop mechanisms for tracking changes from evaluations beyond the current two years of the improvement plan. This would include later evaluations on programmes which have been revised from evaluations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Introduction

The South African National Evaluation Policy Framework was approved in November 2011. It had been in operation for 5 years when Genesis Analytics ("Genesis") was contracted in November 2016 by the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) to conduct the inaugural Evaluation of South Africa's National Evaluation System (NES). The purpose of this evaluation is to assess whether the implementation of the NES is having an impact on the programmes and policies evaluated, the departments involved, and other key stakeholders; and to determine how the system needs to be strengthened to maximise its impact and value for money across government.

2. Approach, Method and Implementation of the Evaluation

The evaluation made use of a theory-based approach as a departure point, including document analysis; literature review and international benchmarking; stakeholder mapping; case studies; key informant interviews; and a survey. The evaluation team conducted 112 key informant interviews and received 86 survey responses and conducted a cost-benefit analysis of a sample of evaluations. Departments and provinces were selected as case studies to represent a range of levels of engagement within the NES. Departmental case studies included the Departments of Basic Education (DBE), Human Settlements (DHS), Justice and Constitutional Development (DJCD), Social Development (DSD), and Trade and Industry (**the dti**). The provincial case studies consisted of the Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Limpopo and the Western Cape.

3. Key Findings from the Literature Review

3.1. National Evaluation Systems – Key Definitions

A NES is defined as "…one in which evaluation is a regular part of the life cycle of public policies and programmes, it is conducted in a methodologically rigorous and systematic manner in which its results are used by political decision-makers and managers, and those results are also made available to the public".[1] It is important to emphasise that the concept of an evaluation system needs to be viewed in terms of a systems approach that recognises the importance of both an ability to provide sound evidence (the supply side) as well as the capacity within the system for individuals and institutions to use information (the demand side)".[2] The development a NES is dependent on the political will for change in the country and the pace of the development of evaluation infrastructure.[3] Once the 'building blocks' for an evaluation system are in place, the focus shifts to embedding evaluation, or in other words, institutionalising evaluation.

3.2. National Approaches to Evaluation

There is considerable variation in country approaches to evaluation in the public sector. A 2013 study found that 33% of the countries assessed did not have a policy in place, or an indication that a policy was going to be developed. 30% of the countries assessed routinely conducted evaluations without a formal policy in place, while 20% were in the process of developing a policy, and 17% had legislated evaluation.[4]

3.3. Benchmarking South Africa to Benin, Uganda, Colombia and Mexico

Benin and Uganda in Africa, and Colombia and Mexico were selected as countries to benchmark with, Mexico and Colombia as international pioneers from which DPME drew much inspiration in designing the NES, and Benin and Uganda being partners with which DPME is working closely. While all five countries have national evaluation plans in place, only Colombia and Mexico have legislated evaluation. However, legislating the system did not equate to there being sufficient capacity to implement it. There was there a need to "catch-up" from a capacity building perspective. All of the countries' evaluation systems are housed in a central coordination and oversight unit. Mexico appears to better communicate evaluation results to the public through the media, which

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[1] (Lazaro, 2015, p. 16)
[2] (UNEG, 2012, p. 7)
[3] (UNEG, 2012)

the other four countries can draw from. Ensuring evaluation use is a key challenge across the five countries. In South Africa, steps have been taken towards creating an enabling environment for evaluation use. In Benin, no clear process for use appears to be in place, but reports are developed for ministers and other relevant stakeholders. Similarly, in Colombia results are presented to Congress and then made public in SINERGIA[5]'s annual report. In Uganda, while the Policy on M&E in the Public-Sector highlights that the purpose of the evaluation system is "to produce evidence of performance and results which can inform public policy", actual utilisation of evaluation outputs appears to be low. This is also a challenge in Mexico.

4. South Africa's National Evaluation System

From 1994 to 2005, there was no central coordination of M&E in the South African government with elements led by the Presidency, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), National Treasury, and the national statistics agency (StatsSA). With no national system, evaluation practice in the public sector emerged in different ways. The policy framework for the Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation (GWM&E) system indicated the need for evaluation.[6] In November 2011, Cabinet approved the National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF).[7] The NEPF and the development of the NES includes amongst others systems for national, provincial and departmental evaluation plans; standards; guidelines; courses; national and provincial champions (DPME and Offices of the Premier) and a follow-up system for evaluations.

5. Findings and Analysis

5.1. Evaluation Plans and Selection of Evaluations

The NES currently operates as a balance between an internally-initiated approach where evaluations are proposed by departments, strategic demand arising from agents such as DPME, Treasury, Parliament, with eventual selection on criteria of importance and link to the NDP/MTSF. While at early stages most were proposed by departments, for the 2018/19 NEP six of the eight evaluations were proposed by DPME or National Treasury, which respondents felt was the way to go. However, to ensure utilisation, efforts should still be undertaken to maximise departmental ownership. In selecting evaluations for National Evaluation Plans (NEPs) and PEPs, DPME and OTPs generally follow the specifications of the NEPF in terms of evaluation prioritisation. Departments and provinces see the creation of a Departmental Evaluation Plan (DEP) or Provincial Evaluation Plan (PEP) as valuable. However, the link to the NEPF and the NDP needs to be made clearer for the overall vision and purpose of evaluation to be articulated. The extent to which a department or province has an evaluation plan in place is a good indication of the breadth of the NES, but not the depth or quality of the system. There are eight PEPs (of nine provinces) and 68 DEPs from 155 national and provincial departments (with only 29 DEPs the previous year). Therefore, great strides have been made in terms of breadth. Early adopters such as **the dti** and DBE, have internalised systems and are ensuring that evaluations are aligned to the departments and their needs.

5.1.1. Key Stakeholders in the NES

A view that came out strongly during the interviews is that the roles of DPME and other actors in the evaluation space are not always clear and there is not always a shared vision for the NES across the centre of government institutions, a view most strongly held by the DPSA. More work is needed to clarify the roles of universities, SAMEA, centre of government departments, civil society organisations and programme beneficiaries.

5.1.2. Time and Costs in the NES

The bulk of the DPME's budget (77% in 2016/17 and 83% in 2015/16) is spent on funding evaluations, while proportionally less is spent on institutionalisation[8] activities such as capacity building (0% in 2016/17 and 8% in 2015/16) and communication (1% in 2016/17 and 0.3% in 2015/16), although DFID support was used or this

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[5] SINERGIA is the M&E section of the Department of National Planning
[6] (Goldman & Mathe, 2014)
[7] (DPME, 2011)
[8] "A process of channelling isolated and spontaneous programme evaluation efforts into more formal and systematic approaches, on the presumption that the latter provide a better framework for fully realising the potential of the evaluation practice" (Gaarder & Briceno, 2010)

between 2012 and 2015. To support institutionalisation this spread needs to be more even. Respondents on both the supply side (evaluators) and the demand side (departments and provinces) noted that the evaluation process is a lengthy process which requires a considerable investment in time. A considerable amount of time appears to be spent on pre-design and design, and the communication of results. The latter specifically (as a non-core evaluation activity) can potentially be reduced to improve the efficiency of the evaluation process.

5.1.3. The Value of the NES

Cost-benefit ratios were calculated of three sample evaluations, which ranged from 1:7[9], to 1:10[10], and 1:13[11]. These ratios show that in these instances the cost of evaluation is heavily outweighed by the benefits, and implies that investing in evaluation is very beneficial for government. While there is certainly value in the system, tracking the costs and benefits of the system as a whole and of individual evaluations needs to be done more systematically, so that the value of the system can be accurately assessed.

5.2. Capacity Building, Quality Assurance and Communication in the NES

5.2.1. Capacity Development

Capacity development has been a large focus of the NES. DPME's capacity building plan has included establishing guidelines and templates, promoting learning networks and forums, short courses, and developing an MPAT evaluation standard. DPME has developed 18 guidelines and 9 templates. Overall, these have been very helpful to departments and provinces. Later adopter provinces in particular highlighted the need for upskilling staff on evaluation, and the need for additional staff to manage evaluations in the provinces. A number of respondents suggested that senior staff as well as programme managers should receive technical training including practical considerations such as budgeting for evaluations.1 989 participants undertook training between 2012/13 and 2016/17. Overall, respondents from key informant interviews and from the survey found the training provided very useful. A number of respondents highlighted the importance of "on-the-job" training, and more experienced officials noted that deepening their training would be useful. However, the amount spent on capacity building has decreased considerably since the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) funding ceased in late 2015, and there is a concern that the NSG is not meeting the demand for evaluation training adequately.

5.2.2. Quality Assurance

The quality assurance mechanisms of the NES are important for the credibility of evaluations coming out of the NES. These mechanisms range from design clinics, steering committees, guidelines, support from DPME directors, peer reviews and independent quality assessment. Respondents noted that peer reviewers are not always included from the beginning of the evaluation which can cause challenges later. Peer reviewers noted that the compensation for peer reviewing is too small for the amount of work required. Respondents highlighted that the quality assessment mechanism worked best when there was communication between the assessors, the programme managers, external evaluators and other key members of steering committees.

5.2.3. Communication

The DPME has developed a communication strategy, and implemented a variety of strategies including presentations related to the NES, communicating results through the media and 31 editions of its newsletter (Evaluation Update), conferences and exchanges, and the development of publications such as policy briefs and annual reports. DPME sends Parliamentary portfolio committees the evaluation reports, but other communication with Parliament is occasional and could be enhanced. Areas that could be strengthened include work with the media, and wider sharing of learnings (formally or informally) within the public sector.

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[9] The Evaluation of the Impact of Agricultural Learnerships in the Western Cape.
[10] The Evaluation of the Funza Lushaka Scheme for DBE
[11] The Evaluation of the BPS Programme for **the dti**

5.3. Impact of the National Evaluation System

The DPME has invested in creating an enabling environment for use of evaluation findings. The improvement plan system is seen as a key element in enhancing use in the system and is seen as one of the key benefits the NES has brought about. There is currently no mechanism to mandate the creation of, or funding of the proposals from an improvement plan, which can lead to difficulties in implementing the recommendations. There is a need for a stronger system to track evaluation improvement plans, and a centralised system would be beneficial where departmental reporting on improvement plans can be entered, and reviewed by DPME.

The case study departments highlighted examples of instrumental use[12] and process use[13]. The preliminary evidence for use of evaluations therefore appears to be encouraging. Departments and provinces appear to understand the value of evaluations and attempt to use them to inform decisions. In the majority of cases there is little conscious consideration of budget implications arising from evaluations, with those evaluations concerned with the economy best in this regard. Beyond the objectives of the NES, other key benefits are improved strategic vision in departments and provinces as a result of using theories of change; the use of good practice examples in internal research after having been exposed to external evaluations; and an enhanced use of evaluative thinking and the consideration of the need to harmonise learning across structures.

5.4. Institutionalisation of the NES

Establishing the NES is a 20-year project, with the first five years creating the building blocks of the system, and establishing the credibility of evaluations. Departments highlighted the positive role that the NES has played in developing evaluation culture, and a common language around evaluation. Later adopters raised legislation as an option for institutionalisation, while in earlier adopters, the focus was more on developing evaluation culture in the departments. A key frustration voiced by departments was the overall lack of a systematic link between evaluation, budgeting and planning and finding funds to conduct evaluations. The provincial case studies show provinces have taken different steps in institutionalising the NES, but that a provincial evaluation champion is essential. A few areas that are seen as important in further institutionalising and expanding the system include strengthening senior-level buy-in; the use of internal evaluations to develop an evaluative culture; the promotion of evaluative thinking; and drive from individual champions. Specific levers identified as necessary in the institutionalisation of the NES include ensuring financial allocations for evaluations; accountability to conduct evaluations; and addressing issues related to fear of evaluation.

6. Conclusions

In terms of *relevance, effectiveness and efficiency,* considerable progress has been made in terms of establishing the system particularly through the evaluation plans, capacity building, quality assurance mechanisms and communication. From a cost perspective, the bulk of DPME's budget has been put toward conducting evaluation. Going forward, a better balance between conducting evaluation and institutionalisation activities, should be achieved. From a stakeholder perspective, the role of DPME needs to be clarified, while the roles of DPSA, National Treasury and NSG, need to be strengthened. Related to *impact,* there are encouraging signs of evaluation use in the system. However, improvement plans need to tracked more systematically to better understand use. In terms of *sustainability and upscaling,* it is suggested that the evaluations included in the NES are expanded beyond those internally-initiated to include some of national and provincial strategic importance in order to achieve the objectives of the NES. The next phase of the NES relates to institutionalisation. This can be done through more systematic use of evaluation findings in financial allocations, accountability to conduct evaluations, and promoting the development of an evaluation culture.

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[12] When evaluations are used instrumentally, the recommendations and findings generated, could inform decision making and lead to changes in the intervention." (Ledermann, 2012)
[13] Process use is where evaluation participants benefit from the process of partaking in the evaluation itself.

7.   Recommendations

Evaluation Mandate

R1   Evaluation should be embedded in legislation as a mandatory component of public management and improvement, with DPME as the custodian, and the roles of Offices of the Premier and departments defined.

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1   INTRODUCTION

Genesis Analytics ('Genesis') was contracted by the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in November 2016 to conduct the inaugural Evaluation of South Africa's National Evaluation System. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess whether implementation of the national evaluation system is having an impact and determine how the system can be strengthened to maximise its impact and value for money across government. However; given that the NES has only been established over the last five years, it is also important to assess whether the establishment, institutionalisation, and thus potential impact of the NES, is ultimately 'on the right track'. The effect of the system will be assessed looking at its impacts on the programmes and policies that have been evaluated, the partner departments that have been and are part of the system and other key stakeholders.

The intended use of the findings is essential for the evaluation to tailor both its approach and communication of recommendations appropriately for the different audiences. This report constitutes the completion of the evaluation process and its purpose is to provide the key findings of the evaluation, and outline recommendations to strengthen the NES.

The purpose of this section, *(Section 1)* is to outline the background of the NES *(Section 1.1)* and the purpose of the evaluation of the NES *(Section 1.2)*. Following this, *Section 2* outlines the evaluation process and the methodologies used in the evaluation are summarised. *Section 3* provides the key findings from the literature review. This includes a review of evaluation in the public sector *(Section 3.1),* national approaches to NESs (*Section **Error! Reference source not found.***) and, South Africa is benchmarked against Benin, Uganda, Colombia and Mexico *(Section **Error! Reference source not found.**)*.

Section 4 outlines the history and objectives of the NES in more detail. *Section 4* goes on to describe the theory of change of the NES which has its foundation in the logical framework (logframe) that was developed for the NES at its conception. The elements of the theory of change which are the focus of this evaluation are also clarified in this section.

Section 4.2 outlines the evaluation findings through the lens of the key evaluation questions of the evaluation. *Section 0* provides the conclusions. *Section 6* outlines the evaluation team's recommendations.

1.1   Background to the National Evaluation System

The National Evaluation System (NES) was established in response to the problem that "evaluation was applied sporadically" and not informing planning, policy-making and budgeting sufficiently. The National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF), introduced in 2011, recognised that there was a missed opportunity to improve government's effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability"[14] and therefore adopted a utilisation-focused approach to ensure that evaluations are used to improve programme performance, promote accountability in government, support effective evidence-base decision-making and promote knowledge creation and dissemination. [15] The NES, established to give structure and function to the NEPF, aims to promote accountability and evidence-based decision-making in the public sector in order to ensure the efficient and effective focus of government decisions and resources.[16]

This section, through Table 1 provides a brief introduction to South Africa's NES, in the form of a timeline of its development. The details of the development of the NES are expanded on in *Section 4* of this report.

Table 1: Timeline of the Development of the National Evaluation System

2007

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[14] (DPME, 2016)
[15] (DPME, 2011)
[16] (DPME, 2016)

Policy framework for the Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation (GWM&E) system[17]

- The GWM&E system was established because it was recognised that monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in South Africa was being conducted inconsistently, and was not being informed by policy. [18]
- The GWM&E consisted of four areas of work, of which one was evaluation.

2010

DPME[19] was established in the Presidency

- While the GWM&E system provided a framework, there was a recognised need for stewardship of the system, and as a result DPME was established.

2011

DPME's services were expanded to include the incorporation of an evaluation system[20]

- DPME's initial focus was on monitoring, and the development of the Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) which is a frontline service delivery monitoring system.
- In focusing on evaluation, an initial consultation was held with departments already undertaking evaluations[21]. This led to a group being formed to lead on evaluation development.

Study tour to Mexico, Colombia and the United States of America (USA)

- The study tour group included the departments that had been doing evaluations, the DPME's Deputy Minister, and the DPME's Director General (DG).
- The study tour culminated in a "write shop" with the travel team and key evaluation Figures in the country.

The National Evaluation Policy Framework was approved by Cabinet

- The afore-mentioned group drafted the policy framework which was sent out for consultation[22] in September 2011, and approved by Cabinet in November 2011.[23]
- This process was an innovative way to draft a policy paper very rapidly with broad buy-in.
- The NEPF sought to formalise a government[24] evaluation system.

DPME's Evaluation and Research unit (ERU) was established

- The ERU was established as the custodian of the NEPF, and it was created in September 2011.

2011 – 2012

Pilot evaluation conducted on Early Childhood Development

- The pilot was started in October 2011, to develop the system through practical application. The evaluation was completed in June 2012.[25]

2012

First National Evaluation Plan (NEP) developed and approved

- The NEPF recognised that capacity to implement evaluations is limited and aimed to focus on a limited number of strategic evaluations through a NEP. Underlying the system is an inclusive voluntary adoption approach[26].
- The concept for a NEP was developed in January 2012. The first NEP was approved by Cabinet in June 2012, and NEP evaluations began in October 2012. [27]
- In most cases the evaluations are co-funded by DPME and the custodian line department through programme budgets. In addition to outlining planned evaluations, the NEP also summarises the status of ongoing evaluations including progress made, emerging issues and challenges.[28]

1.2   Purpose and Questions of the Evaluation of the National Evaluation System

The NES has been in place for approximately five years. The DPME commissioned this evaluation as it felt this was a useful point to reflect on how the NES is working, what difference it is making as well as where it can be

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[17] (Goldman & Mathe, 2014)
[18] (Centre for Learning and Evaluation Results, 2012)
[19] When it was first established, DPME was the Department of *Performance,* Monitoring and Evaluation.
[20] (Phillips, et al., 2014)
[21] For example, the Department of Education, the Department of Social Development, and the Public Service Commission
[22] The South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) was included in the group that was consulted on the policy framework.
[23] (Goldman, et al., 2015)
[24] The extent to which an NES should be a government-wide system versus a country-wide system (IIED, 2016), is discussed in *Section 5.*
[25] (DPME, 2017)
[26] The idea behind this is that the most productive mechanism to encourage use of evaluation findings (and therefore the institutionalisation of evaluations) is to allow departments to engage with evaluation on their own terms and in areas they see the most potential for benefit.
27 (DPME, 2016)
28 (UNDP, 2015)

strengthened. The particular aim of the evaluation was to understand possible areas of weakness in widening reach (and therefore, use) as well as strengthening the quality of evaluations. The findings of this evaluation may be used to feed into updating the NEPF as well as the broader M&E policy of South Africa. In order to assess the impact that the NES is having on the evaluation culture in South Africa, the DPME sought to focus this evaluation across multiple key stakeholder groups to understand how to maximise its impact and value for money going forward. With this in mind, the main questions this evaluation seeks to address are covered in Table 2 below[29]. The table categorises the evaluation questions by the OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development effectiveness and outlines the questions posed in the terms of reference for this evaluation.

Table 2: NES Evaluation Questions through the Lens of the OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Effectiveness

DAC Criteria	Key Questions to be Addressed
Impact	• Is there initial evidence of symbolic[30], conceptual[31] or instrumental[32] outcomes from evaluations? • If evaluations findings are not being used, why is this? • What evidence is there of evaluations contributing to planning/budgeting, improved accountability, decision-making and knowledge?
Relevance, Effectiveness and Efficiency	• How is the evaluation system working as a whole? • Who is involved and what are the consequences of involvement? • How are specific components working nationally and provincially and how can they be strengthened? • What is the value for money of establishing the NES? • Are there other evaluation mechanisms that need to be included to maximise the benefits accrued to the government?
Sustainability and upscaling	• How should the internally-initiated approach evolve to strengthen NES? • How should the balance between internal and external evaluations be managed going forward? • What are the implications for expanding the system? • What changes should be made to policy and the evaluation support system to improve the quality of evaluations?

Source: (DPME, 2016)

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29 (DPME, 2016)
30 "Symbolic use refers to examples when a person uses the mere existence of an evaluation, rather than any aspect of its results, to persuade or to convince." (Johnson, et al., 2009)
31 Conceptual use is the type of use where an evaluation results in an improved understanding of the intervention and its context, or a change in the conception of the evaluand." (Ledermann, 2012)
32 When evaluations are used instrumentally, the recommendations and findings generated, could inform decision making and lead to changes in the intervention." (Ledermann, 2012)

2 APPROACH, METHOD AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EVALUATION

2.1 Approach and Method

Overall, this evaluation was informed by a theory-based approach which is outlined in *Section 2.1.1* below. An overview is provided in *Section 2.1.2* of the data collection methods used. Furthermore, within the evaluation, approaches were developed for case study selection (*Section 2.1.3*), the literature review (*Section 2.1.4*), and the value assessment (*Section 2.1.5*).

2.1.1 Theory-Based Approach

Genesis made use of a theory-based approach (the theory of change for the NES is provided in *Section 0* below) as a departure point for this evaluation. The benefit of a theory-based approach is that because theories of change systematically depict key objectives, and the steps required to achieve these and any inherent assumptions. They are a useful tool for understanding how the intervention (i.e. the national evaluation system) works and how it intends to achieve its objectives; identifying factors that contribute to or detract from the intervention's success; and developing recommendations for improvement.

2.1.1.1 *The Development of the Theory of Change*

The initial version of the theory of change was developed based on the Evaluation Research Unit's (ERU) Operational Logframe which was produced in 2010. The evaluation team then engaged in two stakeholder workshops to refine the causal links and contributors to the different levels of the theory of change. Finally, the theory of change as shown, and elaborated on, in *Section 0* was approved by the Evaluation Technical Working Group (ETWG) with inputs from the evaluation team's Technical Advisory Panel of experts.

The theory of change formed the basis for the analysis framework of the progress of the NES towards the objectives defined within the theory of change. In a theory-based approach such as this, the theory of change provides the basis for evaluating the system against its intended objectives, by ascertaining the extent to which the activities of the system are leading to the intended outputs, outcomes and impacts.[33]

2.1.1.2 *The Development of the Analysis Framework*

The literature review uncovered a useful theoretical framework with which to organise information and data on NESs in developing countries. This framework is Holvoet and Renard's six characteristics of emerging NESs[34]. This framework outlines six characteristics that contribute to the development of emerging NESs, where the identified purpose of an NES is one that uses information collection, analysis and feedback for: Results-based budgeting and management; iterative learning; and evidence-based priority setting and policy making.[35]

These six characteristics are discussed in depth in the Analysis Framework and Literature Review which have been submitted as part of this evaluation. For the purposes of this evaluation report, the six characteristics are summarised in Table 3 below. Within each characteristic and component key questions are asked. This framework is particularly appropriate in that it applies to developing countries where poverty reduction is a primary goal and the government is recognised as a key agent to achieve this goal.

Table 3: Six Descriptive Characteristics of an NES

Characteristic	Elements
Policy	● Evaluation plan ● Monitoring vs. evaluation ● Autonomy and impartiality ● Feedback ● Alignment to planning and budgeting
Methodology	● Selection of results areas to be evaluated ● Priority setting ● Causality chain ● Evaluation methodologies used ● Data collection and quality
Organisation	● Coordination and oversight ● Statistical office ● Line ministries ● Decentralised levels ● Link with interventions
Capacity	● Problem acknowledged ● Capacity building plan

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[33] (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2012)
[34] (Holvoet & Renard, 2007)
[35] (Holvoet & Renard, 2007)

Participation	● Parliament ● Civil Society ● Donors ● Private Sector
Use	● Effective use of evaluation ● Internal usage of evaluation findings

Adapted from: (Holvoet & Renard, 2007)

The evaluation team recognises that there are potential limitations in using the six characteristics as a guide. Specifically, the framework speaks to a broader 'M&E System' rather than a NES. We have taken the liberty of making minor adjustments so that the framework speaks specifically to evaluation. Further, the authors for example, recognise the limitations of the paper arguing that the framework they propose "…makes quite unrealistic demands on at best embryonic national M&E systems".[36] The nature of evaluation is markedly different in developing countries to that in developed countries and as such, there are practical limitations which can hinder the effectiveness of the system. For this reason, understanding the context of the system should be considered alongside the system itself.

It is important to note, that while the Holvoet and Renard paper was used as the guiding document, the evaluation team did consult a broad range of literature, focusing on where the literature differed or concurred with the six characteristics[37]. Furthermore, while these six characteristics were used to frame the evaluation, the analysis of findings was guided by the levels and elements of the theories of change.

The analysis framework for this project was derived by considering the core questions in this evaluation, and juxtaposing these onto the theory of change and afore-mentioned Holvoet and Renard framework. This provides a structured analysis lens through which to consider the progress of the NES in achieving its aims. The analysis framework was used to inform the development of the evaluation tools. The analysis framework, and the evaluation tools are provided in *Annex 2* of this report and were signed off by the steering committee.

2.1.2   Data Collection Methods

Error! Reference source not found. below shows that in conducting this evaluation, the evaluation team used: document analysis; literature review and international benchmarking; stakeholder mapping; case studies; key informant interviews; and a survey. The key purposes of these methods, their link to the various evaluation phases, as well as the sources of information used, are outlined in Figure 1 below. The information received from the data collection was triangulated and cross-checked through the analysis framework, which is elaborated on in *Section 2.1.1* above and in Annex 4 of this Report.

Section 2.1.3 elaborates on the approach to the literature review. Within the key informant interviews, the evaluation team interviewed key stakeholders from selected case study departments, and selected case study provinces. The approach used in selecting the case studies is elaborated on in *Section 2.1.4* The data collected was also used to inform the evaluation team's assessment of the value-for-money – the team's approach to this, is elaborated on in *Section 2.1.5.* Finally, a summary of the field work process is provided in *Section 2.2.*

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[36] (Holvoet & Renard, 2007)
[37] Other frameworks for analysing NESs have been developed, the most popular of which is the framework developed in the *International Atlas of Evaluation*. These frameworks tend to be focused on developed, OECD countries. The contexts of the NESs of developing countries are however vastly different from those of OECD countries.

Figure 1: Overview of Data Collection Methods

Evaluation Phase	Data Collection Method	Purpose	Sources
Throughout	NES Document Analysis	● To gain a better understanding of the design of the NES ● To gain a better understanding of the implementation of the system ● To look at the evaluation outputs of the system	● Relevant programme documents and reports (including annual reports) ● Reports on specific evaluations (including reports, improvement plans and quality assessment reports) ● Guidelines ● Reports on capacity development ● Gauteng and Western Cape diagnostic reports ● Current systems map ● NES reflection session notes ● Evaluation MIS data including improvement plans and reports ● Departmental evaluation plans ● Provincial evaluation plans ● Training data
Literature Review and Stakeholder Mapping (Phase 3)	Literature Review and International Benchmarking	● Review local and international literature on national evaluation systems ● Compare the evaluation systems of Colombia, Mexico, Benin and Uganda in terms of the progress made in the development and implementation of the countries' evaluation systems, and the differences and similarities between these systems and South Africa's NES	● Local (South African) literature ● International literature ● Evaluation documentation and data from the evaluation systems of Colombia, Mexico, Benin and Uganda
Literature Review and Stakeholder Mapping (Phase 3)	Stakeholder Mapping	● Ascertain who is involved in the system and what their roles are ● The different levels of engagement and involvement of different stakeholders ● The inter-relationships between stakeholders ● The stakeholders' interests in the evaluation	● NEPF ● NES reporting documentation ● Evaluation steering committee ● DPME
Field Work (Phase 4)	Key Informant Interviews	● To gain an understanding of the NES's design and implementation ● To gain insight into the contextual background of the NES ● To understand programme management, coordination and performance within the NES ● To gain an understanding of use within the NES	● M&E officials from DPME, other national departments and provincial departments ● Members of the ETWG Officials in departments that have been conducting evaluations since the inception of the NES ● Relevant executive authorities (including DGs, DDGs and HODs) ● Key stakeholders departmental case studies, and provincial case studies ● Key stakeholders involved in capacity development, quality assessment and communication ● International partners in evaluation ● Indirect stakeholders of the NES (including SAMEA, CLEAR AA, Parliament, and Service Providers)
Field Work (Phase 4)	Survey	● To reach a broader respondent base ● To generate quantitative data	
Field Work (Phase 4)	Case Study KIIs	The purpose of these case studies was to gain insight into the implementation challenges and successes of the NES in government departments and provinces	• M&E, planning and financial officials from departments and provinces • OTPs from provinces • Programme implementers from departments and provinces

2.1.3 Approach to the Literature Review

The approach to conducting the literature review for the evaluation of the NES comprised of a combination of two different types, namely a traditional or narrative literature review; and a meta-synthesis.[38] The traditional, or narrative, approach provides the audience with "a comprehensive background for understanding current knowledge and highlighting the significance of new research".[39] This was used in the section of the literature review which discusses NESs. It grounds the context of the evaluation in the history, evolution, development and purpose of NESs. The next use of the traditional, or narrative, approach is in the development or use of conceptual frameworks.[40] This was used in the section of the literature review which outlined the analysis framework for benchmarking South Africa's NES to the NESs of Benin, Uganda, Colombia and Mexico; as well as the framework for guiding the evaluation.

In conducting the traditional literature review, the evaluation team first consulted their technical advisory panel. The panel in turn highlighted key documentation and themes for investigation. From there, the evaluation team built up a set of relevant resources that informed the literature review. In collecting information, the evaluation team consulted a variety of sources, including the publications of governmental and multilateral organisations[41], journals[42], books[43], and the publications of think tanks[44]. The approach to the literature review is summarised in

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[38] (Cronin, et al., 2007)
[39] (Cronin, et al., 2007, p. 4)
[40] (Cronin, et al., 2007)
[41] Such as the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the Dutch Evaluation Office, the European Policy Evaluation Consortium, the OECD, the World Bank, UNICEF, USAID UNDP, and UNEG.
[42] Such as the African Evaluation Journal, the American Journal of Evaluation, Evaluation, New Directions for Evaluation, the African Journal of Public Affairs, the International Public Management Journal, and Evaluation and Programme Planning.
[43] Such "Improving Public Policy: Theory, Practice and Results", "The Encyclopedia of Evaluation", "International Atlas of Evaluation", "Essentials of Utilisation-Focused Evaluation", and "Democratic Evaluation and Democracy: Exploring the Reality".
[44] Such as 3ie, CLEAR AA, the International Development Research Centre, National Council for Economic and Social Policy, and the Parliamentarians Forum on Development Evaluation.

Figure 2 below.

The second type of literature review, meta-synthesis, is the "non-statistical technique used to integrate, evaluate and interpret the findings of multiple qualitative research findings". [45] Using Holvoet and Renard's characteristics[46], multiple reports and papers were used to document and compare the NESs of South Africa, Benin, Columbia, Mexico and Uganda. This approach allowed the evaluation team to combine the findings of the studies and identify their common core elements and themes. [47] In conducting the meta-synthesis, the evaluation team drew on desktop research, as well as requesting documents from relevant stakeholders in the NESs of South Africa, Benin, Colombia, Mexico and Uganda.

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[45] (Cronin, et al., 2007, p. 6)
[46] (Holvoet & Renard, 2007)
[47] (Cronin, et al., 2007)

Figure 2: Approach to Reviewing Evaluation System-Related Literature

Evaluation System Literature

Guidance from a member of the evaluation technical advisory panel

Stocktaking of international evaluation systems
- "Status of National Evaluation Policies – Global Mapping Report" by Rosenstein (2015)
- "Status of National Evaluation Policies – Global Mapping Report" by Rosenstein (2013)
- "Comparative Study on the Institutionalisation of Evaluation in Europe and Latin America" B. Lazaro (2015)
- "International Atlas of Evaluation" by Furubo, Rist, and Sandahl (2002)

Studies examining the impact of evaluation systems on various outcomes
- "Performance Evaluation, Public Management Improvement and Democratic Accountability – Some Lessons from Latin America" by Ospina, Cunill Grau, and Zaltsman (2014)

Conceptualising Evaluation Systems and Providing Guidelines for Implementation
- "Evaluation Systems – What are they and why Study them?" by Leeuw and Furubo (2008)
- "Practical Tips on How to Strengthen National Evaluation Systems" by UNEG (2012)
- "Ten Steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System" by Kusek and Rist (2004)

Additional references on Evaluation Systems within Organisations
- "Evaluation Systems in Development Cooperation" by OECD (2016)
- "A Comparative Study of Evaluation Policies and Practices in Development Agencies" by Foresti (2007)
- "Evaluation Systems in Development Aid Agencies. An Analysis of DAC Peer Reviews 1996 – 2004" by Liverani and Lundgren (2007)

Identification of key themes, for example:

- Defining national evaluation systems, and their components

- Systems view of national evaluation systems

- The evolution of national evaluation systems, as a response to changing international contexts, and changing views on public administration

- The building blocks of evaluation systems

- Institutionalisation of evaluation systems

- Pathways to the development of national evaluations systems

- Status of national evaluation systems in different countries – focusing on different approaches (for example some countries legislate evaluation, while others do not)

- The core functions of evaluation systems and use of the outputs of evaluation systems – including inhibitors and enablers of evaluation use

Additional research in the publications of multilateral and government publications, journals, books and think tank publications

2.1.4   Approach to Case Study Selection

A case study approach was included to assess how different elements of the NES fit together (particularly the role and experience of line departments and provinces), and how these different elements contribute towards the desired objectives captured in the NES theory of change. The purpose of these case studies was to gain insight into the implementation challenges and successes of the NES in government departments and provinces where evaluation is more firmly entrenched and compare this to the experiences of departments and provinces where evaluation is more nascent or challenges have been experienced. In addition to comparing the cases, the similarities and differences in both contexts and experiences are analysed. Finally, a component of the case studies includes tracking past evaluations and assessing their use and whether this use has been conceptual, instrumental or symbolic.

To capture the lessons from the case studies, a mix of departments and provinces, at various levels of NES implementation, were selected. All nine provinces and all relevant departments were considered in determining the final sample. The resultant sample was one that showed a range of commitment and engagement with the NES. While it was initially intended that three provincial case studies would be conducted and three national departments, it was determined through discussion with DPME and the ETWG, that there were more useful learning points that could be uncovered by extending the investigation to include more cases.

In assessing the departments, and their engagement with the NES, the evaluation team drew on the diffusion of innovation theory which provides an adoption of innovation curve.[48] According to the diffusion of innovation, there are five key groups of adopters of innovation (in this case evaluation):

1. **Innovators** are eager to try new ideas, and will be more likely to pilot new ideas;

2. **Early adopters** are key levers of adoption of innovation, and are essential to spreading innovation;

3. The **early majority** tend to take longer to make decisions and are deliberative in adopting new ideas;

4. The **late majority** is a sceptical group and tend to adopt innovation after the average members of the system. The late majority typically adopt innovation as a result of economic necessity or social pressure.

5. **Laggards** are the last to adopt innovation and are often fairly isolated from their peers. Laggards tend to be suspicious of innovations, innovators and change agents.[49]

The distribution of these key stakeholders is summarised in the adoption of innovation curve (Figure 3) below. Based on the adoption of innovation curve, and in conjunction with the steering committee, the following case studies were selected:

- **Provincial:** Eastern Cape (early majority); Gauteng (early adopter); Limpopo (early majority); and Western Cape (innovator).

- **Department:** Department of Basic Education (innovator); Department of Human Settlements (early majority); Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (late majority); Department of Public Enterprises[50]; Department of Social Development (innovator); and the Department of Trade and Industry (early adopter).

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[48] (University of Oaklahoma, n.d.) citing (Rogers, 2003)
[49] (University of Oaklahoma, n.d.) citing (Rogers, 2003)
[50] While the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) was selected as a case study, the evaluation team was unable to secure an interview with a key stakeholder at DPE, despite numerous attempts.

Figure 3: Adoption of Innovation Curve
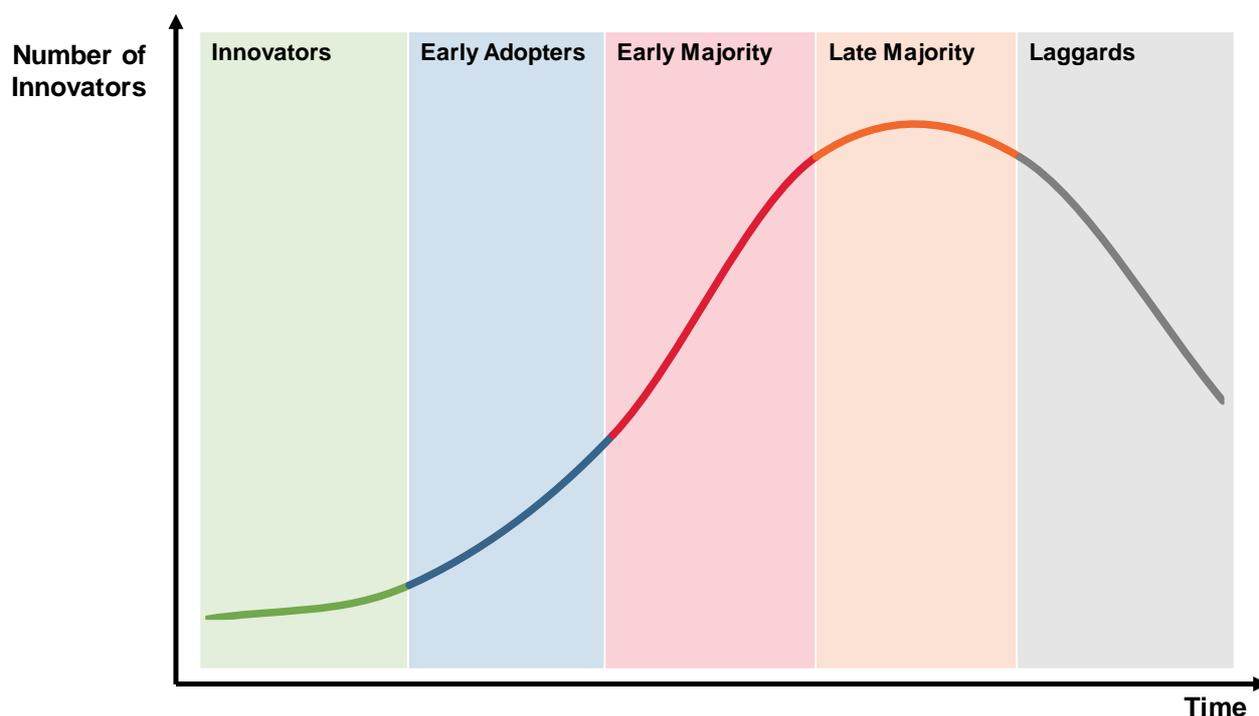
Source: (University of Oaklahoma, n.d.) citing (Rogers, 2003)

The findings from the case studies are included in the analysis and findings section (*Section 4.2*), while the full case studies are provided in Annex 4 of this report.

2.1.5   Approach to the Value-for-Money Assessment of the NES

The evaluation team's approach to assessing the value-for-money (VFM) of the NES considered the NES at the system level (including the value of training and capacity-building), and the cost-benefit of a sample of individual evaluations. The analysis for this evaluation in relation to VFM, started with the data available, and identified emerging findings, in order to propose VFM parameters going forward. These are elaborated on below.

2.1.5.1   Value-for-Money at the Level of the System

Assessment of Available Data

In assessing the value-for-money of the NES, the evaluation team considered a range of data, including:

- **Financial data**: Evaluation Research Unit (ERU) budgets, evaluation costs, procurement expenses, donor reports, and reports to National Treasury.

- **Costs and benefits of training:** DPME data on training, survey data, and qualitative data from surveys and interviews.

- **Financial and non-financial qualities of evaluation recommendations:** Evaluations put forward in evaluations that have been undertaken since the NEPF was established.

- Wider feedback from evaluation respondents: Interview data and survey data.

Identifying Emerging Findings

Drawing on DfID's *Approach to Value for Money*, the key factors in assessing VFM are: economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and cost-effectiveness considerations. These factors, and their alignment to a theory of change, are summarised in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: The Alignment of Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness to a Theory of Change
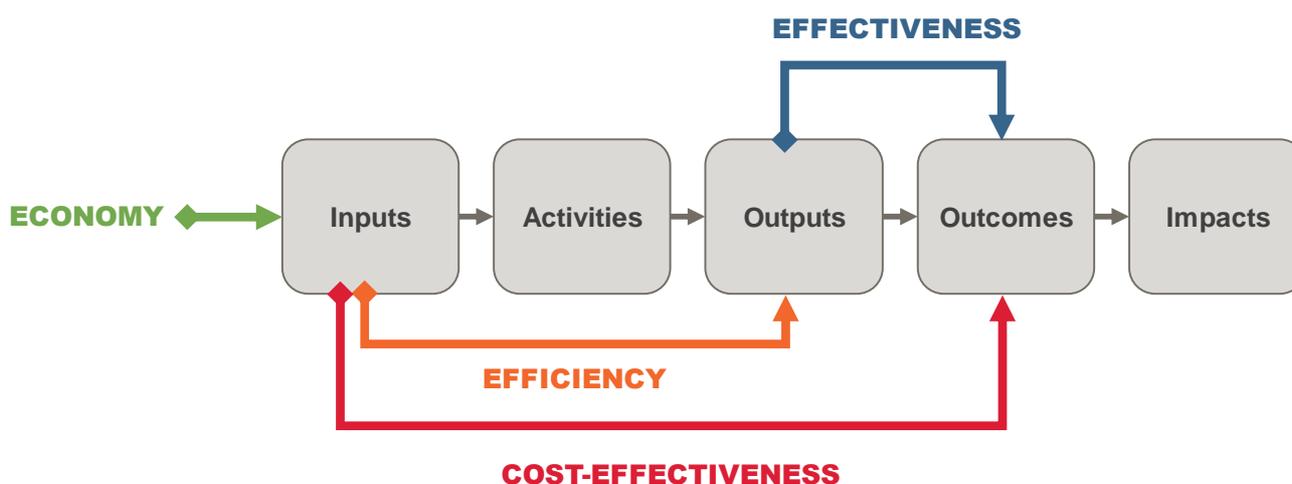
In discussing the value of the NES, it is important to note that the NES is a long-term project that is only five years into its implementation. Based on the literature review, it is unreasonable to expect the system to have achieved its objectives beyond the output and short-term outcome levels of its theory of change.[51] In light of this, the focus of the value assessment is on:

- In assessing the **economy** of the NES, the evaluation team looked at inputs into the system in terms of the operating budget of the ERU as the unit responsible for evaluation in DPME. In assessing the inputs, the evaluation team also looked at the Auditor General's (AG) results for DPME as an indicator of the extent to which the DPME is able to absorb funding, and use it effectively. It is important to note that the AG does not look at the ERU in particular. Therefore, DPME was used as a proxy for the unit.

- In assessing the **efficiency** of the NES, the evaluation team looked at the extent to which the NES is converting its inputs and activities into its desired outputs. In considering this, the evaluation team specifically looked at the data for the quality and cost of the evaluations that are produced, and the quality and cost of the training provided.

- Finally, while acknowledging that it cannot be reasonably expected that the NES' outputs would have become outcomes (which is a measure of **effectiveness**), the evaluation assessed interview and survey data to present some findings on early indications of effectiveness in the system.

It is important to note that it is difficult to assess value in the system, when the system has not been set up to track value and has no existing indicators to the same effect. The key mechanism for tracking value is the improvement plan, being the mechanism through which '*use*' is emphasised, and the tracking of these plans. This has, however, not been done consistently.

2.1.5.2   *Cost-Benefit of a Sample of Evaluations*

The evaluation team conducted an indicative cost-benefit analysis of three evaluations, two at the national level and one at the provincial level. The selection of evaluations was based on the completeness of the data available on the costs and benefits of the evaluations. Based on this, the evaluations selected were the Evaluation of the Funza-Lushaka Bursary Scheme (Department of Basic Education), the Implementation / Design Evaluation of the Business Process Services (PBS) Programme (Department of Trade and Industry), and the Evaluation of the Impact of Agricultural Learnerships in the Western Cape (WCDOA).

In conducting the cost-benefit analysis:

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[51] (UNEG, 2012)

- The costs and benefits are considered in the short term (immediate present value), and as such the evaluation team did not look at accrual over time of costs or benefits.

- Intangible elements such as information and labour have been considered at their approximate market value.[52]

2.1.5.3   *Proposing Value-for-Money and Cost-Benefit Parameters Going Forward*

Based on all the data on value (both financial and non-financial), the final stage in the analysis process was reviewing all of the findings, and presenting conclusions on several areas including how the value of the system is currently assessed and understood, and what value is seen as in the system. On this basis, the evaluation team proposed recommendations for defining, measuring and tracking information to document value for money in the next iterations and implementation of the NES.

2.2   Evaluation Implementation

The evaluation was conducted over the course of six distinct phases, as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: NES Evaluation Implementation Plan

Activities	Outputs
Phase 1 – Inception	
● Kick-off meeting ● Review of available data and relevant documents ● Identification of stakeholders ● Finalisation of scope of work and inception report	✓ Necessary introductions ✓ Receipt of documents ✓ List of stakeholders ✓ Inception report
Phase 2 – Literature Review and Stakeholder Mapping	
● Review literature and international benchmarking ● Draft a comparison of South Africa, Colombia, Mexico, Benin and Uganda ● Identify stakeholders ● Map stakeholder interests and roles in evaluation	✓ Stakeholder map ✓ Literature review
Phase 3 – Theory of Change and Evaluation Design	
● Theory of change workshop with ETWG and Steering Committee ● Develop Evaluation Framework ● Develop evaluation tools and instruments	✓ Theory of change ✓ Report structure ✓ Evaluation framework ✓ Evaluation tools
Phase 4 – Field Work	
● General key informant interviews ● Case studies key informant interviews	✓ Field work report
Phase 5 – Analysis and Synthesis	
● Value assessment ● Theming and summary of key findings ● Qualitative and quantitative data analysis ● Development of recommendations ● Validation workshop	✓ Validation workshop ✓ Value assessment
Phase 6 – Reporting and Close-Out	
● Draft evaluation report ● Present to the Steering Committee and receive comments ● Incorporate comments ● Final report and presentation	✓ Draft final report (full and 1/5/25) and PowerPoint – Including proposed changes to NES design ✓ Final report (full and 1/5/25) and PowerPoint – Including proposed

Phases one to three of the evaluation provided a theoretical foundation to inform the data collection and analysis of the evaluation findings. This foundational work began with the programme document review and international literature review (as noted above) which looked at evaluation in the public sector from a local (South Africa) and international perspective. Included in the literature review was a benchmarking of South Africa to Benin, Uganda, Colombia and Mexico. This provided the evaluation team with core knowledge which informed the analysis framework and formed the basis for the team's approach to the conceptualisation of the theory of change which was developed with the steering committee, and a broader group of stakeholders from the ETWG.

Each phase built on the outputs and lessons of the preceding phases. The outputs from the preceding phases constantly fed into a growing body of analysis and findings over the course of the evaluation. These outputs include: an inception report, an initial view of the NES Theory of change, a literature review, an analysis plan,

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[52] (Walsh & Mooday, 1999)

evaluation tools (key informant interview guides and a survey), a fieldwork report and content for a validation workshop.

2.2.1 Fieldwork

Phase Four of the evaluation relates to fieldwork. As noted above, the analysis framework formed the basis for the development of the evaluation tools. The fieldwork consisted of two components – a survey and key informant interviews. These components are elaborated on below.

2.2.1.1 *Key Informant Interviews*

The fieldwork included key informant interviews with individuals in case study departments and provinces, and more broadly with individuals from other government departments, external stakeholders, service providers, and international partners. The approach used for identifying and contacting these two groups is provided in the sub-sections that follow.

Approach to Broader Key Informant Interviews

The initial contact details for the interviewees were made available to the evaluation team by DPME's ERU. The full list of key informants is available in the Appendices of the Fieldwork Report. Respondents were identified from the following stakeholder groups:

- M&E officials from DPME, other national departments and provincial departments

- Members of the Evaluation Technical Working Group

- Officials in departments that have been conducting evaluations since the inception of NES

- Relevant executive authorities, Director Generals, Heads of Department for National Departments and provincial government

- Key stakeholders in the three departmental case studies and key stakeholders in the three provincial case studies – including programme managers, ETWGs, and case study departments

- Key stakeholders involved in capacity development, quality assessment and communication

- International partners in evaluation

- Stakeholders that are not directly involved in NES, including: parliament, SAMEA, CLEAR AA and service providers that have undertaken evaluations within the NES

Prioritised respondents were contacted by Genesis. Genesis followed up with each candidate a minimum of three times if there was no response to the initial email. The team remained open to the inclusion of additional contacts to the key informant interview list. These additions were made on the recommendation of key informants during or prior to interviews, and on the inputs provided by the steering committee. The process followed in the "Informant Contacting Phase" is shown in Figure 5.

Approach to Broader Key Informant Interviews – Case Study and General

The interview process began on 12 April 2017 and was completed on 11 July 2017. The interviews were conducted mainly in Gauteng as most national departments are based in this region. The evaluation team travelled to Western Cape, Limpopo and Eastern Cape for the provincial case studies. Internal meetings were held regularly to ensure that Genesis was interviewing a representative sample and progress towards this objective was communicated to the Steering Committee in order to access their assistance as needed.

The purpose of the interviews was to gain an understanding of the NES': design, implementation, contextual background, programme management, coordination, performance and utilisation. It is important to note that the evaluation team framed the interviews in a positive light, rather than a negative enquiry in order to promote trust, openness and honesty. To this end, interviewees were assured that their comments would remain

confidential and anonymous at the beginning of each interview. Interviewees were also asked for permission before the interviews were recorded.[53]

The evaluation team began by preparing the discussion guides to be used in the interview with the Key Informants. These tools were based on the analysis framework and were semi-structured and refined by choosing the most appropriate questionnaire from the following stakeholder categories:

- Case Study Key Informant Interviews: ✓ Provincial Case Studies ✓ National Department Case Studies

- Key Informant Interviews of Stakeholders Internal to South Africa's NES: ✓ Government M&E Officials (Including DPME) ✓ Evaluation Technical Working Group ✓ Early Adopter Departments ✓ Director Generals / Executives ✓ Capacity Developers

- Key Informant Interviews of Stakeholders External to the NES: ✓ Parliament ✓ South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association ✓ CLEAR AA ✓ Service Providers

Interviews were 1.5 hours long on average. Each interview had two evaluators present, unless scheduling made it necessary for the team to split. Genesis incorporated capacity building into this process by sharing the interview tool sheets with a representative from DPME, as well as including the same individual in a sample of interviews. After each interview, the team wrote detailed interview notes.

Provincial case study meetings were clustered over a two or three-day period in order to optimise the evaluators' time and engagement with the key informants. Where appropriate and necessary, key informants were grouped together. In the Western Cape, for example, representatives from each department were interviewed in a workshop setting. Following this workshop and group interviews, any interesting points that required further attention were addressed by the evaluators over follow-up telephone conversations.

Figure 5: The Respondent Contacting Phase Explained

1 Introduction	**2** Responses	**3** Interview Set-Up
An introduction email was sent to the prioritised contact list. This email included: • The purpose of the interview • The timeframe of the interview cycle • A letter of explanation and endorsement from DPME • The opportunity to respond with any questions	Responses were managed by the evaluation team directly. These responses included: • Addressing any points of concern or issues arising • Providing respondents with a choice for a telephonic or an in-person interview • Clarity on the content of the interview	• **Provincial:** Once the initial respondents agreed to dates, these dates were communicated to other potential interviewees in the province in order to cluster as far as possible. This simplified logistical arrangements. This excluded Gauteng as the bulk of the evaluation team was based in Gauteng. • **Other Interviews:** Once the data and time of the interview was agreed, based on the availability of the key informant, a meeting request was sent with relevant evaluators included in the calendar request. Following this, logistical arrangements were made.

Ongoing Follow-Ups

All prioritised contacts were sent at least three emails. Follow-ups began approximately two weeks after the initial email had been sent. If a department / provincial / stakeholder group was well-represented in the sample, and they were not responding, the team stopped following up. If this was not the case or if the respondent was part of a case study department or province, or they were considered particularly knowledgeable regarding the NES, then follow-up emails continued. If an individual's number was available to the evaluation team, the team followed up telephonically, as well as by email. DPME was contacted for assistance where respondents were difficult to contact.

A summary of the distribution of the interviews by department/organisation is provided in Table 5. The interview team conducted 111 total respondent interviews. 69% of the individuals contacted were interviewed.

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[53] Interviews were only recorded for the note-taking purposes of the evaluation team.

Table 5: Summary of Interviews Conducted

Organisation	No. Contacted	No. Interviews Conducted
Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	6	5
Department of Higher Education and Training	4	2
Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation	14	9
Department of Science and Technology	4	2
Department of Basic Education	5	5
Department of Justice and Constitutional Development	4	3
Department of Human Settlements	9	4
Department of Public Enterprises	1	0
Department of Social Development	9	5
Department of Trade and Industry	8	5
Eastern Cape	12	8
Gauteng	7	4
Limpopo	25	8
Western Cape	28	28
International	5	2
Other	18	11
South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association	3	3
Total	**162**	**112**

Note: In addition to the stakeholders outlined in Table 5, we reached out to DPME's Outcomes Facilitators, civil society organisations and Parliamentarians. However; the evaluation team was only able to secure an interview with one Outcomes Facilitator, and one respondent from civil society. The evaluation team was unable to secure any interviews with parliamentarians, despite direct assistance from the DPME.

2.2.1.2 Survey

Another component of the fieldwork was a survey. The rationale of including a survey was that it would allow the evaluation team to reach a broader group of stakeholders and generate quantitative data, although the limitations of this type of survey were noted. After consideration and mutual agreement, the DPME sent out the email request and the link to the online survey to the database of individuals involved in the NES held by the ERU[54] (23 May 2017).

Survey responses were anonymised and data collection was managed independently by Genesis. A total of 86 respondents answered the survey, as shown in Figure 6. The results from the survey have been incorporated into the findings outlined in *Section 4.2.*

Figure 6: Respondents to the Survey by Stakeholder Classification

Number of Respondents

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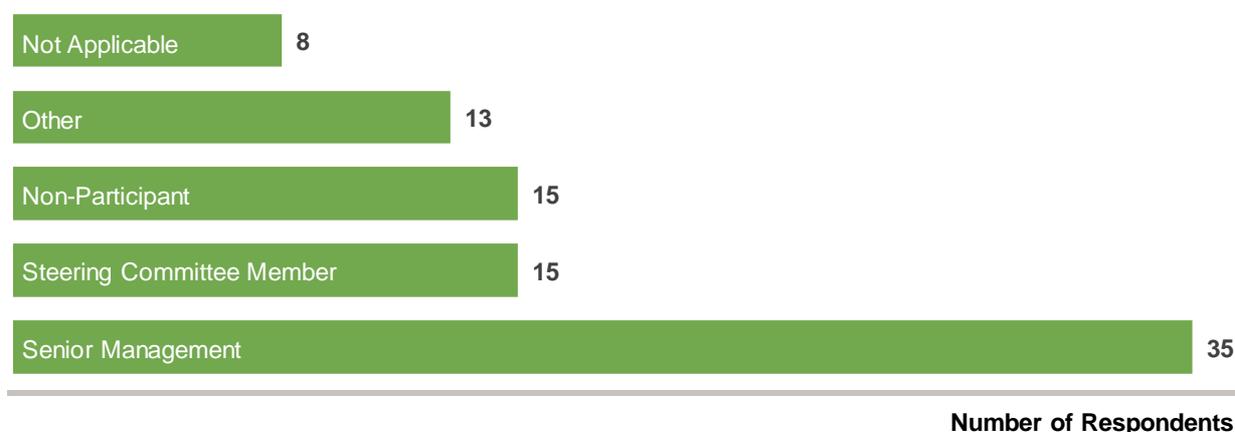
[54] Survey link was initially sent out on 23 May, 2017. A subsequent follow up was sent to the same database, and then on June 27th, a polite request was made encouraging response at the National Evaluation Seminar.

2.2.1.3   Challenges and Successes Encountered in the Fieldwork Process

On balance, the fieldwork process was considered successful. A large number of respondent interviews were conducted in a relatively short period of time. While the volume of interviews was large and the time period compressed, this has not compromised the quality of discussions or the utility of information arising from these discussions. The data collection challenges faced by the evaluation team are summarised in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Data Collection Challenges

Details of Challenges	How the Evaluation Team Dealt with the Challenges
Challenge: Slow Response Rate	
Government officials who had extensive departmental commitments or travelled frequently were difficult to maintain communication with. This was a challenge because a) it took more time to secure interviews and b) the team had to extend the planned fieldwork period to accommodate late or slow responders.	The evaluation team persisted with follow-ups and made efforts to secure the interviews. The first emails went out, followed by a minimum of two follow-up emails. There were cases were DPME was requested to intervene.
Challenge: Government Protocol	
During the inception phase, it was agreed that Genesis would reach out to respondents via email and attach a letter signed by Dr Ian Goldman stating that Genesis has been commissioned by DPME to undertake the evaluation. However, there were cases where government protocol required that there be internal senior level approval for officials to participate in the evaluation. In two instances Genesis needed to work with an official from the Office of the Premier in order to a) identify the relevant people and b) gain access to the provincial respondents. In one national department, the Director General nominated the people who could take part in the evaluation and some of these respondents were not on the original list submitted by DPME.	The evaluation team adapted to the unique needs / requirements of the various departments and provinces and worked closely with the key people in the departments to a) provide guidance on the process to follow and b) to assist Genesis in securing meetings with interviewees. The result of this approach was that Genesis managed to conduct interviews with some of these departments.
Challenge: Incorrect Contact Details	
There were cases where the contact details that were received from DPME were incorrect.	The evaluation team relied on their own knowledge from previous experiences with the various stakeholders, as well as additional inputs from DPME.
Challenge: Non-Responses	
The evaluation team sent emails to all the targeted key informants and some of these did not respond at all.	In cases of non-responses, Genesis sent follow-up emails and made calls, and asked DPME to assist where necessary. One participant was contacted ten times before setting up an interview time. These strategies worked in some cases and interviews were secured, but not in all cases.
Challenge: Refusal to Respond	
Two respondents refused to be participate in the evaluation. The reasons varied. One respondent felt like they had no value to add to the evaluation and the other respondent expressed that they do not in principle believe in the NES.	Genesis and / or DPME sent an email to encourage these stakeholders to respond. Ultimately however, these stakeholders did not take part in the interview process.
Challenge: No-Shows to interviews	
Three people accepted the meeting request but did not arrive for the interview or answer the phone.	Additional follow-ups with these respondents were done as necessary.
Challenge: Receipt of Supporting Documentation	
Key informants often suggested sending the team additional information in documents; however, even after multiple follow ups few respondents sent these documents to the team.	The evaluation team conducted follow-up phone calls where necessary. Additional follow-ups will be done as needed. As necessary, the research team requested input and support from DPME.

The successes experienced in this process are highlighted in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Fieldwork Successes

Success	Description
Interview Tracking	The evaluation team continuously and systematically tracked all the information related to the fieldwork, including the names of people contacted, the stakeholder groups, the number of times people were contacted and progress of interviews.

Success	Description
Flexibility	In general, the participants and team displayed a high degree of flexibility and were adaptive to changes that arose during the fieldwork. During the fieldwork in Limpopo, for example, two additional respondents agreed to be interviewed with short notice. In addition: • A number of respondents selected venues that they thought would be more suitable or efficient for the evaluation team, regardless of where their offices were located. • Respondents were flexible in conducting interviews telephonically. • Respondents were also flexible in conducting interviews telephonically. • Respondents were also flexible on occasions where date and time changes were required.
Openness to Alternative Data Collection	The respondents were open to alternative data collection methods when these were suggested. The alternative methods particularly related to larger groups. The Western Cape ETWG, for example, was interviewed collectively in a workshop setting and in Limpopo, Genesis interviewed the OTP finance team in one group discussion.
National and Provincial Champions	The champions served as the link between the evaluation team and the respondents; and proposed the relevant people to speak to using their insights of their organisations. For example: • The Western Cape assisted the evaluation team with the arrangements of the ETWG group discussion; provided the names of the ETWG members; and arranged for a venue for the workshop. • DPME was consistently helpful and responsive to the evaluation team's requests • The Eastern Cape representative wrote a letter to the DG explaining the research, to facilitate interviews in the province. • The Limpopo OTP was instrumental in providing names of officials and securing a number of interviews.
Honest and Insightful Feedback	Overall, the evaluation team found that key informants were eager to provide their insights. The evaluation team also found this insight to be open and honest. Crucially, these insights and feedback provided in the interviews contained nuanced suggestions for improvements as well as a considered understanding of the successes of the NES.
Good Working Relationship with DPME	Genesis and DPME remained in close contact regarding contact progress. This sense checking aided the team in prioritising necessary interview candidates. It also ensured that DPME was satisfied with the cohort of key informants – saving time and streamlining the effort in the long run.

2.2.2 Data Synthesis

Phase Five, Data Synthesis, of the evaluation draws on all prior phase outputs. The initial analysis process entailed processing and coding the information gather through the key informant interviews. Codes were determined based on the analysis framework. Since the analysis framework was generated based on the Theory of Change and Holvoet and Renard's "Six Characteristics of an NES", the codes aligned with, and were classified according to a matrix of these two frameworks. The quotes associated with codes were then classified according to emerging themes per NES characteristic, and the theory of change level. These were documented in a comprehensive spreadsheet. This sheet allowed the evaluation team to filter and draw on evidence as needed. A summary of this initial data synthesis process is shown in Figure 7 below.

Figure 7: Data Synthesis and Classification Process
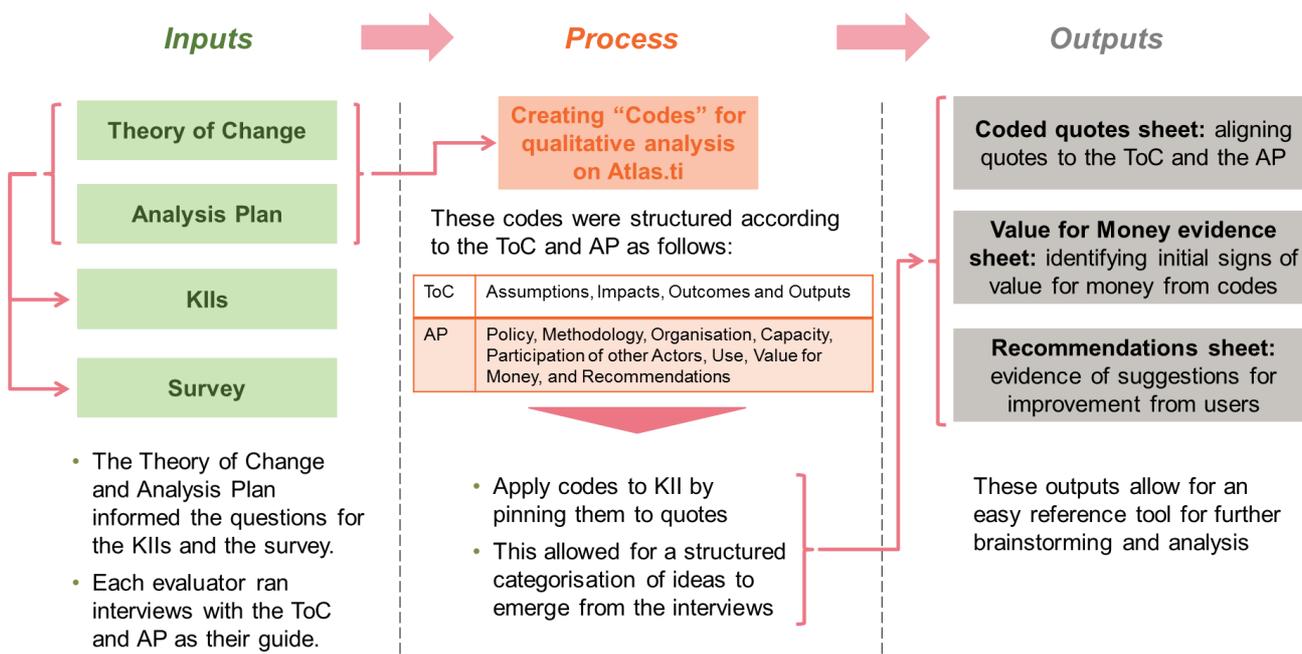
Following coding, Genesis held a series of internal brainstorming workshops to discuss the preliminary findings and emerging recommendations[55]. These preliminary findings were shared with the Steering Committee on 26 June 2017. The evaluation team worked through the feedback from this session and generated presentations and working group discussion guides for the Validation Workshop on 13 and 14 July 2017. The Validation Workshop was attended by a broad range of stakeholders and there was positive engagement in discussing findings and brainstorming potential recommendations. These focused working groups generated clear and useful content for the evaluation team to consider and incorporate in the report.

The analysis activities, processes and outputs are summarised in Figure 8. The findings and recommendations generated from this process are discussed in detail in the sections which follow.

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[55] Capacity building was integrated in this process with a representative from DPME being invited to the bulk of these sessions.

Figure 8: Summary of Analysis Activities Conducted by Genesis

	Process	Outputs
Coding	The evaluation team constructed codes that aligned with the Analysis Plan. Thus, the Theory of Change and Six Characteristics of a NES were assigned to codes. Codes were categorised and presented in a shared sheet to enable easy of reference for analysis.	• Quotes sheet • Recommendations Sheet • Value for money evidence sheet
Internal Workshops	The evaluation team conducted extensive roundtable discussions regarding the emerging findings from coding. Following initial discussions on content brainstorming moved to classification and structure of findings to maximise messaging.	• Preliminary findings presentation referencing the theory of change • Preliminary findings presentation referencing the 6 Characteristics
Preliminary Findings Presentation to Steering Committee	The evaluation team engaged in a discussion with the Steering Committee to familiarise them with the findings generated from the work but also to receive initial guidance on the relevance of these findings.	• Focused representation of findings in both forms listed above • Preliminary sense making
Validation Workshop	The evaluation team ran through preliminary findings and emerging recommendations. Following this presentation, the cohort was divided into 6 working groups to discuss pertinent issues. The groups were given key questions to consider. These workshops were run from an appreciative perspective to maximise problem solving focus. The working group topics were: 1. Maximising Use, 2. Institutionalisation and Widening of the System, 3. Capacity and Systems Needed, 4. Strengthening Quality, 5. Ensuring Resources are Available for the NES, 6. Widening Communication	• Working group presentations • Summary of discussion around validation • Feedback on direction of recommendations • Sense making
Report Writing	The evaluation team made use of the outputs generated from the above to consolidate the findings and recommendations for the DPME	• Final report • Recommendations

3   KEY FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW

As part of this evaluation, the evaluation team produced an international benchmarking and literature review document[56]. The purpose of this document was to:

- Review both local (South Africa) and international literature on government evaluation systems and use this to develop an analysis framework for the evaluation.

- Conduct comparative analyses with two international pioneers in national evaluation systems (Colombia and Mexico) and two African peer countries (Benin and Uganda). These analyses focused on:

  o Summaries of the progress made in the four countries towards evaluation institutionalisation;

  o Identifying differences and similarities between these systems and South Africa's; and

  o Give an overview of trends in the implementation of evaluations and the use of evaluation results.

The literature review enabled the evaluation team to better understand the context of national evaluations systems, their components, their purpose, their institutionalisation and the challenges that are faced in institutionalising these systems. This provided greater contextual depth to the analysis framework and to the overall approach to this evaluation. The sections below present a summary of the literature review.

3.1   Evaluation in the Public Sector

In considering evaluation in the public sector, the key findings from the literature review related to national evaluation systems – key definitions, the evolution of evaluation in the public sector, and the development and institutionalisation of national evaluation systems. These findings are summarised in *Sections 3.1.1, 3.1.2,* and 3.1.3, respectively.

3.1.1   National Evaluation Systems – Key Definitions

As a starting point for discussing the literature on national evaluation systems, this section presents an understanding of the terms associated with these systems. These definitions are provided in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Definitions of Monitoring, Evaluation, Evaluation System, and Institutionalisation

Term	Definition
Monitoring	"…a continuous function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and the achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds". [57]
Evaluation	"Evaluation is a n applied inquiry process for collecting and synthesising evidence that culminates in conclusions about the state of affairs, value, merit, worth, significance, or quality of a programme, product, person, policy, proposal, or plan. Conclusions made in evaluations encompass both an empirical aspect (that something is the case) and a normative aspect (judgement about the value of something). It is the value feature that distinguishes evaluation from other types of inquiry, such as basic science research, clinical epidemiology, investigate journalism, or public polling."[58] Scriven[59] adds to this by noting that "Evaluation determines the merit, worth, or value of things. The evaluation process identifies relevant values or standards that apply to what is being evaluated, performs empirical investigations using techniques from social sciences, and then integrates conclusions with the standards into an evaluation or set of evaluations."[60]
Evaluation System	"…one in which evaluation is a regular part of the life cycle of public policies and programmes, it is conducted in a methodologically rigorous and systematic manner in which its results are used by political decision-makers and managers, and those results are also made available to the public".[61] Evaluation systems are a function of values, practices and institutions as outlined below.[62]

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[56] The approach to developing the literature review can be found in *Section 2.1.3.*
[57] (Kusek & Rist, 2004, p. 12)
[58] (Fournier, 2005, p. 140)
[59] (Scriven, 1991), taken from: http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation/the-evaluation-exchange/issue-archive/reflecting-on-the-past-and-future-of-evaluation/michael-scriven-on-the-differences-between-evaluation-and-social-science-research
[60] (Scriven, 1991), taken from: http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation/the-evaluation-exchange/issue-archive/reflecting-on-the-past-and-future-of-evaluation/michael-scriven-on-the-differences-between-evaluation-and-social-science-research
[61] (Lazaro, 2015, p. 16)
[62] (Lazaro, 2015)

Term	Definition
Institutionalisation of an Evaluation System	"… a process of channelling isolated and spontaneous programme evaluation efforts into more formal and systematic approaches, on the presumption that the latter provide a better framework for fully realising the potential of the evaluation practice"[63]

Adding to the definition for evaluation system that is provided in Table 8, there are four core characteristics of an evaluation system[64]:

- **Presence of evaluation in political, administrative and social discourse:** This shows that there is political and administrative interest in evaluation, and provides a platform for discussion on the use and dissemination of evaluations.[65]

- **Existence of a common epistemological framework:** This refers to a need for consensus among key stakeholders on what evaluation is, what type of knowledge it should produce, and how evaluations should be conducted.[66]

- **Organisational responsibility:** The evaluation system requires an organisational structure to promote and implement evaluations, and not just individual evaluators or administrators. Promoting evaluations, in this context, is concerned with planning and commissioning evaluations and advocating for the use of evaluation in the public sector. This forms part of the concept of evaluative culture. At the initial stages of institutionalisation, there will typically be one dominant organisation in the promotion and practice of evaluation. As the system matures, there will typically be a central body that determines the behaviour of others in the system. If this function is not centralised, the system will be fragmented. Low levels of coordination at a central level can result in a system that is neither cohesive across different levels of government, nor one that is implemented or used uniformly across the public sector. This is often the case in newly established systems or in countries where the administration is strongly decentralised.[67]

- **Permanency:** The evaluation system does not comprise of ad hoc evaluation.[68] Instead the evaluation system has an evaluation plan in place where the evaluations needing to be conducted are decided on and prioritised according to the priorities of the system.

An indicator of a mature evaluation system is then that there are "permanent arrangements or systems whereby evaluation initiatives are commissioned to different evaluators and at the same time, the evaluations conducted are put to suitable use."[69]

It is important to emphasise that the concept of an evaluation system needs to be viewed in terms of a systems approach that recognises the importance of both an ability to provide sound evidence (the supply side) as well as the capacity within the system for individuals and institutions to use information (the demand side)".[70]

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[63] (Gaarder & Briceno, 2010)
[64] (Lazaro, 2015)
[65] (Lazaro, 2015)
[66] (Lazaro, 2015)
[67] (Lazaro, 2015)
[68] (Lazaro, 2015)
[69] (Lazaro, 2015, p. 160), quoting (Furubo, et al., 2002)
[70] (UNEG, 2012, p. 7)

Figure 9 shows that an effective NES occurs at the intersection of the supply system, the demand system and the contextual need. On the supply side, there are evaluators that are trained and equipped to conduct evaluations, while on the demand side, there are units or bodies within government that commission evaluations and promote the use of evaluations.[71] This figure represents a simplified depiction of the core of an evaluation system. In reality, there are interconnections between and within systems and the various actors within these systems. It is also important to note that an NES' actors do not only operate in the one system exclusively, and so, if considering the 'supply', evaluation practitioners do not only evaluate for the public sector.

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[71] (Lazaro, 2015)

Figure 9: Evaluation Demand, Supply and Need in a National Evaluation System
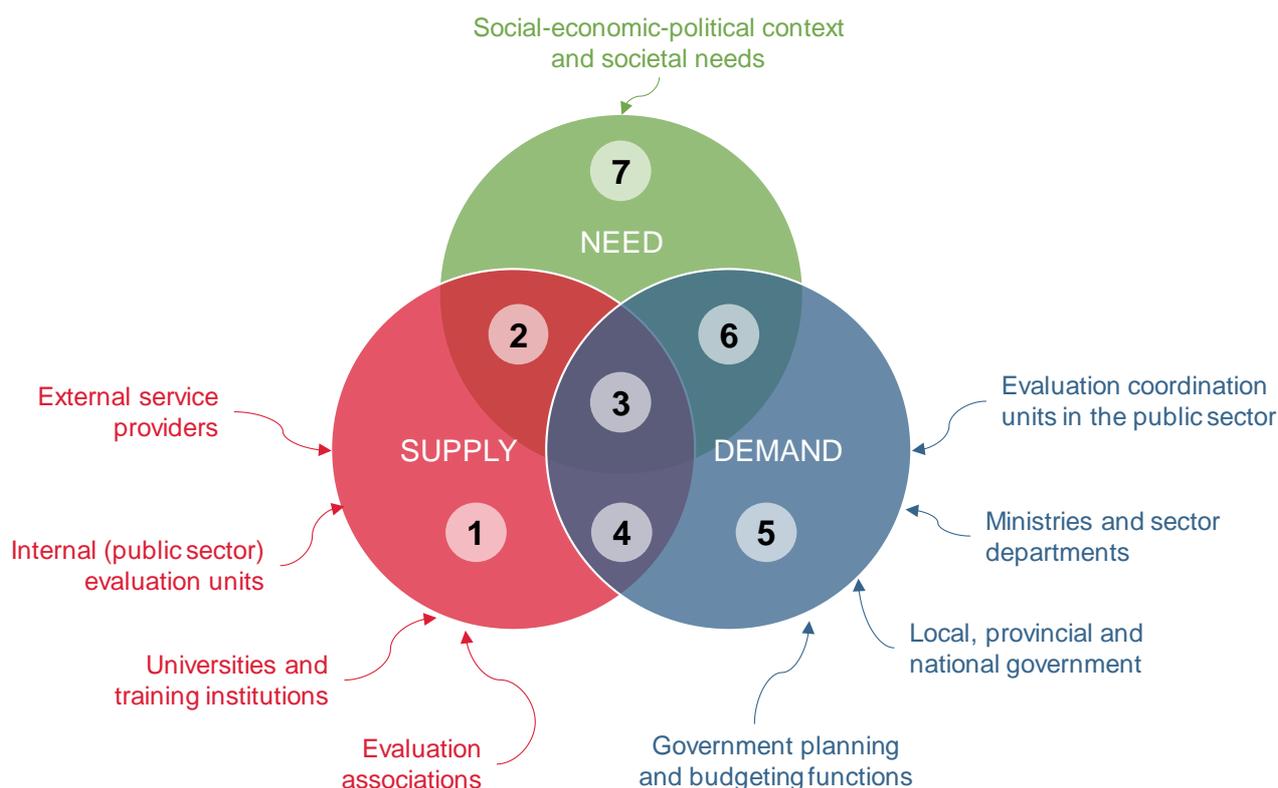
Source: (Casado, 2009)

The definitions provided in this section form the foundation for understanding the sections that follow, namely, the evolution of evaluation (*Section 3.1.2*) and the development and institutionalisation national evaluation systems *(Section 3.1.3)*.

3.1.2 The Evolution of Evaluation in the Public Sector

"Evaluation is a very young discipline – although it is a very old practice"[72]

It is difficult to pinpoint the beginning of evaluation as a discipline as it has been in practice in some form or another for centuries.[73] However, the overall consensus is that evaluation as a discipline began in the education sector with the development of standardised testing in the 1700s and the use of test results to make a judgement on competence.[74] Up until the late 1950s and early 1960s, evaluation was limited to educational assessment and social science researchers in a handful of universities.[75] Evaluation spread to civil society through donors who applied their home country's evaluation requirements to civil society in other countries.[76] Evaluation is now conducted across the public sector, private sector, donors, charitable foundations and civil society.

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[72] (Scriven, 1996, p. 395)
[73] (Scriven, 1996)
[74] (Lance Hogan, 2007)
[75] (Preskill, 2004)
[76] (Burdescu, et al., 2005)

Table 9 below elaborates on the state of evaluation from the 1950s to present. It is important to note that the focus of this section is primarily on the evolution of evaluation in the public sector given that this is the sector from which evaluation emerged.[77]

In the context of the literature review, a distinction is made between evaluation and other monitoring and performance functions in the public sector. The key distinction between evaluation in the public sector[78] and the other functions (such as performance monitoring[79], public policy monitoring[80], performance, audit, inspection and oversight, and quality assurance[81]) is that, simply put, aims to enhance learning, decision making and accountability for improvement, while the latter primarily serves an accountability function. This is not to say that functions like auditing do not result in improvement, just that their primary function is accountability. [82]

This literature review focused on national *evaluation* systems, and not the monitoring and performance functions of the public sector, while recognising that these systems are deeply interrelated. The core principles behind national evaluation systems are that the evaluation of public programmes, policies and institutions: helps to improve effectiveness; provides more accountability and transparency on the use of public funds; and informs the budgetary process and how public resources are allocated.[83]

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[77] (Preskill, 2004)

[78] Focuses on public policies and/or programmes. Evaluations are conducted episodically, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. In the context of the public sector, evaluations are typically commissioned by internal bodies or units, and conducted by either external evaluators or internal units (Lazaro, 2015).

[79] Focuses on organisations/units and is conducted fairly regularly. Performance monitoring draws primarily on quantitative methods; it is commissioned by units charged with the monitoring function in general; and it is typically conducted within the public sector. Performance monitoring can relate to financial and / or non-financial monitoring (Lazaro, 2015).

[80] Focuses primarily on policies and programmes. Like performance monitoring, public policy monitoring is conducted fairly regularly using quantitative methods; it is commissioned by units charged with monitoring and can include units charged with budgetary control and/or human resources; and it is typically conducted within the public sector (Lazaro, 2015).

[81] Can be a done both internally and externally. There is an overlap between evaluation and quality assurance in that the latter can be done on the former. (Lazaro, 2015)

[82] (Lazaro, 2015)

[83] (Burdescu, et al., 2005)

Table 9: The Evolution of Evaluation in the Public Sector - 1950s to Present

	1950s – 1960s | Expansion of the Welfare State	1970s | Advance of Cultural and Scientific Relativism	1980s – 2000s | Rise of Neoliberalism and NPM	2000s – Now
CONTEXT[84]				
ECONOMY	• Post-world war restructuring	• Oil price increased and economic crisis	• Regional economic boom and bust	• Global financial crisis, state budget crises in Europe • Economic recession, increased inequality and austerity • Increased mistrust of the private sector
FOCUS	• 1950s: Reconstruction • 1960s: Growth	• Basic needs	• 1980s: Adjustment • 1990s: Capacity building	• Human security
GOVERNMENT	• Increased social assistance and public service programmes in Europe and the USA • Centralised management, high levels of planning	• Economic slump impacts public finances and sustainability of welfare states	• Country-level restructuring	• OECD: Reaffirmation of the role of the state as the facilitator of problems associated with globalisation and of representative democracy as legitimising state
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	• Expanded government results in more complex public administration • Separation of decision-making, policy development and implementation	• Decentralisation begins in some countries • Constructivist approaches (as opposed to positivist)	• New Public Management – Market forces and competition preferred means of providing public services more efficiently. Publicise sector managers given more autonomy	• Emergence of critical views on NPM • Focus on how to manager better and how to do this in diverse and complex environments • Public value governance: Emphasis on democratic value beyond promoting efficiency • Increased use of technology and data
DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE	• 1950s: Technical assistance • 1960s: Projects (as opposed to country-level interventions)	• Sector investment	• 1980s: Policy-based loans • 1990s: Country assistance strategies	• Global policy coherence
EVALUATION CHARACTERISTICS				
FOCUS AND OBJECTIVE(S)	• Analysing results and impacts of policies on health, education, social services etc.	• Maximising efficiency in using public resources	• Performance monitoring and measurement through indicators that looked at inputs, activities and outputs – public service as an instrument of accountability • Effectiveness a secondary concern	• Evidence-based policy making beings to spread to EU-funded programmes • Evaluation has spread beyond social and health sciences to other sectors • Emergence of evaluation systems and evaluation policies in global literature
INSTITUTIONALISATION	• Non-existent		• Process begins in Europe and spreads to developing countries through the conditionality associated with aid • Driven by finance ministries and sometimes by presidential offices or other ministries	• Some cases of institutional saturation • Wave of flexible institutionalisation in Anglophone countries • Increased interest in researching institutionalisation trends
EVALUATION TYPES AND METHODS	• One-off studies by external academic experts • Scientific experimental, quantitative	• Emergence of demands for participation from social groups and public service users – including demands for more dialogue in evaluations	• End of this period: Increase in ex ante impact assessments and efficiency evaluations	• While not dominant, a return to scientific experimental methods is seen • Impact assessments use mixed methods approaches – using qualitative to add depth to quantitative • Emergence of 'social innovation' and 'social investment' linked to impact assessments • Increased collaboration with the private sector.

Sources: (Burdescu, et al., 2005), (Gaarder & Briceno, 2010), (Lance Hogan, 2007), (Preskill, 2004), (Promberger & Rauskala, 2003) and (Segone, 2013)

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[84] It is important to note that not all countries followed this trajectory. For example. Australia's system developed in 1980s to mid-90s, Colombia from 1994, Chile from the 1990s and Mexico from mid-2000s.

3.1.3 The Development and Institutionalisation of National Evaluation Systems

The development of a NES is dependent on i) the political will for change in the country and ii) the pace of development of M&E infrastructure[85]. Related to political will, the key elements are:

- **Vision of leadership:** Understanding of how M&E information [and the distinction between M & E information] can help public sector managers, decision makers and the country to achieve its national goals; and strategic leadership and a clear understanding of the basic concepts and potential uses of evaluation.[86]

- **An enabling environment:** Commitment to develop and sustain evaluation system, to develop necessary resources for an evaluation system; and to support the core values of an evaluation system which include transparency, objectivity, accountability, and good governance; strong civil society demanding and advocating for these values, and for evidence-based decision-making; and willingness and ability to change culture in organisations.[87]

Related to M&E infrastructure, the key elements are:

- **The capacity to demand and use evaluation information:** Technical infrastructure to do evaluation; existence of credible and relevant data and information-gathering systems; availability of skilled people to gather, analyse and report on the performance of government policies and programmes; a national statistics agency to facilitate a national data development strategy and assist ministries and agencies in capturing and storing data; policies and standards to clarify roles, responsibilities and accountabilities in the system; define the expectations of the system and to develop quality standards; and organisational structure to conduct and / or manage the system.[88]

- **The technical capacity to supply evaluation**: Capacity within government institutions and civil society to incorporate and use M&E information; government and civil society are clear about where and how M&E information can and will be used in government; non-technical government and civil society staff have an appreciation of evaluation concepts and use; adequate incentives to ensure that evaluation information is used; and formal or informal mechanisms for dissemination of evaluation information .[89]

Developing a national evaluation system therefore requires a considerable investment in time and resources. Adding to the building blocks outlined by UNEG, Segone[90] notes that the development of an evaluation system must be approached systemically and thus focus on the individual level, the institutional level and the enabling environment:

- At the **individual level**, the focus must be on: 1. developing senior management capacity to strategically plan evaluations, manage evaluation for independence and credibility, and use evaluations; 2. identifying and supporting leaders or natural champions; and 3. developing professional competencies.

- At the **institutional level**, the focus is on 1. developing a strong evaluation culture which appreciates evaluative thinking and evaluation uses; 2. developing an evaluation policy; 3. setting up an evaluation unit; 4. setting up quality assurance systems; 5. ensuring the independence of the funding of evaluations; 6. developing a system to plan, undertake and report evaluation findings; and 7. establishing knowledge management systems.

- At the level of the **enabling environment**, 1. a public administration is required that is committed to transparency, managing for results, and basing decision making on evidence; 2. legislation and / or policies should be in place to institutionalise the system; 3. evaluation units are capacitated and willing; 4. interest

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[85] (UNEG, 2012)
[86] (UNEG, 2012, pp. 10-12)
[87] (UNEG, 2012, pp. 10-12).
[88] (UNEG, 2012, pp. 10-12).
[89] (UNEG, 2012, pp. 10-12).
[90] (Segone, 2013)

parties have the capacity to monitor evaluation use; 5. a national evaluation professional organisation exists; and 6. there are national evaluation standards and norms.

Once the 'building blocks' for an evaluation system are in place, the focus shifts to embedding evaluation as a national system, in other words, institutionalising evaluation.

The *Comparative Study on the Institutionalisation of Evaluation in Europe and Latin America*, notes that, broadly, evaluation in the public sector is considered to be institutionalised when there is an evaluation plan or strategy in place and evaluations are no longer commissioned on ad hoc basis.[91] Figure 10 below provides a more detailed definition of institutionalisation in the context of evaluation, drawing from the social theory and political perspectives of institutionalisation. From a social theory perspective, institutionalisation occurs when a programme, policy or activity becomes a norm within an organisation, social system or society.[92] The political perspective of institutionalisation takes a more formalised approach in that something is institutionalised when there is an organisation or body responsible for implementation and oversight.[93]

Figure 10: The Contributions of Political and Social Theory Perspectives to our Understanding of Institutionalisation in the Evaluation Perspective
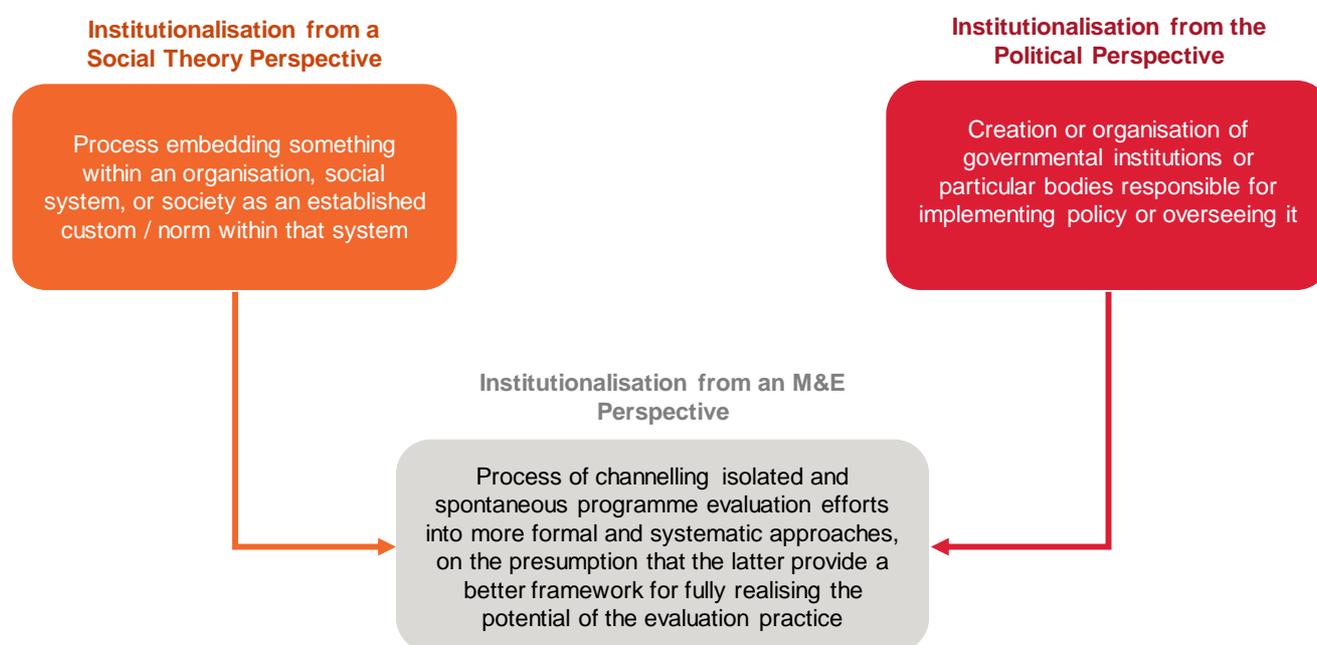
Source: (Gaarder & Briceno, 2010, p. 4)

Gaarder and Briceño draw on these definitions to outline what institutionalisation is from an evaluation perspective. Echoing Lazaro, Gaarder and Briceño see the institutionalisation of evaluation as "channelling isolated and spontaneous programme evaluation efforts into more formal and systematic approaches".[94] Gaarder and Briceño's view is that institutionalisation is important because "strategic orientation, rules and organisational immersion will make evaluations more policy-influential".[95]

In practice, institutionalisation can be interpreted to mean that a country has a national evaluation policy[96] in place or that a country has a strong evaluation culture, but has not necessarily formalised this in the form of

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[91] (Lazaro, 2015)
[92] (Gaarder & Briceno, 2010)
[93] (Gaarder & Briceno, 2010)
[94] (Gaarder & Briceno, 2010, p. 4)
[95] (Gaarder & Briceno, 2010, p. 5)
[96] The United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) notes that "Each organisation should develop an explicit policy statement on evaluation. The policy should provide a clear explanation of the concept, role and use of evaluation within the organisation, including the institutional framework and definition of roles and

policy or legislation. It is also true that a national evaluation policy can be in place without a strong evaluation culture, in which case the extent to which evaluation has been institutionalised can be called into question. Institutionalisation is a key element of evaluation systems because these systems are a function of values, practices and institutions[97].

In the context of sustainability, factors can be categorised as detractors or influencers. The former would weaken a system, while the latter would strengthen it. To illustrate this, and drawing on the figure above, under-developed supply or demand systems would detract from the overall national evaluation system.

Furthermore, drawing on the *International Atlas of Evaluation[98]*, Lazaro notes that there are six factors that influence (or detract from) the development, evolution, and institutionalisation of evaluation systems:

- **Democratic quality:** Evaluation systems are more likely to develop in contexts that favour and promote transparency and social debate.

- **Scientific, technical and public-sector management traditions:** Evaluation systems are more likely to develop in contexts that favour rational, evidence-based decision-making;

- High level of public investment in certain sectors.

- **Existence of driving forces exogenous to the system that are favourable to evaluation:** These forces can be in the form of local stakeholders that want increased transparency in the system, or external stakeholders such as donors.

- **Institutional context and characteristics of the political system:** Evaluation systems are more likely to be developed and institutionalised in countries with majority rule electoral systems as opposed to proportional representation democracies. The argument is that in the latter where government employee accountability is to political parties and not to constituents, evaluations are more likely to be influenced by political considerations. Political will for reflection is essential in entrenching evaluation systems.

- **Administration and reform processes** which improve accountability and transparency functions.[99]

A key element in sustaining evaluation systems is mitigating the risks and challenges associated with these systems. These include the risk that:

- Evaluation systems will become too big and too cumbersome to manage, inhibiting their use;

- The system will produce evaluations that focus on changes in fine-tuning day-to-day management issues, but not larger, more impactful issues;

- Evaluation is used as a procedural Box-ticking exercise and is not used for learning and improvement; and;

- Evaluations confirm the status quo rather than question it. This risk often arises where there is political pressure for a particular evaluation outcome.[100]

Adding to the factors outlined above, the World Bank's *Evaluation Capacity Development Work Series*, drawing from a number of developing countries, highlights the key lessons learned in developing national evaluation systems. These include: In some cases, putting evaluation on the government agenda is a considerable accomplishment in itself as has been seen in Sri Lanka and Malawi; building a common evaluation language and conceptual understanding is also an accomplishment, as was seen in Egypt; strong linkages are required between evaluation at the macro level and evaluation at the project level; the availability of funding for evaluation must be targeted at the areas that need the most development such as, for example, capacity development; developing a large set of indicators can inhibit effective M&E, as has been seen in Uganda; an understanding

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responsibilities; an explanation of how the evaluation function and evaluations are planned, managed and budgeted; and a clear statement on disclosure and dissemination." (UN, n.d.)

[97] (Lazaro, 2015)
[98] (Furubo, et al., 2002)
[99] (Lazaro, 2015)
[100] (Leeuw & Furubo, 2008)

of bureaucratic realities is required, as has been seen in Uganda and Egypt; and capacity building needs to be a sustained effort and not take the form of once-off training events.[101]

While the afore-mentioned factors are important for the development and institutionalisation of a national evaluation system, **there is no single path to a national evaluation system.** There are broadly three pathways to the establishment of a national evaluation system.[102] Figure 11 below shows that in the first instance, evaluation begins through ad hoc studies; while in the second instance, evaluation begins in specific sectors and then spreads; and in the third, evaluation begins and then evolves from government-wide performance monitoring.

Figure 11: Pathways to the Development of National Evaluation Systems and Policies

1 EVALUATION STARTS THROUGH AD HOC STUDIES

Ad hoc opportunistic studies often with strong donor input

Systematisation of evaluation selection and design procedures

2 EVALUATION STARTS IN PARTICULAR SECTORS

Sector management information systems

Larger scale, more systematic sector evaluations

Focus on evaluation capacity development and evaluation use

Increased involvement of academia and civil society; emerging role of VOPEs

Whole-of-government standardised evaluation policy and system

3 EVALUATION STARTS AS WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Whole-of-government M&E system

Incorporation of government-wide performance indicators

National system with ad hoc, supply-driven selection and design of evaluations

Standardised procedures for selection and implementation of evaluations

Standardised procedures for dissemination, review and use of evaluation findings

Examples: Colombia (Ministry of Planning)

Examples: Mexico (Cash transfers) | Uganda (Education for all) | Kenya (Health and HIV/AIDS)

Examples: Chile: Ministry of Finance | South Africa: DPME | Malaysia: Ministry of Finance

Source: (Bamberger, et al., 2015)

3.2   National Approaches to Evaluation

3.2.1   Global Comparison of National Evaluation Systems

As noted in the section above, evaluation systems are developed in different ways with some countries having a strong evaluation culture (as opposed to policy) characterised by learning from experience, accepting constructive criticism, sharing ideas and practices, transparency, and flexibility; while other countries have formal policies in place. [103] In 2013 Dr Barbara Rosenstein undertook a mapping study which looked at: which countries had a legislated national evaluation policy; which countries routinely conducted evaluations without a policy; which countries were currently developing a policy; and which countries were not conducting evaluations and did not have a policy. The results of this study are captured in the map below (Figure 12).

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[101] (Schiavo-Campo, 2005)
[102] (Bamberger, et al., 2015)
[103] (Rosenstein, 2013)

Figure 12: Status of National Evaluation Systems as per Rosenstein, 2013
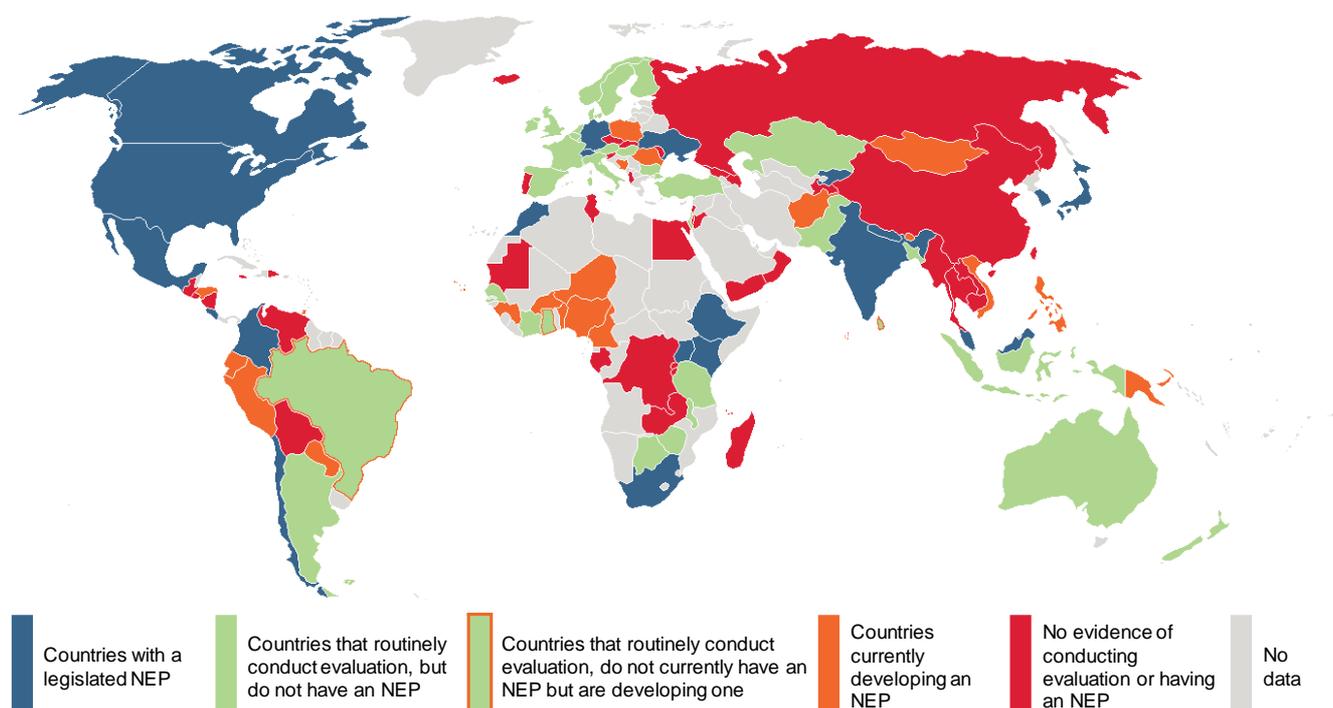
The largest portion (33%) of the 115 countries included in the study sample did not appear to have a policy or an indication that one was going to be developed at the time. Countries with a legislated evaluation policy were in the minority with 17%, while 30% of the countries routinely conducted evaluations without a formal policy. Finally, 20% of the 115 countries were in the process of developing a policy[104].

Rosenstein followed up on the 2013 study with a 2015 update. In this update, recognising that a legislated policy does not equate to use and institutionalisation, Rosenstein developed a more nuanced typology looking at whether the systems were formalised or not, where a formalised system is one where there is an official document or decree mandating or requiring the use of evaluation. A system that is not formalised is one where evaluation is routinely conducted without a policy or a system that does not have a policy *and* does not conduct evaluations. Within 'formalised' and 'not formalised', Rosenstein looked at whether the system was well established, evolving or developing:

- **Well established system** – functioning at a high level, evaluation practice is well established, evaluations are conducted and used, an evaluation culture exists;

- **Evolving –** a system was in place or revisions are being made to the system; and

- **Developing –** a policy and/or practice are being advocated for by actors outside the government, key policy-makers within the government, or international organisations and donors. [105]

Of the 59 countries in the 2015 sample, the bulk (30 countries) were defined as having developing evaluation systems; and the bulk of these (23 countries) were not formalised.[106] Of the countries that were identified to have evolving evaluation systems, there was an equal distribution between those that were formalised and those that were not. Finally, of the well-established systems, the majority (14 countries) had formalised systems

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[104] (Rosenstein, 2013)
[105] (Rosenstein, 2015)
[106] (Rosenstein, 2015)

with only Australia, the United Kingdom and Singapore having well-established systems that were not formalised.[107]

The findings of the 2015 study, as outlined in the map below (Figure 13), reiterates the view that formalisation does not equate to institutionalisation or more specifically, formalisation does not mean that a strong evaluation culture exists. Countries such as Uganda, for example, have a formalised policy, but a developing practice while countries such as Australia have a well-established practice of evaluation within their public sector. There was a formal evaluation policy in place in the 1980's but this fell away in the 1990's; thus, there is currently no formal evaluation system in place.

Figure 13: Status of National Evaluation Systems in 2015 as per Rosenstein[108]
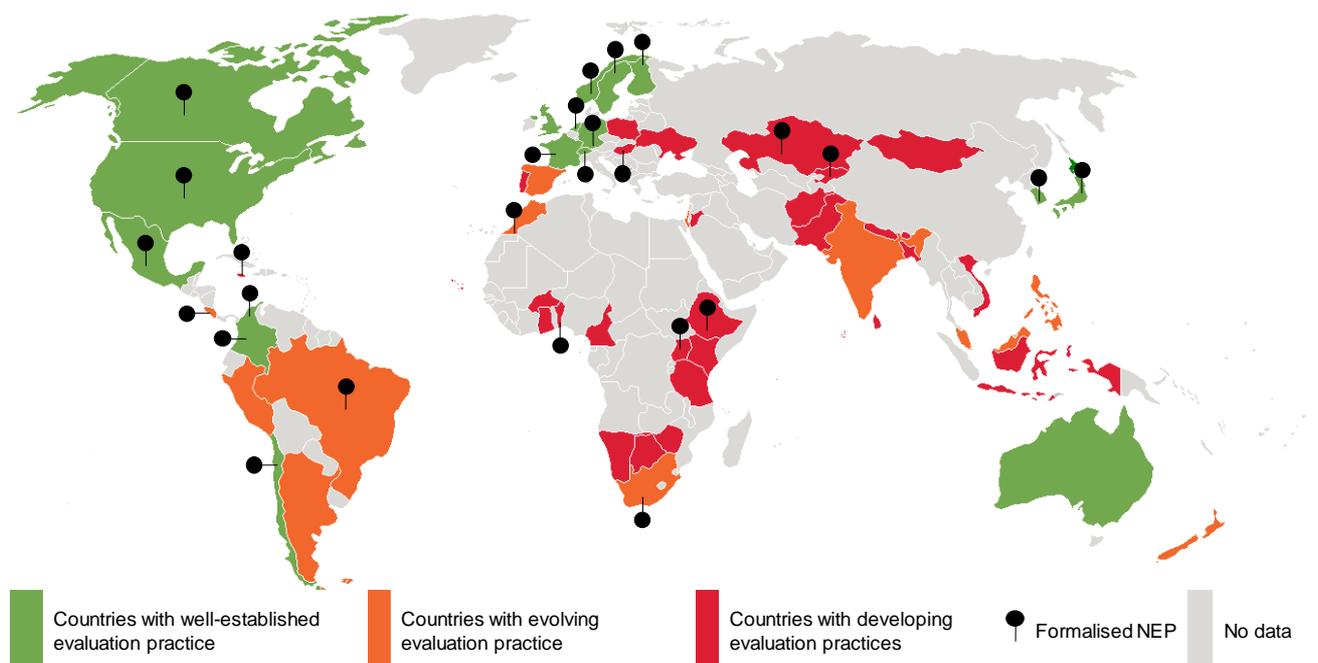
Source: (Rosenstein, 2015)

Part of the literature review looked to benchmark South Africa's NES specifically to the NESs of Benin, Uganda, Colombia and Mexico. This is done in the sub-section below, using the analysis framework outlined in *Section 2.1.1.2* above.

3.3   **National Approaches to Evaluation**

The purpose of this section is to provide the key findings from on the benchmarking exercise, which compared South Africa's NES to those in Benin, Colombia, Mexico and Uganda. The framework for this comparative analysis Is aligned with Holvoet & Renard's six characteristics of an NES – policy, methodology, organisation, capacity, quality and use, and participation of other actors. This framework is discussed in more detail in *Section 2.1.1.2* of this report. Within these characteristics, the countries are compared across the sub-components.[109]

There is a myriad of different types of evaluation systems – both in terms of their construction as well as their implementation. This diversity also transpires because the nature of the evaluation system can change as it

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[107] (Rosenstein, 2015)
[108] There have been further developments since Rosenstein's classification in 2015, specifically Benin and Uganda would likely classify as evolving, however; this literature review does not have more update to date country mapping other than the 2015 study. Further, while it would be useful, it was not the expectation of this assignment to update this mapping exercise.
[109] It is important to note that this analysis is primarily based on a review of available literature and documentation. There are therefore potentially elements of the evaluation systems of South Africa, Benin, Colombia, Mexico, and Uganda that are in fact in place, but have not been documented. There were additional limitations due to official documents being captured only in French (Benin) or Spanish (Colombia and Mexico). Effort was made to accommodate this, but this was not always possible.

evolves to meet the needs of its users, which can change over time. Based on the reviewed documentation, it is recognised that Colombia, Mexico and Benin have a distinct evaluation system while Uganda and South Africa's systems are guided by policy but not legislated.

There are many variations of legal frameworks (or 'national evaluation policy') implementation. Some countries (e.g. Benin, South Africa, Uganda, Uruguay) have a national evaluation policy; others lack a specific evaluation policy but do have national evaluation legislation. A number of countries do not yet have a national evaluation policy, but have proposals or draft policies that are waiting for legislation (e.g. Bhutan, Kenya, Niger). Many countries (e.g. Colombia, Malaysia, Mexico) formalise (or semi-formalise) the legal frameworks upon which evaluation functions are built or structured. Some countries (e.g. Costa Rica, South Africa), have a specific national evaluation system in place. There are also a number of countries which do not.

The paragraphs that follow provide a summarised comparative analysis of the national evaluation systems of South Africa, Benin, Uganda, Colombia and Mexico, while Annex 4 below provides a table that summarises the findings of the benchmarking of South Africa to Benin, Colombia, Mexico, and Uganda across the characteristics of policy, methodology, organisation, capacity, participation of other actors, and quality and use, in more detail.

The findings related to the experiences of the five countries highlights the different pathways to the development of national evaluation systems. Drawing on Figure 11 in *Section 3.1.3.*, Colombia's national evaluation system originated from conducting ad hoc studies, and from there, evaluation selection and design became more systematised.[110] On the other hand, Uganda and Mexico's national evaluation systems began in particular sectors, and scaled from there; and South Africa's began as a government-wide M&E initiative.[111] Like South Africa, Benin's system began as a government-wide system, but unlike South Africa, the development of the M&E system (and subsequent establishment of M&E units across the public sector) came about as a result of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, and the development of the country's first Poverty Reduction Strategy.[112]

The following points summarise the differences and similarities[113] between the national evaluation systems of South Africa, Benin, Uganda, Colombia and Mexico:

3.3.1.1   Policy

- **Evaluation Plan:** All five countries have an evaluation plan in place. The distinguishing feature is the legal status of the plan, and system. The plans of South Africa, Benin and Uganda are informed by policies and frameworks; while the evaluation systems of Colombia and Mexico are informed by a legal mandate.

- **Monitoring vs. Evaluation:** All of the countries reviewed made a distinction between monitoring and evaluation in their policies. It is however important to note that while the distinction is made in the policies, this does not necessarily carry through to practice. The literature reviewed noted that all five countries have traditionally placed an emphasis on monitoring over evaluation.

- **Autonomy and Impartiality:** Of the five countries, Mexico's approach to ensuring independence is the most emphasised with Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo (National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy) (CONEVAL) councillors being from academia, and therefore outside of the government. The evaluation systems for South Africa, Benin, Colombia and Uganda are all located within the executive. The benefit of this structure is that the system is housed outside the line ministries or other spheres of government which it might be evaluating. This adds to the autonomy of the system. In terms of autonomy, it is unclear how budgets are allocated in CONEVAL. In South Africa, Benin,

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[110] (Bamberger, et al., 2015)
[111] (Bamberger, et al., 2015)
[112] (Centre for Learning and Evaluation Results, 2012)
[113] It is important to note that this analysis is primarily based on a review of available literature and documentation. There are therefore potentially elements of the evaluation systems of South Africa, Benin, Colombia, Mexico, and Uganda that are in fact in place, but have not been documented. There were additional limitations due to official documents being captured only in French (Benin) or Spanish (Colombia and Mexico). Effort was made to accommodate this, but this was not always possible.

Colombia and Uganda however, the custodians of the system are allocated their own budgets. Budget constraints were however highlighted as a challenge in all five countries.

- **Feedback:** South Africa, Colombia and Mexico all have a clear reporting and dissemination structure, and strategy. Feedback is less established in Benin where only some of the completed evaluations are made public. The reporting processes for Uganda's system is unclear from the literature reviewed.

- **Alignment to Planning and Budgeting:** All five countries make allowances in their policies for the alignment of monitoring and evaluation, to planning and budgeting. The extent to which this translates into practice, is however highlighted as a constraint in literature related to Benin, Colombia, and South Africa.[114]

3.3.1.2 Methodology

- **Selection of Results Areas to be Evaluated, and Priority Setting:** In South Africa, Colombia, Mexico and Uganda [115] the evaluation systems are aligned to and prioritised according to the countries' development objectives. South Africa's system is most aligned to Colombia's in terms of process.

- **Methodologies Used:** All of the five countries reviewed outline what methodologies should be used in their M&E systems; while South Africa, Benin, Mexico and Uganda explicitly align these methodologies to the phases (activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts) in the theory of change. [116]

3.3.1.3 Organisation

- **Coordination and Oversight:** All of the countries reviewed have a central coordination and oversight structure in place. In South Africa, this structure is the Evaluation and Research Unit (ERU) of the DPME, while in Benin it is the National Evaluation Council and the Bureau of Public Policies. In Colombia, the coordinating structure is the Departamento Nacional de Planeacíon (National Planning Department) (DNP), and in Uganda it is the Office of the Prime Minister. Mexico is slightly different in that there is both CONEVAL which focuses on the social sectors, and SED which focuses more broadly.

- **Statistical Office:** South Africa, Benin, Mexico and Uganda[117] all reference their statistical agencies in their evaluation policies.

- **Line Ministries:** Line ministries play varying roles across the evaluation systems of South Africa, Colombia, Mexico and Uganda.[118] A key constant across these countries' policies is however the central roles played by the ministries of finance in aligning the system to budgeting.

- **Decentralised Levels:** In terms of decentralised levels, the role of Local Government in Uganda is, from a policy perspective, best defined with regards to evaluation. Local Government produces local government development plans and annual budget frameworks, ensures coordination of monitoring activities at the district and lower local government levels, provides data to the ministries, departments and agencies, and ensures the local planning units are staffed. The extent to which this occurs in practice is not clear from the literature. In South Africa, the NES is coordinated at the provincial level through the Offices of the Premier. The literature reviewed however notes that the extent to which lower levels of government are integrated into the NES in practice, is a key weakness of the system.

3.3.1.4 Capacity

- **Capacity Building Plans:** In South Africa and Colombia, shortcomings in capacity are acknowledged and used to inform training plans. The literature on Colombia, and an interview conducted with a Colombian official highlighted that because the system was legislated first, SINERGIA had to "catch up" in terms of

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[114] The extent to which monitoring and evaluation are effectively integrated into practice in Uganda and Mexico, is unclear from the literature reviewed.
[115] The process by which evaluation focus areas are selected is unclear from the literature reviewed on Benin.
[116] An additional element of methodology, is data collection. This is however not included in this summary because the data collection sub-component was difficult to assess through the literature reviewed. Most of the countries assessed highlight a link to nationally collected information, but not how other data should be collected, or the type that needs to be collected. It would seem that this is decided on based on the evaluation in question and not the system as a whole.
[117] The extent to which Colombia's statistics office is aligned to the M&E system is unclear from the literature reviewed.
[118] The role of Benin's line ministries in unclear from the literature reviewed.

capacity building. It was between 1998 and 2002, that the system was particularly over-extended. In both Benin and Uganda, evaluation capacity in the evaluation system appears to be more constrained than in South Africa and Colombia, despite a number of initiatives having been undertaken. Finally, there does not appear to be a systematised capacity building plan in place in Mexico.

3.3.1.5   *Participation of Other Actors*

- **Parliament:** The role of parliament across the countries reviewed appears to be of an oversight nature where annual reports are presented to parliament. The extent to which parliament uses evaluation in findings, or the mechanisms for doing so, is unclear across all five countries.

- **Academia:** Historically the formalisation of evaluation has been developed in an academic setting, as a result, academic institutions, in all five countries, play an important learning function in the development of evaluation culture and practices especially at a government level.

- **Civil Society:** Civil society plays a fairly active role in the evaluation systems of South Africa, Benin, Colombia, Mexico and Uganda. In South Africa, civil society plays more of a learning function, while in Colombia, this function is more closely related to accountability. In Uganda, the role of civil society is more closely aligned to the role of civil society in Colombia.

- **Media:** The role of media in evaluation systems, appears to be most developed / formalised in Mexico where the media is active in publishing the findings of evaluations, and civil society research institutions focus on increasing accountability in the system. The extent to which the media plays a role in the other four countries, is unclear as it is not mentioned in policy documentation.

- **Donors:** The role played by donors in Colombia and Mexico, is unclear from the literature reviewed. In Benin, donors play a supporting role, initially the evaluation system was set up to fulfil donor needs. As the prominence of evaluation grew the local capabilities grew and the donor role changed from conducting evaluations to supporting the process through funding. In South Africa, this role appears to be restricted to funding and capacity building, while in Uganda, donors are seen as a demand side stakeholder in that they design, commission and fund evaluations. The extent to which the participation of donors is integrated into the evaluation system appears to be low for both Uganda and South Africa.

- **Private Sector:** The role of the private sector within the evaluation systems in these countries varies considerably. In South Africa, the role of external evaluators is critical to the objectivity of the evaluation and its findings. This is the opposite in Uganda where external evaluators are viewed with a degree of distrust.[119]

3.3.1.6   *Quality and Use*

- **Effective Use of Evaluation and Internal Usage of Findings:** In South Africa, the focus is on creating an enabling environment for evaluation (in the form of training, guidelines, improvement plans and quality assessments) in an attempt to enhance use. In Benin, no clear process for use appears to be in place, but reports are developed for ministers and other relevant stakeholders. Similarly, in Colombia results are presented to Congress and then made public in SINERGIA's annual report. Some evaluations are followed by improvement plans, these are periodically updated ensure programmes achieve greater impact. In Uganda, while the Policy on M&E in the Public-Sector highlights that the purpose of the evaluation system is "to produce evidence of performance and results which can inform public policy", actual utilisation of evaluation outputs is low. Finally, in Mexico the use of evaluation findings is said to be historically low.

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[119] The role of the private sector in Benin, Colombia and Mexico was unclear from the literature available.

4   SOUTH AFRICA'S NATIONAL EVALUATION SYSTEM

4.1   The Evolution of South Africa's NES

Section 1.1. of this report provided a brief overview of South Africa's NES which focused on the timeline of the development of the NES. This section takes a more detailed view of the NES, outlining the system from its conception to present. There were two notable milestones in the establishment of the NES. The first phase related to the development of the GWM&E system, while the second related to the establishment of the DPME, and the NES – as shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Development of NES

Phase	Description
The development of the GWM&ES System	• 1994 – 2005: M&E was not formally coordinated and driven by the Presidency, DPSA, National Treasury and StatsSA. Evaluation was done on an ad hoc basis and not informed to a systematic plan for evaluation. • In 2007, the Policy Framework for the Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System was developed. [120]
The establishment of the NEPF, DPME and South Africa's NES	• The NEPF, stipulated that the Presidency would be responsible for the development of an M&E framework • In 2009, DPME was established to improve government performance by emphasising M&E • In 2011, DPME conducted a study tour to Mexico, Colombia, Uganda and Benin. The product of this tour came in the form of contributions to the NEPF and the establishment of the NES

Sources: (DPME, 2011) and (Goldman, et al., 2015)

4.1.1   The GWM&E System

In the years 1994 to 2005, M&E in the South African government was not formally coordinated and was driven primarily by departments at the centre of the government (COG) which included the Presidency, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), National Treasury, and Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) – the national statistics agency. It is important to note that DPSA is charged with structures, staffing and administrative systems in the government. A description of the concept of the COG is expanded on in Box 1 below.

As a result of the ad hoc manner in which evaluation was done, the evaluation practice in the public sector emerged in different ways and was not informed by policy[121]. This changed in 2007 with the introduction of the policy framework for the GWM&E system.[122]

Box 1: Centre of Government

The centre of government refers to the institution or group of institutions that support a country's chief executive (president or prime minister) in leading the political and technical coordination of the government's actions, strategic planning of the government's program, monitoring of performance, and communication of the government's decisions and achievements[123]. In South Africa, there are a number of departments and institutions at the centre of government which are responsible for leading the process of improving the efficiency, effectiveness and development orientation of the public service as a whole. These include the Presidency, the Premiers' Offices, the Department of Public Service and Administration, National Treasury, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, the Public Service Commission, and the Department of Public Works.[124]

The aim of the GWM&E system was to provide an integrated framework of standards, principles and practices that can be used as a reference point for all government departments in all matters relating to M&E. It also intended to serve as a central information system that draws from other government systems to deliver useful M&E information and products. The initial adoption of the GWM&E system was driven by the need for the government to strengthen its effectiveness and the acknowledgement that M&E is a vehicle for improving policy and programme effectiveness.[125] The GWM&E system focused on three areas of work, namely:

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[120] (The Presidency, 2007)
[121] (Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results in Anglophone Africa, 2012)
[122] (Goldman & Mathe, 2014)
[123] (Alessandro, et al., 2913)
[124] (DPME, 2010)
[125] (Centre for Learning and Evaluation Results, 2012)

- **Programme performance information** which is derived from administrative records, departmental datasets and strongly linked to departmental budgets;

- **Social, economic and demographic statistics**, derived mainly from Statistics South Africa's national census and surveys as well as departmental surveys; and

- Evaluations and research studies.[126]

A number of frameworks[127] were developed to support the GWM&E system including:

- Framework for Managing Performance information to complement (2007);

- South African Statistical Quality Framework (2008);

- Improving Government Performance: Our approach policy document (2009); and,

- National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF) (2011). The NEPF is critical for the development of the NES, and is elaborated on in *Section 4.1.2* below.

4.1.2   The NEPF

Prior to 2011, some government departments were conducting evaluations but with no consistency in approaches to evaluation. There was no central repository for evaluations and the focus was primarily on monitoring rather than evaluation.[128] In 2011, DPME, with the assistance of the Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD)[129], consulted other government departments in order to better understand their respective experiences undertaking evaluations. The PSPPD's core purpose is to improve evidence-based policy-making (EBPM) on poverty and inequality at national and provincial levels through its research grants and learning and capacity-development activities such as training events, workshops, conferences, and study tours.

Following this consultation process, DPME conducted a study tour to Mexico, Colombia and the United States of America to learn from others at different stages of implementation and institutionalisation of their NESs (this was discussed in *Section 1.1*).[130] The product of the study tour was a contribution to the NEPF and the NES setting out four clear purposes that justified the need for evaluations. These are: 1. improving decision making; 2. improving performance; 3. generating knowledge; and 4. ensuring accountability.[131] The details of the NEPF are set out in *Section **Error! Reference source not found.*** below. The NEPF and the work done to develop it formed the basis of the NES theory of change.

The NEPF is divided into three parts, as shown in Figure 14 below – the introduction, undertaking evaluation, and how do we make this happen? Within these parts, are various provisions and guidelines. These are discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

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[126] (Centre for Learning and Evaluation Results, 2012)
[127] These are policy frameworks and not legislation. The extent to which legislation is required is discussed in the conclusions of this report.
[128] (Centre for Learning and Evaluation Results, 2012)
[129] The PSPPD, is a research and capacity building programme located in the DPME and is part of the larger European Union-funded National Development Policy Support Programme (NDPSP), which seeks to support the implementation of the country's Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) and the accompanying outcomes-based approach[129].
[130] (Goldman, et al., 2015, pp. 1-9)
[131] (DPME, 2011)

Figure 14: Overview of the NEPF
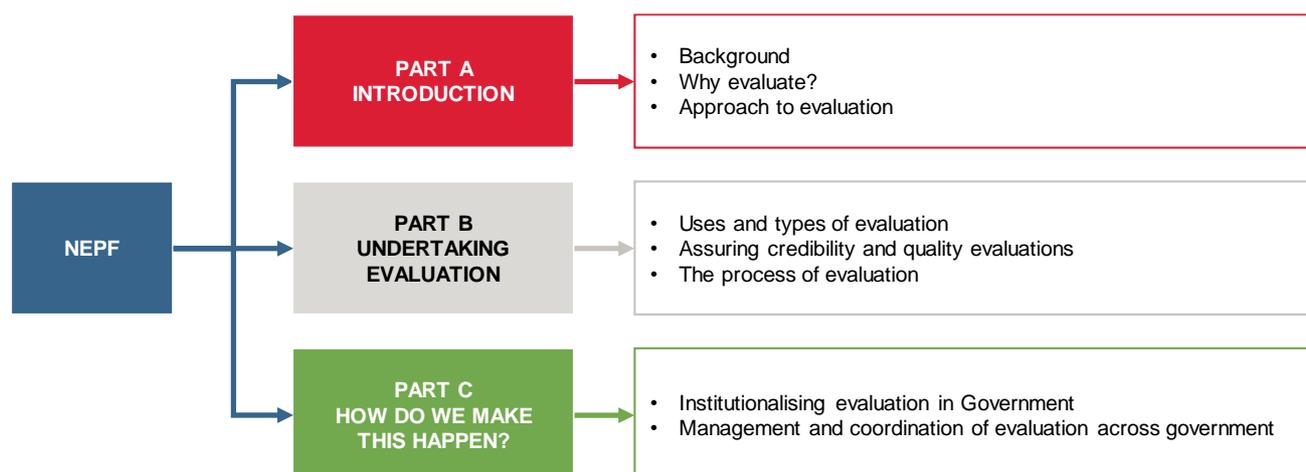
4.1.2.1   Introduction

Part A of the NEPF outlines the legal bases for the policy framework. These include Section 195 of the Constitution which outlines the principles of public administration[132], the Public Finance Management Act (1999), the Public Service Act (1994 as amended by Act 30 of 2007), and the Municipal Finance Management Act.[133]

The NEPF set out the approach to establishing South Africa's NES. The NEPF "provides a common language and minimum standards and promotes utilisation of evaluation findings to improve performance."[134] From an operational perspective, the NEPF sought to:

1.   Facilitate the institutionalisation and use of evaluation;

2.   Develop common terminology for evaluation in the government;

3.   Clarify the role of evaluations;

4.   Frame the evaluation function in terms of its scope, institutionalisation, standards, process requirements, skill requirements, governance, financing and oversight;

5.   Clarify distinctions in the roles and responsibilities of public institutions in relation to evaluation;

6.   Contribute to the improved quality of evaluations within government; and,

7.   Increase the use of evaluations. [135]

In addition to outlining its objectives, the introduction of the NEPF provides the rationale for evaluation (that evaluations are done in order to improve performance, accountability, knowledge generation, and decision-making) and defines evaluation.[136] The NEPF defines evaluation as "the systematic collection and objective analysis of evidence on public policies, programmes, projects, functions, and organisations to assess issues such as relevance, performance (effectiveness and efficiency), value for money, impact and sustainability, and to recommend ways forward."[137]

4.1.2.2   Undertaking Evaluation

Part B of the NEPF outlines a number of factors that must be considered when planning evaluations, these include the object of the evaluation, the primary intended user of the evaluation, the purpose of the evaluation,

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[132] 1. Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted, 2. Public administration must be development-oriented, 3. Public administration must be accountable 4. Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information (DPME, 2011).
[133] (DPME, 2011)
[134] (DPME, 2011, p. iii)
[135] (DPME, 2011)
[136] (DPME, 2011)
[137] (DPME, 2011, p. vii)

the approach and methodology, the type of questions being asked, the type of evaluation needed, and the priority interventions to focus on.[138]

Evaluation Types

The NEPF outlines six types of evaluations categorised according to the core questions being asked in relation to a results-based management framework[139]. The purpose of this approach was to highlight that evaluations should be done throughout the lifecycle of an intervention and to develop a common language and standard procedures for each type of evaluation.[140] The different types of evaluations were selected based on the purpose and questions of the evaluation, ensuring that there are appropriate evaluation types for the different stage of implementation of policies, programmes and projects. These evaluation types are summarised in Figure 15 drawing on the definitions provided in the NEPF.[141]

Figure 15: Types of Evaluations Outlined in the NEPF
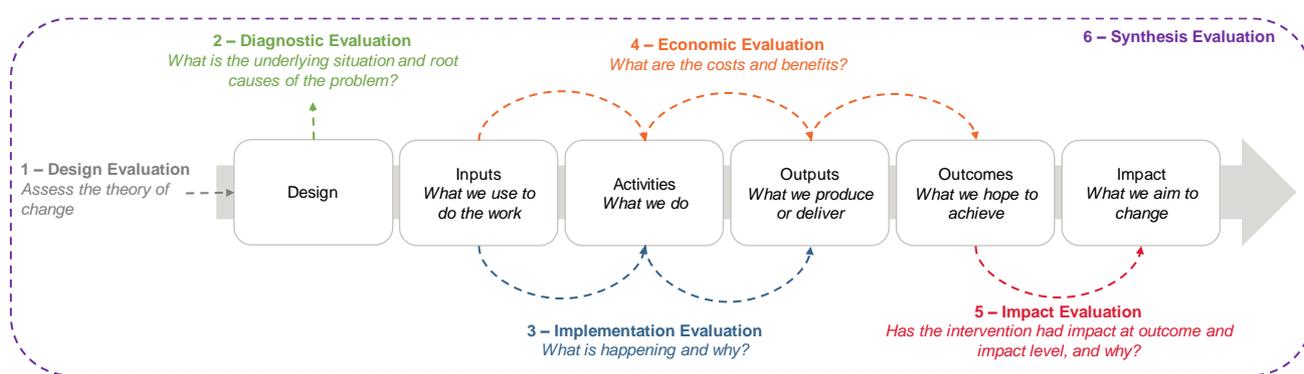
Source: (DPME, 2011)

The NEPF further outlines when the timing for these evaluation types: Diagnostic evaluations should happen "at key stages prior to design or planning"; design evaluations should happen "after an intervention has been designed, in [the] first year, and possibly later"; implementation evaluations should happen "once or several times during the intervention"; impact evaluations should be "designed early on, baseline implemented early, impact checked at different stages"; economic evaluations can happen "at any stage"; and evaluation synthesis should happen "after a number of evaluations are completed".[142]

Prioritisation of Evaluations

In terms of the selection of evaluations to be undertaken, the NEPF notes that programmes and projects should be evaluated every five years. The NEPF recognises that in practice this may not be possible and therefore outlines guidance on prioritising evaluations. Priority should be given to:

- Large evaluations, where the intervention costs more than R500 million or where a large portion of the population is affected by the intervention, and the intervention has not had a major evaluation in five years;

- Interventions that are part of the health, education, crime, rural development, and employment outcomes of the NDP;

- Interventions that are of strategic importance, and have not been evaluated in three years;

- Interventions that are innovative – where innovation can be learned from, for other interventions;

- Interventions that have a significant public interest;

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[138] (DPME, 2011)
[139] (DPME, 2011)
[140] (DPME, 2011)
[141] (DPME, 2017b)
[142] (DPME, 2011, p. 9)

- Interventions where there are concerns around the design of the intervention; and

- Interventions where decisions need to be made about the continuation of the programme or project.[143]

Quality and Credibility

The NEPF highlights that in order for evaluations to be used, evaluations must be relevant and timely, evaluations must be unbiased and inclusive, and the evaluations must be valid and rigorous.[144] In looking at quality and credibility, the NEPF notes that "there are tensions between the degree of ownership (highest if conducted internally) and the degree of independence and external credibility (highest if external to the organisation and external to the government)".[145] In exploring this topic, the NEPF distinguishes between internally initiated, internally undertake, externally initiated, and externally undertaken, as shown in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Initiation and Undertaking of Evaluations

Undertaken By	Initiated By	
	Internally Initiated	**Externally Initiated**
Undertaken Internally to the Institution of Study	Undertaken within the institution either by staff of the programme in question, or other relatively independent staff for timely feedback or learning.	Evaluation initiated by external body e.g. Presidency, and institution asked to do internal evaluation to improve performance.
Undertaken Externally	External service provider or government institution to ensure credibility e.g. impact or implementation evaluation of programme.	Evaluation initiated by external body e.g. Presidency or the Public Service Commission (PSC), and commissioned to external service provider or government institution.
Undertaken Jointly	Undertaken within the institution, but facilitated by external expertise. This is to improve participation in the evaluation, while drawing upon important expertise that may be unavailable within the institution to increase the credibility of the evaluation. This option can be expensive.	Evaluation initiated by external body e.g. Presidency, PSC, or outcomes forum interested in ensuring coherence in evaluation of a new or complicated programme.

Source: (DPME, 2011, p. 11)

Evaluation Process

Part B of the NEPF concludes by providing an overview of the evaluation process, from pre-design and design, to evaluation follow-up. The steps of the evaluation process, as conceptualised in the NEPF, are summarised in Figure 16 below.

Figure 16: Overview of the Evaluation Process

Phase	Activities
Pre-Design and Design	● Preparation ● Development terms of reference ● Selecting service providers ● Data quality and availability
Implementation	● Inception phase ● Advisory / steering group ● Management and support
Peer Review and Validation Process	
Recommendations and Management Response	● Evaluators draw up recommendations ● Users analyse findings and recommendations ● Management responds to the findings and recommendations
Communicating Results[146]	● Receive long and summarised evaluation report ● Develop dissemination strategy ● Ensure that evaluations are posted on department and DPME websites ● Evaluation copies sent to partners

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[143] (DPME, 2011)
[144] (DPME, 2011)
[145] (DPME, 2011, p. 11)
[146] A portion of evaluation budget should be retained for communication.

Follow-Up[147]	● Improvement plan prepared ● Departments undertake necessary actions ● Implementation of improvement plan is monitored DPME reports to ● Cabinet and OTPs ● National Treasury utilises findings and recommendations as evidence-based inputs into the budget process ● Departments use findings in subsequent planning and budgeting processes

Source: (DPME, 2011)

4.1.2.3   *How do we make this Happen?*

Part C of the NEPF focuses on institutionalising evaluation in Government, and management and coordination of evaluation across Government. These are summarised in the paragraphs that follow.

Institutionalising Evaluation in Government

The NEPF lays out the evaluation plans, the roles of different stakeholders, planning and budgeting for evaluation, optimising limited capacity, and standardised systems as key tenets of institutionalisation.

The NEPF notes that rolling three-year national evaluation plans will be developed by DPME, and approved Cabinet, these plans will identify the minimum evaluations to be carried out based on the prioritisation criteria set out above. The NEPF further notes that OTPs should draw up similar plans at the provincial level, and the provincial and national departments can develop their own plans.

The roles of departments, DPME, OTPs, National Treasury, DPSA, PSC, the Auditor General, DCOGTA, the National School of Government[148], Universities and SAMEA are explained in the NEPF[149]:

- **Departments and public institutions** are responsible for incorporating evaluations into project management functions as a tool for continuous performance improvement. This is done by using evaluation findings to inform planning and budgeting. The level of involvement of line departments in the NES is open to the discretion of the line departments. This approach is referred to as the internally-initiated, or voluntary approach. This is elaborated on in Box 3 below.

- **DPME** is the custodian of the evaluation function in government. It is responsible for standard setting, pooling of knowledge, quality assurance, capacity building and technical assistance, ensuring that evaluation adds value and that its use is promoted within government. The DPME is central to the NEPF, and the NES. Box 2 below elaborates on the DPME's role and origins.

- **OTPs** play a similar role to DPME at the provincial level;

- **National Treasury's** role is to ensure that there is value for money during its budget allocation. Therefore, plans and budgets need to be informed by evidence (including evaluation) and cost-effectiveness measures need to be taken.

- **DPSA's** role is to see that evaluation findings that raise concerns about performance or the structure of public service are addressed and evaluation is budgeted for;

- **PSC** has a specific and independent role in the evaluation process. The PSC reports directly to Parliament, but also acts a source of expertise in building the quality of evaluation and improving the performance of the government.

- **The Auditor General** is an independent body. Its role in the system is important as it spurs improved performance within government.

- **NSG** is responsible for M&E capacity development programme across the government;

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[147] A portion of evaluation budget should be retained for communication.
[148] Formerly PALAMA.
[149] (DPME, 2011)

- **Universities** are important in that they provide tertiary M&E skills needed to support the NES. Universities also provide sectoral expertise, and expertise on research methodologies and research process.

- **SAMEA** supports the development of systems and capacities. SAMEA is an important forum for knowledge sharing and learning.[150]

Box 2: The Role of DPME

In 2009, the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME, and now called Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation) was created with the intention of improving government performance by emphasising M&E. When the GWM&E System framework was developed in 2007, it stipulated that the Presidency would be responsible for the development of an evaluation framework, or system which would be accompanied by guidelines and support materials, to facilitate the overall implementation of evaluation systems across the three spheres of government. This leadership role played by the Presidency was aligned to the provisions of the GWM&E system.

The core functions of DPME in the context of the NES, are:
- Thought leadership with a focus on a utilisation-focused approach, the development of evaluation champions, the establishment of a common language for evaluation, and the development of standards and competences;
- Technical support with a focus on the provision of a range of guidelines, the development of courses and training for M&E staff / programme managers, systems support from DPME staff, quality assurance systems development, and the establishment and management of an evaluation repository; and
- Financial support in partnering with national departments to co-fund NEP evaluations. [151]

Box 3: The Internally-Initiated Approach

Currently, departmental and provincial engagement with the NES is based on an internally-initiated approach rather than an externally-imposed approach. The DPME, originally preferred and emphasised the internally-initiated approach to building the evaluation culture in South Africa because it was believed to hold the greatest promise for building ownership, ensuring successful evaluations, which are utilisation-focused and appreciated as a mechanism for learning.

The internally-initiated approach implies that departments are encouraged to opt in to the NES but are not a part of the system by default. The reasoning behind this was the DPME's impression that departments prepared to opt in are more likely to be engaged in the evaluation process and make use of recommendations from evaluations. In order to preserve independence, the NEPF promotes the use of external service providers in conjunction with a steering committee of "notable custodian departments" [152] to oversee the evaluation process.

In terms of planning and budgeting for evaluation, the NEPF acknowledges that "evaluations will not be realised unless they are budgeted for".[153] The NEPF notes that evaluations cost between 0.1% and 5%[154] of a programme or project's budget, and that evaluation costs should be considered in annual budgets and medium-term expenditure frameworks (MTEF).[155]

The NEPF outlines provisions for DPME to develop standardised systems and tools; which include standardised terms of references for different types of evaluations; standard contract formats; models for programme design; guidance on the rules of operation for programmes; standardised evaluation processes; guidelines for improvement plans; using a national panel of evaluators (possibly with standardised rates); and warehousing and storage of the data generated by evaluations.

The NEPF recognises that there is limited evaluation capacity within the government, and externally. The NEPF therefore suggests that in order to address this:

- Technical capacity needs to be developed in the DPME and the OTPs so that they are able to support departments;

- Evaluations that are outsourced, will be done to through an accredited panel;

- Targeted short courses need to be conducted by the NSG, universities and private consultants;

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[150] (DPME, 2011, pp. 15-16)
[151] (DPME, 2016)
[152] (DPME, 2016)
[153] (DPME, 2011, p. 16)
[154] The cost of an evaluation also depends on the complexity of an evaluation (DPME, 2011).
[155] (DPME, 2011)

- A community of practice must be developed drawing on SAMEA and an M&E learning network; and

- International partnerships are being built with countries such as Colombia and Mexico, and international organisations such as 3ie and the World Bank.[156]

Management Coordination of Evaluation Across Government

In managing coordination of evaluation across Government, the NEPF notes the role of the Evaluation Technical Working Group (ETWG), the implementation of the policy framework, quality assurance, and monitoring of evaluations.

The ETWG was established to "support DPME in taking forward evaluation nationally" and includes departments with evaluation capacity, the PSC, DPSA, National Treasury and the Auditor General.[157]. Furthermore, the NEPF notes that "this policy framework requires a major upscaling of the use of evaluations, which will have to be addressed in phases."[158] With this in mind, the NEPF sets out a timeline for implementation which is summarised in

Table 12 below.

Table 12: Forecasted Implementation of the NEPF

Policy and Systems	Year	Implementation
• Evaluation Policy Framework adopted by Cabinet • Three-year and annual evaluation plan developed • Practice notes developed on key elements including TORs, contracting, and the different evaluation types • Evaluation unit created in DPME • NSG courses designed to support this approach to evaluation • Schedule of competencies for evaluators developed • Panel of evaluators created in DPME • Support agreed with international partners • Minimum standards agreed by Cabinet for programme and project plans	2011/12	• 4 evaluations commissioned which test out these systems • Audit completed of all evaluations in the public sector from 2006 • All evaluations hosted on DPME website • Evaluation Technical Working Group starts operation • Dissemination process for this Policy Framework • Capacity development process for evaluation designed
• Systems revised based on experience • System of standards for evaluators developed • Discussions with universities to take on this approach to evaluation	2012/13	• 10 evaluations undertaken or started using standard procedures, of which at least two are impact evaluations • At least 60% of recommendations from evaluations implemented • Training of at least 200 people using the NSG materials • University M&E courses adapted
• System revised based on experience	2013/14	• 15 evaluations undertaken or started using standard procedures, of which at least four are impact evaluations • At least 70% of recommendations from evaluations implemented • Training of at least 500 people using NSG materials
• System revised based on experience	2014/15	• 20 evaluations undertaken or started using standard procedures, of which at least five are impact evaluations • At least 75% of recommendations implemented • Training of at least 500 people using NSG materials • All university public administration courses use adapted materials • Other university courses use adapted materials (e.g. development studies) • Evaluation of the impact of evaluations carried out to date.

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[156] (DPME, 2011, p. 17)
[157] (DPME, 2011, p. 17)
[158] (DPME, 2011, p. 17)

Source: (DPME, 2011, p. 18)

Related to quality assurance, the NEPF notes that the DPME will be involved in evaluations in the NEPs; develop a national panel of evaluators; ensure that competences and standards are developed, and applied, for evaluators; give guidance by standardising procedures; and do meta-evaluations of evaluations.[159] The NEPF further notes that the "DPME will monitor progress with evaluations and will ensure that evaluations are carried out to measure the impact of evaluation itself" and that DPME will report evaluation findings to Cabinet.[160]

The NEPF established a number of milestones outlining when various components and activities were expected to be implemented. Positively, Table 13 below shows that the NEPF has implemented most of the activities outlined in the NEPF. The NES has therefore made great sides, in a short period of time.

Of the planned activities, the areas where these have not been implemented largely relate to training (where the NSG was originally envisioned to run the process); and lower-than-expected levels of improvement plan uptake in terms of monitoring and reporting which means that the evaluation team is unable to assess the extent to which recommendations have been used. There is therefore a need for DPME to focus on enhancing the system for tracking intervention improvement, as a result of evaluations.

Table 13: Status of Selected Planned Activities in the NEPF

Year	Status	Planned Activity
2011/12	🟢	Evaluation Policy Framework adopted by Cabinet
	🟢	Practice notes developed on key elements of the NES
	🟢	Evaluation unit created in the NES
	🟢	NEP developed
	🔴	NSG courses designed to support this approach to evaluation *(At the system's inception, CLEAR AA provided the training. This training has been moved to the NSG this year)*
	🟠	Schedule of competencies for evaluators developed[161]
	🟢	Panel of evaluators created in DPME *(This panel is no longer in use, and instead evaluations go through an open tender process)*
	🟢	Support agreed with international partners
	🟢	Minimum standards agreed by Cabinet for programme and project plans[162]
	🟠	Audit completed of all evaluations in the public sector, and all evaluations hosted on the DPME website *(The audit was completed in 2011. This activity has been completed for a large number of evaluations in the public sector, but not all as DPME relied on other departments and provinces for the information which was not always forthcoming)*
	🟢	ETWG starts operation
	🟢	Capacity development process designed
2012/13	🟢	System of standards for evaluators developed
	🟢	NEP in place and implemented
	🟠	At least 60% of recommendations from evaluations implemented *(Between March 2013 and September 2015, as part of DFID's SPME programme, DPME achieved its targets related to 'Percentage of recommendations by FLSD, CBM & evaluations implemented". Overall however, more systematic tracking of improvement plans is required to accurately assess the extent to which recommendations are implemented.*
	🟢	Training of at least 200 people using the NSG materials *(This was achieved, but not through the NSG)*
2013/14	🟠	At least 70% of recommendations from evaluations implemented *(An accurate assessment of the progress made in this regard requires improved tracking of improvement plans)*
	🟢	NEP in place and implemented

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[159] (DPME, 2011)
[160] (DPME, 2011, p. 19)
[161] A schedule of competences for evaluators was developed in August 2012, made public and used for terms of reference and recruitment. This was not, at the time agreed with DPSA. Work is currently being done with DPSA to agree on evaluation competences.
[162] Evaluation standards were developed and made public in August 2012. These standards were used to develop the quality assurance system.

Year	Status	Planned Activity
	🟠	Training of at least 500 people using NSG materials *(363 people were training and the target was later revised downwards to 200. The training was not conducted by NSG)*
2014/15	🟢	NEP in place and implemented
	🟠	At least 75% of recommendations implemented *(An accurate assessment of the progress made in this regard requires improved tracking of improvement plans)*
	🟠	Evaluation of the impact of evaluations carried out to date *(Underway)*

South Africa's NES has evolved significantly since its formal inception in 2011, through the NEPF. Since its establishment, 69 evaluations identified in the NEPs, of which eight were cancelled. In addition to NEPs, provinces, through the OTPs, develop Provincial Evaluation Plans (PEPs), and departments develop Departmental Evaluation Plans (DEPs). There are currently eight PEPs, and approximately 68 DEPs[163] at the level of provincial and national departments.

4.1.3 NES Logframe and Theory of Change

South Africa's NES has evolved significantly since its formal inception in 2011, through the NEPF. A key consideration in this evaluation is to determine what the next iteration of the NES should look like. In order to do this, the evaluation team, in collaboration with the NES Evaluation steering committee, drafted the NES theory of change.

The evaluation team were provided the original Evaluation and Research Unit's (ERU) Operational Logframe (2010). The rationale for this starting point was the central role that the ERU has in the development and stewardship of the NES. The ERU logframe consists of eight outputs, one outcome and one impact as shown in Figure 17.

Figure 17: ERU Logframe

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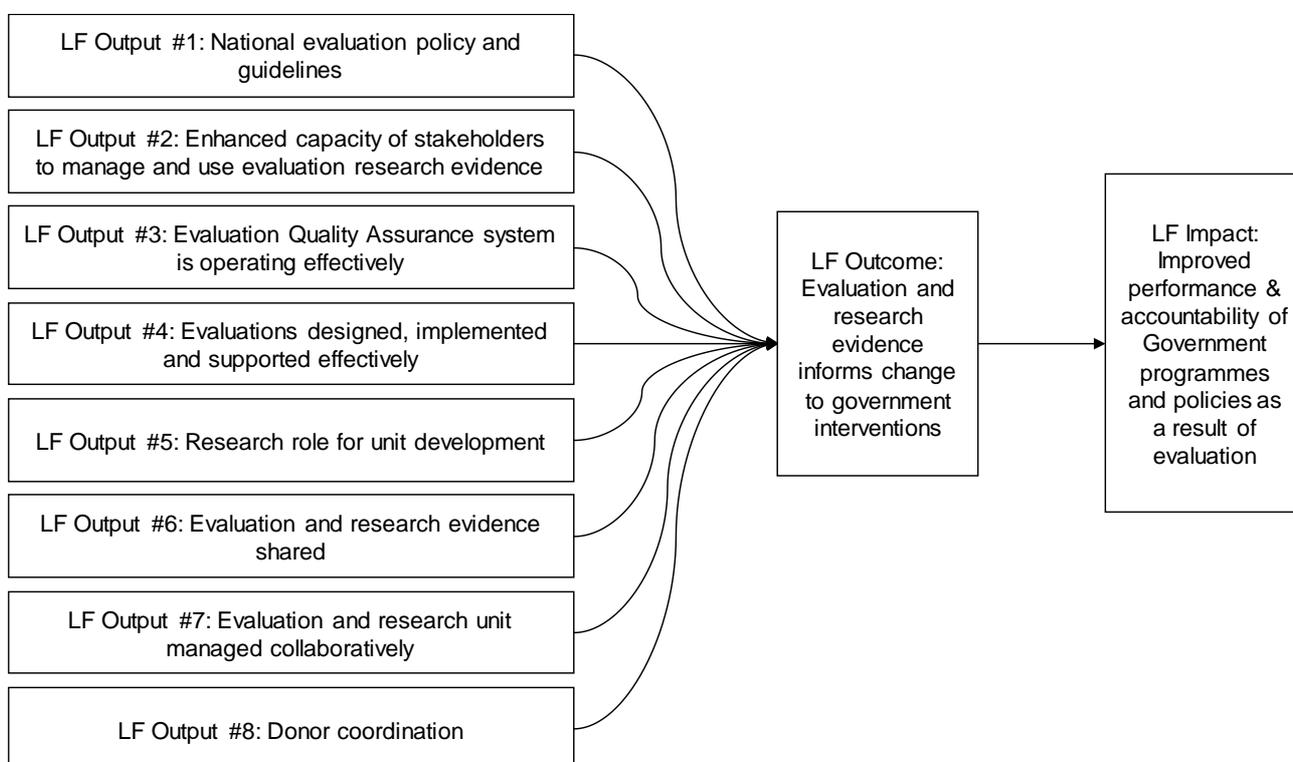
[163] This figure is based on the number of departments that received a Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) score of 3 and over. A score of 3 and over signifies that a department has a DEP.

The process of analysing the NES' theory of change started with reorganising the ERU's outputs to identify how the components might influence each other, and be prioritised in a diagram that flows from inputs to outputs to outcomes.

The initial workshop with the ERU mapped out significantly more elements to the NES than the outputs and outcomes articulated in the logframe. These were grouped into categories of components (for example, activities, outputs, short and long-term outcomes and impacts). The result was a first articulation of the theory of change which was brought to the second workshop for consultation with the wider group of stakeholders.

The second workshop, with the wider consultation group, brought additional perspectives to the process, particularly highlighting the different stakeholders at different levels in the NES and different contexts of the various stakeholders of the NES. Very practical considerations, including the facilitating and hindering factors to the NES, were also discussed.

The first theory of change was reviewed by the evaluation reference group and feedback was incorporated. On the recommendation of the evaluation's expert advisory panel, a second theory of change represented a 'systems' approach to thinking about the NES: namely the push and pull factors (supply and demand) and the management of the NES, and how these three elements make up the NES and influence each other within the NES. All the feedback was then incorporated in the final version which is represented in Figure 18 below. The theory of change illustrated below maps out the logical pathways of how the system intendeds to achieve impact. Contained within the diagram but not visually represented are the assumptions that inform the links between levels of the theory of change and contextual factors that are likely to affect achievement of the theory of change.

The contextual issues and risks that currently exist in the NES environment are summarised in Table 14 below.

Table 14: Assumptions and Contextual Risks in the NES Theory of Change

Assumptions	Contextual Risks
- Evaluation findings will influence decision making with respect to policy, programmes and implementation-level decisions; - Changes implemented as a result of evaluation recommendations, will improve programmes; - Evaluation activities at departmental and provincial level align with the processes outlined in the NEPF - Evaluations are credible, their findings and recommendations are accepted; - High level political buy-in is gained and remains consistent; - Incentives to participate in the NES outweighs disincentives; - Increased government and public accountability increases pressure on departments to improve performance; - Technical, financial and human resources available for building capacity; and - The system can be defined and delineated.	- Different levels of expertise and history of implementing evaluations among provinces and departments; - Multiple layers and levels of compliance and reporting, and ambiguity regarding where evaluation fits; - Evaluation is only one of the multiple public management tools used by the public service, and the various tools are not streamlined; - There are disincentives for stakeholders to undertake evaluations

Figure 18: NES Theory of Change (as at the outset of the evaluation)
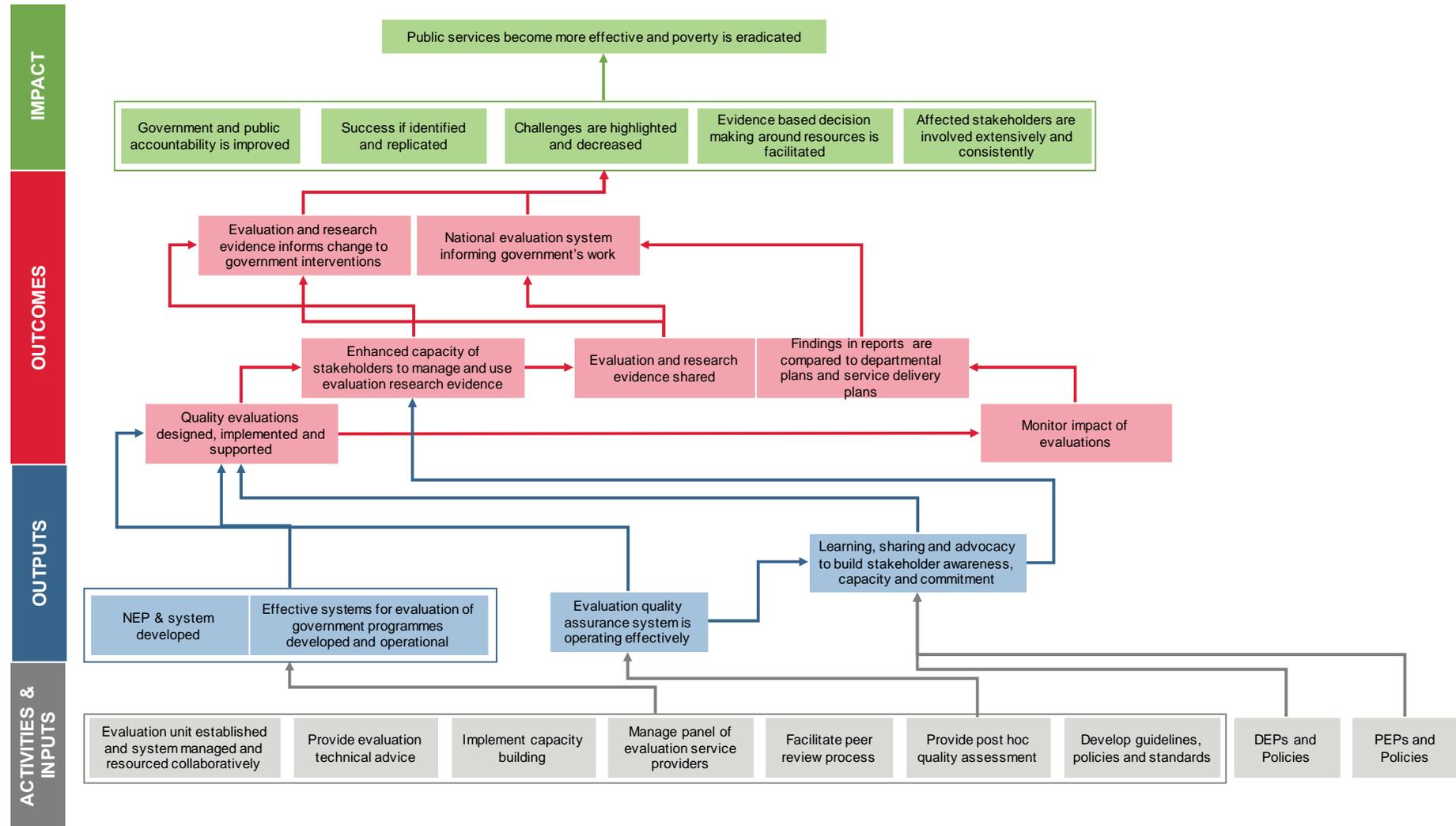
4.2   Departmental and Provincial Case Studies

As part of this evaluation, case studies were conducted at the provincial (Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Limpopo and Western Cape) and departmental (DBE, DHS, DJCD, DSD and **the dti**) levels. Of these case studies, the Western Cape, Gauteng, DBE, DSD and **the dti** are early adopters of evaluation. This is shown in Figure 19 below which shows where the provincial and departmental case studies fit on the adoption of innovation curve.

Figure 19: Departmental and Provincial Case Studies Located on the Adoption of Innovation Curve
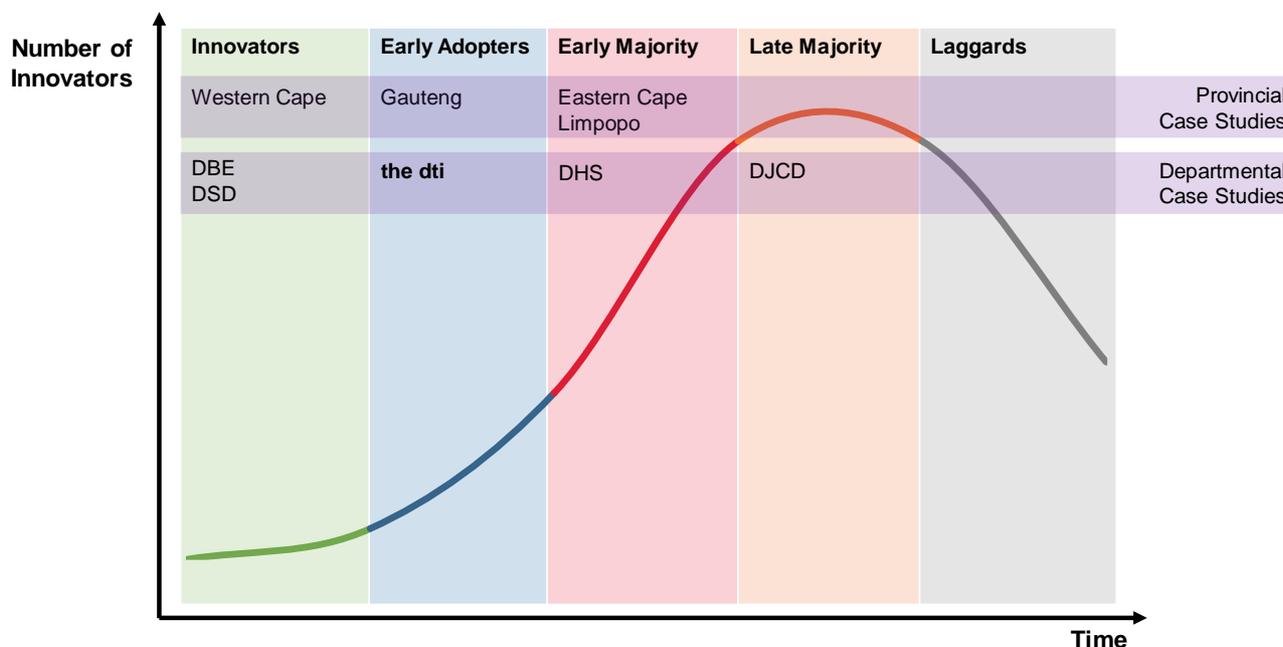
Source: Application of (University of Oaklahoma, n.d.) citing (Rogers, 2003)

4.2.1   Departmental Case Studies

This section provides a brief overview of the case study departments' engagement with the NES, and additional findings are provided throughout the evaluation findings Section (*Section 5)*:

- DBE is an innovator department and has a strong culture of research and evaluation. There is evidence of senior level buy-in DBE with the senior managers in the Research Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate being evaluation champions. DBE's evaluation prioritisation is guided by its Draft Departmental and Evaluation Research Plan which provides details of evaluations planned over a three-year period. Evaluations at DBE are managed by the Chief Directorate, Strategic Planning Research and Coordination with the Research Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (RCME) as the unit responsible.

- DSD, like DBE is an innovator department in that the department was conducting evaluations prior to the establishment of the NES. The M&E function of the DSD falls within the Chief Operations branch. The Chief Director of M&E is responsible for service delivery monitoring, strategic information analysis and monitoring, impact assessment coordination, and organisational performance. Currently, there is a departmental evaluation plan which feeds into the provincial departmental evaluation plans; and going forward, an M&E policy is being drafted for the national department which will make evaluations mandatory. In its current form, DSD has a multi-year evaluation strategy which the DG signs off on.

- **the dti** is an early adopter department. the dti has high capacity for, and buy-in to evaluations, with five evaluations on the evaluation repository. **the dti** seems to fit into the NEPF and NES approach easily and it has adapted its internal systems to match the NEP very quickly, while also maintaining the use of rapid appraisals. From an organisational perspective, **the dti** has established internal planning, monitoring and

evaluation teams. That is, their internal structure reflects that of the DPME. the dti has separated the M&E threads of work in a deliberate way.

- DHS is an early majority department. DHS has been conducting evaluations prior to the establishment of the NEPF and NES. Respondents however noted that evaluations took place on an ad hoc basis prior to this. Despite not submitting a full DEP[164], DHS remains committed to furthering evaluation practice and use in their department. From an organisational perspective, the Chief Director of Programme M&E is charged with evaluation in DHS. The office of the Programme M&E Chief Director is located within the Programme and Project Management Unit branch of DHS. DHS is different to other departments in that the M&E unit is not located within a strategy or planning branch. The DHS's M&E unit is well-capacitated with individuals and budget assigned to conduct evaluation tasks. The majority of M&E officials' time is however spent on monitoring and reporting.

- DJCD is a late majority department. DJCD is fairly new to the NES. DJCD is currently engaged in their 2014 – 2017 DEP and is currently involved in one evaluation within the NEP. From an organisational perspective, DJCD's M&E unit is located within the Chief Directorate of Strategy, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation.

4.2.2   Provincial Case Studies

A brief overview of the case study provinces' engagement with the NES is provided below, with additional findings being elaborated on throughout the evaluation findings section (*Section 5)*:

- The Western Cape is an innovator province. The Western Cape Department of the Premier (DotP), was selected as a target province receiving support and encouragement since the early stages of establishment of the NES. Every three years the Provincial Evaluation Plan (PEP) [165] is published. In the first PEP (2013/14 to 2015/16), the provinces conducted 23 evaluations, the findings and recommendations of which have reportedly been used to improve performance and accountability through the improvement plans. Departmental Evaluation Plans (DEPs) form part of the PEP and aim to evaluate programmes that are a priority for the province. The DEPs are strategically aligned to departmental objectives and Government priorities which are articulated in the NEPF; Strategic Framework for Province-wide Monitoring and Evaluation (2015) and the NEP. [166] In the province, it was recognised that DotP facilitates the departments evaluation 'journey' from concept note, to implementation, and the improvement plan. However, some respondents felt they could not rely on the DotP for technical evaluation assistance such as methods, and would rather liaise with the DPME.

- Gauteng is an early adopter province. Gauteng developed its first PEP in parallel to development of the NES and was a pilot in extending the NES to provinces. The Office of the Premier (OTP) initiated evaluations linked to the Midterm Review in 2011/12 and completed two evaluations that year. In 2012, the Provincial Executive Council adopted the NEPF as well as the Provincial Evaluation Framework and Plan. This covered the period 2012/2013 to 2014/15. Gauteng's evaluation plans are coordinate through the Office of the Premier (OTP). 79 evaluations have been completed in Gauteng since 2013. Gauteng is classified as an early adopter as it really only engaged with evaluation once the NEPF provided impetus to evaluation, and has mirrored the NEPF for the province, however; there has been inconsistent political support over the past years, and institutionally, and despite the efforts of the OTP, evaluation has not been intentionally adapted and adopted to really take across the province.

- The Eastern Cape is an early majority province. The first PEP was developed in the Eastern Cape in 2016/17[167]. The process followed by the Eastern Cape in developing provincial DEPs and PEPs is aligned to the NEPF and the DPME's guiding documentation. In terms of organisational structure, the OTP is

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[164] (DHS, n.d.)
[165] (Western Cape Government, 2017)
[166] (Western Cape Government, 2017)
[167] The process for developing the PEP included: Sensitisation of the provincial stakeholders to the NEPS and on how to populate concept notes; a call for concept notes on potential evaluations; submission of concept notes which were signed off by the HODs.

central to coordinating evaluation in the Eastern Cape. The OTP supports other departments in developing the terms of reference for evaluations; is included in all evaluation steering committees; and oversees departments in their data collection (primarily for monitoring and reporting), and is intended to coordinate the tracking of improvement plans.

- Like the Eastern Cape, Limpopo is an early majority province. The first PEP[168] in Limpopo was approved by the Executive Council in September 2015 with six evaluations agreed as per the provincial priorities. Limpopo produced the PEP using the *Guideline on How to Develop Provincial Evaluation Plan*. The PEP process is coordinated by Limpopo's OTP. The Limpopo Office of the Premier has two M&E units, one responsible for transversal (cross cutting) M&E and another responsible for internal M&E.

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[168] (Limpopo Office of the Premier, 2015)

5   FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

In seeking to address the evaluation questions, this Section looks at: how the NES is working as a whole (*Section 5.1.*); capacity building, quality assurance and communication in the NES (*Section 5.2.*); the impact of the NES (*Section 5.3.*); institutionalisation of the NES (*Section 5.4.*); and evolution of the internally-initiated approach *(Section 5.5.).*

5.1   How the NES is Working as a Whole

- **Evaluation Question:** How is the evaluation system working as a whole, who is involved and what are the implications of this?
- **Link to the OECD DAC Criteria:** Relevance, Effectiveness and Efficiency
- **Link to the Theory of Change:** Inputs ➜ Activities ➜ Outputs ➜ Outcomes

In discussing how the NES is working as a whole, this Section looks at evaluation plans at the national, departmental and provincial levels *(Section **Error! Reference source not found.**)*, the roles and responsibilities of the key stakeholders in the NES *(Section 5.1.2)*, and the time and cost requirements of the NES *(Section 5.1.3).*

5.1.1   Selection of Evaluations in Evaluation Plans

*Section **Error! Reference source not found.*** of this report, notes that the NEPF provides for the development of evaluation plans. DPME, and more specifically the Evaluation Research Unit (ERU) and its 16 staff members, is responsible for developing national evaluation plans (NEPs). The NEPs are published annually and cover three years' worth of planning. [169] [170]

As evidence of the progress made in entrenching evaluation, there have been 69 evaluations identified in the NEPs, of which eight were cancelled (as shown in Table 15 below). In addition to NEPs, provinces, through the OTPs, develop Provincial Evaluation Plans (PEPs), and departments develop Departmental Evaluation Plans (DEPs). There are currently eight PEPs, and approximately 68[171] DEPs at the level of provincial and national departments. At the provincial level, the PEPs are coordinated through the OTPs, and at the departmental level, the DEPs are coordinated through the sub-directorates of the relevant DG's office.

The NEPs, DEPs and PEPs in the NES, are elaborated on in the paragraphs that follow.

5.1.1.1   *National Evaluation Plans*

Figure 20 below outlines the process undertaken by the DPME in developing the NEP for each year. In the process outlined below, the Evaluation Technical Working Group (ETWG) selects evaluations, the NEP is drafted, the NEP is approved by Cabinet, and TORs are then drafted and procurement starts for each evaluation respectively. Once an evaluation is underway, DPME acts as secretariat, and the relevant line department chairs the steering committee. Once an evaluation is complete, an improvement plan is drafted. The progress made in the improvement plan is monitored by DPME.

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[169] (Alessandro, et al., 2913)
[170] (DPME, 2010)
[171] This figure is based on the number of departments that received a Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) score of 3 and over. A score of 3 and over signifies that a department has a DEP.

Figure 20: NEP Process – Indicative Timeline (Annual)

APRIL	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
Call for evaluations	Development and submission of concept notes	Selection and approval by ETWG	Refining Design Clinic and TOC

SEPTEMBER	JANUARY – MAY	JANUARY - MAY	FEBRUARY – MAY
Cabinet approves NEP	Finalising TORs and procurement	Cabinet approves NEP	Evaluation commissioned and implemented

OCTOBER – MARCH	WITHIN 1 MONTH OF COMPLETION	WITHIN 2 MONTHS OF COMPLETION	AFTER CABINET APPROVAL
Evaluation completed and quality assessed	Management response and improvement plan	Results to Cluster and Cabinet	Report to Parliament and public on website

WITHIN 4 MONTHS OF CABINET APPROVAL	FOLLOWING ADOPTION – ONGOING
Communication of results	Monitoring of improvement plan

Source: (DPME, 2012-2016)

Related to the selection of evaluations, *Section **Error! Reference source not found.*** outlines the formal criteria f or selecting evaluations as they are given in the NEPF. In practice, in addition to the formal criteria, there is the less formal criterion of trying to ensure that new departments have the opportunity to participate in the NES, through the NEP. In these instances, some of the afore-mentioned criteria might be relaxed to facilitate the entry of a new department into the NES. Related to NEPs, Box 4 below summarises the survey responses received by the evaluation team when asking why respondents had not submitted evaluations into the NEPs.

Box 4: Survey Responses Related to why Respondents had not Submitted Evaluations into the NEPs

The survey conducted as part of this evaluation asked non-participants[172] in the system why they had not submitted evaluations into the NEP. The responses included the following:

- One respondent noted that their department is not currently conducting evaluations of a large enough scale to be included in the NEP;
- Two respondents noted being new to evaluation, with one respondent noting that "the department I work for is new and still trying to consider the whole evaluation concept and what kind of programmes can be evaluated;
- Two respondents noted that they were unsure whether they should be submitting evaluations, while two respondents noted that they did not submit evaluations because they worked for state-owned enterprises or provincial departments; and
- Two respondents noted that their functions were concerned with monitoring and reporting, and planning, but not evaluation.

It is interesting to note that of the 15 non-participants in the system, nine noted that their departments conduct internal evaluations. While the sample size is small, this indicates that not being part of the NEP does not necessarily mean that departments are not conducting evaluations.

The first NEP was developed in 2011. Drawing on figures from the DPME's Evaluation Management Information System (EMIS), there have been 69 evaluations, at various stages of implementation, in the NEP since 2011/12.[173] Of these 69 evaluations, Table 15 shows that six have been cancelled; 10 are at the concept phase; and four are at the design phase. The majority of the evaluations (25) in the NEP are in the implementation phase and improvement plan phases; and five are closed.

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[172] A total of 15 responses were received for non-participants. 12 of these respondents noted not having submitted evaluations into the NEP.
[173] A full list of the evaluations is provided in Annex 4 of this report.

Furthermore, of the 69 evaluations at various stages of implementation, 12[174] are classified as "stuck". While the EMIS does not provide reasons for this, respondents interviewed, highlighted a number of reasons such as evaluation as non-engagement or non-responsiveness on the parts of the departments, and disagreements around the recommendations and findings of evaluations.

Table 15: Summary of the Status of Evaluations in the NEP

Evaluation Stage					
Cancelled	Concept	Design	Implementation	Improvement Plan	Closed
Number of Evaluations 6	10	4	25	25	5

5.1.1.2 Provincial and Departmental Evaluation Plans

In general, departments and provinces see the creation of a DEP or PEP as a valuable consolidation exercise. However; it was raised, that the link back to the NEPF and the NDP needs to be made clearer for the overall vision and purpose of evaluation to be articulated. Evaluations that are undertaken in the PEPs and DEPs are selected based on their link to provincial and departmental priorities respectively. The reality however, is that there are some priority programmes that have not found expression in the NEPs, DEPs or PEPs, and there are also instances where evaluations of programmes not fitting the criteria above have been included. One of the provinces, for example, reported that they relaxed the selection criteria on their first PEP because it was a learning curve for the province and their focus was therefore on finding provincial departments that were willing to evaluate their programmes or policies in the province's pilot PEP. This province however envisages that they will be stricter on the criteria in future.

In assessing the extent to which departments and provinces have evaluation plans, DPME's Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) provides useful information. MPAT is a self-assessment tool (where the scores are moderated, and evidence on the scores is provided), and is "one of several initiatives to improve the performance and service delivery of national and provincial departments. MPAT is a structured, evidence-based approach to the assessment of management practices. Underpinning MPAT is the logic that improved management practices is key to improving government performance and service delivery."[175] MPAT consists of four key performance areas (KPAs): 1. Strategic management which includes monitoring and evaluation (as two separate components); 2. Governance and accountability; 3. Human resource management; and 4. Financial management.[176]

The scoring for the MPAT element of evaluation is as follows:

- A score of **1** indicates that the evaluation system in the department is not formalised and implemented;

- A score of **2** indicates that the department has planned capacity to manage / conduct evaluation;

- A score **2+** (or 2.5.) indicates that a. relevant staff members are in place; and b. that the department has approved or adopted guidelines that follow the NES;

- A score of **3** indicates that there is a multi-year evaluation plan that follows the NES; and

- A score of **4** indicates that a. the department has undertaken at least one evaluation of a programme, policy, plan, project or system in the previous two years, or is currently undertaking one, b. each evaluation has a steering committee ensuring effective oversight of the evaluation process, c. each completed

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[174] Service Delivery Improvement Planning System (Stuck). 2. Evaluation of Access to the City | Impact Evaluation of the Social Housing Programme (SHP) | Policy Evaluation of Small Farmer Support | Implementation Evaluation of Integrated Residential Development Programme (IRDP) | Baseline for future impact evaluation for informal settlements targeted for upgrading (UISP) | Evaluation of Military Veterans Economic Empowerment and Skills Transferability and Recognition Programme | The Impact of Government's Approach to "Affordable" Housing (1994-2013) | Design Evaluation of the Policy on Community Colleges (PCC) | Implementation Evaluation of Government Coordination System (clusters/ MinMECs and Implementation Forums) | Evaluation of Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) | Synthesis evaluation - Has the provision of state subsidised housing addressed asset poverty for households and local municipalities | Impact Assessment of the Micro Agricultural Financial Institution of SA (MAFISA)
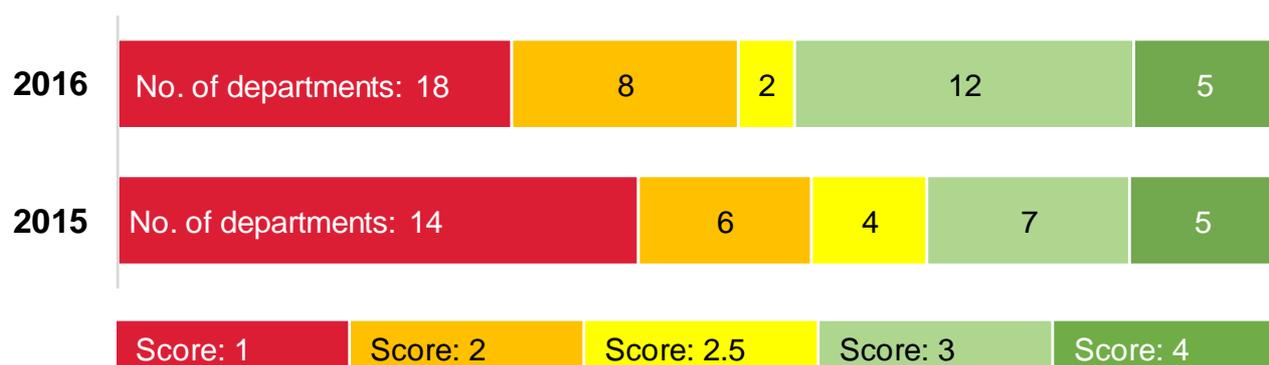[175] (DPME, n.d., p. 1)
[176] (DPME, 2016a)

evaluation has an approved management response and improvement plan, and d. departmental evaluations are made public on departmental websites.[177]

Related to evaluation plans then, all departments and provinces that have a score of 3 or 4, have multi-year evaluation plans in place that follow the NES. Figure 21 below shows that 17 national departments scored a 3 or 4, indicating that 17 national departments have DEPs that align to the NES. It is important to note that these scores are indicative of the breadth of the development of DEPs, but not the depth of plans, or the use of the plans. For example, **the dti** received a score of less than 3, but relative to other departments, evaluation is entrenched in **the dti**.

Figure 21: MPAT National Department Scores, 2015 and 2016

2016	No. of departments: 18	8	2	12	5
2015	No. of departments: 14	6	4	7	5
	Score: 1	Score: 2	Score: 2.5	Score: 3	Score: 4

Source: (DPME, 2016b)

Related to the above, there is considerable variation in terms of the depth of DEPs, as shown in Table 16 below. For example, for DBE, the evaluation team had access to a presentation of the progress of evaluations in the department. This indicated a keen awareness of the purpose of evaluation as well as the practical necessities associated with running an evaluation. It is therefore clear that **the dti** has an internal plan for evaluations, but that it is not formalised and aligned to the DPME guidelines. On the other hand, the Department of Military Veterans and DSD's DEPs are very well-aligned to the DPME's guidelines. In the former, evaluation practice is in its infancy, while in the latter evaluation practice is fairly well established.

Table 16: Summary of DEPs and the Level of Detail in these Plans

| Department / Province	Years Covered	Level of Detail
Department of Basic Education	2017	The evaluation team had access to a summary presentation of the progress of evaluations in 2017. This showed a keen awareness of the purpose of evaluations as well as the practical necessities associated with running an evaluation such as managing costs, etc.
Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs	2014 – 2019	This is a reasonable report. It does not provide extensive background to the philosophy of evaluation but does track the proposed evaluations over time. These do not seem to align with DPME guidelines exactly, though.
Department of Environmental Affairs	2015 – 2018	A comprehensive report explaining each evaluation underway at the moment including: evaluation purpose, aims, design, scope, timeframe, team and stakeholders. There are no principle explanations of evaluations.
Department of Health[178]	2015 – 2016	This does not align completely with the NES and refers to its own guiding principles. Nevertheless, the evaluations planned for the year are mapped out clearly with explanations.
Department of Higher Education and Training	2013	This appears to be more of a framework than a DEP but it covers the basics of explaining the purposes and actions of the system.
Department of Human Settlements	2015 – 2017	This appears to be in summarised framework format. While it highlights evaluations, it does not yet seem that this aligns to the DPME's guidelines.
Department of Justice and Constitutional Development	2014 – 2017	This is a general report on the evaluations planned for 2014-2017. There is a brief discussion about the alignment of this effort to the NEPF. The programmes are explained in detail across financial years.

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[177] (DPME, 2016a)
[178] Not a contributor to the NEP

Department / Province	Years Covered	Level of Detail
Department of Military Veterans	2015 – 2018	This aligns very well with the DPME guidelines and even conforms to the processes suggested by the DPME. It goes on to summarise the proposed evaluations as follows: person responsible, intervention, methodology, type of evaluation, and years of implementation
Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation	2016 - 2020	This conforms to the guidelines from DPME exactly. It goes as far as explaining the linkages of the programmes being evaluated to the NES. It also lays out procedures to be followed after an evaluation.
Public Service Commission	2016 – 2017	This seems to be in functional form with budgets and a summary of evaluations at its core. There does not seem to be a description of the philosophy under-pinning evaluation.
Department of Science and Technology	2016 – 2019	This is a well-developed DEP with a clear purpose and criteria of selection in place. Procedures, roles and responsibilities are made clear. The proposed evaluations are summarised.
Department of Social Development	2015 – 2018	This is an impressive example of a document designed to impart high impact information. It has a Section with Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) as well as explains the processes used for selection. It goes on to describe the planned evaluations according to the DPME guidelines
Department of Sports and Recreation	2018 – 2019	This is a comprehensive DEP that makes the NES clear and goes on to explain the position of the department in the system. It links evaluations back to the NEP and to planning. Proposed evaluations for the coming year are summarised.
Department of Tourism	2016 – 2019	This is a mature DEP that explains and tracks evaluation progress. It is clear that this department has good evaluation capacity. The report highlights the background and progress of evaluation and goes on to predict further evaluations.
Department of Trade and Industry	2016 – 2019	The evaluations team had access to a presentation of the progress of evaluations in the department. This indicated a sophisticated awareness of the purpose of evaluation as well as a long history of evaluation that has resulted in a pre-existing evaluation strategy. Evaluations are summarised and proposed. This is not strictly in line with the guidelines provided by DPME.
South African Police Services	2015 – 2020	This explains which programmes are being evaluated and how often they are evaluated – this is the first indication of prolonged input from evaluation in a programme cycle. The plans cover project names and resources to be used for the project.

Figure 22 below shows the MPAT scores of the provincial OTPs. The reason for including these scores in this report is because, as outlined above, the OTP is central to coordinating and spreading evaluation across the provinces. In 2016, five provinces achieved a score of 3 or above – an increase from just two provinces that received a score of 3 or above. This indicates that more provinces now have PEPs in place that align to the NES. It is important to note that having a higher score does not necessarily equate to better performance in practice. For example, the Northern Cape received a score of 3 in both 2015 and 2016. Evaluation practice in the Northern Cape is, as ascertained from the evaluation team's key informant interviews, in its infancy. On the other hand, Gauteng received a score of 2 in 2015, but is, along with the Western Cape, the province with the most entrenched evaluation practice. The reason for the variation in the scores relates to the provision of evidence in the self-assessment. For example, a province can have a plan in place, but if the plan is not signed off on by the province's management, then it cannot be counted as evidence.

Figure 22: MPAT Scores of Provincial OTPs, 2015 and 2016
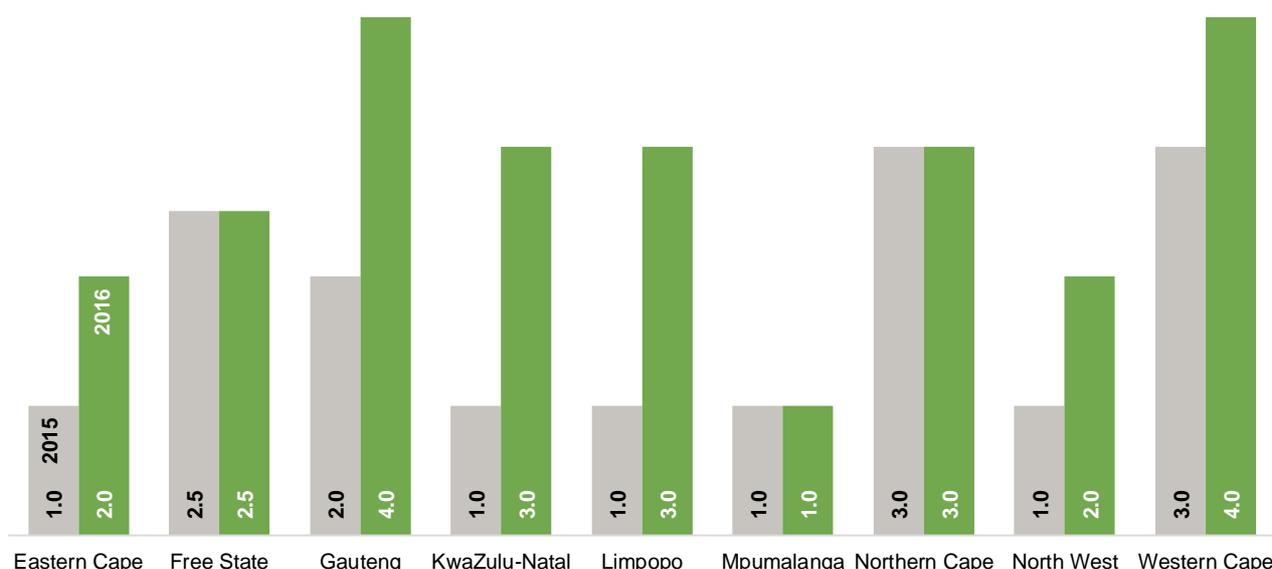
Source: (DPME, 2016a)

As with the DEPs, there is variation in terms of the level of detail in the PEPs, as shown in Table 17 below. Respondents interviewed noted that a particular area of confusion for provinces is that they are not sure how to align their evaluation efforts across the PEPs and the DEPs. There is also no clear messaging from national departments to provincial departments on evaluation. Provincial departments see the greatest benefit of evaluation by participating in the PEP where there is a clear understanding of the purpose of the evaluations in which they are asked to participate. Furthermore, the communication channels between national and provincial departments need to be strengthened with a number of provincial respondents noting that they very rarely see the reports for the national evaluations to which they contribute.

Table 17: Summary of PEPs and the Level of Detail in these Plans

Department / Province	Years Covered	Level of Detail
Eastern Cape	2016 – 2019	This is a well-articulated document that covers the key aspects outlined by the DPME's guidelines. It provides a motivation for evaluations as well as historic principles of evaluation. It summarises future evaluation initiatives.
Free State	2015 – 2017	This is an introductory document that explains the NEPF and the purpose of evaluation in the context of the province. It goes on to summarise the concepts being evaluated.
Gauteng	2016 – 2019	A comprehensive report – it outlines the need for and development associated with evaluations. It goes on to summarise and introduce evaluations for the coming years. It does this according to the DPME's guidelines.
Kwa-Zulu Natal	2016 – 2019	The plan is clear and lays out the provincial cycle of evaluation as well as "post-evaluation actions". It provides a summary of progress of provincial evaluations as well as the criteria for selection. Finally, it provides the detail of a list of upcoming evaluations.
Limpopo	2014 - 2019	This document provides an overview of evaluations as well as their link back to the NES. The summary of planned evaluations is not in great detail but provided nevertheless.
Mpumalanga	2016 – 2019	A well-developed report laying out the principles and approaches to evaluation. It also lays out an audit process of evaluations along with proposed evaluations from 2014 – 2016. It outlines the application process for future evaluations.
Northern Cape	2016 – 2019	A fully developed report which highlights to processes and roles in evaluation. Contains a summary of proposed evaluations with details of methods and people responsible.
Western Cape	2015 – 2019	This is a brief but efficient document which cuts to the core background and motivational points of the NES and the need for evaluations. It summarises the proposed evaluations according to the DPME's guidelines. It goes a step further than most by linking each evaluation back to the provincial goals for the Western Cape.

At the provincial department level, in 2016:

- Three of the 13 Eastern Cape provincial departments scored 3 (with none scoring 4) in 2016, indicating that DEPs are not commonplace at the Eastern Cape provincial departments.

- Seven of the 12 Free State provincial departments scored 3 (with none scoring 4) in 2016. This indicates that DEPs have been developed in most provincial department in the Free State. Key informant interviews however indicated that evaluation practice in the province is nascent.

- Nine of the 14 Gauteng provincial departments scored 3 or more in their MPAT assessment, indicating that the majority of Gauteng provincial departments have DEPs in place.

- Seven of the 13 KwaZulu-Natal provincial departments scored 3 (with none scoring 4) in 2016. The majority of the departments then have DEPs in place. Based on key informant interviews, this fairly accurately mirrors evaluation practice in the province.

- Four of the 12 Limpopo provincial departments scored 3 or above in 2016, indicating that evaluation plans have not been extensively developed. Respondents noted that this is an accurate picture of Limpopo where evaluation practice is just emerging.

- Four of the 12 Mpumalanga provincial departments scored 3 or more in 2016. Like Limpopo, this shows that DEPs are not commonplace, and like Limpopo, based on key informant interviews, the score mirrors the state of evaluation practice in the province.

- Half (six out of 12) of the Northern Cape provincial departments have DEPs. As noted above however, evaluation practice in the Northern Cape is nascent.

- Two of the 13 North West provincial departments have DEPS. Respondents noted that this is an accurate reflection of the state of evaluation in North West.

- Finally, nine of the 13 Western Cape provincial departments have DEPs. The Western Cape is an early of evaluation. This score is therefore representative of most departments having DEPs, and of an entrenched evaluation practice.

5.1.1.3   Selection of Evaluations in Evaluation Plans – Key Summary Points

- In selecting evaluations for NEPs and PEPs, DPME and OTPs generally follow the specifications of the NEPF in terms of evaluation prioritisation. In practice however, there is an additional informal criterion which relates to selecting evaluations from departments that are not yet in the system. In these instances, there may be a trade-off between getting a new department into the system, and meeting the formal specifications of evaluation selection.

- Departments and provinces see the creation of a DEP or PEP as a valuable consolidation exercise. However; the link back to the NEPF and the NDP needs to be made clearer for the overall vision and purpose of evaluation to be articulated.

- Evaluation plans are a key mechanism through which the NES is spread to, and articulated at the departmental and provincial levels.

- The extent to which a department or province has an evaluation plan in place is a good indication of the breadth of the system, but not the depth or quality of the system. There are eight PEPs and 68 DEPs. Therefore, in terms of breadth, great strides have been made.

- There is variation across departments and provinces in terms of the extent to which evaluation plans align to the NES. This variation is not along the lines of early adopters vs. later adopters. In fact, in the case of early adopters such as **the dti** and DBE, while evaluation is firmly entrenched, the evaluation plans are less aligned to the NES, and arguably more aligned to the departments and their needs.

5.1.2   Key Stakeholders in the NES

*Section **Error! Reference source not found.*** outlines the intended roles of key stakeholders in the NES, while this Section focuses on what the roles of the key stakeholders has been in practice.

The development of a NES is, as noted in *Section 3.1,* dependent on the political will for change in the country, and the pace of development of M&E infrastructure. Within these two factors, there are a number of considerations related to organisation, including strategic leadership; commitment to develop and sustain an evaluation system; policies and standards that clarify the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities in the system; and an organisational structure to conduct and / or manage the system. (UNEG, 2012). Clarifying these roles is therefore an essential part of developing and sustaining the system.

In South Africa, the functions of planning and M&E are the responsibility of a number of departments and institutions, and mandates differ across the different levels of government due to the semi-federal nature of the state.[179] DPME is the custodian and primary authority of the NES – however; this function is not a legal position. DPME is supported by other key actors, such as national government departments, provinces and the ETWG.[180]

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[179] (Goldman, et al., 2015, pp. 1-11)
[180] (DPME, 2011)

Figure 9 in *Section 3.1.1* shows that a national evaluation system is a function of need, demand and supply: On the supply side the key actors are evaluation coordination units in the public sector, ministries and sector departments, local, provincial and national government, and government planning and budgeting functions.[181] On the demand side the key actors are external service providers, internal (public sector) evaluation units, universities and training institutions, and evaluation association.[182] The needs of a NES take into account the social-economic-political context and societal needs.[183]

An effective NES occurs at the intersection of need, supply and demand – where demand, supply and need are aligned, and the services are used by those that need them.[184] Figure 23 below applies this classification[185] to South Africa's NES, and shows which stakeholders form part of the supply, demand, and need of the system. In addition to the categories mentioned above, within the demand side, categories for public sector capacity building to enhance demand, and reporting and oversight, have been included. On the supply side a category for international partnerships has been included. These categories have been included because they are relevant to South Africa's NES.

Based on the interviews conducted and documents reviewed, Figure 23 also highlights where stakeholders that have a high level of engagement with the NES (●); stakeholder roles in the system need to be strengthened (●); there is variation in the extent of the involvement of stakeholders in the system (●); stakeholder involvement is currently limited (●); and where the level of interaction in the system is low, but the extent to which this should be strengthened, is unclear (●). Figure 23 provides a summary of the stakeholders in the NES. The roles of these stakeholders are elaborated on in the paragraphs that follow.

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[181] (Casado, 2009)
[182] (Casado, 2009)
[183] (Casado, 2009)
[184] (Casado, 2009)
[185] (Casado, 2009)

Figure 23: NES Stakeholder Map

Key

- 🟢 Strong level of engagement / involvement
- 🟠 High levels of variation in engagement / involvement
- 🔵 Currently limited engagement / involvement
- 🔴 Role needs to be strengthened / clarified
- 🟣 Level of interaction is low, but the extent to which this is a problem, or should be strengthened, is unclear
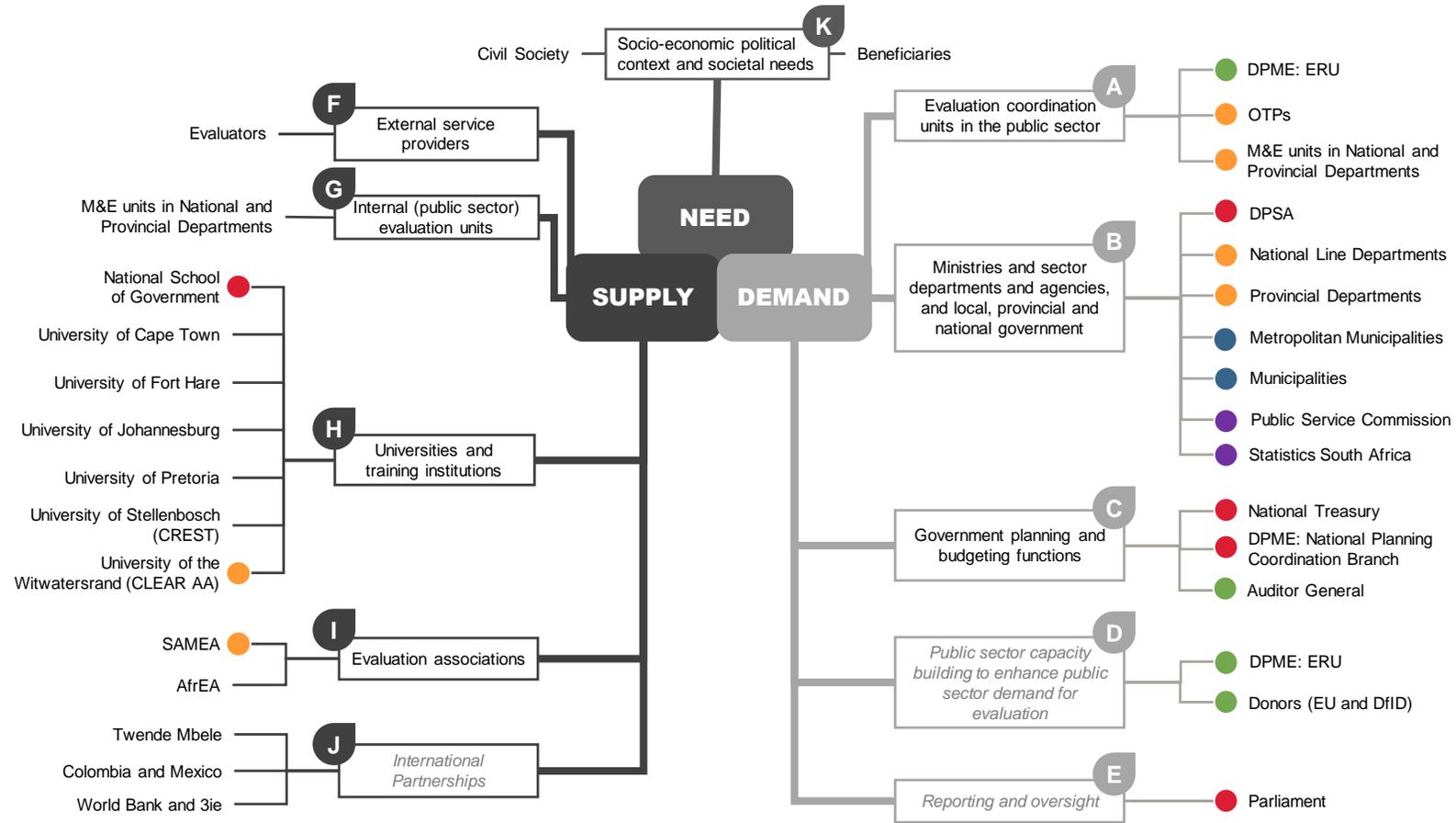
Adapted to the South African context from (Casado, 2009)

While Figure 23 reflects all the stakeholders in the NES, the paragraphs that follow reflect the stakeholders that were discussed and noted to be important during the key informant interviews conducted for this evaluation. Based on this the paragraphs that follow do not include a discussion on:

- **The Auditor General:** The NEPF notes that the Auditor General reports to parliament on audited financial statements, and conducts performance audits. Within the context of the NES, the Auditor General contributes to accountability in the public sector. The Auditor General is however not directly concerned with evaluation, and was not raised as a key stakeholder in the key informant interviews.

- **The Public Service Commission:** The NEPF notes that the PSC monitors and evaluates public service. The NES's role of improving decision making and performance speaks to the role of the PSC. The role of the PSC is linked to evaluation of the public sector, and not evaluations of programmes in the public sector. Respondents did not highlight the importance of the PSC in the NES, and the role of the PSC is therefore not expanded on in the paragraphs that follow.

- **Statistics South Africa:** The NEPF notes that Statistics SA is charged with ensuring data quality and providing information on key development indicators. With the exception of Limpopo, where respondents noted that they aim to have Statistics SA on their steering committees, the role of the Stats SA in the NES, was not emphasised by respondents.

The Sections that follow include an assessment of the roles of DPME (*Section 5.1.2.1*), the OTPs (*Section 5.1.2.2*), departmental M&E units (*Section 5.1.2.3)*, DPSA (*Section 5.1.2.4)*, National Treasury *(Section 5.1.2.5)*, national, provincial and municipal government (*Section 5.1.2.6*), Parliament (*Section 5.1.2.7*), donors (*Section 5.1.2.8*), evaluation associations (*Section 5.1.2.9*) universities and training institutions *(Section 5.1.2.10*, civil society (*Section 5.1.2.11*), evaluators (*Section 5.1.2.12*), and beneficiaries (*Section 5.1.2.13*).

5.1.2.1   DPME

As noted in *Section **Error! Reference source not found.***, according to the NEPF, DPME is the custodian of t he evaluation function of the government. The DPME's responsibilities include standard setting, knowledge development and management, quality assurance, capacity building, technical assistance, and ensuring that evaluation adds value and is promoted within the government. DPME is central in the NEPF, and central to the NES.

During the interviews conducted, the evaluation team found that the understanding of the role of DPME was not always consistent, or as it was intended in the NEPF. From the interviews conducted, and comparing our findings with the intended role of the DPME, it appears that DPME has had to take on a bigger support role than what was originally envisioned. For example, a number of respondents from departmental provinces noted that while their OTPs can sometimes assist, they rely on DPME for advocating for evaluation at the provincial level, and for providing technical knowledge and support.

Generally, most provincial and national departments that were interviewed welcomed the support of DPME and felt that DPME should play a stronger role in the NES. Key successes of the DPME include:

- National and provincial government departments mentioned that DPME being in the Presidency is an important link, particularly for credibility and clout.

- DPME is said to have created an enabling environment and an appetite for evaluation in government.

- A number of respondents noted that increasingly evaluation is being seen as a learning exercise rather than a compliance exercise. This is seen as a credit to DPME.

Conversely, there were a few respondents however who felt DPME is over-extending their role. It is interesting to note that this view came mainly from departments with an established culture of evaluation and the capacity to manage their own evaluations.

Figure 23, and the paragraphs above, show that the DPME's ERU's level of engagement in the NES is strong. The ERU plays a role on the demand side in that it is the central public-sector evaluation coordination unit, and plays a role in the provision of training to stimulate demand for evaluation.

In addition to the ERU, the DPME's National Planning Coordination Branch has a role to play in that it is a central government planning function. The role that this branch is currently playing however, needs to be strengthened. Recognising that there was a gap between evaluation and planning, even within the DPME, in 2013 the ERU worked with the planning branch to introduce a guideline for designing new programmes or revising existing programmes in order to ensure that evaluations can be done at relevant points of programme life cycles.[186] Training programme implementation was also coordinated by the ERU, and conducted by CLEAR AA, in March 2016.[187] The course covered implementation planning with the government context, diagnostic analysis, developing a theory of change, translation of a theory of change into a logframe, defining inputs, and organisational arrangements and processes to support the implementation programme plan.[188] The course was attended by members of the ERU and planning unit, as well as other government departments and OTPs.[189] Drawing on responses from staff members interviewed in the DPME, no activities have been undertaken to strengthen the relationship since the course in 2016. The importance of strengthening the planning-evaluation link within the DPME is an important step in showing the advantages of strengthening the planning-evaluation link across the public sector.

5.1.2.2   *Offices of the Premier*

The NEPF notes the OTPs should carry out an equivalent role to the DPME, at the provincial level. This is shown in Figure 23 above where the OTPs are categorised as evaluation coordination units within the public sector. The level of engagement of the OTPs in the NES is highly variable depending on the province. While the case study departments (elaborated on below) are increasingly engaged with the NES, key respondents noted that in provinces such as Northern Cape, North-West, and Free State, the engagement is limited. From this perspective, work needs to be done in expanding the system to provinces with limited engagement in the NES.

To illustrate the roles of the OTPs at the provincial level, the evaluation team looked at the roles of the OTPs in the case study provinces of the Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Limpopo and Western Cape:

- **Eastern Cape:** As envisioned by the NEPF, the OTP is central to coordinating evaluation in the Eastern Cape. The OTP supports other departments in developing terms of reference for evaluations; is included in all evaluation steering committees; and oversees departments in their data collection (primarily for monitoring and reporting); and is intended to coordinate the tracking of improvement plans.

  The OTP in the Eastern Cape has a number of evaluation champions. A number of respondents noted that the advocacy work of the OTP has been good since the arrival of Mr Mlulami Mdani in the OTP in 2015 as the Specialist in Provincial Performance Evaluation.

  The OTP in the Eastern Cape faces challenges in terms of the capacity in the OTP, as well as advocating for evaluation in a capacity-constrained environment. Respondents expressed a need for more people to be employed to manage and / or conduct evaluations in the province. There are, for example, only two people in the OTP charged with evaluation. In addition to more people, getting the right people was highlighted as a constraint.

- **Gauteng:** Gauteng's OTP has had considerable experience in evaluation, having completed eight evaluations and with an additional four being underway. Gauteng's OTP has played a strong role in advocating for evaluation in the province, and has developed an action list for institutionalising evaluation in Gauteng. This action list includes provincial evaluation capacity and professionalisation; MPAT

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[186] (DPME, 2013)
[187] (DPME, 2016d)
[188] (DPME, 2016c)
[189] (DPME, 2016d)

monitoring, Coordination of different stakeholders such as universities, provincial departments, and SAMEA); continued identification of key evaluations; budgeting for funding evaluations; commissioning evaluations (specifically, supporting the development of terms of reference); and using evaluations for decision making and tracking recommendations.[190]

Annette Griessel (DDG for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation in the Office of the Premier) has been noted by other respondents as an important champion in generating an awareness and desire for evaluations. It is recognised that Ms Griessel has driven Gauteng's PEP and has sat on various committees encouraging the incorporation of evaluations in programme designs. In one instance, a provincial departmental representative noted that his only understanding of NES came from the Head of M&E and not from the national department level. Advocacy has been a strong driver in initiating thought and action around evaluation in Gauteng.

- **Limpopo:** As envisioned by the NEPF, the OTP in Limpopo is the custodian of evaluation in the province. The Limpopo OTP has two M&E units (which is unlike the other three provinces): one responsible for transversal (cross-cutting) M&E and another responsible for internal M&E. The transversal M&E unit is in a branch, headed by a Deputy Director General (DDG). This branch has three Chief Directors and sub-branches formed according to economic, social, governance and administration. There are directors within each branch and these directors are responsible for M&E activities within their respective sectors. The branch complies with all the M&E requirements from national government including MPAT, Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring (FSDM) and evaluations. They also support all departments with evaluations, coordinate PEPs and work with M&E units in the 12 provincial departments. The second M&E unit resides within the OTP, and is responsible for internal evaluation.

- **Western Cape:** As outlined in the NEPF, and as with the other three case study provinces, the role of DotP[191] is one of coordination, technical support and oversight. In the province, it was recognised that DotP facilitates the departments evaluation 'journey' from concept note, to implementation, and the improvement plan. However, some respondents felt they could not rely on the DotP for technical evaluation assistance such as methods, and would rather liaise with the DPME.

Programme managers furthermore noted that they feel that the OTP, while spearheading evaluation in the province, is still building their internal knowledge and evaluation capabilities to improve the extent to which they can provide support evaluations. The support the OTP can provide is also limited by both technical capacity and time constraints. Not all the staff in the OTP have experience or training in evaluation. Another challenge is the high staff turnover, which makes it difficult to build momentum through training as training participants vary between sessions.

Respondents noted that for DotP to sufficiently support departments, respondents suggested that a needs assessment should be conducted to assess the level of evaluation technical expertise and to highlight capacity gaps with the province. Once DotP has this information, respondents feel that the M&E Unit in DotP will be better positioned to support departments through their evaluation journey.

As with Eastern Cape, Gauteng and Limpopo, DotP raised capacity constraints for conducting evaluations. Both DotP and departmental respondents noted that evaluation positions need to be filled, but that budgetary restrictions mean they cannot hire people. The result of this is an increasing workload, and lower-quality outputs. Financial constraints also impact on departments' (including DotP) ability to provide training provided to staff, with respondents reporting that they did not have enough financial resources to send staff on training.

Overall, and as intended, the link between the NES at the national level and the NES at the provincial level is through the OTP. It is part of DPME's mandate to support OTPs and the OTPs mandate to support provincial departments. The respondents revealed that this is generally the case, but there are instances where provincial

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[190] (Gauteng Office of the Premier, 2016)
[191] The Western Cape's acronym for Office of the Premier.

departments contact DPME directly for support. Provincial departments do this when they have a direct relationship with someone at DPME or when the OTP does not have the capacity to support them.

5.1.2.3 *M&E Units in National and Provincial Departments*

At the departmental levels, the M&E unit is typically housed within a strategy and planning unit. As with the OTPs, the evaluation team looked at the location of the M&E units in the case study departments:

- **DBE:** Evaluations are managed by the Chief Directorate, Strategic Planning Research and Coordination with the Research Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (RCME) as the unit responsible. This Directorate in collaboration with researchers in the Office of the Director-General, are responsible, among other things for national monitoring, research and evaluation.

- **DHS:** The Chief Director of Programme M&E is charged with evaluation in DHS. The office of the Programme M&E Chief Director is located within the Programme and Project Management Unit branch of DHS. DHS is different to other departments in that the M&E unit is not located within a strategy or planning branch.

- **DJCD:** Similar to DBE, the M&E unit in the DJCD is located within the Chief Directorate of Strategy, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. Within departments, the M&E units coordinate the evaluation function with programme managers.

- **DSD:** The M&E function of the DSD falls within the Chief Operations branch.[192] The Chief Director of M&E is responsible for service delivery monitoring, strategic information analysis and monitoring, impact assessment coordination, and organisational performance. The Chief Operations Office also includes the chief directorates of strategy, planning, development and risk management, and entity and oversight management.

- **the dti: the dti** has established internal planning, monitoring and evaluation teams. That is, their internal structure reflects that of the DPME. **the dti** has separated the M&E threads of work in a deliberate way. However, there are still some divisions within the department in that there is not consistently high-level buy-in for evaluations. **the dti** provides a useful perspective on the needs and processes of a more sophisticated evaluation culture.

Turning to provincial departments, a number of provincial respondents noted that while the linkages in their provincial structures were fairly well understood, there is a need to clarify and strengthen the linkages between the national and provincial levels. This is expanded on below. Provincial departments also reported that the disconnect between national and provincial government limits the extent to which there can be cross learning from evaluation, as well as potential cost sharing. There was an expressed need for national departments to better include their provincial counterparts in their evaluation efforts regarding both the evaluation process, and communication around the evaluation. This disconnect between departments and provinces leads to a duplication of efforts and instances where one level of government is evaluating a programme that has already been evaluated by the other.

5.1.2.4 *Department of Public Service and Administration*

As noted in *Section **Error! Reference source not found.***, the NEPF highlights the DPSA's role as one that sees that evaluation findings that raise concerns about performance or the structure of the public service are addressed and evaluation is budgeted for.

DPSA is tasked with improving government service delivery and its governance through DPSA is tasked with improving government service delivery and its governance through monitoring national and provincial public administration, but not the content of what departments do.[193] Furthermore, DPSA is tasked with monitoring

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[192] (DSD, 2011)
[193] (DPSA, 2014)

performance at an individual and management level and regulating service delivery improvement.[194] DPSA has a legal mandate framed by the Public Service Act. In this way, DPSA has a performance monitoring role which can also use the structures and tools put in place by the NES to evaluate aspects of the public service.[195] However, DPSA has not put forward any evaluations, while one on Service Delivery Implementation Plans (SDIP) has been proposed by DPME.

Respondents highlighted that the relationship between DPME and DPSA is a fairly contentious one, but that there is a need for the role of the DPSA to be strengthened in the NES, particularly as this relates to staffing. As outlined in the NEPF, related to conducting evaluation, DPSA's role is limited to ensuring that evaluation findings that relate to performance or structure in the public sector, are addressed. There is, as shown in Figure 23, a need for the role of the DPSA to be strengthened in the NES. Of immediate importance to the development of the NES is the role of DPSA in ensuring that capacity available for evaluations, and that the roles and responsibilities of staff concerned with evaluation in the public sector, are clarified.

5.1.2.5   National Treasury

As outlines in the NEPF, National Treasury has a legal mandate to oversee the finances of the government and ensure value for money. An output of the NES is to provide inputs to advise on budget allocations. National Treasury also does expenditure reviews. As such, the NES can contribute to National Treasury's key budgetary and oversight role.

Respondents highlighted that the role of the National Treasury within the NES needs to be strengthened, as shown in Figure 23. More specifically, National Treasury and DPME need to work closer together, particularly in terms of funding evaluations, and funding the improvements in the improvement plans. Some progress has been done by DPME to this end. This is elaborated on in *Section 5.3.*

At provincial level, this would be provincial treasuries and OTPs.[196] Treasury needs to play a more active role in encouraging the assignment of finances from project budgets to evaluation activities and advise on how to make sure evaluation is an affordable element incorporated in all projects and programmes.

5.1.2.6   National Line Departments, Provincial Line Departments, Metropolitan Municipalities, and Municipalities

The NEPF notes that departments are responsible for incorporating evaluations into project management functions as a tool for continuous performance improvement. This is done by using evaluation findings to inform planning and budgeting. The level of involvement of line departments in the NES is open to the discretion of the line departments. Because of this, Figure 23 shows that there is variation in the level of involvement of different departments. The case studies done for this evaluation, provided in Annex 5 of this report show that there are innovator departments (DBE and DSD), early adopter departments (**the dti**), and later adopters **(DJCD)**. This was also found to be the case within provincial departments.

Overall, respondents at both provincial and national level noted the need for there to be better internal linkages between M&E units, managers and implementers. In early adopter departments and provinces, these links are stronger. Programme managers and M&E staff understand the importance of each other's work, where M&E staff provide technical support and guidance, and programme mangers provide their contextual knowledge. In departments where evaluation is less institutionalised, M&E units reported facing challenges with programme managers' inconsistent participation in the evaluation process. This results in a lack of ownership of the process, and ultimately inhibits the extent to which the evaluation findings are used.

The focus of the NES has, since its inception, been on national departments and provinces. While respondents noted that there is the intention of extending the system to the municipal levels, this has not yet been done. It

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[194] (DPSA, 2014)
[195] (DPSA, 2014)
[196] Fort example Western Cape Provincial Treasury is making available R10 million for evaluation for 2018/19 (Zeenat Ishmail)

is however important to note that DPME is currently looking at supporting evaluations in larger metropolitan municipalities such as Tshwane.

5.1.2.7 Parliament

The only reference to Parliament in the NEPF, is that part of the PSC's mandate is reporting to Parliament.[197] The role of Parliament in the NES, has however since evolved. Respondents noted that Parliamentarians interact with the system at different points during the evaluation cycle and that DPME has played an advocacy role in raising awareness among parliamentarians with regards to how evidence generated by monitoring and evaluation can be used to enhance their oversight role. Respondents further noted that the DPME reports to the Public Services committee in parliament and all the evaluation reports are sent to and reported to the relevant parliamentary portfolio committees. Respondents from DPME in particular noted that some Parliamentary committees have expressed an increased interest in evaluation reports and their findings.

Respondents[198] felt that there is a need to consider strengthening the role of parliament (at the national level and potentially at the provincial legislature level), as highlighted in Figure 23, and possibly including parliamentarians in evaluation steering committees. The view is that parliamentarians need a better technical understanding of evaluations to participate in the NES, and to use evaluation to perform their oversight role.

Finally, it is important to note that there have been some strides made in enhancing the role of Parliament in the system. More specifically, CLEAR AA runs a Parliamentary Support Programme which aims to build the capacity of Parliamentarians to use M&E as part of oversight; strengthening legislatures' capacity to monitor their own performance; and developing and sharing best practice on M&E capacity building work within legislatures in the region.[199] While this programme focuses on the region, in 2015/16 the programme focused on legislatures at both the provincial and national levels.[200]

5.1.2.8 Donors

In relation to donors, the NEPF notes that "donor-funded study tours were undertaken to Canada, UK, Colombia, Mexico, USA, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Australia"[201], and that in terms of donor-funded evaluations, the NEPF cautions against parallel evaluation systems and therefore notes that the NEPF should guide donor evaluations in South Africa.

Respondents noted, in line with the above, that donors played a fundamental role in establishing the NES. DfID supported evaluation through the Strengthening Performance M&E Project (SPME) and provided funding for training, quality assessment of completed evaluations and for some evaluations. The World Bank and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) have provided technical support for evaluations by commenting on TORs, methodologies and evaluation reports; and DPME works with 3ie on issues related to evidence-based decision-making, and 3ie has provided funding for impact evaluations in the NES. In addition, the EU provided support to the DPME through the Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD) II. DfID and the EU, in particular, contributed to capacity development in the NES. This is elaborated on in *Section 5.2.1* below.

Respondents, particularly those in low-resource departments and provinces, noted that donors are seen as a potential source for evaluation funding.

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[197] (DPME, 2011)
[198] It is important to note that these respondents did not include Members of Parliament, as the evaluation team was unable to secure interviews with Parliamentarians.
[199] (Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results in Anglophone Africa, 2017)
[200] (Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results in Anglophone Africa, 2017)
[201] (DPME, 2011, p. vi)

5.1.2.9   Evaluation Associations

The NEPF notes that the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) is important In the NES in providing support for the development systems and capacities, and that SAMEA is an important forum for learning and information sharing.[202]

Respondents noted that there is currently a strong relationship between DPME and SAMEA, this was evidenced by the inclusion of SAMEA board members on evaluation steering committees. While the relationship is strong, respondents noted that these two organisations needed deeper collaboration – specifically that M&E officials from across government need to play a more active role in SAMEA events and activities. Furthermore, the strength of the relationship between SAMEA and DPME is seen as a fairly recent development and for that reason, Figure 23 notes that there has been variation in the extent of the involvement of SAMEA in the NES.

Respondents noted that along with CLEAR AA, DPME and SAMEA are contributing to the evaluation community of practice and establishing a common language around evaluation through the development of short courses, and through SAMEA's evaluation conferences.

5.1.2.10   Universities and Training Institutions

The NEPF notes that training courses should be provided by the NSG, universities and the private sector to enhance evaluation capacity in the country. Within universities and training institutions, DPME's relationship with CLEAR AA has been the strongest. CLEAR AA's collaboration with the DPME resulted in the development and rollout of the training courses, namely Managing and Commissioning Evaluations, Deepening Evaluation, and Evaluation Methodology. However, the brief provided for development of these course was not clear with a respondent the impression was that CLEAR AA were responsible for part of the training courses. In reality, CLEAR AA was responsible for all the courses which were seen as insufficient on their own.

Universities were explicitly mentioned as centres for learning where evaluators could develop a theoretical understanding of evaluation which would help address the supply-side (evaluator) constraints faced by the system (the capacity constraints in the system are discussed in more detail in *Section 5.2.1*. below) However, some respondents felt that not enough had been done to include the universities in the system. Departments reported that some staff members had already done postgraduate diploma's through Universities such as the University of Stellenbosch, the University of the Witwatersrand, and the University of Pretoria to gain a deeper understanding of evaluation theory. Currently, as shown in Figure 23, the universities of Cape Town, Fort Hare, Johannesburg, Pretoria, Stellenbosch and the Witwatersrand offer M&E courses.[203] Respondents reported that although the universities are starting to come on board, the progress is slow.

As noted above, the proposed role of the NSG is clear in the NEPF in that it was to be responsible for capacity development across the government. Training has, as noted above, primarily been provided by CLEAR AA. Respondents noted that since the end of the contract with CLEAR AA, the NSG must now become responsible for M&E training in the public sector. Up until now however, the NSG has not effectively fulfilled that function, having trained only 38 people in evaluation in the last six months.[204]

5.1.2.11   Civil Society

The only reference to civil society in the NEPF is around including civil society organisations on steering committees.[205] Respondents noted that where relevant, civil society organisations have been included on steering committees, and have been drawn on for insights into particular programmes or sectors.

A number of respondents noted that the role of civil society should be clarified, and possibly strengthened. In line with this view, a key finding of the literature review was that in developing technical evaluation capacity, in

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[202] (DPME, 2011)
[203] (SAMEA, n.d.) and key informant interview respondents.
[204] The evaluation team attempted to make contact with the NSG, but did not succeed in securing an interview.
[205] (DPME, 2011)

addition to developing this capacity in the public sector, capacity should be developed in civil society.[206] The purpose of this is to ensure that civil society can use and contribute evaluation information.

5.1.2.12 Evaluators

As outlined in the NEPF, good practice would be for independent external service providers to undertake the evaluations guided by a steering committee. These service providers consist of a pre-screened panel[207] of currently 33 organisations of professional evaluators including firms, universities, and research councils.[208]

External evaluators therefore play an important role in the NES. The interviews conducted however, highlighted that the capacity to do evaluation in the in South Africa lies with a small pool of evaluators. Respondents noted that there is a tension that exists between the government and external evaluators. The reasons given for this tension are:

- Service providers are not always well-versed in the context in which the government operates, or its developmental objectives. On the other hand, service providers noted that government processes are too rigid – for example methodology is prescribed in TORs, as opposed to allowing the service provider to suggest a potential methodology that they think would best answer the evaluation questions.

- The evaluation reports produced are not always of a high quality, with departments citing examples of plagiarism and a lack of proof reading the work being sent to departments. However, this problem was not seen to be consistent across all service providers.

Despite these challenges, the consensus across respondents was that the use of external evaluators to enhance evaluation credibility (particularly in terms of independence and impartiality) remains good practice. However, it was recognised that the use of external service providers is not always possible, or not always needed. Potential reasons for this include:

- **Financial constraints:** Departments and provinces are not always able to fund external evaluations; and

- **Evaluation size:** For smaller evaluations, departments and provinces have the capacity and resources to conduct some of the evaluations internally. Furthermore, conducting smaller evaluations internally is seen as more efficient than going through the process of contracting an external service provider.

- **Conducting and evaluation as a mechanism to institutionalise evaluation in the department or province:** A number of respondents noted that in instances where there is little buy-in to evaluation in the organisation, conducting an internal evaluation helps show the value of the process. Institutionalisation of evaluation is discussed in more detail in the organisation section below.

From the supply side (evaluator) perspective, a number of challenges were raised. These challenges are in line with findings from the World Bank's presentation to DPME on an analysis of service providers in South Africa[209] and the preliminary findings provided in the inception report of the *Diagnostic on the Supply and Demand of Evaluators in South Africa[210]*. These findings include that bid requirements being restrictive, particularly for new evaluators and new evaluation companies; that there are limited profit margins for evaluators when conducting evaluation in the public sector; that the management of the evaluation process is time consuming; and that on the one hand, TORs too broad (and not customised for the budget available), and on the other hand the methodologies for evaluations are very prescriptive.

5.1.2.13 Beneficiaries

A few respondents highlighted that beneficiaries are not sufficiently included in the system, noting that 'citizens' voice' is missing from the system. Data and information is typically collected from beneficiaries however, from

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[206] (UNEG, 2012, pp. 10-12).
[207] This use of a panel of professional evaluators was suspended in mid-2017.
[208] (DPME, 2011)
[209] (World Bank, 2014)
[210] (Twende Mbele, 2017)

this point beneficiaries are not included in the development of recommendations or the dissemination of the work.

5.1.2.14 Key Stakeholders in the NES – Key Summary Points

- A view that came out strongly during the interviews is that the roles of DPME and other actors in the evaluation space are not always clear and there is not always a shared vision for the NES. This means that more work needs to be done to clarify the roles of institutions such as universities, SAMEA, centre of government departments, civil society organisations and programme beneficiaries.

- Regarding key stakeholders, the following are a priority for the NES:

- The role of DPME in the NES has evolved from the provisions of the NEPF with the DPME playing a stronger technical role in the NES. While some departments and provinces welcomed this, other (early adopter) departments noted that DPME is over-extending its mandate. Overall, the role of DPME, and its vision, needs to be clarified. This extends beyond the ERU, to include the DPME's internal links to planning.

- The role of DPSA as a stakeholder than can clarify the extent to which M&E officials must focus on evaluation, needs to be strengthened.

- The link between National Treasury, and DPME, must also be strengthened in that there needs to be more systematic ways in which evaluation findings are incorporated with National Treasury's planning for budget allocation.

- The role of the NSG in providing capacity building within the NES, and the funding sources for training in the NES needs to be clarified as soon as possible.

5.1.3 Time and Costs

5.1.3.1 Costs of the NES

Figure 24 below summarises the ERU's budget allocations, by (prescribed) output, between 2013/14 and 2016/17.

DfID contributed to establishing guidelines, capacity building, quality assurance and evaluations. These interventions are important for spreading, deepening and institutionalising the NES. Of these DfID funding activities, capacity and evaluations were somewhat subsumed by DPME's internal budget once DfID funding ended. However, DfID-funded activities like establishing guidelines and quality assurance systems that are important for strengthening the NES, have not been prioritised in ongoing funding. The overall budget increased steadily between 2013/14 and 2015/16, but decreased in 2016/17 which was as a result of the end of DfID funding.

Figure 24 shows that the bulk of the spending was allocated to evaluation funding (Output 4), and less to activities related to spreading, deepening, and institutionalising the NES such as Output 2 (capacity building) and Output 6 (communication). Respondents from the DPME, case study provinces and case study departments (particularly the later adopters) highlighted the need for DPME to play a stronger role in advocating the NES, and building capacity within the system. Going forward therefore, the spread of funding should be more balanced to ensure ongoing momentum through deepening and the institutionalisation of evaluation, which is supported through the full spectrum of outputs.

Figure 24: DPME ERU Budget, 2013/14 - 2016/17
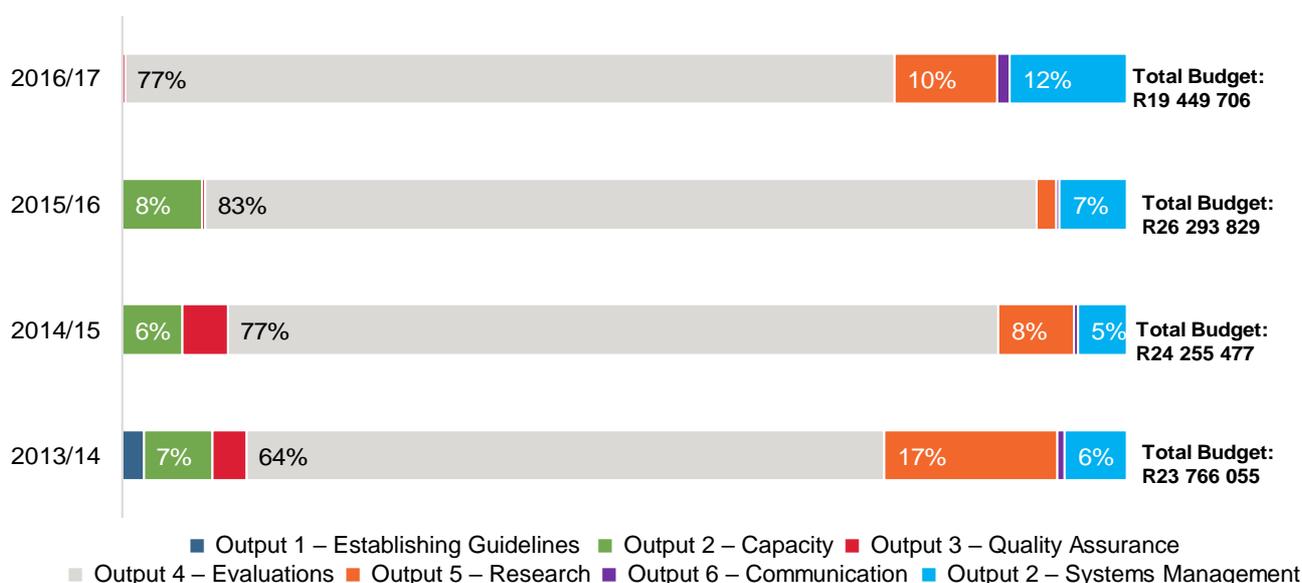
Source: (DPME, 2017d)

The budget allocations, by output and source, between 2013/14 and 2016/17, were:

- Output 1 (establishing guidelines) was a cost during the establishment of the NES, and is thus only reflected in 2013/14 where it accounted for R499 721. This amount was funded by DfID.

- Output 2 (capacity) was funded by DPME and DfID. In 2013/14, all the capacity funding in the budget[211] was provided by DfID; while in 2014/15[212] DPME provided 48% of the funding for capacity, and in 2015/16[213], this figure increased to 53%. Respondents interviewed noted that capacity development remains a key constraint to the development and institutionalisation of the system. Given the importance of capacity development, the budget allocation for this output is proportionally low, and is a challenge for DPME going forward.

- Proportionally, less has been spent on Output 3 (quality assurance) in the ERU's budget, and the bulk has come from DfID funding. DfID contributed 96% of the quality assurance budget in 2013/14[214], and 100% in 2014/15[215] and 2015/16[216]. In 2016/17, DPME funded the full quality assurance budget[217]

- The largest allocation, overall, has been to Output 4 (evaluations). DPME's ERU, DfID and the departments whose evaluation are in the NEP, have all contributed to evaluation funding. In 2013/14 DPME funded 76% (24% came from departmental co-funding) of the total evaluation budget[218]; in 2014/15[219], DPME funded 68% of the evaluation budget (5% came from DfID and 26% from co-funding departments); in 2015/16[220] DPME funded 57% of the evaluation budget (22% came from DfID and 21% from co-funding departments); and in 2016/17[221] funded 61% of the evaluation budget (39% came from co-funding departments). Figure 25 below indicates the budget per stakeholder group on evaluations. As much as total spend has

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[211] Total capacity budget: R1 631 880
[212] Total capacity budget: R1 449 838
[213] Total capacity budget: R2 074 160
[214] Total quality assurance budget: R706 257
[215] Total quality assurance budget: R1 100 256
[216] Total quality assurance budget: R94 507
[217] Total quality assurance budget: R50 000
[218] Total evaluation budget: R15 103 042
[219] Total evaluation budget: R17 590 464
[220] Total evaluation budget: R17 020 739
[221] Total evaluation budget: R14 897 731

decreased, it would seem that co-funding has increased in absolute terms to R7.6 million in 2016/2017. This is a positive indication of departmental interest in the NEP.

Figure 25: Budget by Stakeholder Group per Year, for Evaluations
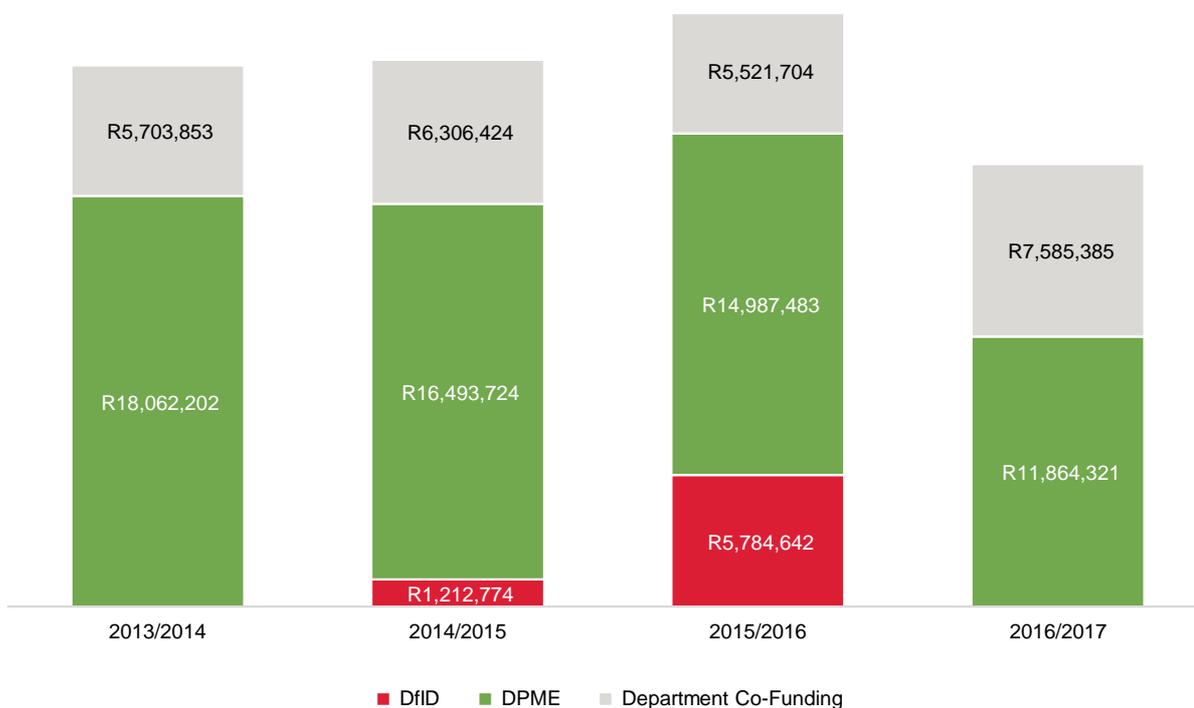
Source: (DPME, 2017d)

- Output 5 (research) was wholly funded by DPME and amounted to R4 089 155 in 2013/14, R1 824 350 in 2014/15, R505 582 in 2015/16, and R1 984 975 in 2016/17.

- Output 6 relates to communication (including conferences). As with Output 5, Output 6 has been wholly funded by DPME. The funding allocated to Output 6 decreased from R180 000 in 2013/14, to R100 000 in 2014/15, and R90 000 in 2015/16. 2016/17 saw an increased focus on the Output with the budget allocation increasing to R250 000.

- Output 7 relates to systems management. With the exception of 2015/16 where DfID provided R32 843 (2% of the total Output 7 allocation), Output 7 has been funded by DPME. While the budget allocation decreased between 2013/14 (R1 465 000) and 2014/15 (R1 180 000), budget allocations for Output 7 have since increased to R1 756 843 in 2015/16 and R2 267 000 in 2016/17.

An important consideration when looking at budgets, is the capacity of the department or unit to use the funding. In assessing this in the context of the NES, the evaluation team looked at the AG's findings for the DPME. The AG's report does not look at the ERU in particular which is why the evaluation team considered the findings for DPME as a whole. Table 18 below shows the DPME has received a clean audit since the 2012/13 financial year. It is worth noting that in the 2015/16 financial year, only 26% of national departments received clean audits, further highlighting that the DPME is a top performer in this regard. [222]

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[222] (Auditor General, 2016)

Table 18: Auditor General's Findings on the DPME

2015-16 audit outcome	2014-15 audit outcome	2013-14 audit outcome	2012-13 audit outcome	2011-12 audit outcome	Findings on specific risk areas (2015-2016)					Unauthorised, irregular as well as fruitless and wasteful expenditure (2015-16)		
					Quality of submitted performance reports	Supply chain management	Financial health	Human resource management	Information technology	Unauthorised expenditure amount	Irregular expenditure amount	Fruitless and wasteful expenditure
green	green	green	green	yellow	R[223]	N[224]	N[225]	yellow	green	-	0.15m	0.35m

Source: (Auditor General, 2016)

In terms of specific areas, the DPME has regressed in terms of the quality of submitted departmental performance reports, while the assessments for supply chain management and financial health, and human resource management are new indicators. DPME has made progress in terms of information technology.

Table 18 shows that irregular expenditure amounted to R150 000 (a decrease from R700 000 in 2013/14), and fruitless and wasteful expenditure amounted to R350 000 in the 2015/16 financial year.[226] The AG's report notes that the irregular expenditure "emanated from procurement transactions concluded without having obtained the required price quotations and non-compliance with local production content requirements."[227] This is not necessarily specific to the DPME's ERU as ERU's bid process is well developed and transparent.

The AG's report commended DPME on its performance noting that the Department's leadership has shown a commitment towards clean administration and governance, and that the "leadership is exemplary and is supported by appropriately qualified staff members".[228] The report further noted that "senior management has responded by designing and consistently implementing sustainable daily and monthly controls over financial and performance reporting."[229]

These findings show that DPME is able to effectively use, and report on, its funding. Furthermore, Table 19 shows the DPME performs well in terms of leadership, financial and performance, and governance indicators. In this table, green indicates "good", and yellow indicates that the DPME is "in progress".

Table 19: DPME's Performance on Leadership, Financial and Performance, and Governance as Provided in the Auditor General's Report, 2015/16

Leadership								Financial and Performance							Governance				
Movement	Effective Leadership Culture	Overall Responsibility	HR Management	Policies and Procedures	Action Plans	IT Governance		Movement	Proper Record Keeping	Processing and Reconciling Contracts	Reporting	Compliance	IT Systems Control		Movement	Risk Management	Internal Audit	Audit Committee	
↑	↔	↓	green	green	yellow	yellow	green	↔	↔	↔	yellow	yellow	yellow	green	green	↔	↔	↔	green	green	green

Source: (Auditor General, 2016)

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[223] Regressed
[224] New
[225] New
[226] (Auditor General, 2016)
[227] (Auditor General, 2016, p. 115)
[228] (Auditor General, 2016, p. 115)
[229] (Auditor General, 2016, p. 115)

5.1.3.2 Evaluation Time and Cost

Drawing on the data provided by DPME on the costs and duration of evaluations, the evaluation team looked at the average duration, average costs of evaluation, by type of evaluation conducted since the formalisation of the NES in 2011. This is shown in Table 20 below[230]. There is considerable variation in costs and duration across evaluation types. For example, the minimum cost for an implementation evaluation was R144 342, while the maximum cost was R4 118 708; and the minimum duration was 2 months, compared to the max duration of 28 months. It is important to note that this variation is a function of the size and scope of the evaluation, in particular, data collection tasks (e.g. field research) versus using internal or existing data.

Table 20: Cost and Duration, by Evaluation Type in Evaluations Conducted since 2011

Evaluation Type	Total No. Evaluations [231]	Cost			Duration (in Months)		
		Average	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Minimum	Maximum
Diagnostic	2	R874 958	R600 000	R1 149 917	7	6	8
Diagnostic / Implementation	2	R653 662	R217 521	R1 089 803	10	3	16
Impact	3	R963 214	R168 482	R2 500 000	9	1	20
Implementation	14	R1 261 517	R144 324	R4 119 707	10	2	28
Implementation / Impact	7	R971 955	R246 692	R1 853 077	6	1	11
Synthesis	2	R320 102	R145 000	R495 205	25	24	25

This information is useful in providing a baseline for the system going forward as it provides a comparator when developing TORs and for reviewing proposals. It is important to continue to track this information in order to assess the progress made in conducting evaluations in the NES.

In addition to assessing evaluation information over the last five years, the evaluation team looked at evaluations prior to the establishment of the NES. While there are a number of differences between those conducted prior to DPME, and those conducted after the establishment of DPME, it is interesting to note that since the establishment of DPME the cost of evaluations appears to have decreased on average. Conversely the time taken to complete an evaluation, on average, has increased slightly – as shown in Table 21 below. This points to potential inefficiencies in the system in terms of the time needed to conduct an evaluation.

Table 21: The Average Cost and Duration of Evaluations before and after the Establishment of the DPME

	Before the Establishment of DPME	After the Establishment of DPME
Average cost of evaluations	R2 385 000	R1 871 000 (↓)
Average duration of evaluations	16 months	17 months (↑)

Related to duration of evaluations, the evaluation team's findings in conducting interviews, found that a broad range of respondents highlighted the length of evaluations as a key challenge. Time delays in evaluations pose risks in terms of the potentially inhibiting the continued relevance of the evaluation, and maintaining the interest and commitment of key stakeholders to the evaluation.

While the paragraphs above, provide a summary of the time taken to complete evaluations, overall, the section that follows look at the time allocations per evaluation phases.

5.1.3.3 Time Taken to Complete Evaluations, by Evaluation Activity

Figure 26 below indicates a summary of evaluation activities as outlined in the NEPF.

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[230] There were a number of evaluations in the repository that were the only ones of their type. These are not included in this table. The evaluation types that are therefore excluded are 1 design evaluation, 1 impact design, 1 design / implementation evaluation, and 1 design and process evaluation.
[231] There are many cases where evaluation types were not specified.

Figure 26: Summary of the Activities in an Evaluation

NEPF Activities

Pre-Design and Design

Implementation

Peer Review and Validation Process

Recommendations and Management Response

Communication of Results

Follow-up

Cabinet Approval

Service Provider Activities

Inception

Design

Fieldwork

Report writing
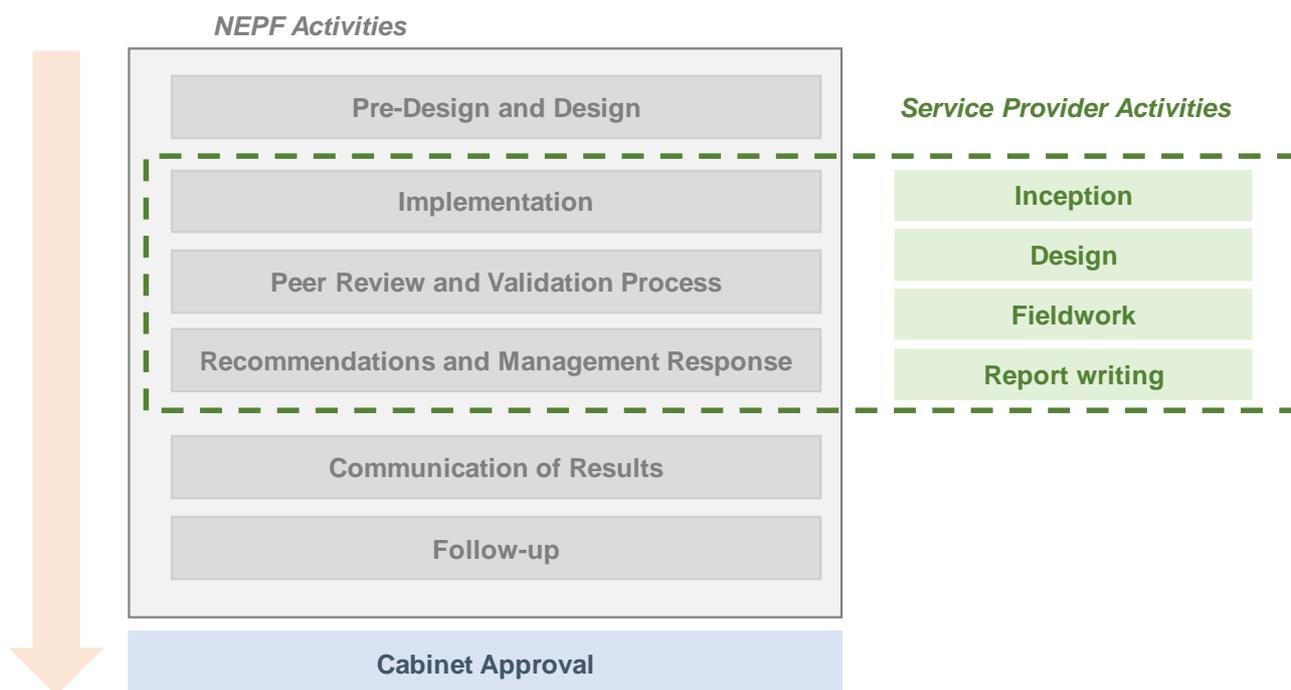
Source: (DPME, 2011)

Figure 27 indicates the average time between start and end days for each NEP from 2011/2012 until 2018/2019, as provided in the Evaluation Management Information System (EMIS). The overall average is 521 days for an evaluation. From 2013/2014 to 2017/2018, the NEP evaluations appear to have been close to this average, and the number of days required for an evaluation followed a near constant trend. As the system becomes more entrenched, it is anticipated by the DPME that for 2018/2019[232], and the years following, there will be a faster turnaround time for evaluations. However, this needs to be tempered with the reality that more complex and complicated evaluations require longer implementation periods. It is interesting to note that the number of evaluations in the NEP peaked 2013/14 and 2014/15. Since then, the number of evaluations in the NEP, has been decreasing. Respondents from the DPME noted that the ERU is planning to include 8 evaluations in the NEP per year, going forward.

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[232] Note: These are the number of evaluations currently forecast for 2018/19. This number is however likely to increase as the NEP for 2018/19 is finalised.

Figure 27: Average Time between NEP Start and End Days
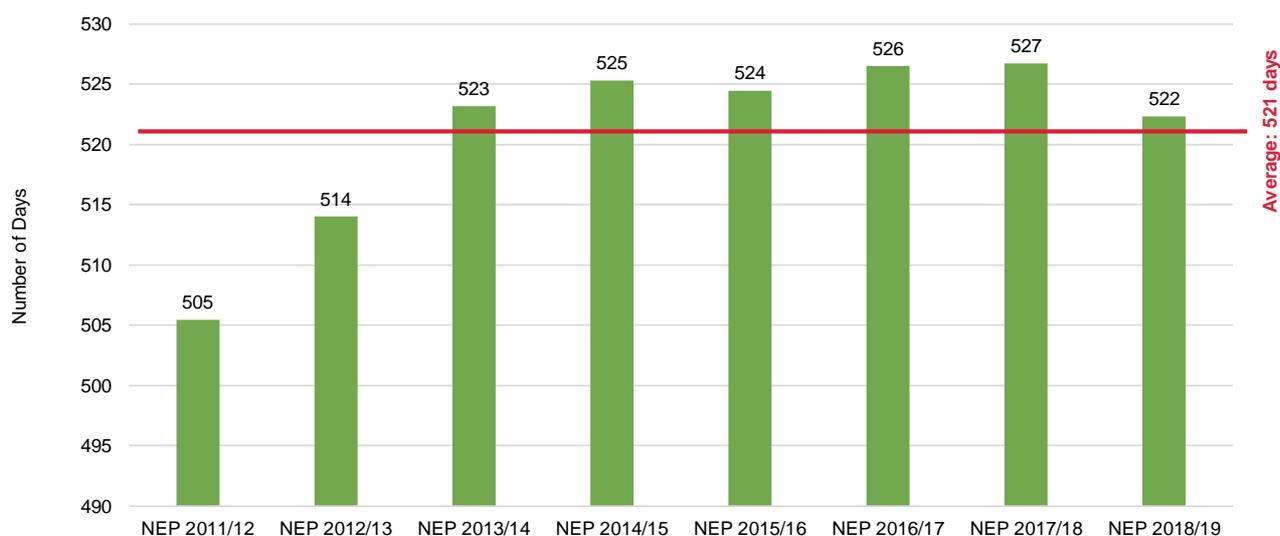
No. of Evaluations	1	7	15	15	12	9	6	2

Source: (DPME, 2017c)

Respondents on both the supply side (evaluators) and the demand side (departments and provinces) noted that the evaluation process is a lengthy process which requires a considerable investment in time. Looking at the time taken to conduct evaluation activities, a considerable amount of time appears to be spent on pre-design and design, and the communication of results. A potential reason for this, is that time is required to attain buy-in for evaluation. In terms of efficiency however, the time spent on communication specifically (as a non-core evaluation activity) can potentially be cut down. This is shown in Figure 28 below.

Figure 28: Overview of Time Spent, by Activities
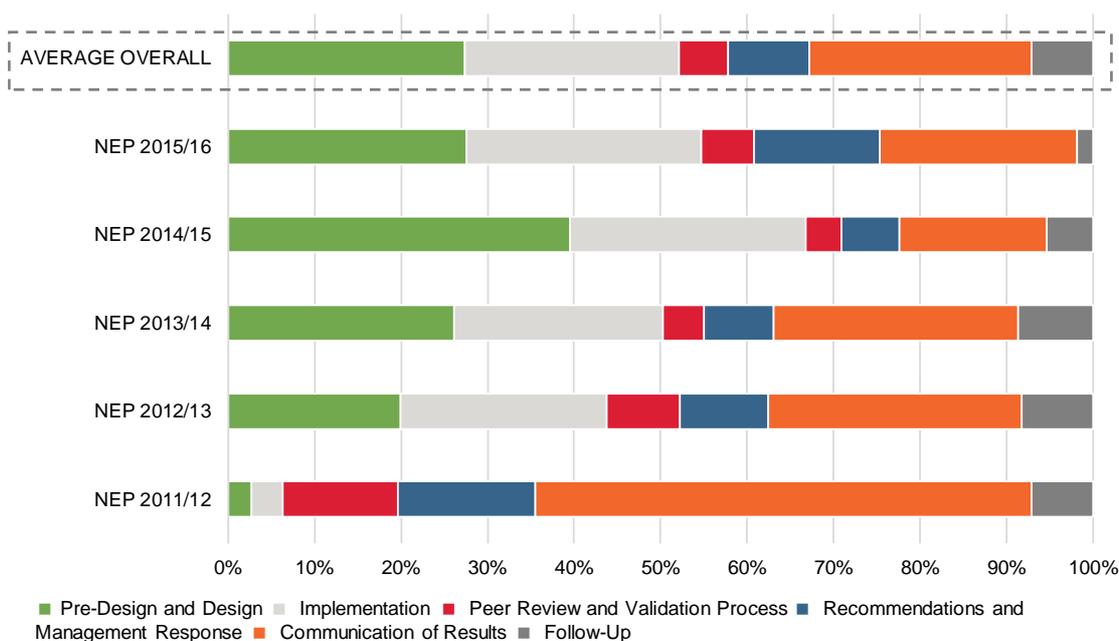
Source: (DPME, 2017c)

By the sub-activities of the evaluation phase, time is spent as follows[233][234]:

- **Pre-Design and Design (Preparation, Developing TORs, and Selecting Service Providers):** This phase is, on average, responsible for a third of the time spent in the pre-design and design phase. However, this has dropped to below 30% in recent years. In contrast, developing the terms of reference has increased from a proportion of roughly 50% of the time spent on pre-design and design, to over 60%.

- **Implementation (Inception, Design, Field Work, and Report Writing):** On average, during the implementation phase, the bulk of the time is spent on report writing, followed by evaluation design, and inception. On average, field work constitutes the smallest proportion of the time spent on implementation. This has been the trend between 2012/13 and 2015/16. The 2016/17 NEP paints a slightly different picture, with proportionally, the least time being spent on report writing and fieldwork.

- **Recommendations and Management Response (Evaluators draw up Recommendations, Users Analyse Findings and Recommendations, and Management Response to Findings and Recommendations):** The three contributing activities to this phase are on average equal contributors to the time spent. However, in recent years, the sub-activity related to users analysing findings and recommendations appears to have occupied less time.

5.1.3.4   Time and Costs – Key Summary Points

- The bulk of the DPME's budget is spent on funding evaluations, while proportionally less is spent on institutionalisation activities such as capacity building and communication. As the NES develops and deepens, institutionalisation becomes more important. Going forward, this spread needs to be more balanced.

- The DPME is a top-performing department in terms of its Auditor General outcomes. This implies that DPME has the capacity to effectively use its funding.

- Respondents on both the supply side (evaluators) and the demand side (departments and provinces) noted that the evaluation process is a lengthy process which requires a considerable investment in time.

- Looking at the time taken to conduct evaluation activities, a disproportionate amount of time appears to be spent on pre-design and design, and the communication of results. The latter specifically (as a non-core evaluation activity) can potentially be cut down to improve the efficiency of the evaluation process.

5.1.4   The Value-for Money of the NES

- **Evaluation Question:** What appears to be the cost-benefit or value-for-money of establishing an evaluation system?
- **Link to the OECD DAC Criteria:** Relevance, Effectiveness and Efficiency
- **Link to the Theory of Change:** Inputs ➜ Activities ➜ Outputs ➜ Outcomes

5.1.4.1   The Cost-Benefit of a Sample of Three Evaluations in the NES

The evaluation team conducted an indicative cost-benefit analysis of the Evaluation of the Funza Lushaka Scheme [235] (DBE), the Implementation / Design Evaluation of the Business Process Services (BPS) programme[236] (**the dti**), and the Evaluation of the Impact of Agricultural Learnership[237] in the Western Cape (WCDOA). The costs and benefits of these evaluations are summarised below.

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[233] (DPME, 2017c)
[234] Communication of results, follow-up and cabinet approval are not divided into sub-activities.
[235] The Evaluation of Funza-Lushaka was an implementation evaluation of the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme, established in 2007 with the goal of attracting greater number of students into the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes in South African universities. The programme is a large-scale programme – during the period covered by the evaluation (2007 – 2013), 23 392 students were funded under the programme, representing on average, 15% of the total ITE enrolment in the period.
[236] The BPS incentive scheme was launched by **the dti** in 2011 to enhance and contribute to South Africa's value proposition as a world-class outsourcing destination for international investors and service providers. The evaluation assessed the efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the BPS incentive scheme, and sought to identify any barriers inhibiting achievement of its objectives. The information gathered has enabled an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the BPS incentive scheme as well as the formulation of corresponding recommendations for improvement.
[237] The primary objective was to evaluate the effectiveness of the learnership programme by identifying success areas and gaps in the programme. Based on the outcomes, recommendations were made for the implementation of strategic changes to further enhance the effectiveness of the learnership programme.

Cost-Benefit of the Outcomes of the Evaluation of the Funza Lushaka Scheme for DBE

The cost-benefit ratio of the outcomes of the evaluation of the Funza Lushaka Scheme is 1:10.23. The costs and benefits, and underlying assumptions are provided in Table 22 below.

Table 22: Summary of the Costs and Benefits of the Funza Lushaka Bursary Scheme Evaluation

Costs / Benefits	Description	Quantity	Value / Unit	Total Value
Costs	Labour – Assistant Director[238]	50 days	R1 302.68	R65 134.10
	Labour – Director[239]	24 days	R2 298.85	R55 172.41
	Labour – Administration[240]	36 days	R957. 85	R34 482.76
	Catering[241]	-	-	R9 000.00
	Direct Evaluation Costs[242]	-	-	R3 000 000.00
	Quality Assessment[243]			R30 000.00
			Total Costs	R3 163 789.27
Benefits	MIS Funding[244]	-	-	R1 500 000.00
	Additional Funding Received for Recommendations[245]	-	-	R3 274 483.00
	Grant Application[246]	-	-	R27 902 913.00
			Total Value of Benefits	R32 677 351.00
			Cost-Benefit Ratio (Benefits / Costs)	**10.23**

Cost-Benefit of the Outcomes of the Evaluation of the BPS Programme for the dti

The cost-benefit ratio of the outcomes of the evaluation of the BPS evaluation is 1:12.85. The costs and benefits, and underlying assumptions are provided in Table 23 below. The labour costs provided below are aligned to the estimates provided by DBE, as estimates could not be provided by **the dti**. These estimates are adjusted for the size of the evaluation. The DBE evaluation was 3.34 times the size of **the dti** evaluation – in terms of cost. The number of days required for the labour costs are therefore divided by 3.34. Furthermore, there were additional benefits such as establishing a legal processing centre. These are considered long-term benefits are therefore, as noted above, not included in this analysis.

Table 23: Summary of the Costs and Benefits of the BPS Evaluation

Costs / Benefits	Description	Quantity	Value / Unit	Total Value
Costs	Labour – Assistant Director	14.96 days	R1 302.68	R19 483.95
	Labour – Director	7.18 days	R2 298.85	R16 504.06
	Labour – Administration	10.79 days	R957. 85	R10 315.03
	Direct Evaluation Costs	-	-	R897 408.00
	Cost of Review of Sector Skills Plan[247]	-	-	R500 000.00
	Quality Assessment	-	-	R30 000.00
			Total Costs	R1 443 711.04

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[238] Quantity based on estimates provided by DBE. Assistant Director salary estimated to be R340 000 per annum, based on data from StatsSA and the INDEED job site which advertises government positions. There are 261 working days per annum. The daily rate is therefore R1 302.68.

[239] Two directors for 12 days each. Quantity based on estimates provided by DBE. Director salary estimated to be R600 000 per annum, based on data from StatsSA and the INDEED job site which advertises government positions. There are 261 working days per annum. The daily rate is therefore R2 298.85.

[240] Three administrators for 12 days each. Quantity based on estimates provided by DBE. Administrator salary estimated to be R250 000 per annum, based on data from StatsSA and the INDEED job site which advertises government positions. There are 261 working days per annum. The daily rate is therefore R957.85.

[241] Based on estimates provided by DBE.

[242] Based on estimates provided by DBE.

[243] Estimated at R30 000 per evaluation.

[244] As a result of the evaluation, additional funding worth R1 500 000 was received from National Treasury for developing a MIS. Funding had previously been turned down, but was approved after the evaluation.

[245] The evaluation improvement plan noted that R3 274 483 for the implementation of two of the 15 recommendations. The funding for 13 of the 15 recommendations was incorporated into the operational plan of the ITE Directorate.

[246] The unit has applied for a grant of R27 902 913 to deliver one of the specific improvement plan activities emerging from the evaluation. This entails linking Grade 12 data with that of post-schooling and measuring the difference and trends in the placement of Grade 12 learners in universities and colleges.

[247] The recommendations from the evaluation included reviewing a sector skills plan. Figure calculated according to the evaluation team's estimation of the market value of this information if it were to be conducted by a contractor (Moody & Walsh, 1999).

Costs / Benefits	Description	Quantity	Value / Unit	Total Value
Benefits	Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Tracking and Job Performance Tracking Systems and Sector Analysis[248] [249]			R18 944 500.00
			Total Benefits	R18 944 500.00
Cost-Benefit Ratio (Benefits / Costs)				**12.85**

Cost-Benefit of the Outcomes of the Evaluation of the Impact of Agricultural Learnership in the Western Cape

The cost-benefit ratio of the outcomes of the evaluation of the evaluation of the impact of agricultural learnership in the Western Cape is 1:7.18. The costs and benefits, and underlying assumptions are provided in Table 24 below. The labour costs provided below are aligned to the estimates provided by DBE, as estimates could not be provided by Western Cape Department of Agriculture. The DBE evaluation cost 13.56 times more than the agricultural learnership evaluation. The number of days estimated for the DBE evaluation are therefore divided by 13.56. The key benefit of the agricultural learnerships evaluation was that it was found that the timing between teaching and practical experience was incorrect. As a result, the programme was changed, and went from accepting 100 learners to only 50 learners which allowed the quality of learnerships to improve.

Table 24: Summary of the Costs and Benefits of the Evaluation of the Impact of Agricultural Learnerships in the Western Cape

Costs / Benefits	Description	Quantity	Value / Unit	Total Value
Costs	Labour – Assistant Director	3.69 days	R1 302.68	R4 801.69
	Labour – Director	1.77 days	R2 298.85	R4 067.31
	Labour – Administration	36 days[250]	R957. 85	R2 542.07
	Direct Evaluation Costs	-	-	R221 160.00
	Quality Assessment	-	-	R30 000.00
			Total Costs	R232 571.07
Benefits	Added Return-on-Investment due to Fewer Failures[251]	-	-	R300 000.00
	Added Benefit to Farmers Sending Workers for Learnerships[252]	-	-	R1 584 000.00
			Total Value of Benefits	R1 884 000.00
Cost-Benefit Ratio (Benefits / Costs)				**7.18**

All ratios of the sample of evaluations are well above zero – this implies the return on evaluations is worth the investment in each case.

Box 5 below provides an indication of the type of data that should be collected for assessing the cost-benefit of evaluations going forward.

Box 5: Data Requirements for Calculating the Cost-Benefit of Evaluations

In conducting a cost-benefit analysis, the following types of information are useful[253]:   **Costs**   • Capital costs: One-off investments, such as new or refurbished buildings and facilities.

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[248] As a result of the evaluation, monitoring KPIs improved to cater for additional services, and differentiated between complex and non-complex jobs. These jobs amount to 37 889 jobs. The evaluation team estimates that monitoring jobs would, based on the team's field work experience, cost R500 per person (or job). The total is therefore R18 944 500.00.
[249] The assumption here is that better tracking of information results in better quality information to be used for decision making.
[250] Three administrators for 12 days each. Quantity based on estimates provided by DBE.
[251] The evaluation team assumed that as a result of higher quality learnerships, less students would fail the training. The evaluation team assumes that the value of this is R300 000. R300 000 is based on the difference between the initial investment's primary return and what would be expected after the programme change (training less learners) was made. If students failed the learnership, then R300 000 was lost outright as a sunk investment. With the re-designed programme, with less students, the assumption is made that there will be less failures as a result of a better quality of learnership. The gain is therefore R300 000.
[252] In terms of wages, the difference between skilled and unskilled labour is R96 000 per annum. The evaluation team assumes that there is a 30% improvement in the odds of farmers getting back skilled labourers from the pool of 50. This equates to 16.5 people transitioning from unskilled to skilled labour. This was then multiplied by the R96 000 to get R1 584 000.00.
[253] (HM Treasury, 2014)

- Revenue costs: Costs which tend to fluctuate in relation to the amount of project activity being undertaken, such as staff salaries.
- In-kind costs: Those inputs that are needed in order to make a project a success, but which the public fiscus will not have to pay for, such as a charity providing their facilities for free. These are counted because there will be an opportunity cost associated with using these resources for project activities.

- **Benefits:**
- Fiscal benefits: Savings to the public sector that are due to a specific project – in this case evaluations.
- Public sector value benefits: Economic and social benefits – this is a measure of the overall value to society and includes: all fiscal benefits except transfer payments such as taxation or social security that just move money from one place to another. Real increases in the quality or quantity of an output can be included, but they are not always easy to quantify or monetise.
- Net growth in the local economy allowing for deadweight, leakage and substitution.
- Wider social benefits including gains to society such as improvements to health; educational alignment; access to transport or public services; and safety or reduced crime.

5.1.4.2 *The Value-for-Money of the NES as a Whole*

In assessing the value-for-money of the NES this section, and as outlined in *Section 2.1.5*, the evaluation team focused on economy, effectiveness and efficiency. The sections that follow look at economy and efficiency in particular, while effectiveness is discussed in *section 5.3* as part of a broader discussion on the impact of the system, and the extent to which evaluations are used.

I. Economy

In assessing the economy of the NES, the evaluation team looked at the ERU's operating budget and the administration of funding within the DPME[254]:

The ERU's Budget

Funding evaluations consistently forms the bulk of the ERU's budget. In 2015/16 the actual expenditure on evaluations formed 83% of the ERU's total expenditure, while in 2016/17, this figure was 77%. DPME's ERU, DfID and the departments whose evaluation are in the NEP, have all contributed to evaluation funding. The DPME funded 76% of the total in 2013/14; 68% in 2014/15; 57% in 2015/16; 61% in 2016/17[255]. The ERU's budget increased from R23 76 055 in 2013/14 to R24 255 477 in 2014/15, and R26 293 829 in 2015/16. The overall budget decreased in 2016/17, to R19 449 706.

Administration of Funding

In assessing the administration of funding, the evaluation team used the AG's findings as an indicator of the strength of financial controls in the DPME. The DPME has received a clean audit since 2012/13, and is a top performer, when compared to other departments. The AG's report commended DPME on its performance noting that the Department's leadership has shown a commitment towards clean administration and governance, and that the "leadership is exemplary and is supported by appropriately qualified staff members".[256] The report further noted that "senior management has responded by designing and consistently implementing sustainable daily and monthly controls over financial and performance reporting."[257] This indicates that the DPME is able to effectively use, and report on, its funding.

Box 6 below outlines the data requirements for assessing the economy of the NES going forward.

Box 6: Data Requirements for Assessing the Economy of the NES

Economy is a measure of the cost of inputs against activities, which is used to establish whether it is possible to reduce the cost of resources used while not reducing the quality of these activities.

- Labour: Salaries of dedicated M&E staff, as well as the salaries of officials that serve on steering committees and the ETWG, and the salaries of programme managers.
- Procurement: The cost of hiring external evaluators to conduct evaluations.

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[254] The details can be found in *Section 5.2.2.* of this report.
[255] Total evaluation budget: R14 897 731
[256] (Auditor General, 2016, p. 115)
[257] (Auditor General, 2016, p. 115)

- Administration and operational costs: ERU costs.
- Management control of input costs: Information on quality assurance, and internal checks and balances.

II.   Efficiency

In assessing efficiency, the evaluation team looked at this in terms of evaluations, and of training, as elaborated on below.[258]

Evaluation Overall

In addition to assessing evaluation information over the last five years, the evaluation team also looked at evaluations prior to the establishment of the NES. This showed that prior to the establishment of the NES, the average cost of an evaluation was R2 385 000. After the establishment of the NES, the average cost of an evaluation decreased to R1 871 000. This points to the NES playing a role in lowering the cost of evaluations. From a duration perspective however, the average duration of an evaluation increased slightly from 16 months before the establishment of the NES, to 17 months after the establishment of the NES. This points to potential inefficiencies in the system in terms of the time needed to conduct an evaluation. This echoes the evaluation team's findings in conducting interviews, where a broad range of respondents highlighted the length of evaluations as a key challenge.

The evaluation team also looked at the potential relationship between evaluation length, cost and quality. This is presented in Figure 29 below. The best fit line in Figure 29 shows that there is a positive relationship between the cost of an evaluation and its length. This is as it should be. The quality assessment scores in Figure 29 are represented by the size of the bubbles. The average score is above 3. While there is a natural relationship between cost and evaluation length, it is evident from Figure 29 that there is no discernible relationship between the length of an evaluation, its cost and its quality.

Figure 29: The Relationship between Cost, Quality and Evaluation Length in the NES since 2011
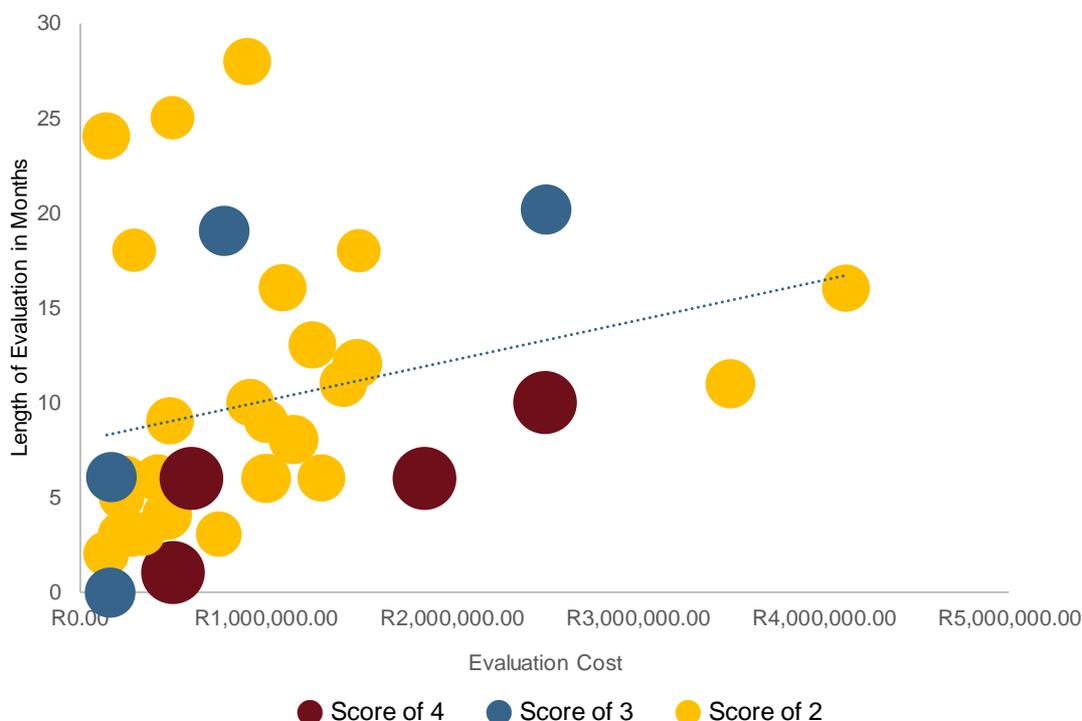
Looking at the cost and duration of evaluations since 2011, the evaluation team found that there is considerable variation in costs and duration across evaluation types. For example, the minimum cost for an implementation

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[258] The details can be found in *Section 5.2.2.* and *Section 5.2.3.* of this report.

evaluation was R144 342, while the maximum cost was R4 118 708; and the minimum duration was 2 months, compared to the max duration of 28 months. It is important to note that the differences in budget would indicate variation in the amount of work required. Evaluations at the lower end of the scale would tend to rely on existing data and require limited field work, while evaluations at the upper end of the scale would tend to be larger, national evaluations.

Training

Between 2014/15 and 2016/17, DPME has coordinated training for 1 369 participants. Of the training coordinated, the bulk of the participants attended the theory of change course, and the EBPM course.

The training conducted has been largely donor funded with the EU contributing R1 105 309 through the PSPPD, to the EBPM course. In addition, a portion of DfID's GBP 2 000 000 for the SPME programme, went towards short courses such the EBPM course and courses on managing evaluations, deepening evaluation, methodology, programme planning, and theories of change. DfID support came to an end in September 2015.[259]

Going forward, capacity development will be funded internally by the DPME. This is evidenced by the increased allocation to capacity in the ERU's budget where in 2017/18 R500 000 has been budgeted for capacity development. This is an increase from the R300 000 budgeted in 2016/17[260] and the R50 000 budgeted in 2015/16.[261]

Drawing on evidence from the interviews and survey conducted for this evaluation, as well as the reporting by EU and DfID, the training coordinated by DPME was seen to be highly beneficial. The theory of change and EBPM courses were noted by respondents to be particularly beneficial:

- Theory of change course: Respondents interviewed noted that learning about, and using theories of change, has been one of the biggest benefits to have come out of the NES. Most respondents commented that the theory of change helps departments, particularly programme managers, to think through their programmes and their underlying logic. There was an acknowledgement that this design stage has developed extensively and that there is now capacity for departments to develop theories of change, without any reliance on external specialists.

- EBPM course: Related to the EBPM course, this course was beneficial in terms of enhancing the knowledge of senior managers on EBPM, as well as a means to indirectly drive demand for evaluation from these senior managers.

Box 7 below outlines the data requirements for assessing the efficiency of the NES going forward.

Box 7: Data Requirements for Assessing the Efficiency of the NES

Efficiency is concerned with the optimal use of inputs to achieve outputs through activities. In the context of the NES, the analysis of efficiency should be conducted at the evaluation level, and then aggregated to get a sense of efficiency of the system.
- The level of achievement against objectives: In the case of the NES, this will be the number of evaluations planned compared to the number of evaluations completed.
- Amount spent in the achievement of outputs against the budgeted amount. This must be tracked at the evaluation level to assess whether evaluations are being completed within budget. In addition to sourcing this information internally, DPME should collect costing information from external evaluators in order to assess the extent to which evaluators complete evaluations within their budgets. The reason for including external is that evaluation budgets are fixed, and unlikely to be adjusted. The internal costs for the evaluators are not however fixed and will provide a good indication of efficiency.
- Experience of delays or expectations in the achievement of outputs: Delays in conducting evaluations must be consistently tracked in terms of the extent of the delays, and the reasons behind these delays.
- Risks to the achievement of outputs categorised by the potential impact and likelihood of occurrence: Potential risks to the completion of evaluation must be documented and ranked.

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[259] (DfID, 2015)
[260] Where R200 000 was actually spent.
[261] Where R0 was actually spent.

- In addition to tracking the above information related to evaluations, the DPME should continue to track the costs of training, and the benefits of training through post-training surveys.

5.1.4.3 Value for Money – Key Summary Points

- The cost-benefit ratios of the three sample evaluations demonstrate that the cost of evaluation, in these instances, is heavily outweighed by the benefits.

- DPME has been commended by the Auditor General on its administration of funding, pointing towards there being economy in the system.

- It is difficult to discern a relationship between the cost, duration and quality of evaluations.

- The theory of change and EPBM courses were found, overall to be very valuable.

- Tracking the costs and benefits of the system as a whole, and of individual evaluations, needs to be done more systematically so that the value of the system can be accurately assessed.

5.2 Capacity Building, Quality Assurance and Communication in the NES

- **Evaluation Question:** How are the specific components of the system (e.g. procurement, quality assurance process, steering committees, training, guidelines, quality assessment system, communication) working nationally and provincially and how can they be strengthened?
- **Link to the OECD DAC Criteria:** Relevance, Effectiveness and Efficiency
- **Link to the Theory of Change:** Inputs ➜ Activities ➜ Outputs ➜ Outcomes

5.2.1 Capacity Building

The NEPF recognised that there is limited evaluation capacity within the government, and externally. The NEPF therefore suggested that in order to address this technical capacity needs to be developed in the DPME and OTPs in order for DPME and OTPs to be able to support departments; evaluations should be outsourced to an accredited panel; short courses should be offered by NSG, universities and private consultants; a community of practice must be developed drawing on SAMEA and an M&E learning network; and international partnerships should be built.

The literature (as highlighted in *Section 3.1.3*), echoing the NEPF, notes that a key component in building a NES is the development of capacity, both in terms of the capacity to demand and use evaluation information; and the technical capacity to supply evaluation. [262] From a capacity building perspective, the following is important in an NES:

- The availability of skilled people to gather, analyse and report on the performance of government policies and programmes;

- Capacity within government institutions and civil society to incorporate and use evaluation information; and

- Non-technical government and civil society staff have an appreciation of evaluation concepts and use. [263]

Through their capacity building plan, DPME has focused on all three of the above. DPME's capacity building plan comprises of:

- **Guidelines and templates:** The DPME has produced 18 guidelines and 9 templates that are updated and revised as necessary and are available online. These guidelines and templates have been developed for use by national and provincial departments, service providers and trainers.

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[262] (UNEG, 2012, pp. 10-12).
[263] (UNEG, 2012, pp. 10-12).

- **The national M&E learning networks and forums:** Evaluation training is provided through the National school of government, universities and SAMEA. Additionally, DPME has established forums for HODs and provincial OTPs to share knowledge and champion evaluation practice across government.[264]

- **Short courses:** DPME offers formal short courses to government staff undertaking evaluations. These courses offer a variety of content and cover the details of what is needed to design, commission, and manage an evaluation. Some workshops are only available to departments who have evaluations in the NEP[265].

- An **Evidence-Based Policy Making (EBPM)** course is offered by the DPME to encourage demand for evaluation, currently focusing at the senior management level (targeted at HODs, DDGs and DGs).

- **Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT):** is an institutional self-assessment tool to assess the quality of management practices in national and provincial departments' management performance areas. It includes a requirement for departments to have planned capacity to manage and conduct evaluations and for relevant staff to be in place. The intention of this standard is to ensure that evaluation practice is institutionalised.[266]

This section first discusses guidelines, training and capacity constraints. The Section on capacity constraints includes a discussion of MPAT.

5.2.1.1 *Guidelines*

Establishing evaluation standards and guidelines is essential in developing a NES.[267] The DPME has produced 18 guidelines[268] and nine templates[269] that are updated and revised as necessary. These guidelines and templates are available online. This section first looks at guidelines in general, and then focuses on the evaluation guidelines that provide information on different evaluation types.

Section 4.1.2 of this report notes that the NEPF provides an overview of six types of evaluations categorised according to the core questions being asked in relation to a results-based management framework[270]. The purpose of this approach was to highlight that evaluations should be done throughout the lifecycle of an intervention and to develop a common language and standard procedures for each type of evaluation.[271] The different types of evaluations were selected based on the purpose and questions of the evaluation, ensuring that there are appropriate evaluation types for the different stage of implementation of policies, programmes and projects.

During the interview process, Government officials and evaluators noted that they find the guidelines helpful in terms of guiding the evaluation process from inception to completion. Respondents that were new to evaluation however noted that they still find the guidelines difficult to understand. Furthermore, it was noted that there the level of awareness of these guidelines across the Government, is low. Respondents for example noted that only departments and provinces that interact with the DPME frequently, are aware of these guidelines.

In the application of the guidelines, the evaluation team found that in some instances these guidelines are applied too rigidly, without regard for provincial or departmental context. More specifically applying the

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[264] (Centre for Learning and Evaluation Results, 2012)
[265] (DPME, 2017c)
[266] (DPME, 2017c)
[267] (UNEG, 2012)
[268] 1. How to Develop TORs for Evaluation Projects. 2. Peer Review of Evaluations. 3. Implementation Programmes. 4. Inception Phase. 5. Management Response. 6. Improvement Plan. 7. Provincial Evaluation Plans. 8. Communication. 9. Diagnostic Evaluation. 10. Design Evaluation. 11. Implementation Evaluation. 12. Impact Evaluation. 13. Economic Evaluation. 14. Synthesis Evaluation. 15. Departmental Evaluation Plans. 16. How to Develop Actionable Recommendations. 17. Toolkit for MPAT Evaluation Standard. 18. Quality Assessment of Government Evaluations. (Available from: https://evaluations.dpme.gov.za/pages/guidelines-other-resources).
[269] 1. Template for Full Report Structure. 2. Template for Evaluation Score Sheet. 3. Logframe Template. 4. SC Appreciation Certificate. 5. Steps in Commissioning an Evaluation by DPME. 6. Template for Evaluation Project Plan. 7. Terms of Reference for Evaluation Steering Committees. 8. NEP Concept Note Template. 9. 1/5/25 Report Structure (Available from: https://evaluations.dpme.gov.za/pages/guidelines-other-resources).
[270] (DPME, 2011)
[271] (DPME, 2011)

guidelines rigidly in lower capacity departments and provinces can be overwhelming to M&E officials in these departments and provinces.

Respondents from both national and provincial departments noted that the NEPF provides adequate guidance for officials that are commissioning evaluations, but that guidance is needed on how to embed a culture of evaluation in a department or province. Furthermore, a number of respondents noted that the NEPF, and its guidelines have been useful in the foundational phase of the NES, there is a need for the NEPF generally, and the guidelines specifically, to be strengthened to reflect the changing context of evaluation in South Africa.

During the interviews with both provincial and national departments, it was clear that respondents find the guidelines on the different types of evaluations useful in assisting departments to understand the different types of evaluations, their purpose, and the requirements. More specifically, and drawing on the case studies conducted for this evaluation, respondents from DJCD noted that they developed their DEP using the DPME's guidelines, and that the department found these to be very useful. DHS noted that they see value in the guidelines in terms of creating a common language related to evaluation.

At the provincial level, respondents from later adopter provinces such as Limpopo and the Eastern Cape noted that they guidelines are helpful, but that it can be difficult putting the theory into practice, or fitting it to their provincial contexts. On the other hand, respondents from early adopter provinces noted that while the guidelines are useful, they would like more flexibility in applying the guidelines, and more scope to include different evaluation types. A respondent from the Western Cape further noted that for departments that are newer to evaluation, it would be helpful to understand what kind of data is required for the different evaluation types.

Figure 30 below shows the NEP evaluations between 2012/13 and 2017/18, by evaluation type.[272] Of the evaluation types, overall, the bulk of the evaluations in the NEPs have been implementation evaluations, followed by impact evaluations, design, a combination of implementation and impact evaluations, diagnostic evaluations, economic, and a combination of implementation and design evaluations. Going forward as the system matures, and more departments and provinces buy into the system it is expected that more impact (as a result of better data through implementation evaluations and improved data management practices broadly), and design evaluations will be conducted (as a result of a better understanding of the need for evaluation throughout the intervention process). A broader range of evaluative information will provide a greater depth of information for decision making and planning.

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[272] This is not the complete list of evaluations in the NEP as some evaluations were not classified by type.

Figure 30: NEP Evaluations by Type, 2012/13 to 2017/18
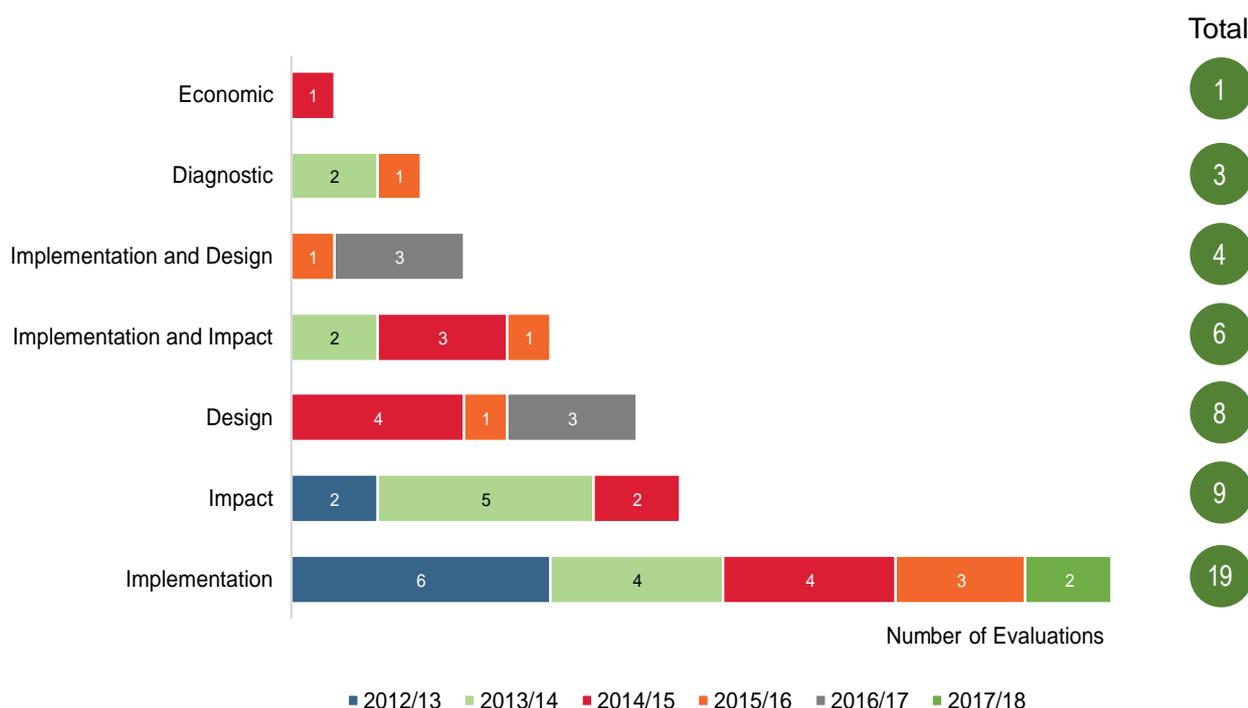
Source: (DPME, 2017)

Figure 30 above is consistent with the interviews that the vast majority of evaluations conducted to date are implementation evaluations. The reasons for this vary. Many of the departments indicated that they selected implementation evaluations because they are interested in finding out about the actual implementation of their interventions, knowing there are challenges to be addressed, while others chose implementation evaluations because they are believed to be easier to manage, or because they do not have the data required for impact evaluations. Figure 30 also highlights that sometimes evaluations are a combination of two types for example, implementation evaluations with design and/or impact questions. Finally, the lack of diagnostic evaluations is reflective of the fact that there is insufficient time and resources allocated to planning interventions.

Respondents from departments that had engaged with the system for longer reported that they require more guidance on impact evaluations and on conducting more complex evaluations such as multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral evaluations. More broadly, respondents noted a concern that the guidelines do not provide enough options for evaluation types, particularly options requiring less time and financial resources. Adding to those external evaluators reported that they would like to see the NES promoting more innovative qualitative approaches such appreciative inquiry, outcomes mapping and contemporary data collection methods such as video dairies and participatory performance reporting, into the prescribed data collection processes that are provided in TORs. External evaluators confirmed that the guidelines provide an accessible entry point for those entirely unfamiliar to evaluation, but there is a tendency to use these types as 'cut-and-paste' and not tailored to the different contexts.

5.2.1.2   *Training*

An overview of the training that has been coordinated by DPME is provided in Figure 31 which shows that between 2014/15 and 2016/17, 1 369 participants were trained. It is clear from Figure 31 that the largest proportion of total participants have been trained on the theory of change, followed by the EBPM course for senior managers.

Training was conducted in prior to 2014/15. In 2012/13, there were 257 participants that went on 12 training courses; while in 2013/14 there were 363 participants that attended training. In both years, the target of 200 was exceeded.[273]

Figure 31: Training Coordinated by DPME between 2014/15 and 2016/17

334 Participants	Theory of Change
172 National Evaluation Seminar	
138 EBPM Course	
104 Concept Note Development Workshop	
96 Design Evaluation	
74 How to Manage an Evaluation	
69 Evaluation Competencies	
64 Provincial Evaluation Seminar	
63 Planning Implementation Programmes	
63 Design Clinic	
60 Evaluation Methodology	
33 Deepening Evaluation	
21 Introduction to Impact Evaluations	
20 Evaluation Methods	
18 Departmental Evaluation Plans	
18 Commissioning an Evaluation in the NEP	
13 Report Writing	
9 Training of Trainers	

Source: (DPME, 2017c)

The training coordinated by DPME has largely been donor-funded:

- As part of the broader Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD), the European Union (EU) provided R1 105 309[274] in funding for the EBPM course.

- A government-to-government agreement was signed with United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DfID) in November 2012. Under this agreement, funding was provided by DfID within a programme called Strengthening Performance Monitoring and Evaluation for the Poor (SPME) which focused on four outputs: 1. Frontline service delivery monitoring, 2. Citizen-based monitoring, 3. Supporting evaluations, and 4. Strategic support facility operational. The funding from DfID amounted to a total of GBP 2 million, of which GBP 660 000 was allocated to evaluation-related activities. These evaluation-related activities included training through a number of courses, namely: the EBPM course and courses on managing evaluations, deepening evaluation, methodology, programme planning, and theories of change. DfID support came to an end in September 2015.[275]

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[273] These figures on not included in the graph because the disaggregated figures prior to 2014/15 were not available.
[274] R105 086 was provided between July 2012 and December 2012. R800 223 was provided between April 2013 and March 2014. R200 000 was provided in September 2016.
[275] (DfID, 2015)

Going forward, capacity development will be funded internally, by DPME. The fluctuation in the amount spent on capacity development (Output 2) is however concerning given that capacity constraints were consistently noted as a barrier for departments and provinces in conducting evaluations. The budget for evaluation peaked in 2015/16 with a total allocation of R2 074 061 (with R969 516 from DfID and R1 104 545 from DPME). In 2016/17 no budget was allocated to capacity development, but R200 000 was re-allocated towards capacity development activities. R200 000 is approximately 15% of the amount spent on capacity building in 2015/16[276]

Going forward, capacity development will be funded internally, by the DPME. This is evidenced by the increased allocation to capacity in the ERU's budget where in 2017/18 R500 000 has been budgeted for capacity development. This is an increase from the R300 000 budgeted in 2016/17[277] and the R50 000 budgeted in 2015/16.[278]

Drawing on evidence from the interviews and survey conducted for this evaluation, as well as the reporting by EU and DfID, the training coordinated by DPME is seen to be beneficial. Respondents interviewed for this evaluation specifically noted that the evaluation learning networks and forums were valuable and that the forums showcased the evaluations that were being done across the Government, as well as the successes and challenges faced during the evaluations. In addition to learning from the experiences of others, respondents noted that it was encouraging to see how evaluations were being used to improve programmes and decision making.

Of those who attended the short courses offered, many had found that the course was useful in building a knowledge base. The survey conducted for this evaluation found that most respondents who had served on steering committees had attended at least one of the short courses coordinated by DPME prior to serving on a steering committee. Of the 35 senior managers who answered the survey, 16 indicated that they attended the Evidence-based Policy Making (EBPM) course and that the course had helped increase their awareness and understanding of the NES.

In addition to the learning networks and forums, the theory of change courses, and the EBPM courses were noted by respondents to be particularly beneficial. Related to the former, respondents interviewed noted that learning about, and using theories of change, has been one of the biggest benefits to have come out of the NES. Most respondents commented that the theory of change helps departments, particularly programme managers, to think through their programmes and their underlying logic. There was an acknowledgement that this design stage has developed extensively and that there is now capacity for departments to develop theories of change, without any reliance on external specialists.

Related to the EBPM course, this course was beneficial in terms of enhancing the knowledge of senior managers on EBPM, as well as a means to indirectly drive demand for evaluation from these senior managers. The evaluation team was able to draw on the survey conducted in this evaluation, as well as the EU and DfID reporting for examples of how participants used what they learned in the EBPM course. These examples are summarised in Table 25 below.

Table 25: Examples of the Benefits of the EBPM Course

Type of Example	Description
Examples of using evidence to inform strategy	A participant used the knowledge gained to develop a traditional affairs and partnerships strategy using evidence sourced at the implementation and beneficiary levels.
	A participant collected evidence to inform the development of a funding model for service centres, as part the National Waste Management Strategy for South Africa. The same respondent noted that "the gathering of the evidence was crucial to help inform the key research questions and the development of the policy and funding options".
	A participant noted that "I have specifically used the theory of change during our strategic planning session earlier this year".

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[276] While R2 074 061 was budgeted for capacity building in 2015/16, expenses amounted to R1 460 526.
[277] Where R200 000 was actually spent.
[278] Where R0 was actually spent.

Examples of evaluations conducted, and measuring success, after the course	A participant noted that after the course they conducted a diagnostic and design evaluation of the services required by the clients of their department.
	A participant noted that they have worked on "ensuring that all projects are adequately documented with clear deliverables and impact desired to ensure that all are monitored and evaluated over time to determine impact in the long term".
	A participant noted that ETWGs have been introduced for various research projects.
	A participant noted that they have benefited from "applying the theory of change to plan an intervention programme that targets the improvement of language and mathematics skills among Grade – 3 learners in selected schools".
Examples of overall benefits of the course	A participant noted that "in my responsibilities to evaluate approval processes on technical work done in the department, the understanding of evidence-based policy making is invaluable".
	A participant noted that "I was able to sell the benefits of the course".
	A participant noted that benefits included "consistently applying the theory of change; thinking more critically about the problem and the evidence, prior to developing the solution".
	A participant noted that "the quality of decisions and policies has improved".
	A participant noted that there is now have a "structured process on evidence gathering for policy changes".
	A participant noted that since the course, there is "improved organisational performance".
	A participant noted that "I am more conscious of the evidence-base for decisions".

Sources: Survey Conducted for this Evaluation, (DfID, 2015), and (European Union, 2017)

While training was, as shown above, found to be a useful foundation, there is a still a noticeable gap in evaluative expertise across the system. Specifically:

- **Training continues to be essential in instances where there is little evaluation experience in an M&E unit.** Although departments have M&E units and M&E officials, respondents noted that staff in these positions were often new, had very little evaluation experience and were learning by doing. The on-the-job training provided staff with practical training, but this was only occurring where one of the colleagues within a particular unit had evaluation experience, and was not present where none of the staff had existing evaluation experience.

- **There is a need for training to be deepened.** Respondents indicated that that were aware of the elements of the NES (such as the NEPF, guidelines and templates, and DPME training courses), and that they had either had exposure to, or directly participated in using them. Many respondents stated that they did not believe that a short course was enough to upskill sufficiently to do their job well, or even adequately, and that the training needs to be deepened. An increasing number of M&E officials have also opted to build their skills through alternative avenues such as attending university courses. However, this option requires staff to take time off work.

- **More training needs to be provided to senior staff members.** Senior staff were further highlighted as staff members who are in need of M&E training. The training should cover the basics, to help senior staff understand the evaluation process, its use and benefits. M&E officials stated that the use of evaluation and the implementation of recommendations is often driven by programmes managers or senior staff. By increasing their technical evaluation expertise, it is the hope that the demand for evaluations will increase (as noted above). An understanding of the evaluation process will also help shift the view of evaluation from being punitive to being a useful programme management tool.

- **More training opportunities should be provided to programme managers.** Respondents suggested that to build an effective NES, evaluation training needs to extend to officials who are traditionally outside of the NES, such as programme managers. Currently only the planning implementation programmes and design evaluations, applies to programme managers. Providing more training to programme managers to familiarise them with evaluation is seen as beneficial because programme managers have significant influence over the budgets of their programmes and funding for evaluation is typically drawn from these

budgets. For programme managers to buy into evaluation, they need to be the primary target audience in stimulating and encouraging demand.

In addition to developing the capacity to demand and use evaluations, a NES needs to develop the capacity to supply evaluations, as shown in Figure 8: Evaluation Demand, Supply and Need in a National Evaluation System in *Section 3.1.1.* of this report. Within the NES, while internal skills are being developed, respondents noted that departments and provinces are reliant on a small pool of evaluators to conduct external evaluations. Using an external evaluator has the advantage of outsourcing evaluation to a service provider who already has noted evaluation expertise (in theory). By outsourcing evaluations, departments and provinces overcome time and capacity constraints that are faced internally (if budget is made available). However, in some cases the capacity of external evaluators was raised as not being sufficient to serve government's evaluation needs. Respondents, for example noted that part of the problem was that external evaluators do not specialise in public sector evaluation and are not familiar with public sector policies.

Furthermore, respondents raised concerns about external evaluators' level of technical evaluation skills and contextual knowledge. Respondents from departments and provinces, for example, felt that evaluations would be of a better quality if the service provider was an expert in the selected sector that the evaluation was being conducted in. Furthermore, a number of respondents noted the external evaluators did not always understand what was feasible to propose as recommendations to the Government. As such respondents stated that in cases some evaluation recommendations could not be used.

5.2.1.3 Capacity Constraints

While considerable capacity building efforts have been undertaken, capacity constraints remain a key challenge in the NES. Capacity constraints were found across the system, along with multiple solutions that had been used to increase evaluation capacity within the system. Interestingly, no respondent pointed to a solid capacity building plan that had been implemented, rather the impression from the respondents was that the current capacity building was done on an *ad hoc* basis. Capacity-related challenges that were highlighted during the interview process include:

- Early adopter departments and provinces tend to have better evaluation expertise, and opportunities for on-the-job training, while the converse is true of departments and provinces that are newer to the system. There is therefore a considerable skills gap across departments and provinces.

- When departments and provinces are hiring M&E staff, respondents noted that there do not appear to be enough skilled people to fill these positions. Furthermore, job descriptions do not place enough emphasis on what skills are needed to sufficiently conduct evaluation tasks. There is therefore the risk that candidates that are selected are not adequately skilled to complete evaluation work.

A practical manifestation of capacity challenges is in the balancing of monitoring and evaluation practices within the NES. South Africa's NEPF clearly distinguishes between monitoring and evaluation. In the NEPF, evaluation is defined as "the systematic collection and objective analysis of evidence on public policies, programmes, projects, functions and organisations to assess issues such as relevance, performance (effectiveness and efficiency), value for money, impact and sustainability, and recommend ways forward".[279] On the other hand, monitoring "involves the continuous collecting, analysing and reporting of data in a way that supports effective management. Monitoring aims to provide managers with regular (and real-time) feedback on progress in implementation and results and early indicators of problems that need to be corrected".[280] The NEPF emphasises the importance of monitoring and evaluation individually, but also how complement each other. South Africa's M&E system has historically focused strongly on monitoring, which is understandable given the need for increased accountability.

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[279] (DPME, 2011)
[280] (DPME, 2011)

The relationship between monitoring and evaluation is prone to conflation. In general, monitoring is afforded a greater priority for departments and provinces, taking the bulk of resources, both human and financial. This is driven by a number of compliance-driven monitoring and reporting tasks such as Annual Performance Plans (APPs), quarterly reporting to Treasury, reporting to the Auditor General, and completing the Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT). The general consensus is that this imbalanced perspective is due to that fact that decisions are "…biased on spending, therefore biased to monitoring. This is partly because it was driven from National Treasury. Evaluation was neglected".

While there are certainly capacity challenges, it is important to note that the system has experienced rapid growth in terms of capacity in a short period, which is a notable success of the NES. An increasing number of departments both nationally and provincially are staffed with people who can conduct and manage evaluations in the public sector. This is evidenced by improving MPAT scores in the system. From a capacity perspective, a score of 2 indicates that the departments have planned capacity to conduct / manage evaluations. In 2015 22 departments scored 2, and above (and therefore had capacity to conduct / manage evaluations). Positively, in 2016, this figure increased to 27, indicating that gains are being made at the departmental level.

Turning to the overall MPAT scores of the provinces, in 2015 five provinces scored 2 and above; while in 2016 this figure increased to seven. Again, highlighting that gains are being made in capacity development. It is however important to that in the interviews conducted, respondents highlighted that improvements in scores do not necessarily translate into improvements in evaluation practice. For example, while Northern Cape, Free State, Limpopo and Mpumalanga scored higher than, evaluation practice in these provinces is in its infancy.

The reason for including these scores in this report is because, as outlined above, the OTP is central to coordinating and spreading evaluation across the provinces. In 2015, five of the nine provincial OTPs score less than 2 in the MPAT assessment. In 2016, only Mpumalanga scored less than two. This points to improvements in the capacities of the OTPs at the provincial level.

5.2.1.4   Capacity Building – Key Summary Points

- Capacity development has been a large focus of the NES, with provisions having been provided in the NEPF. Capacity development is, as shown in the literature review, a key element of building an evaluation system.

- DPME's capacity building plan has been broad, and included establishing guidelines and templates, promoting learning networks and forums, short courses, and developing MPAT.

- DPME has developed 18 guidelines and 9 templates. Overall, these have been very helpful to departments and provinces. Newer evaluating departments and provinces however noted that the guidelines and templates are difficult to put into practice when you are new to the field. On the other hand, departments and provinces with more experience suggested that the guidelines need to be more flexible, and that additional guidelines are needed for undertaking complex evaluations and different kinds of evaluations.

- 1 989 participants undertook training between 2012/13 and 2016/17. Overall, respondents from key the key informant interviews, and from the survey conducted, found the training provided very useful. A number of respondents highlighted the importance of "on-the-job" training, and more experienced officials noted that deepening their training would be useful.

- While DPME has made progress in terms of capacity development, this area, as noted in the interviews conducted, remains a priority area of development in the NES. There is a concern related to budget allocation to capacity building. The amount spent on capacity building has decreased considerably since DfID funding ceased. There is furthermore, a concern about training since DPME's partnership with CLEAR AA ended. The intention was for the training to be moved to NSG. NSG has however only trained 38 officials in evaluation over the last six months (2017). There is therefore a concern that NSG cannot meet the need or demand for evaluation training.

5.2.2   Quality Assurance

At the institutional level, setting up quality assurance systems is essential to developing a NES.[281] A central aim in establishing quality assurance mechanisms is to ensure evaluation credibility. The NES has put several systems and initiatives in place to safeguard the credibility of evaluations and to maximise the likelihood of high quality evaluations. These systems and initiatives include:

- The NEPF's provision that evaluations should be conducted by external evaluators; and

- The development of evaluation process guidelines which include provisions for the development of concept notes, guidelines on terms of reference, design clinics to start conceptualising the theory of change, the DPME's directors being part of NEP evaluations; steering committees, peer reviewers, and quality assessment.

This section begins by looking at quality assurance during the evaluation process, and then proceeds with a discussion on the peer review and quality assessment functions of the quality assurance system.

5.2.2.1   Quality Assurance during the Evaluation Process

Once evaluations have been selected for inclusion in the NEP, a theory of change workshop and an evaluation design clinic is held, using experienced national and international evaluators to support evaluation teams in developing theories of change and designing evaluations. The products of these workshops include a draft theory of change which is refined by the external evaluators when they undertake the evaluations, an outline Terms of Reference (TOR) and a summary of the evaluation to go into the NEP.

Despite these workshops, respondents still mentioned that TORs are not as strong as they should be, and often problems arise when an evaluation is underway and it is clear that there needs to be a scope change. Challenges arise on both the side of the commissioner and the external evaluators which can create a tense working environment that distracts from ensuring that an evaluation is of a high quality, given the context and data availability.

5.2.2.2   The Peer Review System

The NEPF makes provision for a peer review mechanism for the NES, and Guideline 2.2.2 provides further details on the purpose and operationalisation of the peer review system. The peer review system was introduced as an additional quality management mechanism through different stages of the evaluation. The concept is that steering committee members nominate two independent peer reviewers – one to serve as a methodology expert and the other to advise on content. While the DPME guideline on the peer review system notes that peer review should be done throughout, in practice, peer reviews are often done at the end of the process.

There was a general consensus from respondents that the peer review system is in principle, a useful and valuable process, contributing to the production of better quality evaluations. However, the peer review system needs strengthening to be able to realise its full potential. There have, for example, been challenges with the quality of the peer reviewers' inputs, the way in which peer reviewers are selected, and the stage at which peer reviewers get involved in the process. The latter point is particularly important in that bringing peer reviewers in at the end means that it is too late to address any methodological issues. From the perspective of peer reviewers, a number of respondents noted that the honorarium offers too little, and may therefore be a disincentive for peer reviewers considering the amount of work expected.

A review of the peer review system was completed in November 2015. The findings of this review are in line with the findings of this evaluation. Recommendations from November 2015 were incorporated into the updated current peer review guideline. There does not however appear to have been considerable progress since then and many of the same challenges remain.

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[281] (Segone, 2013)

5.2.2.3   Quality Assessment

DPME has developed a quality assessment tool for evaluations done in the NES. The quality assessment tool is a web-based system, and is based on evaluation standards defined in the NES which were developed in 2012/2013. The Quality Assessment (QA) tool includes specific indicators across different assessment areas and phases of an evaluation. This is reflected in Figure 32 below. To date, 158 evaluations have been quality assessed, 93 of which were evaluations completed over the period between 2006 and 2013 and 65 were evaluations completed between 2013 and 2016.

Figure 32: Summary of DPME Quality Assessment Standards

PHASES			
Planning and Design	Implementation	Reporting	Follow-up Use and Learning
ASSESSMENT AREAS			
• Quality of TOR • Adequacy of resourcing • Appropriateness of the evaluation design and methodology • Project management	• Evaluation ethics and independence • Participation and M&E skills development • Methodological integrity • Project management • Completeness of the evaluation report • Accessibility of content	• Robustness of findings • Strength of conclusions • Suitability of recommendations • Acknowledgement of ethical considerations	• Resource utilisation • Evaluation use

Quality assessments are done by independent reviewers. There is an opportunity for steering committee members and the evaluation service provider to respond to the assessor and give inputs. The quality assessment of evaluations involves an application of a Likert-type rating scale. This scale is used to rate evaluations across the above listed standards – the scale ranges from one to five where one is very poor, and five is excellent.

In order to measure the quality of evaluations being produced, the DPME does quality assessments on evaluations. These assessment scores are reported on when evaluations are tabled in Cabinet and gives users a repository an idea of the validity and reliability of evaluation findings. According to the DPME's evaluation management information system (EMIS), A total of 159 evaluations have been quality assessed. Of these, 27% were provincial evaluations, 53% were national evaluations, 19% were national evaluations in the NEP, and 1% were non-governmental evaluations. Quality assessments are seen as an important indicator of whether evaluations in the system are improving over time. It is difficult to discern a trend (see Figure 33) in terms of evaluation quality assessment scores, perhaps as the NES is currently only five years into implementation. It is however worth noting, that on average, national evaluations that are in the NEP, perform better.

Figure 33: Average Quality Assessment Score, by Evaluation Start Year (2012 - 2015)
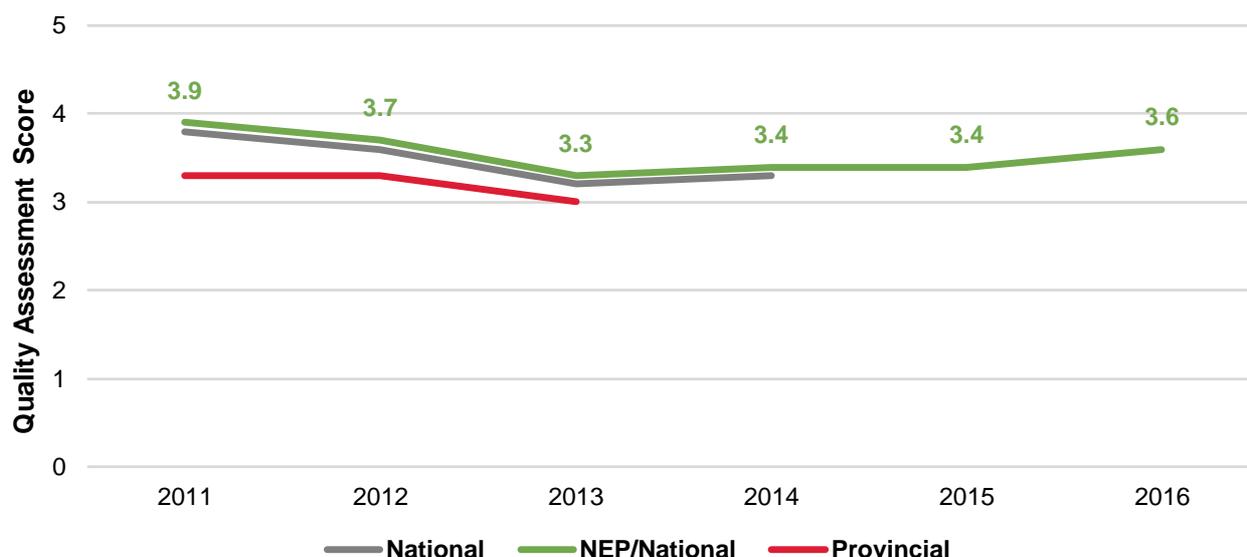
Source: (DPME, 2017)

When highlighting the benefits of the quality assessment system, respondents noted that quality assessments worked particularly well where there was communication between the assessors and the programme managers, external evaluators and other key members of the steering committee.

Respondents highlighted a few challenges in the quality assessment system. One of these related to the technical abilities of the assessors. Respondents from some departments felt that the quality assessors did not have any sufficient sector knowledge or in some instances, sufficient evaluation technical knowledge. In addition, some questionable scores were mentioned by respondents. While it is the responsibility of the relevant ERU director to interrogate the report; often the reports come at the end of a lengthy evaluation process, and as a result the directors have moved on to their other duties, and are not always interrogating the detail of the quality assessments sufficiently.

When asked how the quality assessment process could be strengthened, respondents suggested that internal training be conducted so that government officials are also able to do quality assessments.

5.2.2.4   Quality Assurance – Key Summary Points

- The quality assurance mechanisms of the NES are important for the credibility of the evaluations coming out of the NES, and the extent to which these evaluations can be used.

- Related to the peer review system, there was a general consensus from respondents that the peer review system is in principle, a useful and valuable process, contributing to the production of better quality evaluations. Respondents however noted that peer reviewers are not always included from the beginning of the evaluation which can cause challenges later. Peer reviewers noted that the compensation for peer reviewing is too small for the amount of work required. DPME has conducted a review of the peer review system and the findings from this review were incorporated into an updated peer review guideline, however; are not implemented.

- A total of 158 evaluations have been quality assessed. Quality assessments are seen as an important indicator of whether evaluations in the system are improving over time.

> • Respondents highlighted that the quality assurance mechanisms worked best when there was communication between the assessors, the programme managers, external evaluators and other key members of steering committees.

5.2.3 Communication

Within the communication focus of the DPME, there are 11 work areas, as shown in Table 26. Table 26[282] draws on quarterly evaluation reports submitted within the ERU to assess the level of activity[283] for each work area between Q1 2014 and Q3 2015. The scale Table 26 ranges from no activity (⬜) to high levels of activity (⬛). It is clear from the below that considerable effort has been put into the ERU conducting presentations related to the NES nationally, and internationally, and in communicating evaluation results to the public through a number of different types of media including the DPME newsletter. Furthermore, ERU has done a fair amount of work in terms of conferences and exchanges (such as hosting the annual National Evaluation Seminar), stakeholders and countries, and the development of publications. Related to the latter, DPME notably contributed to a special edition of the African Evaluation Journal on South Africa's NES. The issue consisted of 12 articles and was downloaded 20 965 times.[284] Table 26 also shows that more work is required in providing updates to Parliament. This relates to *Section 5.1.2* above which notes that Parliament needs to play a stronger role in the NES.

Table 26: Indication of the Number of Communication Activities taken per Quarter between 2014 and 2015

Work Area	Indication of Level of Activity per Work Area							
	Q1 2014	Q2 2014	Q3 2014	Q4 2014	Q1 2015	Q2 2015	Q3 2015	Q3 2015
Presentations								
Communication of Evaluation Results								
Advocacy and Communication around Evaluations								
Website								
Conferences and Exchanges								
Stakeholders and Countries								
Development of Publications								
Evaluation Update								
Update to Parliament								
FAQs								
Communication Strategy								

Source: (DPME, 2017e)

Table 26 shows that the DPME has put work into developing their website. In assessing the effectiveness of this work, the evaluation team looked at website data collected between April and September 2017. Over this period the pages on the site were viewed 12 064 times. Of these, 73% were unique views which means that at least 8 000 individuals visited the page for the first time, while 4 000 views were repeat visitors. Weekly, we can see that on average 123 people view the site, while monthly, this figure is 636 people. This indicates that there is consistent traffic to the page.

Of those that visited the site, the most visited page (apart from the landing page) is the page that hosts links to the DPME's guidelines and templates. This aligns to the findings from the interviews, where respondents noted that they found the guidelines and templates helpful. It is also interesting to note that the actual evaluation reports are among the most viewed pages on the site with users spending between 30 seconds and five minutes engaging with the evaluations' summary content. The evaluation with the highest number of views is the "Impact and Implementation Evaluation of the Social Housing Programme", which had 277 views, and average engagement time of two minutes, and 47 seconds between April and September 2017. However, the evaluation that users spent the most time on was the "External Summative Evaluation Study on the Social Responsibility

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[282] Information on communication after 2015 was provided in a different format in that the information was aggregated for the quarter. It is for this reason, that these quarters are not included in the table. They are however expanded on in the text where relevant.
[283] To assess the level of activity, the evaluation team counted the number of activities per work area, and then adjusted the number of activities according to how many focal areas the work area had. For example, there were a number of focal areas under "communication of evaluation results" than in "website". The former would then naturally have more activities. This was accounted for in the analysis of the data.
[284] (DPME, 2017e)

Programme". Users that viewed this page spent an average of seven minutes and 43 seconds engaging with the page.

The majority of people that visited the page were South African. There were, in addition users from the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Australia and India. This indicates that the information on the page is of interest outside of South Africa.

In addition to the communication work areas outlined above, respondents suggested that additional work needs to be:

- The DPME needs to improve its communication strategy both in the public domain and through internal government networks. In this way, other actors such as the media can participate in the system and feed information back to the public.

- Given that the NES is currently a government-wide system, internal communication within government networks needs to be improved.

- Government departments reported that they found it useful to learn from one another. Furthermore, having access to each other's evaluations showcases the benefits of evaluations. Frequent communication about national, provincial and departmental evaluations provides an alternative channel, other than government websites, where evaluations can be accessed. These findings highlight the need for more informal, information sharing networks.

5.2.3.1   *Communication – Key Summary Points*

- The DPME has developed a communication strategy, and has done a considerable amount of work in terms of conducting presentations related to the NES, communicating results through the media and its newsletter, conferences and exchanges, and the development of publications.

- DPME has not done very much regarding communicating with Parliament on evaluations over the entire history of the NES, more focus has emerged in recent months.

- The DPME website was visited 12 064 times between April and September 2017. The most visited page on the site, is the page that hosts the links to the DPME's guidelines and templates. Guidelines and templates were noted by respondents as particularly useful elements of the NES.

- Evaluation report pages were also among the most viewed, showing that users are interested in the content of the work.

- While a lot of work has been done in terms of communication, respondents noted that a number of areas should be strengthened. These include the need to work more through the media, and the promote the sharing of learnings (formally or informally) within the public sector.

5.3   **Impact of the National Evaluation System**

- **Evaluation Questions:** Is there initial evidence of symbolic, conceptual or instrumental outcomes from evaluations? If evaluation findings are not being used, why are they not?[285] What evidence is there of evaluations contributing to planning, budgeting, improved accountability, decision-making and knowledge? Is there evidence of other unintended outcomes or benefits from the evaluation system, e.g. in raising the importance of evidence within departments?
- **Link to the OECD DAC Criteria:** Impact
- **Link to the Theory of Change:** Outcomes → Impacts[286]

In assessing the impact of the national evaluation system, this section looks at evaluation use in the NES by focusing on mechanisms for use in the system (*Section 5.3.1.1*); tracking use in the system through improvement plans (*Section 5.3.1.2*); the nature of recommendations provided in evaluations (*Section 5.3.1.3*);

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[285] Focus in particular on NEPs from 2012/13 and 2013/14, as well as early evaluations in the Western Cape and Gauteng.
[286] Note about it being impact in general but in this instance, too early for proper impact so looking at outcome to impact.

and current use in the system (*Section 5.3.1.4*). This Section concludes by outlining the unintended benefits of the NES (*Section 5.3.2*).

5.3.1   Use in the National Evaluation System

5.3.1.1   *Mechanisms for Use in the National Evaluation System*

Steps have been taken towards improving results through a greater focus on the use of evaluation results. Reflective practices have been entrenched in government work and these include:

- The feedback loops in the outcomes information by departments and DPME;

- Focusing on making results more transparent as stated in the NEPF;

- Greater emphasis on involving the end-users when commissioning evaluations and establishing steering committees for evaluation; and

- The feedback loops to Cabinet through the outcome reporting and presenting final evaluations. [287]

This demand for greater use of evaluation findings did not start with the implementation of the NEPF. Rather, this dates back to 2009 when a report entitled 'Improving Government Performance' was published. This report stated that evaluation must drive instrumental data use which is geared towards improving service delivery in all spheres of government.[288] In contrast, historically, annual progress reports and output indicators were reported to National Treasury and the Auditor General, but not used. This is sometimes referred to as a culture of *malicious compliance.*[289]

The NES was designed to promote use. DPME has invested in creating an enabling environment for the use of evaluation findings. These initiatives include:

- **Training** targeted at government M&E staff, programme managers, and senior managers. The training focuses on why evaluation is important, how to commission and implement evaluations and how to use evaluation findings.

- Using **guidelines** that support use, including guidelines on how to develop terms of reference, how to develop a management response, and how to develop an improvement plan.

- Evaluation **standards and competencies** to ensure that there are good standards to benchmark against.

- Evaluation **quality assessments** once evaluation reports have been completed.

Upon completion of each evaluation, the custodian department has an opportunity to respond to the recommendations, using the DPME guideline of formulating a management response.[290] The department (or departments) records all the recommendations that they agree with, as well as any areas of disagreement.

The management response letter is signed by the relevant DG and is then used as a basis to develop the improvement plan using the guideline on how to develop an improvement plan.[291] This is a plan to guide the department's implementation of the recommendations, including the department's allocation of responsibilities, budgets and timing. The improvement plan is then monitored by DPME for a period of two years.

The evaluation reports and improvement plans are presented to senior managers in the relevant department(s), the relevant sector cluster, the Cabinet committee, Cabinet, and Parliament. After this process and the final approval by Cabinet, the reports are made public on the DPME website and communicated with relevant stakeholders.

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[287] (Goldman & Porter, 2013)
[288] (The Presidency, 2009)
[289] (CLEAR, 2012)
[290] (DPME, 2014b)
[291] (DPME, 2014a)

5.3.1.2   *Tracking Use – Improvement Plans*

The work of DPME is seen as a potential enabler of use, with a respondent noting that the presence of DPME enhances the credibility of the evaluation, and pushes the improvement plan forward. The use of the improvement plan system is seen as a key element in enhancing use in the system and is seen as one of the key benefits that NES has brought about. It is however important to note that there is currently no mechanism to mandate the creation of, or funding of an improvement plan.

As noted above, improvement plans are a key mechanism for ascertaining the level of use of evaluation findings. According to the DPME, there are currently 25 evaluations with an improvement plan in place. These are outlined in Table 27 below. In the table below, the 'reports' referred to are the reports that give an update on the improvement plan. These reports should typically be submitted every six months. Of the 20 improvement plans that have been submitted within the NEP:

- No tracking reports have been submitted for eight evaluations;

- One tracking report has been submitted for two evaluations;

- Two tracking reports have been submitted for two evaluations;

- Three tracking reports have been submitted for three evaluations; and

- Five tracking reports have been submitted for four evaluations.[292]

Table 27: Evaluation Improvement Plans

Evaluation Year	Evaluation Title	Report Status / Next Report Due	No. Reports Received
2011	Diagnostic review of early childhood development (ECD)	Completed	4
2012	Evaluation of business process services programme	Completed	4
2012	Impact evaluation of Grade R	Report 4: 31/01/2017	3
2012	Implementation evaluation of Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP)	Completed: 30/01/2016	4
2012	Implementation evaluation of nutrition programmes addressing children under five years old	Report 1: 05/03/2015	0
2012	Implementation evaluation of urban settlements development grant (USDG)	Report 2: 07/10/2016	1
2013	Evaluation of Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP)	No due dates on system	0
2013	Evaluation of Technology and Human Resources for Industry Programme (THRIP)	Report 3: 28/02/2017	2
2013	Evaluation of the land restitution programme	Completed: 30/01/2016	4
2013	Evaluation of the Support Programme for Industrial Innovation (SPII)	Report 3: 31/07/2016	2
2013	Impact Assessment of the Micro Agricultural Financial Institution of SA (MAFISA)	No due dates on system	0
2013	Implementation evaluation of government coordination systems	Report 1: 15/12/2015	9
2013	Implementation evaluation of the Export Marketing Investment Assistance (EMIA) incentive programme	Report 4: 02/02/2017	3
2013	Synthesis evaluation – Has the provision of state subsidised housing addressed asset poverty for households and local municipalities	Report 1: 21/10/2016	0
2014	Design evaluation of the Policy on Community Colleges (PCC)	Report 1: 20/04/2017	0
2014	Implementation evaluation of citizen-based monitoring programme	-	0
2014	Implementation evaluation of Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT)	Report 4: 30/06/2017	3
2014	Implementation evaluation of the Funza-Lushaka bursary scheme	Report 2: 29/09/2017	1
2014	Implementation evaluation of the social sector Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP)	Report 1: 27/07/2016	0
2016	Implementation evaluation of land Recapitalisation and Development Programme (RECAP)	Completed: 30/01/2016	4

Source: (DPME, 2017a)

Where there have been delays in submitting tracking reports, a number of reasons have been given. These include:

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[292] (DPME, 2017a)

- There are three of the evaluations in Table 27 that have not been put into the DPME's management information system (MIS).[293]

- Related to the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) evaluations in particular, the department is currently finalising a third evaluation. Once this evaluation is finalised, the improvement plans for this evaluation will essentially be merged with the improvement plans of the first two evaluations to address them holistically.

- For some evaluations, the process seems to have stalled on the side of the departments. An example of this is the *implementation evaluation of nutrition programmes addressing children under 5* where an improvement plan workshop was held in 2014, but an improvement plan was never approved. Neither the approved improvement plan, nor updates on progress have been forthcoming.

- In some instances, due dates were pushed out because of a delay in getting the improvement plan approved.

- One department claims to have faced technical difficulties in developing an improvement plan and any subsequent progress reports. This is for the *implementation evaluation of the Urban Settlements Development Grant (USDG).* The challenge highlighted by the department was that it is difficult to report progress against a policy (as opposed to a programme or a project) and wanted support figuring out how to draft the progress reports from the DPME.

From the interviews conducted, it is clear that the improvement plan process needs to be refined. Areas of clarification that were raised in the interviews related to:

- The role of DPME in the improvement plans, with one respondent noting that once an improvement plan is developed, the process should be handed over to the department completely; and another respondent confirming that it is important to ensure that the department takes ownership of this process and mechanisms and guidance to do so should be developed.

- There is a need for a stronger system to track evaluation improvement plans. This relates to developing a centralised system where departmental reporting on improvement plans can be entered, and reviewed by DPME.

5.3.1.3   Inputs for Use – Nature of Recommendations Provided

A key challenge raised by respondents was the capacity needed to use evaluations. Capacity (in terms of number of people, time and level of skill) is a challenge when implementing evaluation recommendations. While this was also a view held at the national departments, the challenge is particularly acute at the provincial level. Positively, a number of departments highlighted the positive role that DPME plays in assisting from a capacity perspective in terms of training, guidelines and acting as a central source of considered advice.

Related to the challenge of limited capacity in using evaluations, an additional challenge is in resourcing the provisions of the evaluation improvement plans. As noted above, once evaluations are completed, improvement plans are developed based on the recommendations of the evaluation. While this is certainly good practice, a number of departments highlighted the challenge of resourcing the work that stems from the improvement plans. The evaluation resourcing issue is therefore a function of the financial resources required to conduct an evaluation and the resources required to use the evaluation.

In interrogating these findings, the evaluation team conducted a document review of the recommendations provided in a sample of evaluation reports. In doing so, the evaluation team categorised the recommendations in terms of whether or not they had financial implications. For example, recommendations that relate to setting up a new unit, developing a new system, hiring additional staff, and increasing funding, all have financial implications.

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[293] The reason for this is unclear.

The evaluation team assessed 24 evaluation reports as there were 24 reports that were both available in the evaluation repository, and had been commissioned since 2011 when the NEPF was approved. These 24 evaluations comprised of 400 recommendations. Of these 24 evaluation reports, the bulk (37.5%) were implementation evaluations; while 25% were a combination of implementation and impact evaluations; and 12.5% were diagnostic evaluations – as shown in Table 28 below.

Table 28: Evaluation Types

Evaluation Type	Number of Evaluations	Percentage of Total
Implementation[294]	9 (37.5%)	37.5%
Implementation / Impact[295]	6 (25.0%)	25.0%
Diagnostic[296]	3 (12.5%)	12.5%
Diagnostic / Implementation[297]	2 (8.3%)	8.3%
Impact[298]	2 (8.3%)	8.3%
Design[299]	1 (4.2%)	4.2%
Evaluation Synthesis[300]	1 (4.2%)	4.2%
Total **24**		**100%**

Figure 34 below shows that of the 400 recommendations in the 24 evaluations, only 22% had financial implications. The bulk (70%) have non-financial recommendations which largely relate to strategy, policy and operations. In other words, this data indicates financial constraints would only impact the implementation of 22% of the evaluation recommendations that were assessed. Capacity constraints on the other hand, would impact a far larger proportion of recommendations which, while they might not be financial, they do have capacity (staff and time) implications.

Figure 34: Financial vs. Non-Financial Nature of the Recommendations Commissioned since 2011

Financial	Non-Financial	Unclassified
22%	70%	9%

5.3.1.4 *Current Use in the National Evaluation System*

In the field of evaluation, the value of an evaluation itself is determined by the extent to which it has been used and the extent to which benefits have been realised for commissioners of evaluations, programme implementers, evaluators and the beneficiaries.[301][302] While most of the literature on the use of evaluation focuses on the use of evaluations once evaluations are completed and reports submitted, utility can be derived throughout the evaluation process. Evaluation participants can, for example, realise benefits from evaluations by taking part in

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[294] (1) DFID, 2015. Mid-term evaluation of SARRAH. (2) DSD and DPME, 2015. Implementation evaluation of the EPWP in the social sector: Phase Two. (3) DBE, 2013. Formative evaluation of textbooks and workbooks. (4) DPME, 2015. Evaluation of the effectiveness of environmental governance in the mining sector (EEGM). (5) DRDLR and DPME. 2013. Implementation evaluation of the comprehensive rural development programme (CRDP). (6) DPME and DTI, 2013. Implementation / design evaluation of the business process services programme. (7) DPME, 2015. Impact / implementation evaluation of the MPAT system. (8) The Business Trust, 2011. External evaluation of the Monyetla work readiness programme: Phase two. (9) DBE and DPME, 2016. Evaluation of Funza-Lushaka bursary scheme.
[295] (1) DTI and DPME, 2015. Impact evaluation of technology and human resources for industry programme (THRIP). (2) DST, 2011. Review of the first ten years of the national science week programme. (3) DTI and DPME, 2014. Implementation evaluation of the DTI's export marketing investment assistance incentive programme (EMIA). (4) DTI and DPME, 2014. Evaluation of support programme for industrial innovation (SPII). (5) DPME, 2014. Impact and implementation evaluation of government coordination systems. (6) DEA, 2012. External summative evaluation study of the social responsibility programme.
[296] (1) DOE, 2011. Report on the annual assessment of 2011. (2) DPME, Inter-departmental Committee on ECD and UNICEF, 2012. Diagnostic review of the early childhood development (ECD). (3) National Credit Regulator, 2011. The cost of credit, access to credit and associated market practices 2011.
[297] (1) DOH, 2014. Diagnostic / implementation evaluation of nutrition interventions for children from conception to age 5. (2) DOE, 2013. The state of literacy teaching and learning in the foundation phase: National report 2012.
[298] (1) DSR, 2011. FIFA 2010 World Cup legacy audit. (2) DAFF and DPME, 2015. Impact evaluation of the comprehensive agricultural support programme (CASP).
[299] (1) DST, 2012. Independent design assessment of the energy research development and innovation (ERD&I) strategy.
[300] (1) DHS, 2015. Diagnostic of whether the provision of state-subsidised housing has addressed asset poverty for households and local municipalities / evaluation of provision of state subsidised housing assets.
[301] (Ledermann, 2012)
[302] (Patton, 2012)

the planning, designing and implementation of evaluations.[303] This is particularly true in an effort to inculcate a culture of evaluative thinking as is the case in the South African public sector.

Types of Evaluation Use

When considering evaluation use, **there are essentially four different types of evaluation use**:

1. **Instrumental use** is where the recommendations and findings generated inform decision making and lead to changes in the intervention.[304] Essentially, direct action, such as policy change should occur as a result of the evaluation.[305] This particular type of use is not widespread, especially in cases where the context in which the evaluation is taking place is complex.[306]

   Instrumental use can be restricted by external factors such as the political environment, donor interests or the practicality of implementing recommendations. Instrumental use is further complicated by the complexity of the process of changing policy.[307]

   Instrumental use is highly desirable within the South African NES but has yet to take real hold.

2. **Conceptual use** is the type where an evaluation results in an improved understanding of the intervention and its context, or a change in the conception of the evaluand (policy, programme or project).[308] Where there is conceptual use, an evaluation has resulted in something new being learned about the programme, its beneficiaries, its stakeholders, its operations, and / or its outcomes.

   This type of use is also referred to as *enlightenment use* because the findings add to knowledge that may be accessible and used by a wider group of stakeholders.[309] Conceptual use is helpful because an increase in knowledge can potentially lead to changes in the way that programmes are managed and implemented.

   The NES currently encourages conceptual use through the existing demonstrated preference for implementation evaluations.

3. **Symbolic use** is the least desirable type of use. Broadly, "symbolic use refers to examples when a person uses the mere existence of an evaluation, rather than any aspect of its results, to persuade or to convince".[310] Fleisher and Christie[311] however note that there are differing views on what symbolic use is.

   Some authors note that when an evaluation is used to "persuade important stakeholders that the programme or organisation values accountability" it is being used symbolically, while others note that an evaluation is being used symbolically when it is done not to discover new information, but rather to justify an already existing position.[312]

   This evaluation found one example of symbolic use within the NES.

4. **Process use** refers to the value derived by stakeholders from merely partaking in the planning and implementation of evaluations.[313] The evaluation report may not necessarily be used but there may be other benefits of participating in the process, to the organisation or stakeholders. These benefits may include a change in the way management views evaluations, mobilising staff to work together towards a common goal or getting programme managers to think differently about their programmes.[314]

   Because of the emphasis on external evaluation service providers to date, Process use has not been as widespread as possible, and mechanisms for extending the value derived through process use should be explored and considered across the NES (further discussed in Section 7).

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[303] (Forss, et al., 2002)
[304] (Ledermann, 2012)
[305] (Henry & Mark, 2003)
[306] Picciotto, 2016
[307] (Højlund, 2014)
[308] (Ledermann, 2012)
[309] (Henry & Mark, 2003)
[310] (Johnson, et al., 2009, p. 378)
[311] (Fleischer & Christie, 2009)
[312] (Fleischer & Christie, 2009)
[313] (Forss, et al., 2002); (Henry & Mark, 2003) (Ledermann, 2012)
[314] (Forss, et al., 2002)

Evidence of Use: What do the Case Studies Reveal?

Table 29 below documents the evidence of use in its various forms along with information tracking the progress of departments or provinces; while Figure 35 summarises the instances of use observed in the case studies. The highest reported instance of use is instrumental use at seven out of nine (78%). While these reports are varied in depth it is clear that by and large evaluations are perceived as valuable and are integrated to some extent in decision-making processes. The second highest recorded use is process use at five out of nine (56%). This implies that at a minimum, respondents felt that they gained value from being part of an evaluation process. This will be discussed further in the paragraphs that follow. Conceptual and symbolic use have only one reported instance of use each. DHS sited conceptual use while DSD cited an example of symbolic use. DSD had a wide variety of forms of use indicating that DSD's approach to evaluation is varied and dependent on the participants from the department.

Figure 35: Departments or Provinces Reporting Instances of Evaluation Use (Total Case Studies = 9) [315]

Number of Evaluations

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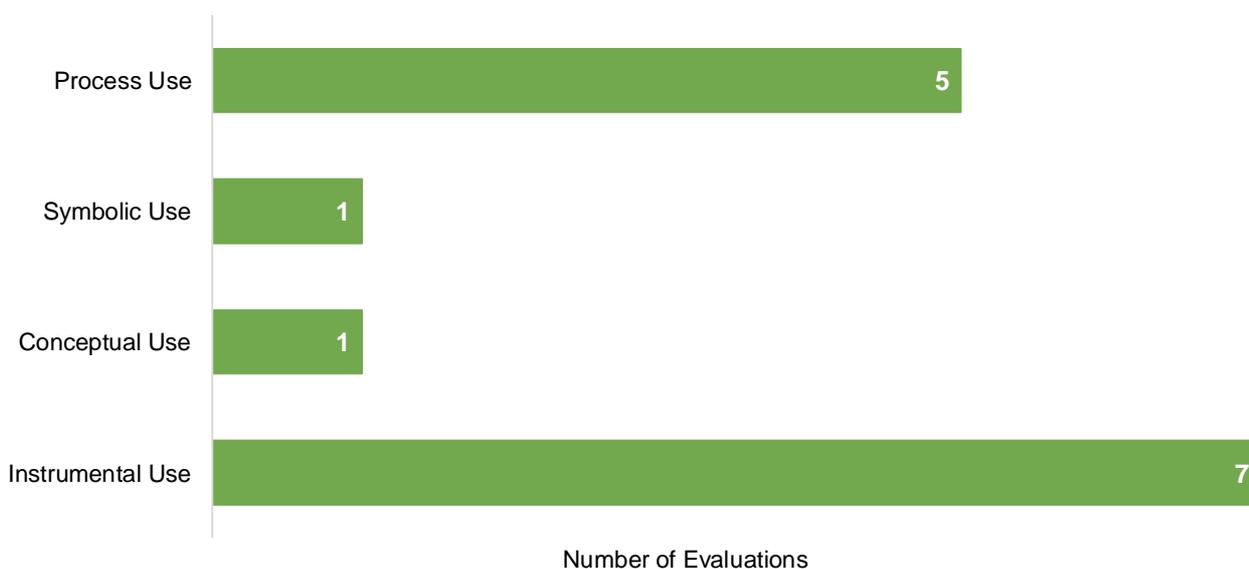
[315] It is possible to have more than one type of use per Province or Department.

Table 29: Evidence of current use from Case Studies

Classifying Use across Departmental and Provincial Case Studies		Number of Evaluations in DEPs and PEPs			MPAT			Overall QA Score
		Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	2015	2016	Comment	
Departmental Case Studies								
DBE	**Instrumental Use** As a result of the Funza Lushaka evaluation, DBE's budget for MIS was increased. The Funza Lushaka bursary scheme now also has Cabinet approval to appoint new people **Process Use** DBE respondents noted that people who participated in steering committees have benefited from the evaluation process in terms of enhancing their understanding of evaluation, and the evaluation process. In addition, there was consensus from DBE respondents that the use of the theory of change is one of the most useful elements of the provisions of the NES.	*Not available*	*Not available*	*Not available*	3	2.5	No evaluation plan submitted	3.72
DHS	**Instrumental Use** USDG Evaluation: DHS developed a new policy related to USDG. DHS consulted with National Treasury on the new policy, and this was approved MinMEC; and the USDG grant framework was adjusted. Social and Rental Housing Evaluation: DHS is working on adjusting the income levels and funding for the social housing programme. **Conceptual Use** Respondents from DHS noted that they find evaluations helpful as a reflective experience, but not currently as a decision-making exercise.	*Not available*	*Not available*	*Not available*	2	4	Meets requirements	3.34
DJCD	**Process Use** Respondents noted that being part of an evaluation in the NEP was helpful in that it shed light on good practices in the evaluation process and influenced their internal processes. This opens up the possibility that more evaluations can be managed internally. Like other departments and provinces, respondents in DJCD found the theory of change to be the most evaluative mechanism.	2014 to 2015: 1	2015 to 2016: 2	2016 to 2017: 4	2	3	Developed a multi-year DEP	*Not available*
DSD	**Instrumental Use** There are examples of evaluations have provided programme managers with critical information needed to make decisions. One example of evidence of use in DSD is the Isibindi evaluation. It was reported that as a result of the evaluation, other services for orphans and vulnerable children were improved. **Process Use** The theory of change development process was noted to be highly valuable to the department. Respondents noted that having a theory of change allows for smoother implementation of the programme and is illustrative of the benefits that using evaluation activities can have. However, a challenge occurs when this activity is not wholly bought into by key officials.	2015 to 2016: 6	2016 to 2017: 3	2017 to 2018: 1	*Not available*	*Not available*	N/A	3.74

Classifying Use across Departmental and Provincial Case Studies	Number of Evaluations in DEPs and PEPs			MPAT			Overall QA Score
	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	2015	2016	Comment	
the dti — **Instrumental Use** SPII Evaluation: The scope of the programme was expanded to address commercialisation; the objectives were revised and the collaboration in the programme improved. BPS Evaluation: The incentive period was extended to five years, KPIs were refined and job support was improved, job projections were made more accurate, the value proposition was expanded to include legal process outsourcing and sector skills plans were reviewed.	*Not available*	*Not available*	*Not available*	4	5	Multi-year DEP not submitted	3.6
Provincial Case Studies							
Eastern Cape — **Instrumental Use** There is evidence that some effort is being made to encourage the creation and use of improvement plans in the province. This is not yet a wide-spread practice as evaluation is very new to the province. However, as an example, the improvement plan for Provincial Treasury evaluation of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) support programme is being implemented this year. This process is going to be monitored by the Eastern Cape's OTP. **Process Use.** Respondents highlighted the importance of the use of evaluative thinking. The promotion of evaluative thinking was noted as an important precursor to conducting evaluations and using their findings. There is a need to emphasise programme and policy reflection within the provincial government, as well as communication between different departments so that an environment of learning is created and promoted.	*Not available*	2016 to 2017: 6	2017 to 2018: 4	1.3	1.8	Evaluation in 46% of Eastern Cape departments is not formalised or implemented	3.2
Gauteng — **Instrumental Use** The Department of Education has begun tracking the progress of its improvement plans. The Department of Economic Development and the Department of Infrastructure Development have begun using evaluations at various points in programme maturity.	2014 to 2015: 9	2015 to 2017: 24	2016 to 2018: 29	2.25	2.9	In 2016, six departments scored 4 which means almost half of the departments in Gauteng were noted to be conducting evaluations	*Not available*
Limpopo — **Process Use** None of the evaluations in the PEP have been completed yet, but respondents noted that there are systems in place for facilitating evaluation use.	2015 to 2016: 6	2016 to 2017: 3	2017 to 2018: 2	1.2	2.13	One third of departments in Limpopo are, based on their MPAT scores, underperforming in terms of evaluation	*Not available*
Western Cape — **Instrumental Use** Some provincial departments have found that negative evaluation findings could potentially constrain the demand for evaluations. One department has addressed this challenge by placing evaluations in programme managers' KPIs. Respondents noted that recommendations had helped them improve internal processes which benefited departments; and that evaluation findings assisted in decision making and programme improvement.	*Not available*	*Not available*	*Not available*	2.6	3	Respondents noted that MPAT places an additional administrative burden on the Western Cape and that the value of MPAT is unclear because provincial departments are unsure of what the information is used for.	3.27

Figure 36 records the change in planned evaluations and MPAT scores between the case studies. In the instances where evaluations have increased this is indicative of an increased uptake following the demonstration of value and / or an increase in buy-in from senior management. In the case studies where decreases have been reported, this is owing to budgetary constraints. These case studies reported the need for further buy-in and hoped that demonstrating the value through well-targeted evaluations would encourage up-take. In terms of MPAT, almost all case studies showed an improvement. However, the **dti and DBE** decreased due to a lack of the provision of multi-year planning tools. This would indicate that from an organisational perspective, the cases studied are moving in the direction of being prepared to use evaluations effectively. Quality assessment scores for all case studies are above three. This implies that all are able to oversee above average quality evaluations.

Figure 36: Case Studies Increase or Decrease in Number of Evaluations and MPAT Scores Over Time
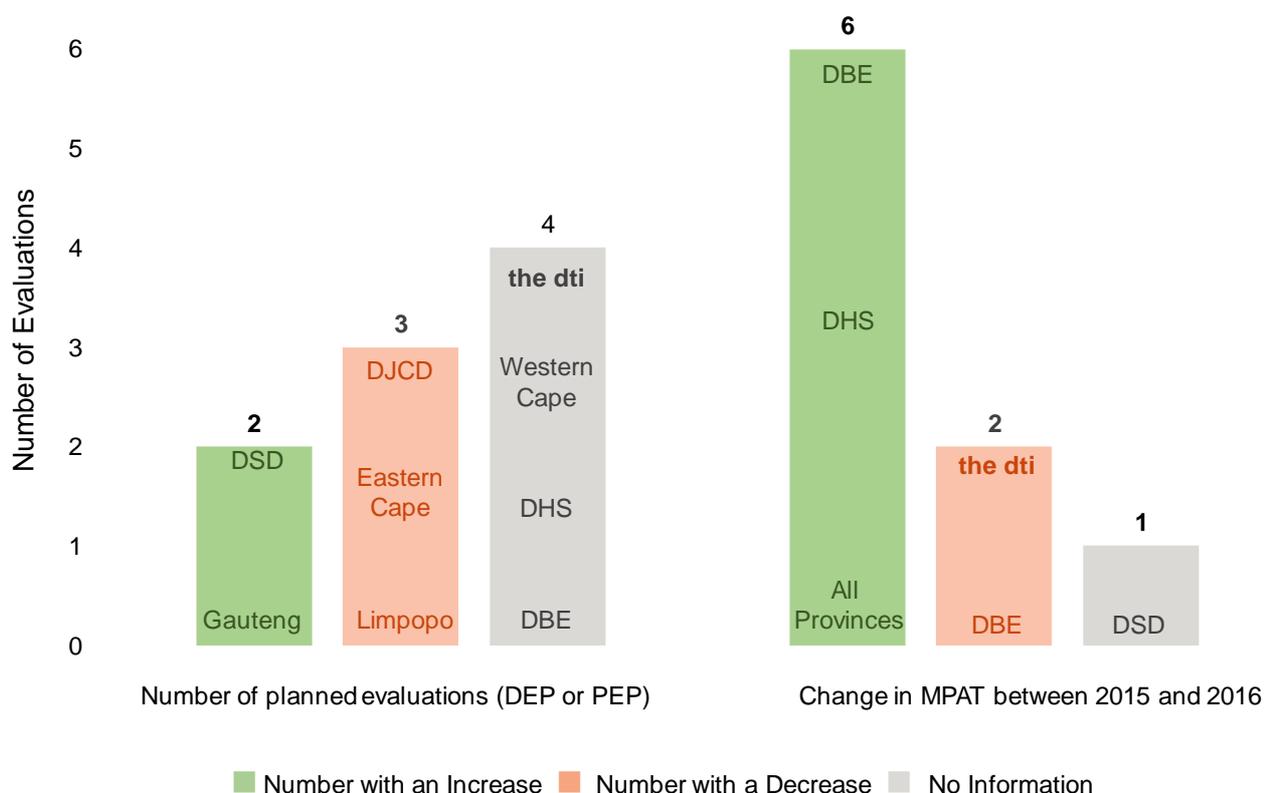
The preliminary evidence for use of evaluations appears to be encouraging. Departments and provinces appear to understand the value of evaluations and attempt to use them to inform decisions. However, this process of use has not yet been captured through the formal monitoring channel in place: improvement plans. For this reason, it is not possible to reliably assert that evaluations are being used to their greatest advantage. In order to support greater extraction of value, the improvement plan process requires greater adherence.

Factors Influencing Evaluation Use

Extensive research has been done on the factors that affect evaluation use, particularly on factors that affect instrumental use. Inhibitors and enablers of evaluation use exist on both the evaluation supply side (evaluators) and the evaluation demand side (commissioners and implementers). These should be considered in

discussions regarding maximising the use of evaluations going forward. Table 30 below summarises the key factors that affect evaluation utilisation. [316]

Table 30: Factors that Affect Evaluation Utilisation

Factors that Affect Utilisation		
Evaluation Utilisation	**Supply Side**	• The identification and participation of stakeholders • Evaluator ethics and values • Evaluation timeliness • Evaluation quality • Clarity and accessibility of findings • Quality, relevance and innovativeness of recommendations
	Demand-Side	• Context of the evaluation • Adequate resources allocated to undertake the evaluation (time and funds) • Timeliness • Adequate resources to use evaluation findings and recommendations • Knowledge use and evaluative culture • Level of monitoring (& evaluation) fatigue • Alignment of internal processes for use including budgeting and planning

On the supply side, evaluations are more likely to be used when key stakeholders are appropriately identified and participate in the evaluation process; when the evaluation is done ethically; when the evaluation is timed to coincide with key decision-making points; when the evaluation is valid and rigorous; and when the findings and recommendations are presented in a clear and accessible way.[317]

On the demand side, evaluations are likely to be used when the organisational context is receptive to evaluation; when there are adequate resources to use the evaluation findings and recommendations; when there is a culture of evaluation within the organisation; when the evaluation is commissioned at a relevant time; when the findings of the evaluation are accessible; when there is an internal process for use; and when levels of evaluation fatigue are low.[318]

Evidence of Contribution to Planning, Budgeting, Improved Accountability, Decision-Making and Knowledge

Figure 37 and Figure 38 provide a breakdown of how budget implications have been considered in 66 evaluations under the NES. Those evaluations concerning the economy have the highest rates of actively considering the budget at a rate of 50% (seven out of 14). No evaluations concerning safety, skills, local government, the environment or social protection appeared to consider the budgetary implications of their work. Of the 27.27% of evaluations that actively considered budgetary implications, 37.5% involved potential efficiency/saving, 25% considered increasing transformation impact and 18.75% engaged with outstanding policy issues or key decision as well as priority spending areas. Therefore, it would seem that by and large evaluations contribute to improved budgeting (potential efficiency/saving) as a primary impact. However, secondary impacts appear to indicate an improvement in planning (priority spending areas and increasing transformation impact) as well as decision-making (outstanding policy issues or key decisions needed). However, in the majority of cases (72.73%) there is no conscious consideration of budget implications. As use improves, reporting of budget considerations would allow for a more accurate understanding of the impact of evaluations on contributing to budget considerations.

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[316] (ALNAP, 2003); (Bayley, 2008); (Berriet-Solliec, et al., 2014); (Burdescu, et al., 2005); (Dutch Evaluation Office, n.d.); (Earl & Earl, 1996); (Fleischer & Christie, 2009); (Forss, et al., 2002); (Henry & Mark, 2003); (Højlund, 2014); (Johnson, et al., 2009); (Ledermann, 2012); (Patton, 2012); (Stufflebeam, 1999); (The Joint Committee, 1994); and (Visser, 2014)
[317] (ALNAP, 2003); (Bayley, 2008); (Berriet-Solliec, Labarthe, & Laurent, 2014); (Burdescu, del Villar, Mackay, Rojas, & Saavedra, 2005); (Dutch Evaluation Office, n.d.); (Earl & Earl, 1996); (Fleischer & Christie, 2009); (Forss, Claus, & Jerker , 2002); (Henry & Mark, 2003); (Højlund S. , 2014); (Johnson, et al., 2009); (Ledermann, 2012); (Patton, Essentials of Utilization-Focused Evaluation, 2012); (Stufflebeam, 1999); (The Joint Committee, 1994); and (Visser, 2014)
[318] (ALNAP, 2003); (Bayley, 2008); (Berriet-Solliec, Labarthe, & Laurent, 2014); (Burdescu, del Villar, Mackay, Rojas, & Saavedra, 2005); (Dutch Evaluation Office, n.d.); (Earl & Earl, 1996); (Fleischer & Christie, 2009); (Forss, Claus, & Jerker , 2002); (Henry & Mark, 2003); (Højlund S. , 2014); (Johnson, et al., 2009); (Ledermann, 2012); (Patton, Essentials of Utilization-Focused Evaluation, 2012); (Stufflebeam, 1999); (The Joint Committee, 1994); and (Visser, 2014)

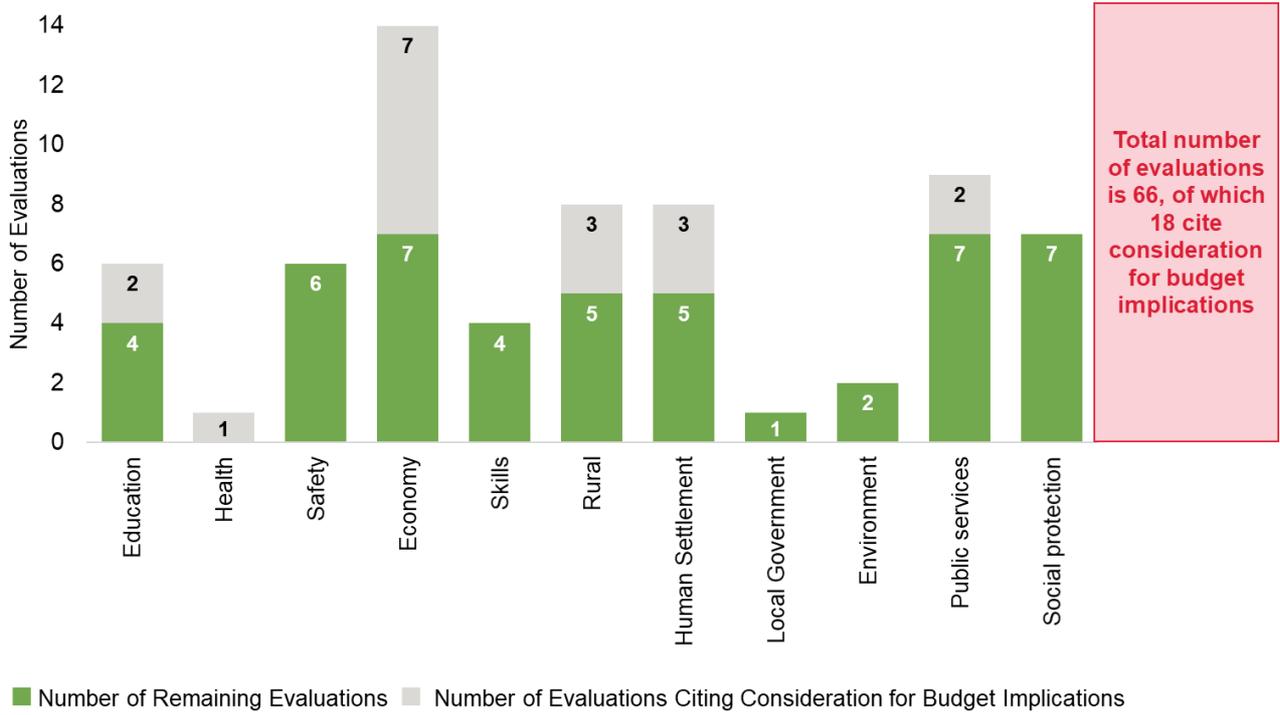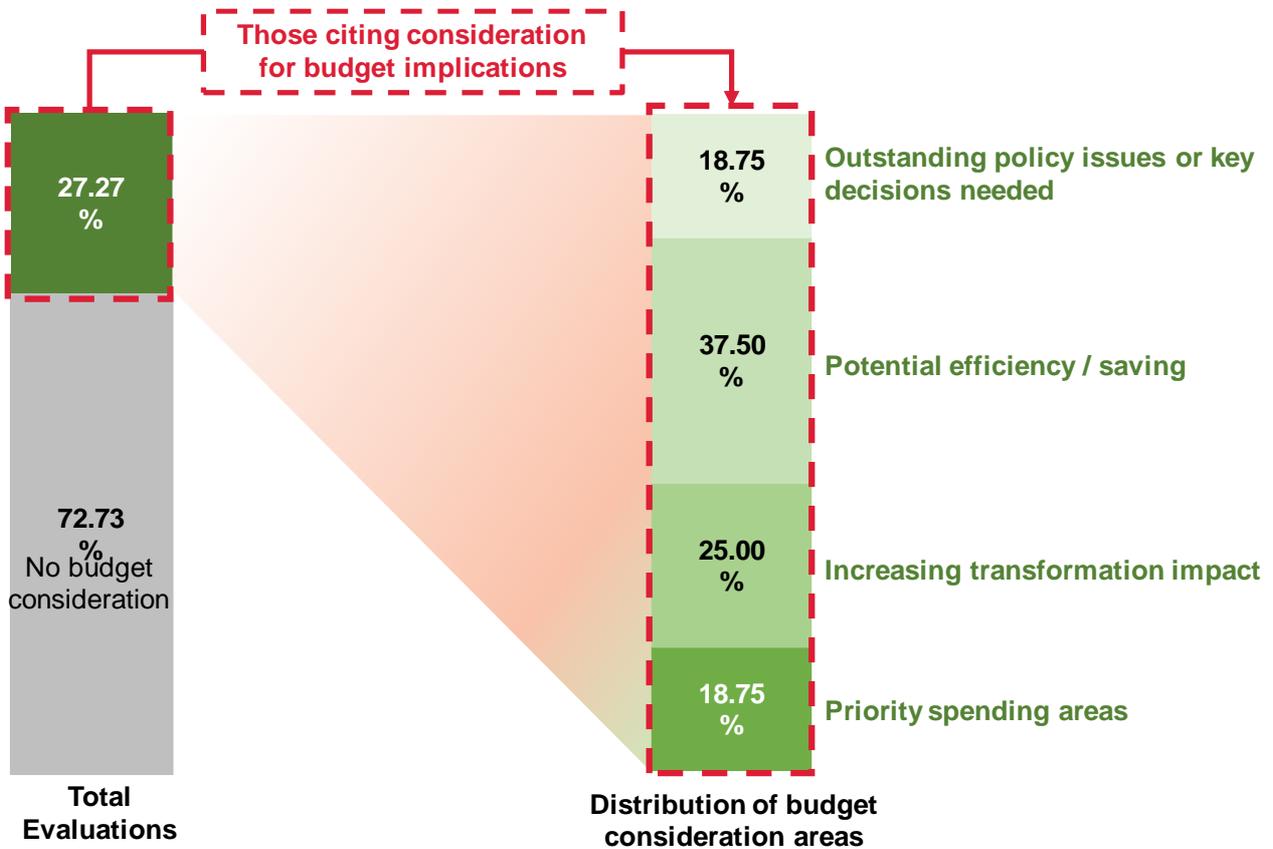**Figure 37: Evaluations reporting Budget Considerations by National Outcomes**

Figure 38: Breakdown of Distribution of Areas Considered in Budgets

5.3.2 Evidence of Unintended Benefits from the NES

- **Evaluation Question:** Is there evidence of other unintended outcomes or benefits from the evaluation system, e.g. in raising the importance of evidence within departments?
- **Link to the OECD DAC Criteria:** Impact
- **Link to the Theory of Change:** Outcomes → Impacts[319]

The key unintended benefits of the NES are the results of process use. Case study departments and provinces reported process use as the second highest form of use. The following are the broader unintended benefits experienced by the departments and provinces in this study:

- **An improved strategic vision as a result of using a Theory of Change.** Respondents felt that this allowed them to understand the purpose of their programmes more clearly. It helped the programme to run more smoothly. The use of a Theory of Change helped to enable greater alignment across internal departmental stakeholders regarding programmes' strategic vision.

- **The use of "good practice" in internal research after having been exposed to external evaluations.** Exposure to evaluative processes has inspired internal teams to develop more consistent methods of analysis internally.

- **An enhanced use of evaluative thinking and the consideration of the need to harmonise learning across structures.** The logical process of introspection has been cited as highly valuable in ensuring impact. Further, it would seem that departments and provinces felt better able to discuss programmes by making use of the language introduced by the NES.

5.3.2.1 *Impact of the National Evaluation System – Key Summary Points*

- Of the elements for enabling use, the use of the improvement plan system is seen as a key element in enhancing use in the system and is seen as one of the key benefits that NES has brought about. It is however important to note that there is currently no mechanism to mandate the creation of, or funding of an improvement plan. There is a need for a stronger system to track evaluation improvement plans.

- The preliminary evidence for use of evaluations is encouraging. Departments and provinces appear to understand the value of evaluations and attempt to use them to inform decisions.

- Looking at budgetary considerations arising from evaluations, those evaluations concerned with the economy have the highest rates of actively considering the budgetary implications of their evaluations. However, in the majority of cases there is little conscious consideration of budget implications.

- A key challenge raised by respondents was the capacity needed to use evaluations. Capacity (in terms of number of people, time and level of skill) is a challenge when implementing evaluation recommendations. While this was also a view held at the national departments, the challenge is particularly acute at the provincial level.

5.4 Implications for the NES Going Forward

- **Evaluation Question:** What are the implications for expanding the system, e.g. to all departments, metros and public entities and how should intergovernmental links around evaluation be strengthened? What changes in the evaluation support ecosystem (including institutional capacity and budgets within departments and DPME) need to be implemented to improve the quality of evaluations, timeliness, effectiveness, value-for-money and contribution to accountability, and contribution to the wider knowledge base? What are the implications for the theory of change of the NES? How should the internally-initiated (demand-driven and voluntary) approach used evolve in future to strengthen its impact on government priorities (NDP, gender etc.)?
- **Link to the OECD DAC Criteria:** Sustainability and Upscaling

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[319] Note about it being impact in general but in this instance, too early for proper impact so looking at outcome to impact.

- **Link to the Theory of Change:** Inputs → Activities → Outputs → Outcomes → Impacts

This section highlights the key findings related to where the NES should be focusing in the next five years in terms of sustainability and upscaling, namely:

- Institutionalising and embedded evaluative practice into the public sector;

- Evolution of the internally-initiated approach to one that is more strategic in order to ensure that programmes and policies that are critical to the country's development priorities, are evaluated; and

- Developing stronger links between planning, budgeting and evaluation. While it can be argued that this is a foundational issue, it is an issue that has not been sufficiently addressed in the last five years.

5.4.1 Institutionalisation

In terms of expanding the NES, institutionalisation is essential. Institutionalisation is a core driver of an effective NES, as noted in *Section 3.1.3* of this report.[320] It is important to note, as a respondent from DPME stated, to recognise that the establishment and institutionalisation of evaluation is a 20-year project, of which we are only through five years. The first five years of the NES have focused on the building blocks of the system. Once these are firmly established, institutionalisation should become the focus. Currently, there are a few areas that are seen as important in progressing towards institutionalisation, and expanding the system. These are:

- **Senior-level buy-in:** Respondents consistently noted that senior-level buy-in is essential to embedding evaluation in a department or province. In departments and provinces where there was little senior-level buy-in, respondents highlighted that in a bid to achieve buy-in evaluation needs to be included as a key performance area for these managers. The DG/DDG course is targeted to help promote this and has directly led to a number of evaluations, as shown in *Section 5.2.3.2.* above.

- **The use of internal evaluations to develop an evaluative culture:** Respondents noted that in the absence of senior-level buy-in, or a reluctance around evaluation, conducting internal evaluations to demonstrate the worth of evaluations, and the process of evaluations, is helpful. For example, in the Department of Science and Technology (DST), an M&E staff member conducted an internal evaluation in order to show the benefits of evaluation. This respondent noted that in doing so, they were able to garner senior level buy-in.

- **Promotion of evaluative thinking:** A broad range of respondents highlighted the need to promote evaluative thinking in departments and provinces. Respondents from the Eastern Cape, for example, noted that in a resource constrained environment where large scale evaluations are not always possible, departments should be focusing on also looking at other tools for cheaper processes than full evaluations. This could include processes to promote evaluative thinking, reflecting on learnings from their programmes, and on communicating these learnings to other provinces and departments. This points to the idea that beyond conducting evaluations, institutionalisation relates to promoting an evaluative culture. A key tool for promoting evaluative thinking is the theory of change. Respondents consistently highlighted the promotion of the use of theories of change as one of the key successes of the NES.

- **Drive from individual champions:** One of the key findings from all the interviews was that most provinces and national departments who have undertaken evaluation activities have had an individual champion who was instrumental in ensuring that evaluation activities happen. Respondents noted that this extends beyond champions in their own provinces and departments, to the director's in DPME's evaluation unit. DPME has largely been successful in identifying champions. It is however important to note, that in the longer term, relying on champions to carry the system forward poses a risk to the system in that too much emphasis is placed on the role of the individual, rather than the institution which will ultimately influence whether or not an evaluative culture is sustained.

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[320] (Gaarder & Briceno, 2010)

Practically, there were specific levers identified as necessary in the institutionalisation of the NES:

- **Financial allocation:** A respondent from DJCD noted that one source of frustration is that there is no direct link between evaluations and budgets. Respondents from DSD added to this by noting that the evaluation process is easier (in terms of buy-in) when the relevant programme manager has allocated funding for the evaluation. **the dti** noted that their main concern is that their programmes do not have sufficient long-term funds for evaluations. Funding for evaluation is a key constraint at the provincial level. In Limpopo, the lack of funding from programmes for evaluations has been cited as a key barrier to the expansion of the NES. Respondents from the Eastern Cape noted that linking evaluation to the budget and planning cycle in the public sector, needs to be improved on. Positively, the Western Cape government has recently allocated R10 000 000 of its budget to conducting evaluations. A wide range of departments and provinces supported the idea of evaluation budgets being prescribed by Treasury. With financial guidance at this level they believed Programme Managers would begin incorporating evaluation into budgets more regularly.

- **Accountability to conduct evaluations:** Doing evaluation "…should be a part of the performance agreement of every DG and Head of Department (HOD)". In the Eastern Cape, this has been incorporated in management contracts by the provincial government to encourage uptake, and is also evident in KZN COGTA, where KPIs reflect the percentage of recommendations implemented.

- **Promotion of the development of an evaluation culture:** Looking at the departmental case studies, Respondents from DBE noted that while the department had a pre-existing evaluation culture, this culture has been strengthened by the NES. The DBE's perception is that as a result of the NES evaluations have improved, procurement processes have been simplified, and departments are given access to technical support. Respondents from DHS acknowledged that they see the value of the NES, but that the department is resistant to changing their evaluative norms. he case study provinces all highlighted the importance of an evaluation champion in expanding the NES provincially and developing an evaluation culture. For example, in the Eastern Cape, an evaluation champion has recently begun the process of enhancing evaluation in the province. The roles of evaluation champions were also emphasised in the early adopter provinces of the Western Cape and Gauteng.

A potential inhibitor to the institutionalisation of evaluation is a fear of evaluation, where evaluation is seen as something punitive. Where this is the case, programme managers are less likely to conduct evaluations. This fear stems from a lack of understanding of the purpose of evaluation and not knowing how the results will be used. M&E officials noted that although evaluation is intended for learning and as a problem-solving mechanism, people still view it as an audit or performance assessment. A number of respondents also noted that some departments do not submit evaluations to the NEP because they are averse to the findings being made public, and that they are averse to the findings being presented to Cabinet[321]. The Evidence-Based Policy-Making (EBPM) course for DGs/DDGs aims to change this perspective of senior managers.

5.4.2 Evolution of the Internally Initiated Approach

The NES started as an internally-initiated approach which sees the evaluations being conducted for programmes whose departments who demand them. This approach has emerged in various manifestations:

- Evaluations are conceived and proposed by the department. In some cases, departments are pushed into an evaluation where the programme is of considerable size and importance.

- Evaluations of programmes are conceptualised by the DPME or National Treasury and the department is encouraged to submit the proposal. Having the lead department submit the proposal achieves a degree of ownership.

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[321] This is being addressed through the Director General (DG) / Deputy Director General (DDG) courses where government officials are being educated about the purpose and use of evaluations to improve programmes and policies

- The OTPs in provinces also play a strategic role in deciding which programmes should be evaluated to determine if key provincial priorities are being achieved

These examples illustrate that demand for evaluations can come from both inside and outside of the department. That is, departments or provinces have no legal obligation to engage in the NES, however they are incentivised to participate in order to improve their MPAT scores.

The first of these was the practice for many of the evaluations in early stages of the NES, e.g. evaluations proposed by dti, DSD etc. Examples of the second includes the Human Settlements evaluations, where there was a strong push from the DPME to get these evaluations implemented, but they were implemented through the Department, who funded them. The latest version of the NEP for 2018/19 which goes to Cabinet in November 2017, six of the eight evaluations have been proposed by DPME or National Treasury.

The NES seeks to increase demand for evaluation across the government. The internally-initiated approach is that it is almost exclusively a function of the departmental or provincial demand rather than having this demand balanced with the strategic demand arising from agents such as parliament or economic cluster groups. Early adopter departments and provinces only see the internally-initiated approach as having been successful in the presence of high level political buy-in. Overall, respondents preferred sticking to the internally-initiated approach but did suggest that adjustments to the approach would be necessary to achieve the objectives of the NES, particularly encouraging demand from the centre of government focusing on strategic priorities. In this way, some evaluations would be proposed centrally, and others by the relevant departments (as is currently the case). A number of respondents commented on the need for a mandated minimum number of evaluations which are conducted to a minimum standard and include structured milestones for e.g. final reports, recommendations and improvement plans.

6   CONCLUSIONS

The key findings of this evaluation are summarised in the points below, and are categorised according to the OECD DAC criteria for development effectiveness.

6.1   Relevance, Effectiveness and Efficiency

How is the system working as a whole? How are the specific components of the system working nationally and provincially and how can they be strengthened?

- **Evaluation Plans:** Evaluation plans are a key mechanism through which the NES is spread to, and articulated at the departmental and provincial levels. The extent to which a department or province has an evaluation plan in place is a good indication of the breadth of the system, but not the depth or quality of the system. There are eight PEPs and 68 DEPs. Therefore, in terms of breadth, great strides have been made incorporating all but one provinces and the vast majority of departments, however; more needs to be done to track the implementation and progress of the plans.

- **Capacity:** Capacity development has been a large focus of the NES, with provisions having been provided in the NEPF. DPME's capacity building plan has been broad, and included establishing guidelines (18) and templates (9), promoting and facilitating learning networks and forums, short courses, and developing MPAT. Overall, the provision of guidelines and templates is seen as useful, particularly if they are adapted to the context and capabilities of the department or province. 1 989 participants undertook training between 2012/13 and 2016/17. Overall, respondents from the KII, and from the survey conducted, found tremendous progress arising from the training provided, deepening the knowledge of many relevant public officials within the NES. However; capacity remains a priority area of development in the NES to continue to build on the momentum achieved.

- **Quality Assurance:** Overall the quality assurance mechanisms are appropriate and necessary, but to date have not fully achieved the full potential influence on the evaluations. Related to the peer review system, the system is in principle seen as a useful and valuable process. Peer reviewers are however not always included from the beginning of an evaluation which can cause challenges later. Related to quality assessment, 159 evaluations have been quality assessed. Respondents highlighted that quality assurance mechanisms worked best when there was open communication between the assessors, the programme managers, external evaluators and other key members of steering committees.

- **Communication:** While a lot of work has been done in terms of communication, particularly in the most recent years, respondents noted that a number of areas should be strengthened. These include the need to work more through the media, and the promote the sharing of learnings (formally or informally) within the public sector.

- **Time and Costs:** The bulk of the DPME's budget is spent on funding evaluations, while proportionally less is spent on institutionalisation activities such as capacity building and communication. Going forward, this needs to be more balanced to continue to see depth and institutionalisation of evaluation. Respondents on both the supply side (evaluators) and the demand side (departments and provinces) noted that the evaluation process is a lengthy process which requires a considerable investment in time, much of which can and should be truncated through implementing more efficient processes around planning, procurement, and communication of results. This includes procurement and SCM-related issues that introduce a myriad of challenges outside of the commissioners, managers and service providers' control.

Who is involved and what are the consequences of involvement?

- The roles of DPME and other actors in the NES are not always clear and there is not always a shared vision for the system. More work needs to be done to clarify the roles of institutions such as universities, SAMEA,

centre of government departments, civil society organisations and programme beneficiaries. The role of DPME in the NES has evolved from the provisions of the NEPF with the DPME playing a stronger technical role in the NES. There are mixed views on this in provinces and departments. Therefore, DPME's vision and role need to clarified. The role of DPSA as a stakeholder that can clarify the extent to which M&E officials must focus on evaluation, needs to be strengthened. The link between National Treasury, and DPME, must also be strengthened in terms of linking evaluation to planning for budget allocation. The role of the NSG in providing capacity building within the NES, and the funding sources for training in the NES needs to be clarified as soon as possible.

What is the value for money of establishing the NES?

- The cost-benefit ratios of the three sample evaluations demonstrate that the cost of evaluation, in these instances, is heavily outweighed by the benefits. Tracking the costs and benefits of the system as a whole, and of individual evaluations, needs to be done more systematically so that the value of the system can be accurately assessed.

Are there other evaluation mechanisms that need to be included to maximise the benefits accrued to the government?

- Respondents from departments and provinces, particularly the early adopters, highlighted a need for more evaluation types to be included in DPME's guidelines, particularly around rapid evaluation options, including those led internally.

- Given the wide spread adherence to MPAT, MPAT should be further leveraged to extend and progress the standards for evaluation.

6.2   Impact

Is there initial evidence of symbolic [322], conceptual [323] or instrumental [324] outcomes from evaluations? If evaluations findings are not being used, why is this? What evidence is there of evaluations contributing to planning/budgeting, improved accountability, decision-making and knowledge?

- Of the levers to enable use, the *improvement plan* is seen as a key element in enhancing use in the system and is seen as one of the key benefits that NES has brought about. It is however important to note that there is currently no mechanism to mandate the creation or funding of an improvement plan. Further, there is a need for a better mechanism to track evaluation improvement plans. The preliminary evidence for use of evaluations is encouraging. Departments and provinces appear to understand the value of evaluations and attempt to use them to inform decisions, despite many challenges that they face. Looking at budgetary considerations arising from evaluations, those evaluations concerned with the economy have the highest rates of actively considering the budgetary implications of their evaluations. However, in the majority of cases there is little conscious consideration of budget implications. A key challenge raised by respondents was the capacity needed to use evaluations. Capacity (in terms of number of people, time and level of skill) is a challenge when implementing evaluation recommendations. While this was also a view held at the national departments, the challenge is particularly acute at the provincial level.

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[322] "Symbolic use refers to examples when a person uses the mere existence of an evaluation, rather than any aspect of its results, to persuade or to convince." (Johnson, et al., 2009)
[323] Conceptual use is the type of use where an evaluation results in an improved understanding of the intervention and its context, or a change in the conception of the evaluand." (Ledermann, 2012)
[324] When evaluations are used instrumentally, the recommendations and findings generated, could inform decision making and lead to changes in the intervention." (Ledermann, 2012)

6.3   Sustainability and Upscaling

How should the internally-initiated approach evolve to strengthen the NES?

- Overall, respondents preferred sticking to the internally-initiated approach but did suggest that adjustments to the approach would be necessary to achieve the objectives of the NES, particularly encouraging demand from the centre of government focusing on strategic priorities.

What are the implications for expanding the system?

- The first five years of the NES have focused on the building blocks of the system. The next, important phase of the NES relates to institutionalisation. This can be done through more systematic use of evaluation findings in financial allocations, accountability to conduct evaluations, and promoting the development of an evaluation culture.

7   RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1   **Evaluation Mandate**

There is a need for a clear and formalised mandate for systematic evaluation across the government. Evaluation has not yet reached a point within the government, where one could confidently say, that there is an evaluative culture, or a systematic approach to doing evaluation. Given the lack of mandate currently for 'late adopters' to embark on an evaluation process, and also, the fact that even early adopters from a substantive and technical perspective have lost financial support, there is a need for a formal mandate to shift the approach to evaluation. One way to do this is to make evaluation mandatory and embedded in legislation. DPME is currently drafting a Planning, M&E Bill. However, there are potential drawbacks to this, namely that evaluation becomes an additional compliance task, and loses its learning and evaluative thinking functions. The implementation of the requirement will therefore need to be done with a clear developmental pathway/phasing that allows departments and provinces to build their evaluation function incrementally, as has been the case to date.

DPME's Evaluation Unit (previously ERU) is the natural custodian of evaluation and it is a trusted partner of provinces and departments. It has undoubtedly contributed to, and continues to support, the deepening and strengthening of the NES across the government. However, the role and mandate of DPME, and its legal mandate for M&E needs to be clarified, as well as the roles of provinces, departments and state-owned entities.

R1   **Evaluation should be embedded in legislation as a mandatory component of public management and organisational improvement, with DPME as the custodian, and the roles of OTPs and departments defined**.

The use of evaluation evidence needs to consistently feed into the planning and budgeting cycles in a formalised way. Planning of new programmes as well as improvements, to existing policies and programmes needs to be based on evidence generated through evaluations and other sources. Currently, departments and provinces have to make their own plans to fund evaluations, which often leaves them in a position where funds are lacking to implement their evaluation plans (both provincial and national). Fiscal challenges will continue into the foreseeable future, so if evaluation is to really take root in the government's toolkit of public management, real consideration for funding needs to be determined. In order to do this, at the departmental and provincial levels, better linkages are required between M&E units, budgeting units and planning units. Evaluations should be aligned to both the budget and planning cycles at the national and provincial levels, to provide timely inputs into planning and budget allocation. Once this process is refined at the national level, this can be used as a guide to inform provincial processes.

R2   **Planning and budgeting must systemically draw from the results of M&E. The findings from evaluations and implementation of improvement plans should be codified in departmental strategic plans[325], APPs, annual and quarterly reports. DPME should incorporate this as it updates the Framework for Strategic Plans and APPs[326]. In addition, they should be part of senior managers performance agreements. This will support the promotion of evaluation champions in the public sector.**

R3   **New phases of programmes should not be funded until an evaluation of the previous phase is completed. For this to succeed, buy-in is required from provincial treasuries and National Treasury.**

R4   **The role of impact evaluations needs to be strengthened, particularly for large policies or programmes, programmes that have already had an implementation evaluation, and in new programmes where there is an opportunity to design in for impact evaluation from the beginning.**

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[325] Which include Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEF).
[326] APPs can also be used to provide insight into what departments have planned in terms of evaluation.

Currently the use of impact evaluations has been limited due to poor data, and lack of designing in from the outset of programmes. This is often the result of impact evaluations not having been planned for (from a data perspective) from the beginning of the programme. There is a need for quality data to be generated and better planned for.

R5   The role of key stakeholders in the evaluation ecosystem including DPSA, National Treasury, SAMEA and civil society, notably think tanks, needs to be clarified.

More work needs to be done to clarify the roles of institutions such as universities, SAMEA, centre of government departments, civil society organisations and programme beneficiaries. Related to civil society organisations, specifically, a view that emerged from the interviews conducted was that civil society is under-utilised and under-engaged in the NES.

7.2   Budgeting for Evaluative Processes

Evaluation-related tasks include a range of tasks from internally conducted rapid annual reviews and / or evaluative thinking exercises, to robust externally-conducted evaluations. More evaluation types should be considered and added to the menu of options including options requiring less resources, those that can be done quicker (rapid evaluations), and also more options for 'learning by doing', and internal evaluation types as appropriate.

R6   DPME should initiate and develop guidelines for rapid evaluative exercises which can be conducted when budgets are limited or time is short, and which potentially can be conducted by M&E units. This should include when internally conducted evaluations are relevant.[327]

Currently, departments and provinces have to make their own plans to fund evaluations, and funds are often lacking to implement their evaluation plans. Budget needs to be allocated to ensure that funding is available for evaluation activities. Cabinet has approved that programmes should allocate a % of funding for evaluation. There is also the potential for cost sharing across government.

R7   Programmes must be required to budget a % of programme budgets for evaluation, or M&E. Typically this should be in the range 0,5-5% depending on the size of the programme. Programme plans must include an evaluation cycle, as in the DPME Guideline for Planning.

R8   DPME/national departments should promote the sharing of evaluation plans across spheres of government so that evaluation resources can be pooled across government departments, for evaluations that examine similar programmes, or cross-departmental evaluations. In doing so, an 'evaluation competency centre' could be established by the DPME.

Most departments have more than one M&E official (or are supposed to, based on approved structure). Because of the high demand of monitoring on 'M&E' officials, evaluation takes a back seat to the monitoring requirements of these staff. Evaluation-specific 'posts' need to be created in departmental structures, as already happens in some departments, for example Rural Development and KZN COGTA.

R9   DPSA with technical input from DPME should develop clear requirements for specific evaluation staff with competences, job descriptions, and posts in standard M&E units. M&E units should have at least one evaluation specialist.

7.3   Capacity development

In extending evaluation to a public management requirement there is a risk of falling into a capability trap in which there is not sufficient capability to manage, conduct or use evaluation outputs. A combination of capacity development options will need to be strengthened and resourced.

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[327] Note DPME is already testing out some rapid models.

R10 DPME must strengthen its investment in capacity development, including working with Treasury and PSETA to ensure that budget is available for courses/learnerships, and with additional dedicated staff to focus on capacity development.

In addition, current M&E staff should be offered an option of specialising to become evaluation specialists with expert training and exposure to undertaking evaluations within/ for government.

R11 DPME to work with NSG, DPSA and SAMEA to ensure that suitable post-graduate courses and continuous professional development opportunities are available for evaluation professionals within the public sector (and the extended evaluation system).

As the experiences of evaluation is growing rapidly within the government, there are increasing lessons to be learned from each other, for example at the recent National Evaluation Seminar (June 26 and 27, 2017). This 'sharing' cannot be replicated by theoretical training and the 'exchange' of on the ground cross-learning, and management of resource-constraints is needed.

R12 DPME to work with stakeholders to establish a Community of Practice (COP) for learning and sharing around evaluation for government. The COP must focus on technical and experiential learning, not administrative or bureaucratic functions. The COP can take the form of an online platform, or the form of in-person engagements.

Learning from smaller internal evaluations provides an excellent capacity building opportunity. One of the provinces reported that they relaxed the criteria on their first PEP because it was a learning curve for the province and so they just wanted to start evaluations in this formative stage.

R13 The national and provincial ETWGs should suggest how internal evaluations should be encouraged to encourage learning, bearing in mind the need for independence for major evaluations.

The 'capacity building' component of evaluation contracts should be strengthened. This could include workshops on building a Theory of Change, developing an Analytical Framework, report writing, etc. However; it is also imperative that the department avails staff to participate in skills transfer activities and allows the identified candidates to commit the time.

R14 Build-in specific skills transfer elements into Service Level Agreements with evaluation service providers.

At present there is insufficient diversity of evaluators, with many of the contracts going to a limited pool of evaluation organisations. There is therefore a need to expand this pool, and provide space for established evaluators to partner with emerging evaluators.

R15 DPME needs to use both capacity development and procurement tools to ensure that emerging evaluators are brought into the system, and encourage a broader variety of universities to participate in the system.

7.4 Managing and tracking evaluations

Improvements need to be made in managing evaluations. When evaluation service providers are procured, evaluations' foundational documents need to be better including Concept notes, Terms of reference, and input documents. Improving these foundational documents will help to improve the quality of evaluation processes and products.

R16 DPME to work to strengthen the quality of foundational documents including TORs. This requires expanding the training, refinements to the guideline and more consistency in application of the guideline

R17 The system needs to be strengthened to track evaluations from end-to-end. The existing MIS system was developed to allow for the possibility of departments feeding in their data to one central location.

Departments that have participated in the NEP or PEPs must be accountable to input their data and this needs to be enshrined in legislation – consequences need to be imposed if not complying with the improvement plan reporting. The MIS/tracking system, should be able to show the value and efficiency gains from evaluation experienced by departments. This would allow the DPME to make a comparative case for evaluation and to track evaluation spend.

R18 **The management information system is the 'backbone' of the NES and it needs to be strengthened and used across all evaluation in government, not only for the NEP. This will allow transparent monitoring of the state of the system, as well as extraction.**

R19 **DPME must use the results of this tracking to ensure that departments (both national and provincial) are following up on improvement plans, reporting to Cabinet, and holding departments who are not doing so accountable.**

7.5 Strengthening Use through Communication and Improvement plans

DPME and departments have invested significantly in communication around evaluation results. However, this is not sufficient and additional investment is needed, working with the media, with think tanks, and with Parliament to distribute information more broadly, including outside of South Africa.

R20 **DPME, provinces and departments need to allocate significant resources for evaluation communication, both financial and human. This will ensure full value is obtained from the investment currently being made, and that stakeholders are aware of the findings. This will also help to build trust in government.**

Challenges have been found in how far improvement plans are being implemented and monitored. The first challenge is data – and R10 addresses improving the tracking of improvement plans. Another challenge is that development of these plans does not necessarily imply resources are available to implement the changes that are recommended. In some instances, costing exercises have been conducted (for example, on ECD), which allowed prioritisation of the services that were proposed.

R21 **DPME should hold some resources to be used during the improvement plan stage of NEP evaluations to enable funding of exercises such as costing. The same would be beneficial for OTPs for provincial evaluations.**

R22 **DPME should develop mechanisms for tracking changes from evaluations beyond the current two years of the improvement plan. This would include later evaluations on programmes which have been revised from evaluations.** Linking evaluations to planning and budgeting (as expanded on above) would assist in tracking improvement plans.

7.6 Revisions to the theory of change

Based on the findings and recommendations of this report, a number of changes have been made to the theory of change of the NES. The revised theory of change is provided in Annex 2 of this report, and the changes made to it include:

- The inputs to the system have been explicit in the revised theory of change. In the first version of the theory of change, many of the inputs were assumed to be in place. The evaluation has however found that this is not the case. As a result, the following are now included in the theory of change as inputs: funding for evaluation, funding for capacity development, human resources (including government officials and service providers), and the development of a capacity building plan.

- Additional outcomes related to quality assurance, have been included in the theory of change, as quality assurance is an essential part of the system.

- Additional outcomes related to improvement plans, as the initial version of the theory of change did not address improvement plans. Improvement plans are important in closing the evaluation cycle.

Specifically, the revised theory of change looks at the development of improvement plans, the implementation of improvement plans, the funding of evaluation recommendations, and monitoring the impact of evaluations.

ANNEX 1: REFERENCES

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ANNEX 2: ADDITIONAL DETAIL OF THE METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

Policy

Holvoet and Renard's first characteristics of an effective NES is policy and highlights that an effective NES is defined as one where 1. an evaluation plan, or guiding policy is in place that indicates what needs to be evaluated, how it needs to be evaluated, and assigns responsibilities; 2. the policy articulates the difference between monitoring and evaluation and does not emphasise one over the other, 3. provisions for impartiality and autonomy are planned into the system; 4. a feedback approach has been developed; and 5. the policy emphasises the need for M&E results to feed into planning and budgeting.[328] This is pertinent to assessing NESs because policy plays a valuable role in how monitoring and evaluation is perceived, and implemented nationally.

These factors are echoed across the literature that was reviewed for this framework:

1. The guiding principle of the M&E of the World Bank AIDS programme is that there needs to be one, comprehensive, national M&E system.[329] This requirement, while a valuable one, presupposes that countries will have the institutional, financial and resource capacity needed to develop and support such a system. This is not always the case, particularly in developing countries.

2. Of the nine principles outlined in the *International Atlas of Evaluation,* three are concerned with policy.[330] Principle 5 notes that there need to be institutional arrangements for commissioning evaluations and disseminating results; while Principle 6 extends this to note that there needs to be institutional arrangements in parliament for conducting and disseminating results; and Principle 9 highlights policies need to include a provision that evaluations need to focus beyond indicators and targets, to outcomes.[331]

Methodology

Methodology[332] is the second characteristic indicating that an effective NES 1. clearly identifies what needs to be evaluated in the form of key result areas/programmes for investigation; 2. that selection criteria for these result areas and how they will be evaluated are clear; 3. that evaluation objectives are prioritised; 4. causality chains or theories of change are explicit or expressly incorporated into evaluation processes; and 5. sources for data collection are identified.[333] This is relevant for assessing NESs because of the variety of methodologies that are applied globally and in the context of South Africa, Benin, Colombia, Mexico and Uganda, it is important to understand which methodologies are used in the country and how these are implemented.

Organisation

Organisation is the third characteristic and classifies an effective NES as one where 1. there is an appropriate institutional structure in place for coordination, central oversight and feedback; 2. the outputs of statistical offices are streamlined into M&E needs; and 3. M&E units that are at decentralised levels are integrated into the central system.[334] How the NES functions in South Africa, and the other countries could vary between different levels of government. These nuances are important to understand when assessing and comparing the effectiveness of NESs.

Of the components that Holvoet and Renard looked at, the *decentralised levels* component is highlighted in other literature:

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[328] (Holvoet & Renard, 2007)
[329] (Wilson, 2004)
[330] (Jacob, et al., 2015)
[331] (Jacob, et al., 2015)
[332] The methodology characteristic has been adjusted to more appropriately reflect evaluation specifically rather than M&E broadly.
[333] (Holvoet & Renard, 2007)
[334] (Holvoet & Renard, 2007)

1. The benefits of decentralisation are that roles and responsibilities can be assigned at different levels, ensuring that activities are conducted efficiently and consistently; and ownership is spread throughout the system. However, for these benefits to be realised, the necessary institutional structures need to be in place.[335] This is relevant for assessing and comparing South Africa, Benin, Colombia, Mexico and Uganda's NESs because it is recognised that in developing country contexts much of the required institutionalisation is often lacking.

2. Goldman and Mathe further emphasise the importance of an NES being centrally-driven by a capable ministry.[336] This reiterates the role played by the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation in the implementation and maintenance of the NES in South Africa.

Capacity

Holvoet and Renard's fourth characteristic is capacity where 1. capacity problems are acknowledged and 2. one where capacity building plans are in place to address these gaps.[337] Other papers reviewed align to this view and add:

1. A supply of evaluators from different disciplines is needed.[338] In the context of developing countries this can be particularly difficult to achieve especially in cases where monitoring and evaluation as a discipline is still in its infancy. In developing countries, access to a supply of good quality evaluators can be a challenge. In these cases, less importance is placed in which disciplines they are drawn from.

2. Capacity is a particular problem at regional and district levels where there is typically a higher turnover of staff.[339] In developing countries, capacity is often a challenge experienced at all levels not only in terms of resources and workforce but also skills and the associated development.

3. Dedicated financial resources are needed and allocated appropriately for developing capacity.[340] Here again, context is of particular relevance. Countries with weak NESs are often developing countries with minimal financial resources. This creates a barrier to establishing an effective NES.

4. It is important to develop a simple system with clear lines of responsibility and division of labour.[341] While it is recognised that simple systems are the easiest to maintain and are thus the most sustainable, it is also important to realise that countries with the greatest need for simple NESs are often also those who have very complex national challenges. This creates a unique difficulty to develop a simply NES to address very complex issues.

Participation of Other Actors

The fifth characteristic identified by Holvoet and Renard is, participation of other actors which highlights that in an effective NES 1. the role of parliament is recognised and clearly articulated; and 2. the role of civil society and donors (where relevant), is recognised and procedures are in place for participation.[342] Related to the participation of civil society, Jacob, Speer and Furubo note:

1. Principle 4 from the *International Atlas of Evaluation* highlights that it is important that a national evaluation society exists.[343] Evaluation societies play a key role in supporting an NES and ensuring broader participation in the system.

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[335] (Anie & Larbie, 2004)
[336] (Goldman & Mathe, 2014)
[337] (Goldman & Mathe, 2014)
[338] (Jacob, et al., 2015)
[339] (Anie & Larbie, 2004)
[340] (Anie & Larbie, 2004)
[341] (Anie & Larbie, 2004)
[342] (Holvoet & Renard, 2007)
[343] (Jacob, et al., 2015)

Quality and Use

Quality and use is the sixth characteristic which specifies that an effective NES is one where the results of the system are effectively reported on and compared to targets with any discrepancies being analysed; and where the results of the system are incorporated into an annual report and used to improve programmes and policies.[344]

The quality component of the six characteristics is essential in that it looks at the outputs, outcomes and impacts of the system, more specifically whether the system is producing evaluations that improve policies and programmes. Goldman and Mathe highlight this point by noting that the measure of success of an evaluation system, is utilisation.[345] It should be recognised that the establishment of an NES often takes a number of years, and as such, there may be a lag time between implementation of the system and utilisation of the evaluations produced. This is particularly true in developing countries which can experience additional challenges during the establishment phases – as discussed above. In the literature reviewed, there was no specification of the length of such a lag.

The core purpose of evaluation is to provide evidence for improved decision making, learning and accountability. For this purpose, to be realised, it is essential that evaluations are used. Evaluation is not an end in itself, but rather a tool intended to stimulate action for improved interventions. This action should stem directly from the process of evaluation and the report findings and recommendations.[346]

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[344] (Holvoet & Renard, 2007)
[345] (Goldman & Mathe, 2014)
[346] (Patton, 2012)

Analysis Framework

Six Characteristics	Link to Theory of Change	Intended NES Results	Evaluation Questions
Policy	Output	National evaluation policy and system developed	How should the internally-initiated and voluntary approach used evolve in the future to strengthen its impact on government priorities?
	Outcome	Evaluation and research evidence shared, an evidence base is created – culture of learning is developed	To what extent is there an explicit and consistent approach to reporting, integrating and disseminating?
		Evaluations designed, implemented and supported	To what extent does the NES consider the importance of both monitoring and evaluation?
	Impact	Accountability is improved	How should the balance be managed going forward of internal / outsourced, use of government departments as custodian of the system (DPME), in terms of independence, learning, credibility of evaluations and the system going forward?
		Public services become more effective and poverty is eradicated	How relevant is the NES to the NDP?
	Assumptions	Shared understanding of NESs and procedures, and the process for establishing the NES	To what extent do the assumptions that form the foundation of the NES, hold?
		Evaluation activities at the department and provincial level align with NES	To what extent do the assumptions that form the foundation of the NES, hold?
Methodology[347]	Output	Effective systems for evaluation of government programmes developed and operational	How should the National Evaluation Policy Framework and guidelines be updated to expand the system?
			To what extent are the methodologies used / suggested relevant to evaluation outcomes? Are there other evaluative mechanisms which need to be included to maximise the benefits for government?[348]
		Reports are compared to plans and benchmarks such as international best practices	To what extent are reports compared to plans and benchmarks such as international best practice? Does this form part of the quality assurance system?

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[347] This refers to an NES being clear about evaluations should be approached.
[348] For example, rapid methodologies, the promotion of evaluative thinking

Six Characteristics	Link to Theory of Change	Intended NES Results	Evaluation Questions
	Outcome	Enhanced capacity of stakeholders to manage and use evaluation research evidence	To what extent is there a common understanding of evaluation methodologies, design and target setting?
Organisation	**Output**	National evaluation policy and system developed	How is the system working as a whole, who is involved and what are the implications of this? Are the boundaries of the system clear and well understood?
			To what extent is the NES relevant and useful to all levels of government?
		Learning, sharing and advocacy to build stakeholder awareness, capacity and commitment	How are the specific components of the system[349] working nationally and provincially and how can they be strengthened?
			To what extent is it clear which stakeholders are in the system and which are not? Are the roles of these stakeholders understood?
	Outcome	Effective national evaluation system informing government's work (evaluations are used)	What are the implications for expanding the system and how should intergovernmental links around evaluations be strengthened?
	Impact	Affected stakeholders are involved extensively and consistently, ownership is increased	To what extent are key stakeholders involved consistently and extensively? Are the various roles in the system understood?
	Contextual Risks	Different levels of expertise and history of implementing evaluations among departments and provinces	To what extent is the success and sustainability of the system inhibited by contextual factors? Are there measures in place to mitigate potential contextual risk?
		Multiple layers and levels of compliance and reporting, and ambiguity regarding where evaluation fits	
		There are disincentives for stakeholders to undertake evaluations	
	Assumptions	Technical, financial and human resources available for building capacity	To what extent do the assumptions that form the foundation of the NES, hold?
		High-level political buy-in is gained and remains consistent	
		The system can be defined and delineated	

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[349] For example, procurement, quality assurance process, steering committees, training, guidelines, quality assessment system and communication

Six Characteristics	Link to Theory of Change	Intended NES Results	Evaluation Questions
Participation of Other Actors	**Impact**	Affected stakeholders are involved extensively and consistently, ownership is increased	To what extent are key stakeholders involved consistently and extensively? Are the various roles in the system understood?
Quality and Use	**Output**	Evaluation quality assurance system is operating	To what extent is a quality assurance system in place? Is this system well understood?
		Learning, sharing and advocacy to build stakeholder awareness, capacity and commitment	How are the specific components of the system[350] working nationally and provincially and how can they be strengthened?
	Outcome	Effective national evaluation system informing government's work (evaluations are used)	Is there initial evidence of symbolic[351], conceptual[352], or instrumental[353] outcomes from evaluations?
		Enhanced capacity of stakeholders to manage and use evaluation research evidence	To what extent is the sustainability of the system inhibited by capacity constraints?
	Impact	Evidence-based decision making around resources is facilitated	What evidence is there of evaluations contributing to planning / budgeting, improved accountability, decision making and knowledge?
		Challenges are highlighted and decreased	Is there evidence of other unintended outcomes or benefits from the evaluation system, e.g. in raising the importance of evidence within departments?
		Success is identified and replicated	
		Accountability is improved	How should the balance be managed going forward of internal / outsourced, use of government departments as custodian of the system (DPME), in terms of independence, learning, credibility of evaluations and the system going forward?
		Public services become more effective and poverty is eradicated	How relevant is the NES to the NDP?

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[350] For example, procurement, quality assurance process, steering committees, training, guidelines, quality assessment system and communication

[351] As noted in the TOR, "symbolic is where, for example, the profile of an issue is raised considerably by the evaluation"

[352] As noted in the TOR, "conceptual is where the understanding of the issue is improved, enabling better planning or decision-making. If learning is happening there will be some conceptual shifts"

[353] As noted in the TOR, "instrumental is whether the specific recommendations are implemented, in this case through the improvement plans"

ANNEX 3: PROPOSED REVISED THEORY OF CHANGE
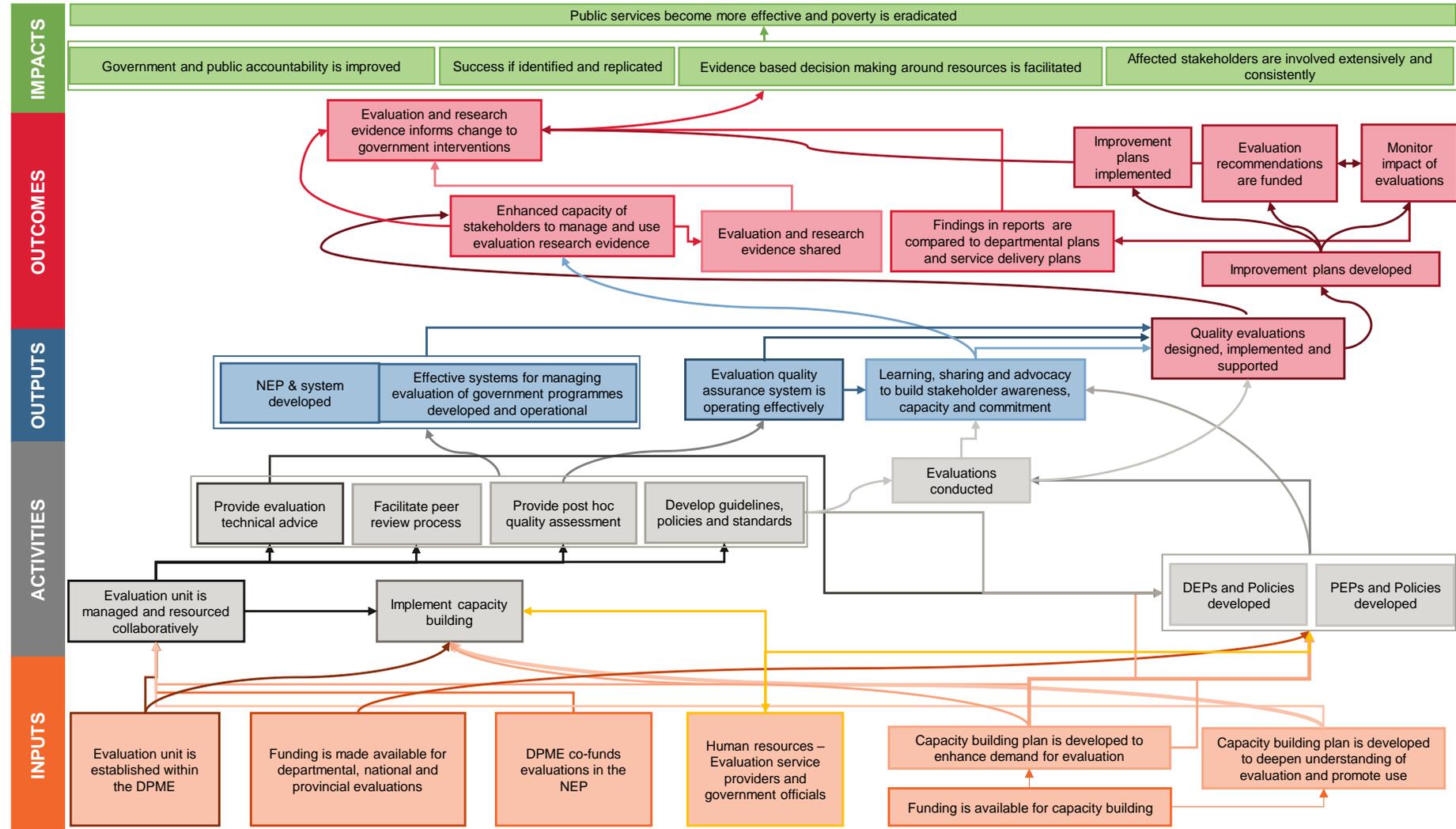
ANNEX 4: ADDITIONAL DETAIL RELATED TO THE KEY FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW AND INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKING

Summarised Comparison of South Africa to Benin, Uganda, Colombia and Mexico

South Africa	Benin	Uganda	Colombia	Mexico
POLICY – Evaluation Plan[354]				
• Evaluation plan in place which was set in motion by the establishment of the NEPF in 2011. • NEPF sets out procedure for selecting evaluations to be included in the NEP; provides organisational structure for NES; highlights roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders; emphasises that purpose of the NES is for EBPM. • Guided by policy, but not legislated.	• Evaluation plan in place. The plan covers a ten-year period (2012 – 2021). • The plan clarifies the role of evaluation in the public sector; and the link between the plan and the country's poverty reduction strategies.	• System is governed by the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy (NIMES) and the National Policy on Public Sector M&E. • NIMES highlights the linkages between the M&E system and the country's development strategies; and outlines the structure of the system and the roles and responsibilities of those in the system.	• Evaluation system holds a legal mandate. • Colombia's constitution established the national results-based management and evaluation system (SINERGIA) which outlines its organisational structure; what needs to be evaluations, and why.	• Evaluation system holds a legal mandate – CONEVAL was established through a legal mandate which outlines the criteria for the selection of evaluations to be conducted. Evaluations are decided on by the Ministry of Finance, CONEVAL, and the Ministry of Public Management.
POLICY – M vs. E				
• Distinction made between monitoring and evaluation • Historical emphasis on monitoring over evaluation	• Distinction made between monitoring and evaluation • Monitoring and evaluation are complementary	• The policy explicitly describes the differences between monitoring and evaluation	• Historically, used to involve only monitoring • Now there is clear distinction between monitoring and evaluation	• Monitoring and evaluation are clearly defined • The Performance evaluation system (SED) has two distinct M & E functions
POLICY – Autonomy and Impartiality				
• The NES' coordinating structure is the Office of the Presidency which has positive implications for autonomy and impartiality. • External service providers add an element of independence to government evaluations	• Historically and currently evaluations are undertaken by external consultants to ensure impartiality of the evaluation reports	• There is a code of conduct for evaluators to adhere to when conducting evaluations to ensure impartiality • Project evaluations are also to be conducted by external consultants	• Evaluations are contracted out to external evaluators who are housed in either national or international universities or firms. The use of external evaluators increases the evaluation's credibility	• CONEVAL conducts evaluations and is described as an independent government agency with a unique governance structure • It is located within the executive branch is an independent body made up of six academic councillors from certified academic institutions • The councillors are involved in each decision CONEVAL makes as well as the review process of all evaluations
POLICY – Feedback				
• Steering committee members are expected to constantly report back to senior managers and	• Only some of the completed evaluation reports are made	• Feedback on the basis of evidence derived from monitoring activities is	• Performance management of programmes has been integrated within	• SED established a feedback mechanism in 2008. Programme

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[354] In this context, this could also refer to an evaluation policy

South Africa	Benin	Uganda	Colombia	Mexico
departmental staff about the progress of the evaluation • Completed evaluations are presented to senior staff, Cabinet, and then made publicly available through an online repository	public and available on the Public Policy Evaluation Bureau, Benin (BEPP) website. • Many of the evaluation reports are only available to the government, technical and financial partners and professional associations in the sectors evaluated.[355] • Benin is developing an improved civil society dissemination strategy	considered to be clearer than feedback on evaluation findings, perhaps because monitoring is more established in the Ugandan system, and more closely aligned to budgeting functions • From a dissemination perspective, there does not appear to be a clear procedure in place for disseminating the information generated from evaluations • In terms of reporting, evaluation reports are made public and can be accessed on government websites	all government planning frameworks. The evidence obtained through the M&E system is used to inform decision making, improve resource allocation and strengthen the accountability of national programmes and sector policies	managers, planning, evaluation and budget units within line ministries are required to prepare a response to the evaluation findings.
POLICY – Alignment to Planning and Budgeting				
• The planning cycle and processes in the South African government are not fully integrated into planning periods, or across sectors and levels of government.[356] • Furthermore, more coordination is required between the various levels of government to ensure that evaluation outputs feed into alignment and planning	• Evaluation is not yet systematically linked to planning and budgeting • However, this constraint has been acknowledged and effort are being made to ensure further alignment is achieved in the future	• It is unclear whether monitoring information is used to inform planning or budget allocations • An important note related to budget is that while there may be alignment to the budgeting process, the budgets available for conducting evaluations, are often constrained	• The Constitution created in 1991[357] strengthened the alignment of planning of public policies to evaluation • Every new administration has been tasked with the preparation of the National Development Plan which requires government to reflect on its social investment priorities in its budget allocation; however, full harmonisation has not yet been achieved	• It was unclear, from the literature reviewed, how exactly the NES is aligned to planning and budgeting
METHODOLOGY – Selection of Results Areas to be Evaluated				
• The role of the NEPs is that they outline what is to be evaluated over the year. This is increasingly true of PEPs and DEPs	• The literature and documents that could be sourced lacked clarity on the determinants of areas to be evaluated.	• The Policy on Public Sector M&E advises that all projects over the value of 70 billion shillings should be evaluated • Cabinet developed a five-year agenda for "public policies and topics of major national interest to be subjected to rigorous independent evaluation"	• Evaluations are defined by the Colombian national government and correspond to the strategic considerations in the NDP • The DNP, along with the relevant sector ministries, decides which programmes will be evaluated	• All programmes that deal address poverty and inequality must be evaluated
METHODOLOGY – Methodologies Used				
• Design evaluation • Diagnostic evaluation • Implementation evaluation	• Diagnostic evaluation • Implementation evaluation • Impact evaluation	• Ex-ante / baseline evaluations • Mid-term and final evaluations • Impact evaluations	• Operational or Process evaluation • Results evaluation • Cost-Benefit evaluation	• Design evaluation • Indicator evaluation

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[355] (Bureau of Public Policies Evaluation, 2016)
[356] (Bureau of Public Policies Evaluation, 2016)
[357] Law 812 of 2003 sets-up the NDP including the guidelines and provisions for results-based management

South Africa	Benin	Uganda	Colombia	Mexico
• Economic evaluation • Impact evaluation • Synthesis evaluations			• Productivity evaluation • Executive evaluation • Impact evaluation	• Programme consistency and results evaluation • Process evaluations • Impact evaluation
ORGANISATION – Coordination and Oversight				
• DPME is the custodian and primary authority of the NES. DPME is supported by other key actors, such as national government departments, provinces and the ETWG	• The Coordination of Government Action is the coordination structure at the central level, responsible for the implementation of government policy on evaluation and designing the Strategic Plan.	• The Office of the Prime Minister is the central implementer and coordinator for Uganda's evaluation	• The DNP is responsible for coordinating the evaluation process.	• **CONEVAL** is responsible for the evaluation of social sector programmes and ensuring the results are fed back into policy making; • **The ministry of finance** is in charge of the performance-based budgeting initiative, coordinates performance monitoring activities, and ensures that evaluation information is used for the budgetary decision-making process • **SFP:** Its focus is on oversight and coordinating the internal government M&E system
ORGANISATION – Data Collection and Statistical Offices				
• The type of data collected is largely dependent on the evaluation being conducted – and which department in conjunction with DPME is commissioning the evaluation. At • Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) is the statistical office. It is charged with ensuring quality of data which informs the evaluation system. • This department also conducts the national census. Its mandate is informed by the Statistics Act. • The data provided by StatsSA plays a critical role in DPME commissioned evaluations, and thus the NES	• Benin experiences two main challenges with it comes to data collection and management: 1) lack of capacity to supply the required information and; 2) lack of strategy for the publication and dissemination of statistics. • The National Institute for Statistics and Economic Analysis is the technical secretariat to the National Council for Statistics and therefore has staff in the planning directorates of government departments in line with the development of a national statistical system	• The statistical office in Uganda is the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS). The role of UBOS in Uganda's NES is in the provision of social, economic and demographic statistics such as the Uganda National Household Survey, the National Service Delivery Survey, the Service Provision Assessment and the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey	• Quantitative data collection: direct surveys to different stakeholders and beneficiaries; and the collection of baseline data through baseline surveys • Qualitative methods on the other hand include in-depth interviews, focus groups discussions, spot checks, direct observations and a document review • The National Administrative Department of Statistics (Spanish: Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística), commonly referred to as DANE, is the Colombian Administrative Department responsible for the planning, compilation, analysis and dissemination of the official statistics of Colombia.	• In 1998, Congress mandated that all government-funded programmes providing subsidies had to submit rules of operation (ROP) - standardised programme information including design, objectives, indicators and envisaged beneficiaries This contributed to a significant improvement in the quality of data, and the ease with which it was accessible • The National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI by its name in Spanish, Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía) is an autonomous agency of the Mexican Government dedicated to coordinate the National System of Statistical and Geographical Information of the country.
ORGANISATION – Line Ministries				

South Africa	Benin	Uganda	Colombia	Mexico
• Line ministries are, included in steering committees when the evaluation pertains to their ministry. There are furthermore, M&E units within the line ministries. The experience and capacity of these units varies considerably across ministries.	• The role played by line ministries in Benin is unclear from the literature reviewed	• Ministries, departments and agencies report to the Office of the Prime Minister. Ministries. • Depts. and agencies in the evaluation system produce annual Ministerial Policy Statements, ensure that planning units are staffed for evaluation, ensure that there is a management information system in place, plan for evaluation budgeting, and hold quarterly reviews to assess their progress against targets	• Council of Ministers and (Consejo Nacional de Política Económica y Social (National Council of Economic and Social Policy) (CONPES) act as high-level decision-making bodies, a President's senior advisor was appointed in a political advisory role and an Inter-Sectoral Committee for Evaluation and Management of Results was established • Inter-Sectoral Committee is made up of representatives from the Presidency, and the ministries and agencies whose programmes are to be evaluated	• Mexico there are evaluation units within ministries which provide technical assistance and inputs into improvement plans
ORGANISATION – Decentralised Levels				
• The NES is coordinated at the provincial level through the Offices of the Premier. However, similar to the line ministries, the extent to which this is aligned with the NES is recognised as a weakness of the system	• The literature and documents that could be sourced lacked clarity around the role of decentralised levels in Benin's NES.	• The role of decentralised levels of government is unclear in Uganda's NES	• Colombia is a federal state with a national government, 32 regional governments and 1119 local governments. National government has 13 Ministries and 6 administrative department similar to the DNP	• Further investigation is required to determine the existence of decentralised levels, and if so, how these are linked to the overall NES
CAPACITY – Problem Acknowledged				
• Shortcomings in capacity are acknowledged and used to inform training plans • In response to capacity constraints a number of initiatives have been launched including the National M&E Learning Network and forums for senior staff; short courses for government employees involved in evaluation; the provision of guidelines and templates; and the Management Performance Assessment Tool	• Evaluation capacity is constrained • In response Benin established Benin Evaluation Days, these events bring together national and international partners for training and knowledge sharing • Benin is currently looking at developing M&E courses through its School of Public Management	• Evaluation capacity is constringed • Capacity development has been conducted through of joint effort by the Office of the Prime Minister, the Uganda Evaluation Association, and the Uganda Management Institute.	• The evaluation system acknowledges capacity constraints and has responded with capacity building plans • Capacity building initiatives have included seminars, training loans and grants, and the identification of qualified consultants to develop guidance material	• Mexico's capacity problems are fairly unique in that on the hand, CONEVAL is well-established and well-capacitated system • There does not appear to be a current capacity building plan in place.
PARTICIPATION OF OTHER ACTORS – Parliament				
• Parliament provides credibility to the evaluation process by approving planned evaluations and the findings and recommendations that come out of the evaluations	• Parliament are involved in promoting the use of evaluation findings in legislative processes.	• Parliament plays a very high-level role and is responsible for exercising oversight on spending and the implementation of government programmes. M&E findings and	• The Colombian Congress forms part of the demand side of evaluation • The president presents his annual reports about progress made on target sets out in the NDP to congress	• It was unclear from the literature what role Parliament play in Mexico's NES

South Africa	Benin	Uganda	Colombia	Mexico
		recommendations may be used by parliament in the legislative process as well as strategic development planning		
PARTICIPATION OF OTHER ACTORS – Civil Society				
• Academic institutions play an important learning function in the development of evaluation culture and practices especially at a government level. • Private sector and Non-Government Organisation (NGOs) also contribute to the existing knowledge surrounding evaluations, their methodologies and use; to capture this professional organisation have formed to document and develop evaluation culture	• NGOs and international donors promote the use of, and demand for evaluation, while universities assist with capacity development.	• At the Local Government level, NGOs form part of technical planning committees and also submit evaluation reports of their own programmes to the district planning committee. • Their reports are used to inform local government resource allocation.	• Parts of civil society oversee results and validate findings	• The media is active in publishing the findings of evaluations, and civil society research institutions focus on increasing accountability in the system.
PARTICIPATION OF OTHER ACTORS – Donors				
• In South Africa, the role of donors appears to be restricted to funding of capacity building initiatives	• Activities such as conferences and outreach still require financial support from donors	• Donors design, commission and fund evaluations in Uganda. M&E is used as an accountability mechanism by donors, which can determine the release and allocation of funds – this is quite a substantial role in the country given the value of donor funds	• Donors initially played an important role in the development SINERGIA, they promoted the use of evaluation in social programmes by multilaterals • In a 2008 paper by the World Bank the problems of fiscal restrictions had resulted in evaluations activities not being extended beyond a pilot phase	• The role of donors is unclear from the literature review
QUALITY AND USE – Effective Use of Evaluations				
• In South Africa, the focus is on creating an enabling environment for evaluation in an attempt to enhance use. Enabling components include the provision of training, guidelines, standards and competencies; the provision of quality assessments; and ensuring that there is a link between the findings, the relevant department and to Cabinet	• In Benin, no clear process for use appears to be in place, but reports are developed for ministers and other relevant stakeholders	• In Uganda, while the Policy on M&E in the Public-Sector highlights that the purpose of the evaluation system is "to produce evidence of performance and results which can inform public policy", actual utilisation of evaluation outputs is low	• In Colombia results are presented to Congress and then made public in SINERGIA's annual report. Some evaluations are followed by improvement plans, these are periodically updated ensure programmes achieve greater impact	• In Mexico, the use of evaluation findings is said to be historically low. Evaluation guidelines were developed in 2007 to increase use. These guidelines note that once an evaluation is completed, the recommendations must be ranked in terms of their relevance and feasibility. This forms part of an implementation which is also published (along with the evaluation).

ANNEX 5: ADDITIONAL DETAIL RELATED TO FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

List of Evaluations in the National Evaluation Plans

Cancelled Evaluations (6)

1. Evaluation of the Asset Forfeiture Unit Sub-Programme

2. Implementation Evaluation of the Mining Charter

3. Impact evaluation of the Agricultural Extension Recovery Programme

4. Implementation Evaluation of the Ilima Letsema Programme

5. Impact evaluation of MAFISA (quantitative)

6. Implementation Evaluation of the Outcomes System

Evaluations at the Concept Phase (10)

1. Service Delivery Improvement Planning System (Stuck)

2. Evaluation of Access to the City (Stuck)

3. Design and Implementation Evaluation of the National Space Strategy (TORs approved)

4. Implementation Evaluation of the South Africa Police Service Detective Service: Crime Investigation (TORs approved)

5. Implementation Evaluation of the Integrated Social Crime Prevention Strategy (TORs approved)

6. Implementation Evaluation of GIAMA (Pre-implementation)

7. DBE-DOT Learner Transport Programme (TORs approved)

8. Diagnostic evaluation of the implementation of Community Based Worker (CBW) systems across government (TORs approved)

9. Implementation Evaluation of Specialised Commercial Crime interventions in South Africa with specific focus on Investigation and Prosecution Systems (TORs approved)

10. Implementation and partly impact evaluation of the 2010 broad-based socio-economic empowerment charter (mining charter) (Pre-implementation).

Evaluations at the Design Phase (4)

1. Impact / implementation evaluation of the evaluation system (TORs approved)

2. Evaluation of Early Grade Reading in SA (TORs approved)

3. Evaluation of City Support (TORs approved)

4. Implementation evaluation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process and its contribution towards sustainable development (TORs approved)

Evaluations at the Implementation Phase

1. Implementation Evaluation of the Agricultural Extension Recovery Plan (Approved reports)

2. Evaluation of CAPS/New School Curriculum (Approved reports)

3. Implementation evaluation of citizen-based monitoring programme (Approved reports)

4. Implementation evaluation of the Non-Profit Organisations Regulatory Framework and Legislation (Approved reports)

5. Implementation Evaluation of the National Drug Master Plan in addressing all forms of Substance abuse (Approved reports)

6. Evaluation of the National Qualifications Framework Act (NQFA) (Implementation)

7. Impact Evaluation of the Social Housing Programme (SHP) (Stuck)

8. Evaluation of the Indigenous Knowledge Systems Policy (IKSP) (Approved reports)

9. Economic Evaluation of the Incremental Investment into the SAPS Forensic Services (Approved reports)

10. Policy Evaluation of Small Farmer Support (Stuck)

11. Implementation Evaluation of the Framework for Strategic and Annual Performance Planning (FSAPP) (Implementation)

12. Implementation Evaluation of Integrated Residential Development Programme (IRDP) (Stuck)

13. Baseline for future impact evaluation for informal settlements targeted for upgrading (UISP) (Stuck)

14. Evaluation of Military Veterans Economic Empowerment and Skills Transferability and Recognition Programme (Stuck)

15. Evaluation of Tax Compliance Cost of Small Businesses (Approved reports)

16. Evaluation of Community Work Programme (CWP) (Approved reports)

17. Implementation Evaluation of Land Recapitalisation and Development Programme (RECAP) (Served at Cabinet)

18. Implementation/ Impact Evaluation of the National School Nutrition Programme (Approved reports)

19. The Impact of Government's Approach to "Affordable" Housing (1994-2013) (Stuck)

20. Evaluation of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges Expansion and Capacity Development Programme (Implementation).

21. Implementation / Design Evaluation of the Integrated Justice System / Programme (Implementation)

22. Implementation Evaluation of Older Persons Act (Implementation)

23. Evaluation of Birth Registration Programme (Implementation)

24. Government Business Incentives (Implementation)

25. The Evaluation of the Integrated Strategy on the Promotion of Entrepreneurship and Small Enterprises (Implementation)

Evaluations at the Improvement Plan Phase

1. Design Evaluation of the Policy on Community Colleges (PCC) (Stuck)

2. Diagnostic Evaluation /Programme Audit for Violence Against Women and Children (Improvement plan)

3. Diagnostic Review of Early Childhood Development (ECD)

4. Economic Evaluation of the Incremental Investment into the SAPS Forensic Services

5. Evaluation of Business Process Services Programme

6. Evaluation of CAPS / New School Curriculum

7. Evaluation of Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) (Stuck)

8. Evaluation of Land Restitution Programme (Stuck)

9. Evaluation of Technology and Human Resources for Industry Programme (THRIP) (Improvement plan)

10. Evaluation of the Support Programme for Industrial Innovation (SPII)

11. Impact Assessment of the Micro Agricultural Financial Institution of SA (MAFISA) (Stuck).

12. Impact Evaluation of Grade R (reception year of schooling) (Improvement plan)

13. Implementation Evaluation of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP)

14. Implementation Evaluation of Citizen-Based Monitoring

15. Implementation Evaluation of Government Coordination System (clusters/ MinMECs and Implementation Forums) (Stuck)

16. Implementation Evaluation of Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) (Improvement plan)

17. Implementation Evaluation of Nutrition Programmes addressing Children under 5 (Improvement plan)

18. Implementation Evaluation of the Export Marketing Investment Assistance Incentive Programme (EMIA) (Improvement plan)

19. Implementation Evaluation of the Funza-Lushaka Bursary Scheme (Improvement plan)

20. Implementation Evaluation of the Land Recapitalisation and Development Programme (RECAP)

21. Implementation evaluation of the Social Sector Expanded Public Works Programme (Improvement plan)

22. Implementation Evaluation of Urban Settlements Development Grant (USDG) (Improvement plan)

23. Implementation/ Impact Evaluation of Effectiveness of Environmental Governance in the Mining Sector (Improvement plan)

24. Implementation / Impact Evaluation of the National School Nutrition Programme

25. Synthesis evaluation - Has the provision of state subsidised housing addressed asset poverty for households and local municipalities (Stuck)

Closed Evaluations

1. Diagnostic Review of Early Childhood Development (ECD)

2. Evaluation of Business Process Services Programme

3. Evaluation of the Support Programme for Industrial Innovation (SPII)

4. Implementation Evaluation of Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP)

5. Evaluation of Advanced Manufacturing Technology Strategy (AMTS).

Case Studies

As noted in the methodology section of this report, the evaluation team conducted departmental and provincial case studies. Figure 39 below shows where the case studies fit on the adoption of innovation curve. The Western Cape, DBE and DSD are innovators; while Gauteng and **the dti** are early adopters, Eastern Cape and Limpopo are part of the early majority, and DJCD is part of the late majority.

Figure 39: Departmental and Provincial Case Studies Located on the Adoption of Innovation Curve
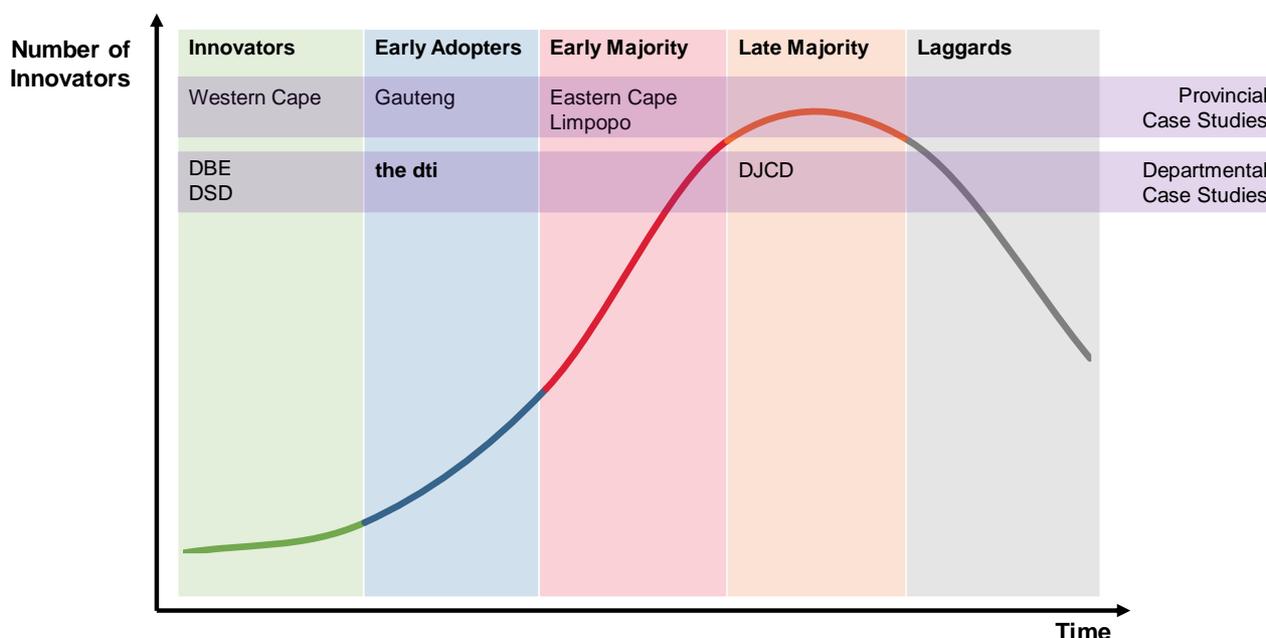
These departments and provinces are discussed in the sections that follow. The information collected on the provinces and departments is organised along the lines of Holvoet and Renard's six characteristics where policy looks at the evaluation plan, monitoring vs. evaluation, autonomy and impartiality in the system, feedback, and alignment to planning and budgeting; methodology looks at priority setting, methodologies used, and data collection; organisation looks at coordination and oversight; capacity looks at capacity constraints, and capacity building plans; participation of other actors looks at the extent to which provinces and departments are working with key stakeholders such as parliament, civil society, donors, and the private sector; and use looks at examples of use of the evaluation process or findings at the departmental and provincial levels.[358]

It is important to note that there is considerable variation in the level and type of information available across the provinces and departments. As a result, the type of information contained in the six sub-questions is not always consistent across provinces and departments.

Departmental Case Studies

Department of Basic Education

Policy

DBE was an innovator of the NES, along with DSD and the Department of Health. DBE has a strong culture of research and evaluation. There is evidence of senior level buy-in in DBE with the senior managers in the Research Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (RCME) being evaluation champions. In addition, the current DG and the Minister both place high worth on the evidence generated by evaluations. Table 31 below outlines the details of the eight evaluations that can be found on DPME's repository.

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[358] (Holvoet & Renard, 2007)

DBE has produced a *Draft Departmental Evaluation and Research Plan (DERP)* as their departmental evaluation plan (DEP) which provides details of the evaluations approved by the department's senior management over a three-year period. The approved evaluations are linked to the department's strategic programmes. While DBE has developed a plan, this plan does not currently provide information on funding sources for the evaluations in the plan.

Even though DBE's evaluation work predates the NES, respondents in the department noted that they have found engaging with the NES empowering. More specifically respondents noted that participation in the NES has:

- Strengthened the M&E unit's hand in advocating for evaluation and developing an evaluative culture in DBE;

- Simplified procurement processes;

- Access to technical support to manage evaluations; and

- Enhanced the credibility from evaluations being submitted to Cabinet.

DBE does a combination of external and internal evaluations depending on capacity. Evaluations are either done internally by DBE officials or externally by external service providers in the private sector or academia. The internal evaluations have been for small programmes.

Methodology

DBE has adopted the DPME guidelines and the NEPF was formally adopted by DBE in October 2016. The guidelines on evaluation types are seen to be useful by respondents from DBE. For example, DBE had originally intended the Funza Lusaka evaluation to be an impact evaluation. However, based on DPME's guidelines on evaluation types, and interactions with the steering committee, it was decided that an implementation evaluation would be more suitable given the time and resource constraints. Respondents from DBE noted that while they find the guidelines on evaluation types useful, they would like to see DPME providing more support on additional evaluation methodologies, beyond the six provided in the DPME's guidelines.

In prioritising evaluations, DBE follows the same process as DPME. Respondents noted that: a senior management meeting is held during which concept notes for proposed evaluations are discussed; the M&E team motivates why proposed programmes should be evaluated; motivates for funding from the CFO or donors; and indicates who is responsible for which tasks and encourages them to budget for taking evaluations forward; provinces are then informed of the proposed evaluations; and evaluations are commissioned; and the M&E team then works with programme managers in engaging with senior managers and during the drafting of TORs.

Table 31: Overview of DBE Evaluations in the DPME Evaluation Repository

Evaluation	Report Approval	Evaluation Length (Months)	Status	National Outcomes	Type	Subject	Cost	Overall QA Score	Improvement plan in place
Basic Education Macro Indicator Report	2013	-	Final report approved	**1** – Improved quality of basic education	Diagnostic	Sector	No data[359]	3.54	No
Monitoring and Evaluation Report on the Impact and Outcomes of the Education System on South Africa's Population: Evidence from household surveys	2006	-	Final report approved	**1** – Improved quality of basic education	Impact	Institution	No data[360]	3.7	No
Report on the Annual National Assessments of 2011	2011	4 months	Final report approved	**1** – Improved quality of basic education	Diagnostic	Policy	No data[361]	3.5	No
Schools that Work	2007	4 months	Final report approved	**1** – Improved quality of basic education	Impact	Institution	No data[362]	4.2	No
The status of the Language of Learning and Teaching in South African Public Schools	2010	12 months	Final report approved	**1** – Improved quality of basic education	Diagnostic	Policy	No data[363]	4	No
Developing and Evaluating the First Phase of the Grade 12 Mind the Gap Study Guide Series	2013	13 months	Final report approved	**1** – Improved quality of basic education	Impact	Programme	R0[364]	3.3	No
The State of Literacy Teaching and Learning in the Foundation Phase: National Report 2012	2013	12 months	Final report approved	**1** – Improved quality of basic education	Diagnostic; Implementation	Sector	R17 000 000	3.8	No
Evaluation of Funza-Lusaka Bursary Scheme	2016	22months	Final report approved	**1** – Improved quality of basic education	Implementation	Programme	R3 222 650	3.7	Yes
		Average: 11 months					Average: R10 111 325[365]	Average: 3.72	

Source: (DPME, 2017)

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[359] Information is not available on the repository, or in the quality assessment of the evaluation.
[360] Information is not available on the repository, or in the quality assessment of the evaluation.
[361] Information is not available on the repository, or in the quality assessment of the evaluation.
[362] Information is not available on the repository, or in the quality assessment of the evaluation.
[363] Information is not available on the repository, or in the quality assessment of the evaluation.
[364] This evaluation was done internally, and there were therefore no additional evaluation costs.
[365] This average is not reflective of the average cost of evaluations in the department as it represents the costs of only two evaluations.

Respondents from DBE noted that the M&E unit supports programme managers in thinking through programmes and adds value in creative thinking around programmes. There is mutual respect between programme managers and the M&E unit, and their roles are mutually understood.

All the DBE evaluations that were done through the NEPs were peer reviewed using the NES peer review system. Respondents from DBE expressed some reservations about the peer review system. According to these respondents, the peer review system needs to be strengthened. Specifically, respondents from DBE noted that:

- The system could be strengthened through possibly having a panel of peer reviewers similar to the panel of evaluators; and

- Outcomes facilitators can play a larger role in nominating peer reviewers given that they understand the sectors, and are familiar with international experts whose services might be appropriate in a peer reviewer capacity.

Evaluations that are done through the NES are subjected to a quality assessment process. Respondents from DBE noted they have experienced challenges with the quality assessment process. While there is recognition that the quality assessments are important, and that they should be done by an independent party; there is a concern that some of the quality assessors do not sufficiently understand the education sector and / or evaluation methods. Even though the DBE evaluations have scored highly in the quality assessments, as shown in Table 32 below; respondents from DBE noted that there were instances where evaluations were scored highly when, in the view of DBE respondents, the methodology of these evaluations were not sufficiently rigorous. Respondents from DBE further expressed concerns that the QA process is superficial, or too high level, to be useful. Respondents noted that the system can be improved by having a deeper focus on methodology and rigour.

Organisation

Evaluations at DBE are managed by the Chief Directorate, Strategic Planning Research and Coordination with the Research Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (RCME) as the unit responsible. This Directorate in collaboration with researchers in the Office of the Director-General, are responsible, among other things for national monitoring, research and evaluation. Programme-specific monitoring and evaluation is the responsibility of the respective programme or branch managers who are supported by research units within the various branches and units in the DBE. In terms of MPAT DBE's score decreased from 3 in 2015 to 2.5 in 2016, as shown in Table 32 below.

Table 32: DBE MPAT Evaluation Scores, 2015 - 2016

Year	MPAT Score	Description
2015	3	There is a multi-year evaluation plan that follows the NES
2016	2.5	Relevant staff members are in place; and b. that the department has approved or adopted guidelines that follow the NES;

Source: (DPME, 2016b)

The reason that DBE attained a lower score in 2016 was primarily because an evaluation plan was not submitted as evidence in the evaluation KPA of MPAT. The oversight of not including this evaluation plan as evidence, unnecessarily cost the DBE, as reflected in their reduced score between 2015 and 2016. The score achieved is at odds with DBE's actual performance in conducting evaluations is seen by respondents in DBE and DPME to be high. Respondents from DBE noted that they are more interested in meaningfully institutionalising evaluation than being driven by the requirements of MPAT.

Capacity

DBE is relatively well-capacitated. There is a Chief Director, Director, Deputy Director and two Assistant Directors responsible for overseeing research and M&E functions in the departments. The difficulty is that

evaluations require substantial time and so the existing capacity gets spread thinly. Time consuming elements of evaluation include workshop attendance; supporting programme managers in developing evaluation concept notes; participating in theory of change workshops and design clinics; commenting on deliverables; and communicating to internal senior managers.

DBE evaluations are managed by a director, supported by an M&E officer. Respondents from DBE note that they have found having a director serve as an evaluation expert useful. There are, however, concerns about time constraints at the director level resulting from a number of competing priorities.

Table 33 below indicates how well DBE evaluations have scored according to the DPME's quality assessment system scores. The average for DBE is 3.72 out of a total of 5, where any score above 3 is considered good.

Table 33: Quality Assessment Scores for DBE Evaluations

	Overall Score	Planning and Design	Implementation	Report	Follow-up and Use	Partnership Approach	Free and Open Learning Process	Evaluation Ethics	Coordination and Alignment	Capacity Development	Quality Control	Project Management
Basic Education Macro Indicator Report	3.54	3.03	3.35	3.76	2.75	3.03	4	4	3.46	3.14	4.01	-
Monitoring and Evaluation Report on the Impact and Outcomes of the Education System on South Africa's Population: Evidence from household surveys	3.7	2.71	3.43	4.01	3.03	5	4.5	4.5	3.75	1.75	3.88	-
Report on the Annual National Assessments of 2011	3.5	3.53	2.96	3.96	2.4	5	4.27	4.27	3.53	1.5	4.11	-
Schools that Work	4.2	3.94	3.92	4.5	3.93	5	4.61	4.61	4.6	-	4.25	-
The status of the Language of Learning and Teaching in South African Public Schools	4	3	4.24	4.1	3.58	5	4.64	4.64	3.25	2	4.05	-
Developing and Evaluating the First Phase of the Grade 12 Mind the Gap Study Guide Series	3.3	3.52	3.19	3.31	2.97	3.18	3.2	3.2	3.83	2	3.58	-
The State of Literacy Teaching and Learning in the Foundation Phase: National Report 2012	3.8	3.64	3.64	3.76	2.94	3.74	3.72	3.72	4.87	2.92	3.89	-
Evaluation of Funza-Lusaka Bursary Scheme	3.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Average	**3.72**	**3.34**	**3.53**	**3.91**	**3.63**	**3.09**	**4.28**	**4.13**	**3.87**	**2.21**	**3.97**	**-**

Source: (DPME, 2017)

As noted above, where there are time and capacity constraints in conducting evaluations, and where the size of the evaluation is considerable DBE makes use of external service providers. Respondents from DBE noted that they have experienced challenges with the quality of evaluation service providers. These include:

- Instances of low quality of evaluation reports, as a result the steering committee and DPME are required to invest more time in working with the evaluators to refine the report ensuring that the arguments are coherent and that the recommendations logically follow from the findings.

- Instances of evaluators struggling with interpreting data and triangulating information.

- Concerns around the literature reviews not being used to inform the evaluation – where the literature review is seen as a deliverable that is independent of the evaluation report.

In addition to human resource capacity constraints, a key limitation for evaluation is limited financial resources. Because the RCME unit only has an operational budget, it is the programme branches and DPME that fund evaluations. This increases ownership at the programme manager level and while this arrangement is helpful

within DBE because of good internal relationships, it cannot necessarily be used in other departments where programme managers are more reluctant to conduct evaluations.

Use

All evaluations in the NEP must produce an improvement plan for the evaluation, which is monitored by DPME. In addition to improvement plans, DBE has internal systems in place to promote the use of evaluations, including communication with senior managers throughout the evaluation process, jointly developing suggested next steps once an evaluation is complete. In addition, evaluation is embedded into the performance agreements of relevant DBE staff.

Examples of use from conducting evaluations include:

1. **Instrumental use:** As a result of the Funza Lushaka evaluation, DBE's budget for MIS was increased. The Funza-Lusaka bursary scheme now also has Cabinet approval to appoint new people. The Funza Lusaka managers have changed the way in which they place graduates, based on the results of the evaluation.

2. **Process use:** DBE respondents noted that people who participated in steering committees have benefited from the evaluation process in terms of enhancing their understanding of evaluation, and the evaluation process. In addition, there was consensus from DBE respondents that the use of the theory of change is one of the most useful elements to come from the NES.

Department of Human Settlements

Policy

Relative to other national departments, DHS is an early adopter department and has been conducting evaluations prior to the establishment of the NEPF and NES. The earliest recorded evaluation took place in 2010. Respondents however noted that evaluations took place on an ad hoc basis prior to this. However, these evaluations were acknowledged to be of varying levels of scope and quality. Table 34 below summarises the information on DPME's evaluation repository related to five DHS evaluations that can be found on the repository.

Despite not submitting a full DEP[366], DHS remains committed to furthering evaluation practice and use in their department, and has provided the DPME with a summarised table of the framework that has been developed for the DHS by KPMG as a guideline for when an evaluation may be valuable to conduct. However, the projects to be evaluated are scoped by external service providers, not the department itself.

Despite the widespread evaluation practice within DHS, respondents highlighted a number of concerns related to the NES:

- A number of respondents noted that they are unclear on why the DPME's vision of evaluation is necessarily "better" than what the department has historically been doing. Respondents further noted that the DPME's enthusiasm in advocating for the NES may have caused some anxiety in the department regarding how to integrate the added responsibilities of a NES evaluation into the daily work of each individual.

- Respondents noted that as a result of the internally-initiated approach, a few departments are over-represented in the NEP. Departments that are interested in the NES, and have developed the relevant evaluation skills, consistently submit evaluations to the NEP, while less experienced departments are reluctant to do so. Respondents from DHS noted that the former are insider departments, while the latter continue to be outside the system.

- Respondents noted that there is a considerable amount of work that goes into an NEP evaluation so if it is not legislated, respondents felt that it is unlikely that the support for the system will continue – even in departments who have opted into the system.

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[366] (DHS, n.d.)

On a practical level, there appears to be some confusion in DHS about the role that DPME plays in NES evaluations. In some cases, staff felt that the DPME was evaluating them rather than helping them to evaluate. The staff acknowledged that they know this is not the case and that it is simply a matter of articulating the NES better, internally. Respondents from DHS further noted that they would like DPME to approach the department with the objective of enabling an improved understanding of the context facing the department before suggesting conformity to the NES. DHS has conducted evaluations for some time and so needs to be made aware of the relevance of DPME's objectives in their existing structures.

Despite the views expressed above, respondents at the DHS noted that they continue to see the NES as a valuable initiative and remain committed to furthering evaluation practice and use in their department.

The bulk of the department's evaluations are done by external service providers**.** Respondents from DHS noted that in terms of external evaluators, it appears as if the same evaluators conduct the bulk of government evaluations. Respondents hinted at a "clique" of evaluators and evaluation commissioners developing, noting that this contributes to a perception that the sector is governed by personal relationships rather than a department's objectives. An additional concern raised related to external evaluators is that the recommendations arising from evaluations are often not practical, and thus not necessarily implementable. Finally, respondents noted that often external evaluators have a condescending attitude towards government officials which results in difficult working relationships.

Methodology

DHS's M&E staff have noted that they have appreciated the clarity provided by DPME's guidelines on evaluation elements such as TORs. However, outside of M&E officials, the evaluation team found that senior managers and programme managers, although involved in the evaluation process, had not deeply engaged with DPME's guidelines. This resulted in confusion around the different types of evaluations being used and the expected outcomes from these evaluations.

As noted above, external service providers are called upon to structure the evaluation agenda for DHS. After having constructed the evaluation agenda, the same service providers may bid to conduct the evaluations. This is a practice that has been in place for a number of years in the department. There is however a concern amongst respondents that this can create conflicts of interest, where service providers decide what needs to evaluate based on what services they are able to offer, rather than having a robust prioritisation framework.

Table 34: Overview of DHS Evaluations in the DPME Evaluation Repository

Evaluation	Report Approval	Evaluation Length	Status	National Outcomes	Type	Subject	Cost	Overall QA Score	Improvement plan in place
Report on the Evaluation of the Impact of the Rural Housing Programme 2009/2010	2010	10 months	Report approved	**8 -** Sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life	Impact	Programme	R1 300 000	3.8	**Yes**
Evaluating the Performance of Social and Rental Housing Programmes	2010	13 months	Report approved	**8 -** Sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life	Implementation; Impact	Programme	R1 200 000	3.4	**No**
Design and Implementation Evaluation of the Urban Settlements Development Grant (USDG)	2015	18 months	Final report	**8 -** Sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life	Design; Implementation	Policy; System	R1 498 148	3.1	**Yes**
Diagnostic of whether the provision of state-subsidised housing has addressed asset poverty for households and local municipalities/ Evaluation of Provision of State Subsidised Housing (Assets)	2015	25 months	Final report	**8 -** Sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life	Evaluation Synthesis	Policy; Programme	R 495 205	3.1	**No**
Impact/Implementation Evaluation of the Social Housing Programme (SHP)	2016	18 months	Final report	**8 -** Sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life	Implementation; Impact	Programme	No data[367]	3.3	**No**
		Average: 17 months					Average: R1 123 338	Average: 3.34	

Source: (DPME, 2017)

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[367] Information is not available on the repository.

Most DHS evaluations are procured by the department using their own internal processes. As a result, there is tension between the processes followed by DPME, and those followed by DHS. For example, while DHS evaluations that are in the NEP are peer reviewed and quality assessed, a respondent noted there is no clear mechanism for these functions within DHS's internal process. A summary of the quality assessment scores that DHS evaluations (in the NEP), is provided in Table 35 below. The table shows that overall, all evaluations received scores that were higher than 3 which indicates that the evaluations were of a fairly good quality.

Table 35: Quality Assessment Scores for DHS Evaluations

	Overall Score	Planning and Design	Implementation	Report	Follow-up and Use	Partnership Approach	Free and Open Learning Process	Evaluation Ethics	Coordination and Alignment	Capacity Development	Quality Control	Project Management
Report on the Evaluation of the Impact of the Rural Housing Programme 2009/2010	3.8	4.57	4.33	3.55	2.82	3	4	5	4.42	2	3.7	-
Evaluating the Performance of Social and Rental Housing Programmes	3.4	3.29	3.78	3.37	2.41	2.36	5	4.67	3.83	3.5	3.22	-
Design and Implementation Evaluation of the Urban Settlements Development Grant (USDG)	3.1	3.22	2.88	3.25	3	2,96	3.39	3.4	3.47	2.4	3.25	-
Diagnostic of whether the provision of state-subsidised housing has addressed asset poverty for households and local municipalities/ Evaluation of Provision of State Subsidised Housing (Assets)	3.1	2.81	3.03	3.46	2.93	3.19	3.44	2.8	3.8	2	3.25	2.67
Impact/Implementation Evaluation of the Social Housing Programme (SHP)	3.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Average	**3.34**	**3.47**	**3.47**	**3.46**	**2.93**	**3.19**	**3.44**	**2.8**	**3.8**	**2**	**3.35**	**-**

Source: (DPME, 2017)

Organisation

The Chief Director of Programme M&E is charged with evaluation in DHS. The office of the Programme M&E Chief Director is located within the Programme and Project Management Unit branch of DHS.[368] DHS is different to other departments in that the M&E unit is not located within a strategy or planning branch.

In entrenching an evaluation culture, particularly in their provincial counterparts, respondents from DHS acknowledged that they need to create a consolidated message about evaluation for provinces. At this stage, provinces are only asked to give data inputs to the national department without much context, analysis or feedback between the national and provincial units. They realise that a culture of inclusion would clarify and create a more effective environment for evaluations.

DHS has completed the DPME's MPAT tool and a scored 2 out of 4 in 2015 and 4 out of 4 in 2016.[369] This implies that they have complied with all the necessary management KPA's for evaluation. It is important to note that while the department meets the requirements of MPAT, this does not speak to the quality of evaluation in the department, or the institutionalisation of evaluation.

Capacity

The DHS's M&E unit is well-capacitated with individuals and budget assigned to conduct evaluation tasks. The majority of M&E officials' time is however spent on monitoring and reporting. Added to this, M&E staff tend to conduct rapid appraisals rather than full evaluations, and appear to find monitoring a more effective tool in holding teams to account than evaluation. Respondents noted that because the team has more experience in monitoring, they continue to submit evaluations to the NEP so as to receive technical evaluation support. From

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[368] (DHS, 2017)
[369] (DPME, 2016b)

a skills perspective, respondents noted that there should be an increased focus in the NES on on-the-job and active coaching related to evaluation.

Use

Of the five evaluations that have been in the NEP, only two have corresponding improvement plans. For the evaluations that do have improvement plans, reporting against these plans has been lacklustre. For example, DHS has consistently missed reporting deadlines for the improvement plan for the USDG evaluation. Respondents from DHS noted that they find evaluations helpful as a reflective exercise, but not necessarily as a decision-making tool. On the other hand, respondents from DPME have noted that as a result of the evaluations conducted:

1. USDG Evaluation: DHS developed a new policy related to USDG. DHS consulted with National Treasury on the new policy, and this was approved by MinMEC; and the USDG grant framework was adjusted.

2. Social and Rental Housing Programme Evaluation: DHS is working on adjusting the income levels and funding for the social housing programme.

Department of Justice and Constitutional Development

Policy

DJCD is currently engaged in their 2014 – 2017 DEP and is currently involved in one evaluation within the NEP. The proposed evaluations in this DEP, and their status, are summarised in Table 36 below. Of the evaluations outlined below, one (*evaluation of the functionality of the design of the integrated justice system*) was included in the NEP, and is currently in progress. The status of the remaining evaluations is unknown with there being no information on these evaluations in departmental documentation.

Table 36: DJCD DEP Evaluations

Financial Year	Evaluation	Type of Evaluation	Responsibility for Evaluation	Status[370]
2014/15	Evaluation of the implementation of initial sexual offences courts in order to guide further roll-out of additional courts	Implementation	Chief Directorate: Strategy, Monitoring and Evaluation	Unknown
2015/16	Evaluation of the impact of established One-Stop Child Justice Centres (OSJCJ) with a view of establishing additional sites	Implementation	External evaluator	Unknown
	Evaluation of the effectiveness of a court digitisation project	Design	Chief Directorate: Strategy, Monitoring and Evaluation	Unknown
2016/17	Evaluation of the functionality of the design of the integrated justice system, effectiveness of the implementation strategy, and governance structures	Design	DPME	In progress, and in NEP
	Evaluation of the functionality of the governance committee of the EXCO	Implementation	Chief Directorate: Strategy, Monitoring and Evaluation	Unknown
	Evaluation of the impact of paperless solutions	Impact	Chief Directorate: Strategy, Monitoring and Evaluation	Unknown
	Impact assessment of sexual offences courts	Impact	External Evaluation	Unknown

Source: (DJCD, 2014)

In addition to the evaluations outlined above, the DJCD issued terms of reference in June 2017 for an *impact study of the Child Justice Act, 2008 (Act 75 of 2008).*

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[370] Interviewees of this evaluation were primarily involved with Integrated Justice System and did not have information about other programmes to update this data.

From a policy perspective, one respondent within the department expressed support for the legislation of the NES, with the view that the process will be taken more seriously with a legal mandate.

Table 36 also shows that half of the evaluations conducted engaged external evaluators. A programme manager for Integrated Justice System (IJS) evaluations noted that there are potential gains in terms of impartiality when using external service providers, but that their experience with the service provider for this evaluation was not a positive one. Key concerns raised were the service provider's lack of contextual knowledge which inhibited their analysis; and that the service provider was not receptive to feedback on, for example, the evaluation instruments developed.

Methodology

Overall, respondents from the DJCD noted that DPME's guidelines are useful in guiding the evaluation process – from conception to close-out. Further, as per Table 36, the department is attempting to conduct a variety of types of evaluations.

Organisation

DJCD's M&E unit is located within the Chief Directorate of Strategy, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. From an evaluation perspective, DJCD has improved in its MPAT scoring. Table 37 shows that the department's score increased from a 2 in 2015, to a 3 in 2016. The key differentiator between the two years is that the department developed a multi-year DEP[371], and one evaluation was included in the NEP.

Table 37: DJCD MPAT Evaluation Scores, 2015 - 2016

Year	MPAT Score	Description
2015	2.0	The department has planned capacity to manage / conduct evaluation
2016	3.0	There is a multi-year evaluation plan that follows the NES

Source: (DPME, 2016b)

It is however important to note that these scores do not reflect the quality of evaluations or the level of institutionalisation in the department. Related to institutionalisation, respondents from DJCD noted that more advocacy on evaluation is required for programme managers, particularly around the purpose of evaluations. The view is that if programme managers buy into evaluation, they will be more inclined to budget and plan for it. Overall, the drive for evaluation is seen to come from the DG level, but needs to be embedded at the programme management level.

A challenge raised by respondents was that the link between evaluation and budgeting is not strong enough. Budgets are controlled by the programme managers, and not through the M&E unit. In an attempt to improve the relationship between the M&E unit and programme managers, an agreement was reached requiring the relevant units to meet regularly, particularly to ensure that these units are informed about each other's work. Furthermore, it was highlighted that "getting people to talk about what they are doing, their ups and downs, has helped people understand the implication of their work and how it affects other departments and programmes".

As noted above, one evaluation has been part of the NEP. The department's experience of this evaluation process and the support received from DPME, has been positive. The departmental team linked to this evaluation found the steering committee to be particularly helpful. The only issue that was raised in this regard was that because the process is driven by DPME, members of the DJCD team did not always feel sufficiently included. A particular example given was that the IJS team did not have input into the selection of the service provider, which they would have liked.

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[371] Related to this score: It is noted above that the DEP was developed in 2014. Therefore, the score in 2015 should have also reflected this. A potential reason for the change in score was that the evidence (in the form of the DEP) may not have been submitted in 2015.

Capacity

DJCD is constrained in terms of the number of people tasked with evaluation. There are currently five people in the M&E unit. This unit is responsible for monitoring the whole department's work across 105 indicators. The team therefore has limited time and resources for evaluation. It was, in addition, noted that posts in the department have been frozen[372] and that the unit is currently unable to hire more people for the M&E unit. The department's capacity is further constrained because of the length of time that is required for managing and conducting evaluations.

A number of respondents noted that they had attended M&E forums with other departments that had more experience in conducting evaluations. This was thought to be useful in that it provided a space for discussing the challenges of conducting evaluations, and how to mitigate these challenges.

Use

For the evaluations that have been conducted, evaluation improvement plans have not been developed yet. It is therefore too early for evidence of instrumental use. From a process use perspective, however, respondents noted that being part of an evaluation in the NEP was helpful in that it shed light on good practices in the evaluation process and influenced their internal processes. This opens up the possibility that more evaluations can be managed internally. Like the other departments and provinces, respondents in DJCD found the theory of change to be the most valuable evaluation element.

Department of Social Development

Policy

DSD is an early adopter department in that the department was conducting evaluations prior to the establishment of the NES. Early M&E functions in DSD were driven by National Treasury and biased towards budget-led monitoring and reporting. This has since evolved to include a larger focus on evaluation. Respondents from DSD noted that in choosing programmes to evaluate, the department focuses in on its departmental priorities, which are aligned to the NDP.[373] Respondents further noted that evaluations are used by the department to check whether the department is on track to achieving its outcomes, and to inform policy and programmatic changes. Currently, there is a departmental evaluation plan which feeds into the provincial departmental evaluation plans.

Going forward, an M&E policy is being drafted for the national department which will make evaluations mandatory. Respondents from DSD noted that the policy will also stipulate that evaluation should be budgeted for. In this way, the department hopes to institutionalise evaluation.

The Table 38 below indicates that in the financial year 2015/16, four evaluations were submitted to the NEP and two evaluations were done internally. Of the four evaluations submitted only one, the Diagnostic Review of the Social Sector Expanded Public Works Programme was accepted and completed in 2016. In the 2016/17 financial year three evaluations were planned and proposed to be submitted in the NEP and for the 2017/18 financial year one internal evaluation has been planned.

Table 38 indicates the evaluations that have been completed by the department. Of the five evaluations listed the cost and length of the evaluations varies. All of the completed evaluations scored above 3 and evaluations have been diagnostic, implementation or impact indicating that evaluations are aligned to different points of the programme cycle.

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[372] The reason for this was not elaborated on.
[373] (DSD, 2015)

Methodology

Looking at evaluation types, respondents noted that programme managers are largely interested in impact evaluations, but that conducting impact evaluations is not always possible given the data requirements of an impact evaluation. In practice, and as shown in Table 38 below, DSD has completed a variety of evaluations.

It was acknowledged by DSD respondents that data collection processes need to be improved. Stronger data collection processes would enable the department to provide data to service providers, thereby reducing the cost of data collection activities in evaluations. To address this issue, 45% of the unit's APP is focused on collecting and analysing data.

Organisation

The M&E function of the DSD falls within the Chief Operations branch.[374] The Chief Director of M&E is responsible for service delivery monitoring, strategic information analysis and monitoring, impact assessment coordination, and organisational performance. The Chief Operations Office also includes the chief directorates of strategy, planning, development and risk management, and entity and oversight management.

In its current form, DSD has a multi-year evaluation strategy[375] which the DG signs off on. By actively including the DG, evaluation is driven from the top and more likely to be demanded (and used).

Although evaluation in the department is becoming more prominent, there are still challenges around coordination and logistics. For example, the department faces challenges in getting all the relevant stakeholders to be part of steering committees and the department's evaluation working group. This indicates that the department is having difficulty in getting staff to fully engage in the process, and dedicate sufficient time to the process. As with other departments, M&E staff face constraints in meeting both monitoring and evaluation requirements.

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[374] (DSD, 2011)
[375] (DSD, 2015)

Table 38: Overview of DSD Evaluations in the DPME Evaluation Repository

Evaluation	Report Approval	Evaluation Length	Status	National Outcomes	Type	Subject	Cost	Overall QA Score	Improvement plan in place
Implementation Evaluation of EPWP in the Social Sector: Phase Two (2009/10 - 2013/14)	2005	13 months	Final report	**7 -** Vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities with food security for all; **13 -** An inclusive and responsive social protection system.	Implementation	Sector; Programme	R1 254 542	3.5	No
Review of the Child Support Grant: Uses, Implementation and Obstacles	2008	12 months	Final report	**3 -** All people in South Africa are and feel safe; **12 -** An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.	Implementation; Impact	Programme	No data[376]	4.0	No
The South African Child Support Grant Impact Assessment: Evidence from a survey of children, adolescents and their households	2012	40 months	Final report	**2 -** A long and healthy life for all South Africans.	Impact	Policy	R13 000 000	4.0	No
A profile of social security beneficiaries in South Africa - Volume 3	2006	24 months	Final report	**3 -** All people in South Africa are and feel safe; **12 -** An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.	Diagnostic; Implementation	Programme	R17 000 000	3.7	No
Diagnostic Review of the Social Sector Expanded Public Works Programme	2015	13 months	Report approved	**7 -** Vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities with food security for all; **13 -** An inclusive and responsive social protection system.	Implementation	Sector; Programme	R1 250 000	3.5	No
		Average: 20 months					Average: R8 126 135.50	Average: 3.75	

Source: (DPME, 2017)

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[376] Information is not available on the repository, or in the quality assessment of the evaluation.

Respondents at DSD noted that they have a good relationship with DPME, who they turn to for technical guidance on evaluations, as well as financial support. However, the department feels that DPME needs to extend its reach to those who are not conducting evaluations in the NEP so that they too can benefit. Furthermore, there is an expressed need for National Treasury to play a more prominent role in evaluation in the department. The department recognises that it is not only evaluations that need to be budgeted for, but improvement plans as well. Without budget allocation for the implementation of recommendations in improvement plans, findings and recommendations are difficult to implement.

In terms of coordination with provincial departments, DSD respondents noted that more coordination is needed with provincial departments so that the departments are not only drawn on, from the national department, for data and information, but that the provincial departments are actively engaged with the evaluation work being done at the national level.

In terms of linking evaluation to budgeting and planning, DSD's evaluation plans are linked to the MTSF and the APPs. These linkages are positive, and essential to embedding evaluation in the department. Despite this mechanism, respondents noted that the link between evaluation and budgeting is still relatively weak. Respondents reported that monitoring is given more weight and evaluation is not budgeted for in programme budgets. Evaluation only occurs where there is an evaluation champion who promotes it. The link between budgeting and evaluation is however starting to strengthen.

Respondents noted that evaluations are easier when a programme manager *wants* it versus when evaluation is imposed on programme managers. The DEP states that all evaluations planned (whether in the NEP or internally) for the next three financial years should be budgeted for in the budgets of the respective programmes.[377]

Respondents in the DSD noted that while resources are not explicitly dedicated to evaluations, an 'evaluative mind-set' among staff is encouraged as a means of embedding an evaluation culture within the organisation. In this way, it is hoped that staff are constantly striving to achieve the desired outcomes and impact of policies and programmes by improving the department's interventions.

Capacity

Although DSD is an early adopter department, staff reported that they are still grappling with some of the technical elements of evaluation and that many staff lack post-graduate evaluation-related qualifications. The result of this is that much of the evaluation work still needs to be outsourced to an external service provider. However, where capacity building has taken place staff have found training valuable as they have been able to improve their skills. DSD staff are also increasingly involved in evaluations so more staff are learning-by-doing. The learning by-doing approach was reported by respondents to be beneficial.

The result of capacity building was noted by respondents to have influenced the design phase of evaluations most significantly. Initially, building elements, such as the theory of change, were outsourced. However, due to increased experience and capacity building these foundational evaluation elements are now being conducted internally.

Similar to other departments, there is a need for programme managers to be capacitated on the technical elements of evaluations. This helps to 'demystify' evaluation and illustrate that it can be used to improve policy, programmes, and projects.

Table 39 below summarises the quality assessments scores for DSD evaluations. It would seem that in general, the department's evaluations perform well across most areas with there being some room for improvement in the area of capacity development.

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[377] Department of Social Development, Departmental Evaluation Plan, 2015 -2018

Table 39: Quality Assessment Scores for DSD Evaluations

	Overall Score	Planning and Design	Implementation	Report	Follow-up and Use	Partnership Approach	Free and Open Learning Process	Evaluation Ethics	Coordination and Alignment	Capacity Development	Quality Control	Project Management
Implementation Evaluation of EPWP in the Social Sector: Phase Two (2009/10 - 2013/14)	**3.5**	3.49	3.45	3.62	3.13	3.28	3.67	3.7	3.73	3.2	3.47	3.57
Review of the Child Support Grant: Uses, Implementation and Obstacles	**4**	4.1	3.67	4.17	4	3.93	5	3.67	4.75	1.5	4.16	-
The South African Child Support Grant Impact Assessment: Evidence from a survey of children, adolescents and their households	**4**	4.56	3.4	4.41	3.5	2.8	5	4	5	4	4.39	-
A profile of social security beneficiaries in South Africa - Volume 3	**3.7**	3.95	3.37	3.76	4.05	3.64	5	3.89	2.75	2	3.96	-
Diagnostic Review of the Social Sector Expanded Public Works Programme	**3.5**	3.49	3.45	3.62	3.13	3.28	3.67	3.7	3.73	3.2	3.47	3.57
Average	**3.74**	**3.92**	**3.47**	**3.92**	**3.56**	**3.39**	**4.47**	**3.79**	**3.99**	**2.78**	**3.89**	**3.57**

Source: (DPME, 2017)

Use

Use of evaluations within the DSD is inconsistent. There are examples of evaluations that have provided programme managers critical information needed to make decisions. However; it was also shared that programme managers want multiple evaluations done of the same programme, without having implemented the recommendations of previous evaluations. One example of evidence of use in DSD is the Isibindi project. It was reported that due to the evaluation, other services for orphans and vulnerable children were improved.

From an evaluation process perspective, respondents from DSD noted that the evaluation process in its entirety, from developing an evaluation proposal to the improvement plan, needs to be reassessed. Currently the process still requires a lot of advocacy in order to maintain momentum. However, for key priority programmes this should not be the case. To increase the use of evaluation and the findings, a more collaborative process is needed, such that information produced in evaluations is consistently fed into planning of future iterations of the programme.

Finally, the theory of change development process was noted to be highly valuable to the department. Respondents stated that having a theory of change allows for smoother implementation of the programme and is illustrative of the benefits that using evaluation activities can have. However, a challenge occurs when this activity is not wholly bought into by key officials.

Department of Trade and Industry (the dti)

Policy

the dti is an early adopter department. **the dti** has high capacity for, and buy-in to evaluations, with five evaluations on the evaluation repository. An overview of the evaluations initiated by **the dti** in the evaluation repository, is provided in Table 40 below. **the dti** has a three-year evaluation plan and follows a similar process for determining the DEP as is used for the NEP[378].

the dti does evaluations internally, and makes use of external evaluators. Figure 40 below provides a breakdown of the internal evaluation activities planned in **the dti** until 2019.

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[378] (DTI Evaluation Seminar, 2016)

Figure 40: the dti's Internal Evaluation Count, and Mix of Evaluation Types, 2016 – 2019
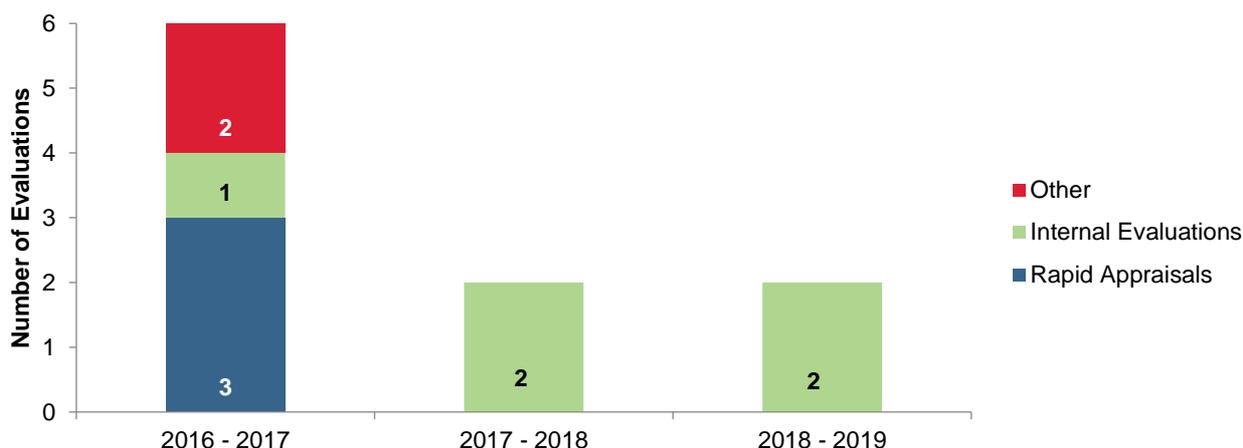
*Source: (**the dti** Evaluation Seminar, 2016)*

The challenges that **the dti** faces in terms of external evaluators appear to align with those described by other departments (whether early or recent adopters). They are as follows:

- Service providers, on occasion have not had enough capacity to complete a project to a high standard but insist they are able to keep to the timeframes departments require.

- The respondents felt that service providers often had preconceived ideas and were unable to adapt their thinking during the research process.

- Service providers often asked for data in consolidated form but internal staff often do not have the time to do this. This is a part of the reason they require the help of service providers.

the dti staff felt that dealing with service providers in meetings took up a great deal of their time. They would prefer a more streamlined communication process.

Table 40: Overview of the dti Evaluations in the DPME Evaluation Repository

Evaluation	Report Approval	Evaluation Length	Status	National Outcomes	Type	Subject	Cost	Overall QA Score	Improvement plan in place
The economy-wide effects of price-reducing reforms in infrastructure services in South Africa	2006	24 months	-	**6 –** An efficient, competitive and responsive economic infrastructure network	Implementation	Programme	No data[379]	3.7	No
Evaluating the decline in THRIP applications between 2006/07 and 2008/09 and possible scenarios for intervention	2010	7 months	-	**5 –** A skilled a capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path	Diagnostic	Plan	R248 500	4.0	Yes
Implementation / design evaluation of the business process services programme	2013	24 months	Final report approved by Cabinet. Improvement plan[380] being implemented.	**4 –** Decent employment through inclusive economic growth; and **5 –** A skilled a capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path	Implementation	Programme	R897 408	3.7	Yes
Implementation evaluation of **the dti's** export marketing investment assistance incentive programme (EMIA)	2014	11 months	Final report approved by Cabinet. Improvement plan[381] being implemented.	**4 –** Decent employment through inclusive economic growth; and **6 –** An efficient, competitive and responsive economic infrastructure network	Implementation, Impact	Programme	R914 294	3.6	Yes
Evaluation of support programme for industrial innovation (SPII)	2014	6 months	Final report approved by Cabinet. Improvement plan[382] being implemented.	**4 –** Decent employment through inclusive economic growth; and **6 –** An efficient, competitive and responsive economic infrastructure network	Implementation, Impact	Programme	R1 300 000	3.5	Yes
Impact evaluation of technology and human resources for industry programme (THRIP)	2015	-	Report approved. Improvement plan[383] submitted. About to be Tabled at Cabinet.	**4 –** Decent employment through inclusive economic growth	Implementation, Impact	Programme	R 1 500 000	2.8	Yes
		Average: 14.4 months					Average: R972 041	Average: 3.55	

Source: (DPME, 2017)

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[379] Information is not available on the repository, or in the quality assessment of the evaluation.
[380] Improvement plan submitted in June 2014
[381] Improvement plan submitted in January 2015
[382] Improvement plan submitted in January 2015
[383] Improvement plan submitted in June 2015

Methodology

Unlike some of the other early adopter departments, **the dti** seems to fit into the NEPF and NES approach easily and it has adapted its internal systems to match the NEP very quickly, while also maintaining the use of rapid appraisals. Respondents believe that the NES has given government a common language through which to discuss evaluation. Respondents appreciate that the guidelines have created an environment which forces one to engage with a problem systematically. **the dti** is especially grateful for the addition of improvement plans to the NES. Respondents suggest that this is a formal post-evaluation tracking mechanism that has been needed for some time. Finally, respondents felt that the increased attention on evaluation generated by NES has created a more favourable evaluation environment in higher level political structures within the department.

Organisation

the dti appears more open to adapting its internal functions to align to the NEPF. **the dti** has established internal planning, monitoring and evaluation teams. That is, their internal structure reflects that of the DPME. **the dti** has separated the M&E threads of work in a deliberate way. However, there are still some divisions within the department in that there is not consistently high-level buy-in for evaluations. **the dti** provides a useful perspective on the needs and processes of a more sophisticated evaluation culture.

Despite the above it would seem that for some reason **the dti's** MPAT rating dropped from 4 in 2015 to 2 in 2016.[384] A score of 2 in MPAT indicates that multi-year evaluation plan is not in place. We know from the above however, that **the dti** does have an evaluation plan. The score could therefore have been as a result of the department not submitting the plan.

the dti's experience of DPME has been positive. Respondents at **the dti** have found communication to be free-flowing and easy. DPME has been helpful in turning thoughts about evaluation and the development of evaluation into action. In particular, the respondents have found that the financial assistance from DPME has been invaluable in facilitating their ability to conduct evaluations at a scale that is broad enough to showcase the depth of analysis possible in the department. The on-going technical support from DPME has encouraged a more consistent application of evaluation best practice. The international exposure to institutions like the World Bank and United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) has inspired respondents in **the dti's**.

The respondents believed that there are two areas in which DPME could add even greater value to their department:

- Linkage to NDP: The department struggles to refer back to the NDP and would like guidance on how to entrench this in the evaluation cycle.

- Refresher and dissemination: The respondents seemed to 'float in and out' of the evaluation environment so struggle to stay abreast of the developments in the NES. A newsletter or quick instructional news reel was suggested as a solution to this.

Respondents felt that DPME had helped by training service providers on government compliance issues as well as the NES. The biggest contribution appears to have been the ease of using short-listed service providers vetted by DPME. **the dti** mentioned that procurement can often be the longest component of an evaluation.

Capacity

the dti is concerned that the NES and internal evaluation programmes do not have sufficient long-term funds. Respondents believe that until evaluations are incorporated into programme designs, evaluation will continue to struggle for financial backing. **the dti** believes that Treasury backing would lead to universal application of funding to evaluation.

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[384] (DPME, 2016b)

A further concern is that the cost of data collection is incredibly high. This creates a barrier to conducting sophisticated and strategically relevant evaluations. Respondents felt that DPME could assist by making research available to them that discusses innovative and cost-effective data collection methods. Until evaluations are able to deliver relevant recommendations on big programmes at a reasonable rate, the respondents do not anticipate consistent buy-in across programmes.

Respondents reported that a factor influencing their success (and, as a corollary, departmental vulnerability) lies in the fact that they have a fixed internal team that deals with any one evaluation. This includes the responsibilities associated with managing external service providers such as communication and data collection. This allows the internal team to provide a fixed a clear message throughout the evaluation. However, this is not the case for internal evaluations. Internal evaluations typically have less prestige attached to them and are therefore not seen as a priority by many people in the department. One respondent went as far as to make the example of some officials asking to be paid for their part in an internal evaluation as they felt it was not a part of their job description.

Across all projects, as shown in Table 41, the area that seems to require the greatest input is capacity development. However, the consistently high scorings areas are: implementation, partnership approach, free and open learning process and evaluation ethics. This speaks to a collaborative and transparent evaluation culture.

Table 41: the dti Quality Assessment Score Breakdown

	Overall Score	Planning and Design	Implementation	Report	Follow-up and Use	Partnership Approach	Free and Open Learning Process	Evaluation Ethics	Coordination and Alignment	Capacity Development	Quality Control	Project Management
Evaluating the decline in THRIP applications	4.0	4.5	4.0	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.3	4.1	1.0	4.3	4.2	1.8
Economy-wide effects of price-reducing reforms in Infrastructure services	3.7	4	3.5	3.9	3.1	3.2	4	4.6	4.0	2.3	3.9	-
Implementation / design evaluation of the BPS programme	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.2	3.7	3.4	3.6	3.8	4.0	3.9	-
Implementation Evaluation of the EMIA programme	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.8	3.2	3.6	3.8	3.8	4.0	2.4	3.4	-
Evaluation of SPII	3.5	3.3	3.6	3.6	3.2	3.7	3.9	3.1	4.2	3.0	3.3	-
Impact evaluation of THRIP	2.8	2.6	3.1	2.9	2.5	3.6	3.2	3.1	2.5	2.8	2.6	2.4
Average	**3.6**	**3.6**	**3.6**	**3.7**	**3.1**	**3.6**	**3.6**	**3.7**	**3.3**	**3.1**	**3.5**	**2.1**

Use

the dti is one of the few departments that has considered the post evaluation progress of its evaluations. **the dti** reports that the Implementation / design evaluation of the Business Process Services Programme resulted in improved KPIs and generated real export revenue gains. This is an encouraging evolution in evaluation culture – it marks the transition to understanding and communicating the value an evaluation achieves. Additional examples of evaluation use include:

- In the case of SPII, the scope of the programme was expanded to address commercialisation, the objectives were revised and the collaboration in the programme improved.

- In the case of BPS, the incentive period was extended to five years, KPI's were refined and job support was improved, job projections were made more accurate, the value proposition was expanded to include legal process outsourcing and sector skills plans were reviewed.

Provincial Case Studies

This section provides a description of the extent to which the NES is embedded in four provinces: Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Limpopo and Western Cape. As noted in the methodology section of this report, the case studies were selected in collaboration with the evaluation steering committee.

Eastern Cape

Policy

The first PEP was developed in the Eastern Cape in 2016/17[385]. In developing the PEP, the OTP received concept notes from four of 12 departments.[386] The process followed by the Eastern Cape in developing provincial DEPs and PEPs is aligned to the NEPF and the DPME's guiding documentation. There is also broad consensus amongst the respondents about the need to ensure that the province's developmental priorities (which are aligned to national priorities) are evaluated.

There is one Eastern Cape evaluation in the DPME evaluation repository, as shown in Table 42 below.

Table 42: Overview of Eastern Cape evaluation in the DPME Evaluation Repository

Evaluation	Report Approval	Evaluation Length	Status	National Outcomes	Type	Subject	Cost	Overall QA Score
Evaluation of the Grade 12 Learner Support Intervention	2015	3.5 months	Final report completed	**1** – Improved quality of basic education	Implementation	Programme	R282 720	3.2

In addition to the PEP that was submitted, the Department of Roads and Public Works (DRPW) and the Provincial Treasury submitted DEPs. The evaluations proposed in these plans are summarised in Table 43 below. It is important to note that DRPW's submission was a *Framework for Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation* and is therefore broader than an evaluation plan. It is interesting to note that the provincial department has established such a framework. For the purposes of this report, only evaluations[387] are included in Table 43.

Table 43: Summary of the Eastern Cape's PEP and DEPs[388]

Department	Proposed Evaluation	Year	Internal / External	Included in PEP or DEP?
DOH	Strengthen primary healthcare to ensure better access, equity and equality	2016/17	Internal	PEP
DOH, DBE, DSD	Implementation / impact evaluation of the Nutrition Programme	2016/17	External (Academia)	PEP
DRPW	EPWP phase 3 impact evaluation	-	External	DEP
DRPW	Midterm review	2016/17	External	DEP
DSRAC[389]	Evaluation of mass participation programme implementation	2016/17	Internal	PEP
DCOGTA; Provincial Treasury	Evaluation of Operation Clean Audit	2016/17	Internal	PEP
DOE	Evaluation of Grade 12 Learner Support Interventions as Part of the Learner Attainment Improvement Strategy	2016/17	Internal	PEP
DSRAC	Evaluation of the impact of library services to the communities in the Eastern Cape	2017/18	Unknown	PEP
Provincial Treasury, DCOGTA	Evaluation of the Infrastructure Service in the Province of the Eastern Cape	2017/18	External	PEP and DEP
Provincial Treasury	Evaluation of the LOGIS Implementation in the Eastern Cape (External Evaluation)	2017/18	External	PEP
Provincial Treasury	Evaluation of the Technical Support Unit in the Province of the Eastern Cape	2017/18	External	PEP

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[385] The process for developing the PEP included: Sensitisation of the provincial stakeholders to the NEPS and on how to populate concept notes; a call for concept notes on potential evaluations; submission of concept notes which were signed off by the HODs.
[386] (Eastern Cape Office of the Premier, 2016)
[387] In addition to evaluations, the framework made provisions for an environmental scan / situational analysis; an annual organisational performance assessment; an MPAT assessment; a human resources efficiency index; a financial maturity index; and a customer care review.
[388] The DEP's and PEP's have no information available regarding the status of progress on evaluations. Information from interviews has been incorporated where possible.
[389] Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture

Department	Proposed Evaluation	Year	Internal / External	Included in PEP or DEP?
Provincial Treasury	The impact of the financial CFO support provided in municipalities	2016/17	Internal	PEP and DEP

Sources: (Eastern Cape Office of the Premier, 2016), (Eastern Cape Department of Roads and Public Works, 2014, pp. 40-41), (Eastern Cape Provincial Treasury, 2016)

It is evident from Table 43 that four of the proposed evaluations will be done internally. By doing some of the evaluations internally, the cost of conducting the evaluations is minimised. A respondent emphasised this by noting that their department had initially sought to do an external evaluation, but had financial constraints. In doing the evaluation internally, the department realised the potential threats to impartiality and objectivity, and therefore, in a bid to mitigate this risk, partnered with Fort Hare University and the Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council (ECSECC) within the OTP. In addition to the resource constraints associated with external evaluation, one respondent highlighted that there are supply side constraints too. For example, for one evaluation only one service provider expressed interest in doing the evaluation. In addition, the department in question's experience with this evaluation was not positive, with concerns about the extent of service provider impartiality.

There is an acknowledgement amongst the respondents interviewed that while the distinction between monitoring and evaluation is understood, the emphasis is on monitoring and reporting, over evaluation. A key concern raised with regards to monitoring was that there is not enough budget in the OTP to verify the data that they are receiving. One respondent in the OTP noted that they spend approximately 80% of their time on reporting, and 20% on evaluation. One of the reasons cited for the disproportionate amount of time spent on reporting is that individual performance assessment is tied to conducting reporting and monitoring, and not tied to evaluation. In addition to noting that monitoring is dominant over evaluation, a respondent noted that there is some ambiguity in the provincial government around the difference between evaluation and research with these two terms often being used interchangeably.

There was consensus amongst the respondents interviewed that there is a need to 'sell' evaluation better and deepen demand if it is to take hold more broadly in the province, particularly at the senior levels. Encouraging and emphasising the value of evaluation is central to achieving high-level buy-in, and to outlining the case for funding for evaluations. Linking evaluation to its financial impacts is essential, with a respondent noting that when approaching senior officials, the value of doing evaluation in terms of the evidence produced and the potential programme improvements must be put into monetary terms. It was also emphasised that the messaging related to evaluation must be "simple and targeted" to the audience.

Methodology

Overall, respondents in the Eastern Cape provincial government noted that they find DPME's guidelines on evaluation methodologies helpful from a conceptual perspective, but that the guidelines have been difficult to implement in reality. One respondent noted that there can be ambiguity on what type of evaluation is required when designing an evaluation. As a result, this department typically asks for a 'mix' of evaluation types by, for example, asking for an implementation evaluation, with an element of impact evaluation. From a methodology perspective, there is a need for information on types of evaluations that extend beyond the six in the DPME guidelines. A respondent noted that they would, for example, like more information on conducting rapid assessments.

A number of respondents emphasised the importance of the theory of change with one respondent noting that, in general, there is a lack of situational analysis in provincial departments. The theory of change provides departments with the space to reflect on their programmes, and the contexts within which they operate.

Organisation

In terms of organisational structure, the OTP is central to coordinating evaluation in the Eastern Cape. The OTP supports other departments in developing the terms of reference for evaluations; is included in all evaluation steering committees; and oversees departments in their data collection (primarily for monitoring and reporting), and is intended to coordinate the tracking of improvement plans. While there are M&E units in all departments, a number of respondents highlighted the challenge of competing priorities. Evaluation is often seen as "nice to have", but not as an essential part of the departments' work.

The Eastern Cape provincial departments have completed DPME's Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT). Figure 41 shows how the Eastern Cape provincial departments performed in 2015 and 2016 in terms of the evaluation element of the strategic management Key Performance Area (KPA).

Figure 41: Eastern Cape Provincial Government MPAT Evaluation Scores
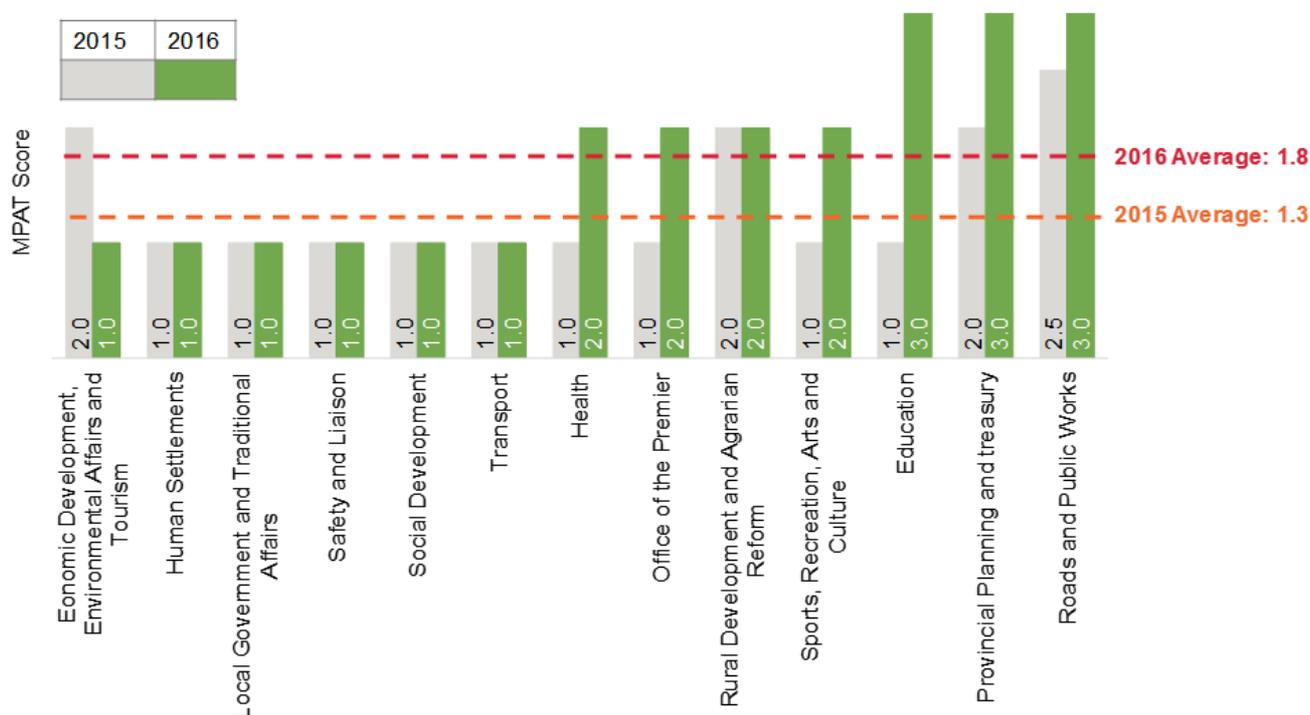
Source: (DPME, 2016b)

The average score for departments increased from 1.3 in 2015 to 1.8 in 2016. Of the 13 departments, six achieved a score of 1 in 2016. Evaluation in 46% of Eastern Cape departments is not formalised or implemented. Four of the 13 departments achieved a score of 2; and three departments achieved a score of 3.[390] No departments in the Eastern Cape achieved the maximum score of 4. The highest performing departments were the DRPW, DOE, and Provincial Treasury. All of these departments are presented in the list of planned evaluations in Table 43 above.

From the perspective of institutionalising evaluation, a higher degree of political and senior management buy-in is required in the Eastern Cape. A respondent, for example, highlighted that Members of the Executive Council (MECs) need to be "brought on board" with evaluation and that DPME should be the mechanism for this because national government is seen to hold more weight than the provincial OTP. Legislation of the NES was not seen as the answer to challenges of institutionalisation with a respondent noting that "if you want a tick box exercise, then you should legislate, [but this is] not the way to go if you want to change organisational

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[390] (DPME, 2016a)

culture to be more critical, reflective and evaluative". However; contrary views existed such that one respondent commented that the Eastern Cape has a "militarised bureaucratic structure" and that if something is not considered to be required, it will not be prioritised.

In terms of institutionalising evaluation, the same respondent argued that evaluations should be included in the performance contracts of MECs so that the provincial leadership is assessed against an expectation to support and advance evaluation practice in the province, as a component of their broader performance review. Positively, the PEP highlights that the improvement plans from Provincial Treasury-DCOGTA, and DOH-DOE-DSD-DRDAR evaluations will be included in the annual performance plan (APP) of these departments.

In addition to linking evaluation to individual performance, there was also an expressed need for evaluations to be better aligned to the budget review process so that on the one hand, evaluations can be budgeted for, and on the other hand, that evaluation recommendations can be used to inform budget allocations. Respondents noted that an alignment to the budget review process will assist departments in the prioritisation of funds for evaluations. Essentially, evaluations will be prioritised if evaluation findings are needed for the budget review. Added to this, it is helpful if evaluations are aligned to the medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF) cycle. If evaluations are aligned to MTEFs, funding is easier to allocate. If they are not, funding needs to reprioritised during the three-year cycle.

A key element of institutionalisation that emerged from the interviews was the role of a champion. There are certainly champions for evaluation in the Eastern Cape provincial government. These champions are largely in the OTP and in a few departmental M&E units. A number of respondents noted that the advocacy work from the OTP has been good since the arrival of Mr Mlulami Mdani in the OTP in 2015 as the Specialist in Provincial Performance Evaluation. Another example of the work of a champion was in DSRAC where an individual spent a considerable amount of time and energy conceptualising an evaluation which included reaching out to the Eastern Cape Research Council (ECRC) to do quality assurance for the evaluation; and reaching out to Rhodes University to partner on data collection. Despite the groundwork done on this evaluation, the evaluation ultimately did not take place because of funding constraints. This particular example is evidence of there being creative thinking around resourcing evaluations, and including academia and think tanks into evaluation work. Related to inclusion of and collaboration with external stakeholders, a respondent noted that working with universities would be beneficial in ensuring that the work is done, and in upskilling students at universities in the province.

Another key element of institutionalisation that was raised was that of learning by doing with a respondent noting that "we did our first evaluation internally, the role stakeholders played was very important. We learned a lot from the exercise. The guidelines were very useful and [we] consulted other departments about how to do evaluations. This was a sort of test run before hiring an external service provider. This helped staffs' confidence levels when doing evaluations." Conducting an evaluation internally therefore increased departmental comfort levels with regards to evaluations, and helped prove that the exercise is worthwhile.

A number of respondents expressed a need for better relationships between line departments and provincial departments, and between provincial departments and municipalities. There were examples given where a national department commissioned an evaluation, but where the provincial equivalent felt excluded from the process despite being a key user of the work and potentially assisting with any provincial aspects of the evaluation.

Capacity

Respondents expressed a need for more people to be employed to manage and / or conduct evaluations in the province. There are, for example, only two people in the OTP looking at evaluation. In addition to more people, getting the right people was highlighted as a constraint. There is a perception that there is a shortage of evaluation skills in the province, the recruitment process was seen by a respondent as being overly standardised and potentially missing key candidates because of the way the process is set up, and the nature of the

information that is seen to be important. A respondent, for example, noted that the recruitment process does not favour "out of the box" thinkers and prioritises strict compliance to the employment criteria specified, even in instances where the criteria may not all be relevant.

From a training perspective, a number of Eastern Cape officials attended DPME's training courses on evaluation which were found to be very useful. There is however a recognition that capacity is also constrained at DPME, given the level of support DPME provides to departments and provinces.

The evaluation in the repository was rated using DPME's quality assessment tool – the outcome is shown in the Table 44 below. Since there is only one evaluation, generalisation is not possible.

Table 44: Quality Assessment Scores for Eastern Cape Evaluations

	Overall Score	Planning and Design	Implementation	Report	Follow-up and Use	Partnership Approach	Free and Open Learning Process	Evaluation Ethics	Coordination and Alignment	Capacity Development	Quality Control	Project Management
Evaluation of the Grade 12 Learner Support Intervention	3.2	3.57	3.1	3.43	2.53	3	3.22	4.3	3.07	1	3.29	3.52
Average	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: (DPME, 2017)

Use

There is evidence that some effort is being made to encourage the creation and use of improvement plans in the province. This is not yet a wide-spread practice as evaluation practice is very new to the province. However, as an example, the improvement plan for Provincial Treasury's *Evaluation of the CFO Support Programme* is being implemented this year. This process is going to be monitored by the Eastern Cape's OTP. Because this is the only improvement plan currently being implemented, there is limited evidence of instrumental use of evaluations.

In addition to instrumental use, a number of respondents highlighted the importance of the use of evaluative thinking. The promotion of evaluative thinking was noted as an important precursor to conducting evaluations and using their findings. There is a need to emphasise reflection within the provincial government, as well as communication between different departments so that an environment of learning is created, and promoted.

Gauteng

Policy

Gauteng developed its first PEP in parallel to development of the NES and was a pilot in extending the NES to provinces. The Office of the Premier (OTP) initiated evaluations linked to the Midterm Review in 2011/12 and completed two evaluations that year. In 2012, the Provincial Executive Council adopted the NEPF as well as the Provincial Evaluation Framework and Plan. This covered the period 2012/2013 to 2014/15. This document outlined the process for application to be a part of the PEP as well as the timeline associated with this application. Further, it clarified the roles of various actors in the system as well as explaining the purpose of evaluations. This marked the first wide-spread information drive around PEP's for Gauteng.

From 2012 to the present, the OTP has completed eight evaluations and an additional four are underway. Four[391] evaluations are documented in the DPME central evaluation repository. The completed evaluations in the repository are a mixture of implementation; evaluation synthesis and impact evaluations. The cost of these

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[391] A Review of the Gauteng Master Skills Plan; Evaluation Synthesis- Violence Against Women and Children; Mid-Term Evaluation of the Siyazondla Homestead Food Gardens Programme; Review of the Expanded Public Works Programme in Gauteng, 2009 – 2014

evaluations ranged from R100 000 to R250 000. Three other evaluations undertaken in 2014 and 2015 have been submitted to DPME[392], while a further evaluation[393] has been submitted to the Provincial Executive Council. Two Gauteng Provincial Government Midterm Reviews have been published, in 2012 and in 2017, while four evaluations were underway in 2017/18.

Table 45 below summarises the departments in Gauteng that have a formal provincial DEP. There are eight departments including the OTP. There are 79 evaluations that have taken place in Gauteng since 2013. The department with the highest number of evaluations is the Department of Education with 25; and the OTP is a close second. Evaluations that appear in the PEP are not often replicated in the DEP. Table 45 goes on to summarise the evaluations for each department. Unfortunately, information regarding whether evaluations are classified as internal or external was unknown for this province and has therefore been omitted from the table below.

Table 45: Gauteng Provincial Departments with DEPs

Department	DEP Years Covered	Number of Evaluations[394]	Brief description of detail
Department of Economic Development	2016 - 2019	3	This is a very simple version of a DEP with no coherent message around the stage or progress of evaluations in the department. It is essentially a list of intended evaluations
Department of Education	2013 - 2019	26	A comprehensive DEP that provides evidence of evaluations taking place prior to most provincial departments starting from 2013. The framework is well established and the evaluation is well articulated with clear deadlines in place across the process. There are a high volume of completed evaluations. Between 2013 and 2016 18 evaluations were completed with one still in progress. For the 2016/17 to 2018/19 evaluation cycle three have been commissioned for external evaluation while four will be conducted internally.
Department of Human Settlements	2016 - 2019	2	A DEP aligning with NEPF. Some of departments evaluations are included in the PEP, indicating that the department is aligning its evaluation priorities to provincial priorities.
Department of Infrastructure Development	2016 - 2019	3	The department appears to have formed internal criteria for when a programme ought to be evaluated. This considers size, scope and performance of "initiatives". The department's evaluation strategy is articulated clearly. It Is not clear if evaluations are internal or external.
Department of Social Development	2016 - 2019	8	Some efforts have been made to align with the NEPF; however, the link between evaluations and budgets appears to be weak
Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation	2016 - 2019	9	A well-developed policy document for evaluations as well as containing comprehensive detail about programmes to be evaluated. Terminology is used that is inconsistent with the NEP.
Gauteng Provincial Treasury	2014 – 2017	6	There is a clear awareness and consistent use of evaluations. They appear to be largely internal with a focus on departmental efficiency rather than programmes.
Office of the Premier (excluding joint initiatives)	2016- 2019	9	A well-designed summary of the purpose and needs for evaluation in Gauteng. It highlights areas of success and provides recommendations for institutionalisation of evaluation.
Total	-	66	-

Sources: (Gauteng Department of Economic Development, 2015), (Gauteng Department of Education, 2016), (Gauteng Department of Human Settlements, 2015), (Gauteng Department of Infrastructure Development, 2016), (Gauteng Department of Social Development, 2016), (Gauteng Departments of Sports Art Culture and Recreation, 2016), (Gauteng Office of the Premier, 2016) and (Gauteng Provincial Treasury, 2016).

Methodology

Respondents appeared largely happy with the guidelines presented to them by the DPME. However; some provincial departments have not yet taken these guidelines on board and continue conducting evaluations

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[392] Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring, Young Women's Development Programme and Township Economy Revitalisation.
[393] Tshepo 500 000 youth employment programme
[394] "Number of evaluations" refer to the total number of evaluations that have been completed, under way or have been commissioned

outside the category areas defined by the DPME. Some respondents felt that the categories were rather confining and would appreciate a larger variety of evaluation types as well as the flexibility to combine elements of different evaluation types to optimise the evaluation process.

Departments with provincial DEP's appear to be making use of the planning guidelines developed by DPME.

Organisation

Gauteng is an early adopter province in principle. Respondents however noted that recently, political interest has been diverted away from evaluation to other priority focus areas. In a bid to advocate for evaluation practice, and promote institutionalisation, the PEP has identified an action list to aid the process of evaluation institutionalisation. These actions divide up into eight broad categories, as shown in Table 46 below.

Table 46: Action List to Encourage Institutionalisation of Evaluation in Gauteng

Provincial evaluation capacity and professionalisation	• Strengthen Gauteng's internal evaluation capacity to plan, commission and manage evaluations • Raise awareness of the purpose and potential benefits of evaluation • Raise awareness about evaluation types and when to use them
MPAT monitoring	• Enhance evaluation capacity to improve MPAT scores
Coordination	• PME-GPD in OP to continue coordinating and providing leadership and technical support for the annual Provincial Evaluation Plan process
Partnerships	• Strengthening the role of universities to contribute to evaluations through research • Provincial departments to continue working with DPME to strengthen alignment with national policy frameworks and M&E guidelines and standards • Participate in SAMEA
Identification of evaluations	• Provincial departments to develop or continue to develop departmental evaluation plans
Budgeting for funding evaluations	• Departments need to budget for evaluations and include these budgets in annual departmental budgets and the MTEF
Commissioning evaluations	• Provide clear and effective Terms of Reference when using external consultants
Using evaluations for decision-making and tracking recommendations	• Improvement plan workshops should be held to develop implementation plans and implement evaluation recommendations

Source: (Gauteng Office of the Premier, 2016)

Annette Griessel (DDG for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation in the Office of the Premier) has been noted by other respondents as an important champion in generating an awareness and desire for evaluations. It is recognised that she has driven Gauteng's PEP and has sat on various committees encouraging the incorporation of evaluations in programme designs. In one instance, a provincial departmental representative noted that his only understanding of NES came from the Head of M&E and not from the national department level. Advocacy has been a strong driver in initiating thought and action around evaluation in Gauteng.

Turning to MPAT, Gauteng's average MPAT score improved from 2.25 in 2015 to 2.9 in 2016. The with the top performing departments being Education, Infrastructure Development, Office of the Premier, Social Development, Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation and Treasury which all received an MPAT score of 4 in 2016. The MPAT results for departments are shown in Figure 42 below. The average score increased from 2.25 to 2.9 between 2015 and 2016. Of the 14 departments, five achieved scores below 2 out of 4 in 2015 but only three were performing at this level in 2016. In 2016, six departments scored 4 which means almost half of the departments in Gauteng were noted to be actually doing evaluations and not just preparing to do them.

Figure 42: Gauteng Provincial Government MPAT Scores
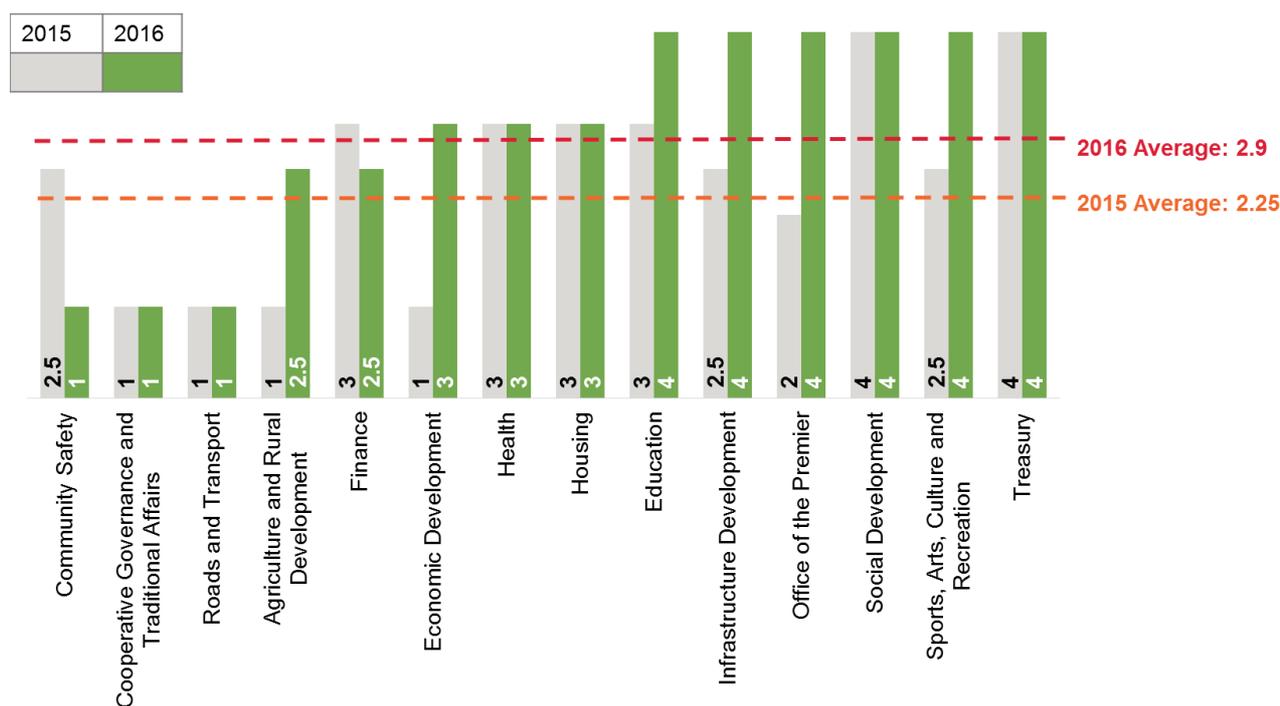
Source: (DPME, 2016b)

Gauteng's OTP views the central co-ordination and messaging of evaluations among M&E officials as a key success of the NES. Prior to NES there was no common language or drive for evaluation. DPME also acts as a useful focal point for collaboration between departments and provinces in generating best practice that would not have happened previously. Gauteng believes that the DPME's supportive role has changed the evaluation landscape in South Africa. However, Gauteng feels that in order to have true buy-in to evaluations it requires support from provincial decision-making structures and political champions. While important progress has been made in improving evaluation practice, evaluation is reportedly not yet seen as a priority in improving government performance.   This is evidenced by the limited human resource allocations and inadequate budgeting for evaluations in many departments. An additional constraint is that not all Programme Managers have embraced the benefits of evaluation and would thus prefer not to allocate scarce resources to evaluation. However, this support is beginning to grow with the common language around evaluation that DPME and the provincial PME champions have facilitated.

Capacity

Gauteng has sufficient M&E staff; however, the staff's focus is primarily on monitoring and reporting rather than evaluation. A consequence of this is that many staff are not trained to undertake or commission evaluations, nor are provided with the on-the-job learning experiences needed to confidently manage and commission evaluations. Further, there is a concern that research has been conflated with evaluation in some cases, especially by senior managers in the province. Some provincial departments have been doing smaller internal evaluations, which has provided the experiential basis for commissioning and managing larger evaluations. In general, evaluation is not seen as a priority on the province's agenda. The perception held across the province is that the added value of evaluations in improving performance needs to be more effectively demonstrated to prompt greater support and adoption of evaluations across departments. However, there are some departments like the Department of Education that have an entrenched culture of evaluation. Respondents reported that this was largely due to the continued support of senior managers as well

Respondents further noted that M&E staff are not always adequately trained to conduct or commission evaluations. M&E staff have their skill set based in monitoring and research rather than evaluation. The creation of dedicated and permanent evaluation posts, recruitment and up-skilling is necessary to develop the necessary capacity for evaluation in Gauteng.

Use

There is some evidence of use beginning to emerge in provincial departments. The Department of Education has begun tracking the progress of its improvement plans. The Department of Economic Development and the Department of Infrastructure Development have begun using evaluations at various points in programmes as a programme develops in maturity. This implies a coherent message beginning to emerge about the value of evaluation in departments.

Beyond the context-specific issues discussed previously there are practical barriers to use that have been identified in Gauteng:

- The peer review system is not in operation. It is not clear who one should ask (there is no network in place) nor is it clear when a peer reviewer should become involved in an evaluation. It was suggested that a feedback process throughout the evaluation would be valuable.

- Political buy-in from senior staff is changeable and depends on the Premier's priorities. It is difficult to understand how to make evaluation a priority in this environment.

- The quality assurance system is not functioning optimally. It is a long process although it is still seen as valuable. It is believed that the process is biased towards quantitative studies and discounts the merits of qualitative outputs.

Limpopo

Policy

The first PEP[395] in Limpopo was approved by the Executive Council in September 2015 with six evaluations agreed as per the provincial priorities. Limpopo produced the PEP using the *Guideline on How to Develop Provincial Evaluation Plan*. The province experienced challenges implementing the first PEP because of difficulties with securing service providers. Four evaluations are currently being implemented and expected to be completed by August 2017. The criteria for including evaluations in the PEP is the same as the national criteria with some additions to fit the provincial context. Programmes are selected based on their alignment with the National Development Plan (NDP). Provincial Development Plan (PDP) and Medium-Term Strategic Framework.

In addition to the PEP that was submitted, the OTP as a department, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (LDARD), the Limpopo Provincial Treasury (LPT), and the Limpopo OTP submitted DEPs. Within the PEP, evaluations were proposed for the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET), the Limpopo Department of Social Development (LDSD), Limpopo Department of Public Works, Road and Infrastructure (LDPW), and the Limpopo Department of Transport (LDoT). The evaluations proposed in these plans are summarised in Table 47 below.

Table 47: Summary of Limpopo's PEPs and DEPs

Department	Proposed Evaluation	Status	Year	Internal / External	Included in PEP or DEP?
LEDET	Implementation Evaluation of the Enterprise Development Programme	Underway	2015/16	External	PEP
LDSD	Impact Evaluation of the services rendered to children under the foster care programme	Underway	2015/16	External	PEP

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[395] (Limpopo Office of the Premier, 2015)

Department	Proposed Evaluation	Status	Year	Internal / External	Included in PEP or DEP?
LDOH	Implementation Evaluation of the models of laundry services that are being implemented in public health facilities/ hospitals of Limpopo	Delayed	2015/16	External	PEP
LPT	Diagnostic Evaluation of Supply Chain Management Procurement Strategies.	Underway	2015/16		
LDPW	Impact/Implementation Evaluation of the National Youth Services (NYS)	Underway	2015/16	External	PEP
DOT	Impact Evaluation of the overload control measures in preventing damage to road infrastructure network and improving road safety in Limpopo.	Delayed	2015/16	External	PEP
LDARD	Impact evaluation on the drought intervention plan of the department LDARD	Planned	2016/17	External[396]	DEP
LDARD	Impact evaluation n Nguni Cattle development projects to Limpopo cattle emerging farmers.	Planned	2016/17	External[397]	DEP
OTP	Impact/implementation evaluation of the anti-poverty strategy.	Planned	2016/17	Internal	DEP
OTP	Implementation evaluation of workplace skills plan	Planned	2017/18	Internal	DEP
OTP	Implementation evaluation of targeted group programme with special reference to people living with disabilities.	Planned	2018/19	Internal	DEP
LPT	Impact evaluation on financial management training courses conducted in provincial departments in line with National Treasury Standards.	Planned	2017/18	Internal	DEP
LPT	Evaluation of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit Technician Learnership Programme	Planned	2018/19	Internal	DEP
LPT	Impact of the support afforded to departments on contract management	Planned	2018/19	Internal	DEP
LPT	Diagnostic evaluation on implementation of infrastructure projects.	Planned	2019/20	Internal	DEP

Sources: (Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2016), (Limpopo Office of the Premier, 2016), (Limpopo Office of the Premier, 2015), and (Limpopo Provincial Treasury, 2016)

When the province develops a PEP, the OTP sends out a call to departments for proposals to all provincial departments to submit programmes to be evaluated. The OTP then assesses the quality of these proposals and engages M&E units within departments to refine them. Proposals are then assessed by the ETWG for inclusion in the PEP. The ETWG also meets quarterly to discuss progress on provincial evaluation activities. Once the evaluations are approved and implemented, they are overseen by steering committees which are comprised of key stakeholders, such as, government officials from relevant departments, project implementers and relevant industry bodies.

The first PEP was developed after the provincial budgeting process so departments did not have budgets for evaluations. The OTP managed to negotiate for and secure funds for the PEP evaluations. The Finance Department in the OTP has recognised that budgeting for evaluations is difficult for departments because evaluation is not their core business, and therefore, the principals do not approve funds for evaluation and prioritise funds for service delivery. The Finance Department therefore is seeking to motivate for funds from Provincial Treasury because monitoring and evaluation is a core function of the OTP. For the first round of evaluations, the OTP managed to secure funds but due to delays in procurement, the funds were lost. Almost R4 million in allocated funds was reprioritised by Provincial Treasury because service provider procurement was not completed on time. These delays resulted from instances where tenders were published but no bids were received from applying service providers. Even with all the procurement challenges, the OTP does however maintain that it is appropriate for them to commission evaluations in the PEP, that is, manage the procurement and entire evaluation process and departments do their own provincial DEPs.

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[396] Budget for the evaluation is R 500 000
[397] Budget for the evaluation is R 500 000

Methodology

Limpopo has, as far as possible tried to emulate the NES as it is applied in national context. They have adapted the NEPF and the guidelines for the different types of evaluation. There are similarities in the evaluation prioritisation criteria at the provincial level adapted from the NEPF. This is discussed in detail in the policy section above. The existing provincial DEPs indeed follow the NES guidelines. For the PEP, there is an Evaluation Technical Working Group (ETWG) which comprises the OTP, other provincial departments and Statistics South Africa (StatsSA). The OTP is currently working on getting universities to be more involved with evaluations, particularly for assistance with methodology and quality assurance. When the reports are completed, it is intended that the same evaluation process as outlined in the NES will be followed, which is a management response, improvement plan, communication to executive management, quality assessment and public communication, but there has yet to be a complete full cycle to date.

Despite efforts to mirror the NES as it is applied in the national context, there have been some processes that have not been followed as national and provincial contexts differ, and Limpopo does not have the same capacity and resources as DPME and national departments. One example where Limpopo deviated is with the procurement of service providers. There are cases where custodian departments were not part of selecting the service providers. Custodian departments see this as a missed opportunity both for their own learning and for contributing contextual and sectoral knowledge to the process. Staff of the Finance Department also feel that it would be beneficial to have a panel that is comprised of M&E officials for knowledge on evaluations, departmental people for knowledge on the programme and Finance staff for procurement-related matters. The lesson here is that, even if it makes sense for budget purposes for the OTP to manage procurement and get the funds from Treasury, custodian departments are keen to still be involved and they are an important respondent in a bid adjudication committee. There have also been some challenges with steering committees comprising individuals not relevant to the programme or have no decision-making power within their respective departments, affecting the quality of the oversight role intended to be played by the steering committee.

Organisation

The Limpopo provincial departments have completed DPME's Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT). Figure 43 shows how the Limpopo provincial departments scored in 2015 and 2016 in terms of the evaluation element of the strategic management Key Performance Area (KPA).

Figure 43: Limpopo MPAT Scores
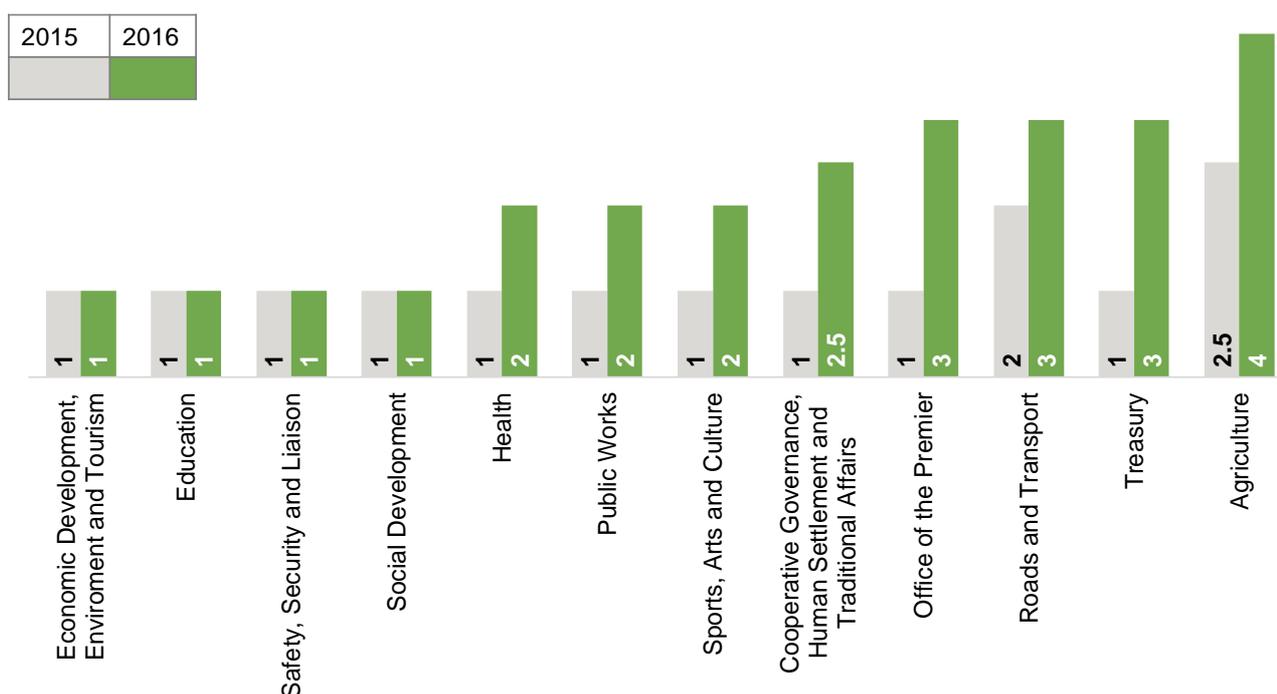
Source: (DPME, 2016b)

The average score for departments increased from 1.2. in 2015 to 2.1. in 2016. Of the 12 departments, four achieved a score of 1 in 2016. One third of departments in the Limpopo are therefore underperforming in the MPAT score that relates to evaluation. Three of the 12 departments achieved a score of 2; one department scored 2.5, three departments achieved a score of 3 and one department scored 4. The highest performing departments were the Department of Agriculture, OTP, Roads and Transport, and Provincial Treasury. The OTP, Department of Agriculture and Provincial Treasury have developed DEPs and have M&E units.

The Limpopo Office of the Premier has two M&E units, one responsible for transversal (cross cutting) M&E and another responsible for internal M&E.

The transversal M&E unit is in a branch, headed by a Deputy Director General (DDG). This branch has three Chief Directors and sub-branches formed according to economic, social, governance and administration. There are directors within each branch and these directors are responsible for M&E activities within their respective sectors. The branch complies with all the M&E requirements from national government including MPAT, Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring (FSDM) and evaluations. They also support all departments with evaluations, coordinate PEPs and work with M&E units in the 12 provincial departments.

The second M&E unit resides within the OTP, and is responsible for internal evaluation.

Capacity

A key finding relating to M&E capacity in the province was the challenges within the recruitment process. The majority of departments expressed concerns relating to the staffing of departmental M&E Units. Many current M&E staff are sourced from other departments or units and transferred into an M&E Unit. This presents challenges because transferred people may not be willing or trained to perform M&E tasks.

Limpopo, through the OTP and support from DPME has provided training on evaluation provided by various training service providers. The OTP reported that most of training initiatives were timed to coincide with the development of the PEPs so that officials who had been trained could put the knowledge into practice. Provincial officials reported that they enjoyed the training and found it useful but the training could be strengthened and

be better aligned to what needs to be applied in practice. They reported that they could not apply some of the knowledge because of time constraints. They have too many responsibilities and evaluation is not the only work that they do.

Regarding areas of the training that need strengthening, the ETWG that reviewed concept notes reported that the quality of some of the concept notes received indicated that people had not applied the knowledge gained at the training on how to develop concept notes. The impression of the ETWG is that the M&E people who had received the training went back to their departments after training and just handed over the template to programme managers without helping them to complete it. Programme managers feel that the people who are spearheading evaluation within the OTP and departments are also still building their internal knowledge and evaluation capabilities to improve the extent to which they can provide support evaluations. The support the OTP can provide is also limited by both technical capacity and time constraints. Not all the staff in the OTP have experience or training in evaluation. Another challenge is the high staff turnover, which makes it difficult to build momentum through training as training participants vary between sessions.

Senior managers that attended the Evidence Based Policy Making (EBPM) course provided by DPME delivered by University of Cape Town found it helpful but there was a view that the target audience is not appropriate because senior managers do not conduct evaluations. The suggestion was that the course should be targeted at Deputy Directors and Directors because they are permanent staff and they are responsible for M&E. The challenge with targeting political appointees is that they are often transferred between departments, which can impede the accumulation of evaluation knowledge and capacity within a department. There are, however, exceptions. For example, an interviewed senior manager who attended the EBPM course reported that she works closely with junior staff and has imparted the knowledge she gained through the training.

Participation of Other Actors

Limpopo officials feel that national departments do not support provincial evaluations adequately (or at all in some cases). National departments do not focus on evaluations in their interaction with provincial departments – thus losing important opportunities for collaboration and learning. They suggested that moving forward, it would be beneficial to have a representative from the national department in evaluation steering committees or technical working groups, even if virtual. This will assist to create synergy, that is, more alignment of work being conducted in both levels of government. Limpopo officials also commented that there isn't enough cohesion and shared learning between provinces. They collaborated with Mpumalanga on a few initiatives and this relationship proved to be mutually beneficial. The relationship started at Theory of Change training which was jointly done by the two provinces. In 2016, the provinces collaborated on the provincial evaluation seminar. Limpopo is looking to strengthen this going forward and possibly have similar initiatives with other provinces.

The OTP acknowledged that the extent to which evaluations are institutionalised depends on political buy-in. One of the biggest challenges is when Heads of Departments (HODs) are transferred between departments and M&E officials need to restart the evaluation advocacy and awareness raising process, and actively convince senior managers, be it HODs or Programme Managers, that evaluations are important. Officials consulted expressed an impression that certain senior managers deprioritise evaluation as lacking in value and importance in the core function of performance management. This is evident in the way that M&E units are staffed, in the province there is a definite perception that M&E is not a position that requires experience or skill, and has been an option to relocate displaced staff, and the lack of budget made available for evaluation. M&E staff would like to see the profile of evaluation being alleviated.

The province is currently working on involving universities to assist in providing advice on evaluation methodology and sector expertise, as well as gaining an understanding of service provider motivations to bid or not bid for an evaluation.

Use

None of the evaluations in the PEP have been completed yet but there are systems in place for facilitating evaluation use. Therefore, it is not currently clear whether departments will have the will and capability to implement findings. When asked about plans post evaluation, officials reported that they would like to use findings to improve the way in which programmes are implemented and hope to use evaluation to improve decision making and accountability.

Western Cape

As an early adopter, the Western Cape Department of the Premier (DotP), was selected as a target province receiving support and encouragement since the early stages of establishment of the NES. The province has seen increasing demand for evaluations, especially from early adopter provincial departments (such as the Western Cape Department of Agriculture) over the last five years. However, some provincial departments are still experimenting with evaluation, and thus there still remains a diversity across provincial departments with respect to evaluation experience, evaluation expertise and evaluation use. It has a 2016 MPAT average score of 3.3 and the Western Cape (WC) Department of Agriculture is the best performing department in the province.

The use of evaluation champions has been crucial to the province's success in institutionalising the provincial evaluation system. Certainly, in many departments, the high will to do evaluations has facilitated the growth of evaluation culture and use of evaluations. However, similar to the NES, the provincial evaluation system faces both human and financial resource constraints when it comes to conducting evaluations, and this reportedly impedes progress in certain departments. There is some evaluation expertise within provincial departments indicating a high skill. However, the resilience of the current state of institutional readiness depends on key individuals (evaluation champions) both in departments and the DotP M&E Unit. The continued engagement and stewardship of these champions, both in terms of the PEP and DEPs, is crucial to maintain momentum and build on early successes.

While the use of evaluation champions has been successful, it was interesting to note that the same departments have evaluations in the PEP each year. The internally-initiated approach therefore has been successful. However further interventions are required to extend the use of evaluation to late adopters within the Western Cape.

Policy

There are 12 evaluations conducted by the Western Cape that are in the DPME repository. The key elements of these evaluations are summarised in Table 48 below.

Every three years the Provincial Evaluation Plan (PEP) [398] is published. In the first PEP (2013/14 to 2015/16), the provinces conducted 23 evaluations, the findings and recommendations of which have reportedly been used to improve performance and accountability through the improvement plans. The PEP provides a list of evaluations to be conducted across the Western Cape, the 2017/18 plan profiles nine evaluations that were allocated funding through the 2016/17 budget statement process[399]. Table 49 below provides a summary of the evaluations included in the 2017/18 PEP.

The Western Cape institutionalised the NEPF at a provincial level and aims to use evaluations to improve governments effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.[400] Because of this the Western Cape has served as a case study for the NES as it has been identified as a provincial pioneer in the area of a regional Provincial Evaluation System.[401]

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[398] (Western Cape Government, 2017)
[399] (Western Cape Government, 2017)
[400] (Western Cape Government, 2017)
[401] (Western Cape Government, 2017, p. 4)

The findings under *policy* for the Western Cape, indicate underlying tension within the Provincial Evaluation System. The 2017/18 PEP states that from a provincial priority, evaluations are linked to the five Provincial Strategic Goals (PSG) and the National Outcomes.[402] However, each PSG constitutes number of programmes and projects which are evaluated separately. Officials interviewed expressed that it would be advantageous to evaluate the extent to which activities funded across all programmes and projects linked to a particular PSG supported the achievement of that specific PSG. This is an ambitious undertaking, requiring the PEP to consider how the findings from individual programme / project evaluations can be synthesised to assess progress towards a PSG. This is not currently the approach informing the development of the WC PEPs, and while the benefits for evidence-informed policy-making are clear, the feasibility of such an approach remains to be tested.

Departmental Evaluation Plans (DEPs) form part of the PEP and aim to evaluate programmes that are a priority for the province. The DEPs are strategically aligned to departmental objectives and Government priorities which are articulated in the NEPF; Strategic Framework for Province-wide Monitoring and Evaluation (2015) and the NEP. [403]The evaluation collected DEPs from the following provincial departments:

- WC Department of Agriculture
- WC Department of Community Safety
- WC Department of Economic Development and Tourism
- WC Department of Education
- WC Department of Transport and Public Works

- WC Department of Human Settlements
- WC Department of Local Government
- WC Department of the Premier
- WC Department of Social Development

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[402] (Western Cape Government, 2017, p. 6)
[403] (Western Cape Government, 2017)

Table 48: Summary of Western Cape Evaluations in the DPME Evaluation Repository

Evaluation	Report Approval	Evaluation Length	Status	National Outcomes	Type	Subject	Cost	Overall QA Score
An Evaluation of Mass Participation, Opportunity and Access, Development and Growth (MOD) Centres	2014	7 months	Final Report	**1 -** Improved quality of basic education; **2-** A long and healthy life for all South Africans	Implementation	Institution; Programme	R295 260	3.02
An Evaluation of the Market Access Programme	2014	7 months	Final Report	**6 -** An efficient, competitive and responsive economic infrastructure network	Impact	Programme	R423 870	3.5
Cape Gateway Evaluation	2005	48 months	Final Report	**12 -** An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.	Implementation; Impact	Project	R41 000	3.3
Evaluation of Clubs within the Club Development Programme	2013	4 months	Final Report	**12 -** An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.	Implementation; Impact	Programme; Project	R144 324	3.2
Evaluation of the Availability, Extent, and Utilisation of Agricultural Economic Databases	2016	4 months	Final Report	**4 -** Decent employment through inclusive economic growth	Diagnostic	Programme	R217 520	3.4
Evaluation of the Impact of Agricultural Learnership in the Western Cape	2014	6 months	Final Report	**5 -** A skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path	Implementation; Impact	Programme	R221 160	3.4
Evaluation of the Implementation and Impact of Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') Decision Making	2014	10 months	Final Report	**10 -** Environmental assets and natural resources that are well protected and continually enhanced	Implementation; Impact	System	R485 918	3.4
Impact Assessment - Department of Social Development: Homes for the Aged	2010	12 months	Final Report	**2 -** A long and healthy life for all South Africans	Diagnostic; Implementation	Institution	R250 000	3
RED Door Impact Study: Phase Two	2008	-	Final Report	**4 -** Decent employment through inclusive economic growth	Impact	Programme	-	3.7
Report for the Evaluation of the "Ke Moja, I'm fine without drugs" Programme	2009	5 months	Final Report	**2 -** A long and healthy life for all South Africans	Implementation	Programme	R230 000	3.8
The Burgundy Cheese Project	2007	3 months	Final Report	**5 -** A skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path	Implementation	Programme	-	2.8
Work & Skills for 100 000 Programme Evaluation	2011	-	Final Report	**4 -** Decent employment through inclusive economic growth	Other	Sector; Programme	R168 482	2.7
		Average: 10 months					Average: R247 753	Average: 3.27

Source: (DPME, 2017)

Table 49: Western Cape PEP Proposed evaluations

Implementing Department	Name	Audience	Evaluation Type	Cost Estimate	Time (Months)
Department of Transport and Public Works	Evaluation of the EPWP integrated grant implementation	Policy makers, government officials, youth, civil society	Design	R250 000	6
	Evaluation of the Fatigue Management programme	Policy makers, government officials, road users, media	Design	R200 000	6
	Evaluation of the Statutory Integrated Transport Planning (ITP) function	Policy makers, government officials, transport users, service providers, public interest groups	Diagnostic	R750 000	6
	Evaluation of the Provincial Roads Maintenance Grant	Policy makers, government officials, youth, civil society	Impact	R300 000	6
	Evaluation of the Public Transport Operations Conditional Grant	Policy makers, government officials, youth, civil society	Economic	R300 000	6
	Evaluation of the Benefits Realisation of the Enterprise Content Management (ECM) system	Policy makers, government officials, auditor general, internal auditors, service providers	Economic	R100 000	6
Department of Agriculture	Evaluation of the Land Care Programme	Stakeholders, landowners, Department of Agriculture	Impact, Economic, Design	R500 000	3
	Evaluation of the impact of the 4th industrial revolution on the Western Cape agriculture sector	Government, farmers, agri-business	Diagnostic, Impact, Design	R800 000	7
Provincial Treasury	Evaluation of the Chartered Accountants Academy Training Programme	Policy makers, government officials, educators, students, public interest groups	Design	No budget	11

Source: (Western Cape Government, 2017)

According to respondents, the NEPF has provided a standard process for evaluation which leads departments through the "evaluation journey", from drafting the concept note for the evaluation to the development of management improvement plans. Respondents expressed that conducting evaluations has been made easier, as departments have access to material such as evaluation guidelines. Some respondents reported that the guidelines are comprehensive and user-friendly, while other cautioned that guidelines should be adapted to suit departmental needs. However, as mentioned, despite the evaluations increasing in the province, it continues to be the same departments in the Provincial Evaluation System regularly, while other departments continue to lag. This was corroborated by the 2017/18 PEP as evidence by Table 49 above which illustrates that only three departments have evaluations in the PEP. The Department of Transport and Public Works has six out of the nine evaluations, while the Department of Agriculture has two and Provincial treasury has one.

The financial requirements for evaluation are reported to act as a barrier to actually conducting evaluations. However, the sentiment expressed in many interviews is that if departments value evaluations, they either find funding for the evaluation from a donor or postpone evaluation activities until funding is available. This finding was supported by the 2017/18 PEP which listed funding as a challenge to evaluations, and the exploration of alternative funding options as a solution.[404]Respondents stated that there was lack of DPME financial support for provincial evaluations and that co-funding arrangements with the DPME might incentivise certain departments that are lagging to commission evaluations.

Respondents in the province felt that the internally initiated approach had prevented key strategic programmes from being evaluated. Instead, it was suggested by certain officials consulted that legislative requirements for evaluation of programmes that meet certain criteria (for example, exceeding a budget threshold, like a budget of over R10 million) should be evaluated. Early adopter departments and departments who had conducted evaluations stipulated that they thought departments were not opting into the system because they did not see evaluation as a management tool that would increase the effectiveness of their programmes. However, further interrogation is needed into the potential reasons why lagged departments have not opted into the system as yet.

Currently evaluations are funded by provincial departments. However, greater collaboration is needed between Provincial Treasury and departments to ensure a common understanding of the need for evaluation in each case, as this determines which programmes get evaluated. To facilitate this collaboration, respondents expressed the need for Provincial Treasury to develop a deeper understanding of the purpose of evaluation. Provincial Treasury has an evaluation within the current PEP, which indicates that there is already progress towards enabling this deeper understanding because Provincial Treasury staff will participate in their own evaluation, and it is expected that this experience will help them to understand evaluation process and use.[405]

Respondents thought that evaluations should explicitly be linked to decision-making around budget allocations. If this were the case, then respondents reported that HODs would be incentivised to do evaluations and take them seriously as the evaluations would generate evidence that could be used motivate why budgets should be maintained or increased. For example, the Departments of Transport and Public Works commissions many evaluations each PEP cycle (six in the current cycle), because they use their evaluations to motivate for grants from the national department. The department sees the value in evaluations as a means of providing evidence that supports funding allocation decisions.

Methodology

Types of Methodology

Since the first published PEP, there has been an increase in the number of evaluations being conducted in the province annually. There are an increasing number of implementation evaluations being done throughout the province because (i) the method was easy to understand and (ii) implementation evaluations were more aligned

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[404] (Western Cape Government, 2017, p. 33)
[405] Western Cape Government. Provincial Evaluation Plan 2017/18: 31

to the questions departments needed to answer. Initially programmes managers want impact and not implementation information as the impact information is needed communicate the changes programmes have made to DGs and HODs. Impact evaluations couldn't be done as easily as implementation evaluations due to data requirements, costs and expertise needed to manage the evaluation. However, as programme managers continue to grapple with the various evaluation methodologies they come to be convinced that other methodology types such as diagnostic and design evaluations can be useful in answering the evaluation questions they have and have started to demand alternative types of evaluations.

Departments who are still new to evaluation stated that there were too many evaluation types. They felt that they had not sufficiently mastered an evaluation type sufficiently to justify experimenting with unfamiliar evaluation types that might require a steep learning curve in terms of alternative evaluation approaches and methods.

Data Quality

Data collection is reported to be problematic for the provinces. Evaluations would be facilitated by having good monitoring data, but this is not always available. Respondents reported that having access to good reliable data could lower evaluation costs as data collection would not need to take place. When evaluations are proposed, respondents stated that what is looked at is the availability of traceable performance data over the last five years. This determines whether an evaluation can be done or not. Evaluations which take between three to six months face data limitations due to time constraints. The timeframe in which the evaluation is conducted does not ensure that (i) the data that has been collected can be verified and (ii) that the data collected is reliable and of a good quality.

Respondents reported that the province is currently building a central database that would house historical data. However, respondents acknowledged that a process of data validation needs to occur first to ensure the reliability of this data. As such good data governance standards are being set to help improve for data availability for future evaluations.

Organisation

In the province, it was recognised that DotP facilitates the departments evaluation 'journey' from concept note, to implementation, and the improvement plan. However, some respondents felt they could not rely on the DotP for technical evaluation assistance such as methods, and would rather liaise with the DPME.

For DotP to sufficiently support departments, respondents suggested that a needs assessment should be conducted to assess the level of evaluation technical expertise and to highlight capacity gaps with the province. Once DotP has this information, respondents feel that the M&E Unit in DotP will be better positioned to support departments through their evaluation journey.

It was noted that within provincial departments there are different levels of experience with evaluation. Early adopter departments have established M&E units but the level of technical expertise differs. Early to late majority adopter departments rely on programme managers to draft evaluation TORs and to manage evaluations but use external service providers to supplement the programme managers' technical expertise. Lagging departments are those new to evaluation with limited evaluation experience and technical capacity.

For those departments who do not have a lot of experience with evaluation, it was noted that programme managers need to be more included. Largely, evaluations were reported to be driven by a programme manager and not an M&E official. Respondents noted that when programme managers were involved the evaluation was easier to conduct and implement recommendations. It was noted that for evaluations to be a success, programme staff need a sense of maturity, allowing them to have appreciate the developmental and improvement focused nature of evaluation, and not take it personally. As such evaluations undertaken in organisations that are learning-oriented have greater chance to be valued and used. When evaluations are

seen as learning-oriented, respondents believed that evaluations will not be viewed as punitive but rather as a tool for improvement.

The province had a particular issue with the use of MPAT, stating that for them MPAT does not have any real value, places an increasing administrative burden on provincial departments and that it is unclear what information produced through MPAT is used for. M&E officials stated that they felt pressurised to comply with guidelines in order to receive a decent MPAT score. The MPAT scores for the Western Cape are shown in Figure 44 below.

Respondents felt that provincial evaluations which produce relevant findings and information for local government are not being shared adequately with local structures. As such information that could be of value was not being used to drive decisions and improve programmes at local structures in a province that was actively using evaluation.

Figure 44: Western Cape MPAT scores per department
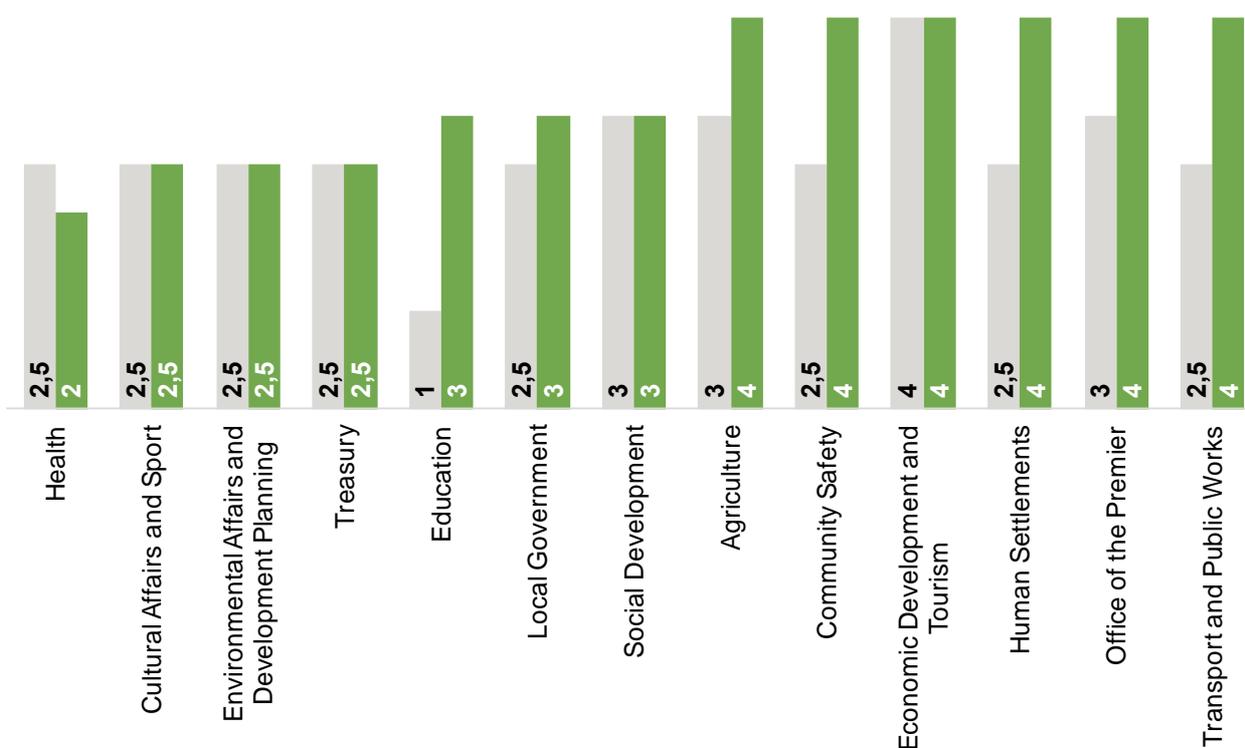
Source: (DPME, 2016b)

Capacity

DotP and provincial departments raised capacity constraints for conducting evaluations. Departments stated that positions needed to be filled but that budgetary restrictions mean they could not hire people. The result of this was an increasing workload, and poor-quality outputs. Financial constraints also impacted on departments ability to provide training provided to staff, with respondents reporting that they did not have enough financial resources to send staff on training

There is a lack of evaluative skill within the departments. In some departments, it was not just that more staff were needed but instead departments needed senior staff to oversee the evaluations. In these departments staff composition and capability was valued greater than the number of staff.

Respondents in the province indicated that senior management do not participate in capacity building interventions and therefore do not understand the benefits of evaluation, which limits the demand for evaluations.

It was indicated that programme managers' technical capabilities need to be increased to improve their understanding of evaluation and how it can be used.

Evaluation capacity among departments varies. To supplement internal capacity early adopter WC departments reported using external service providers to develop PEPs, DEPs and to manage evaluations. The use of service providers in this manner was unique to the WC as service providers elsewhere in the system were used to conduct the actual evaluations.

A further capacity problem was high staff turnover, particularly among HODs, which affects evaluation use and demand. With the entry of new HODs, M&E units have to invest more time in evaluation advocacy and awareness to ensure that evaluation use in continued within the department.

Table 50 below summarises the quality assessment scores given to Western Cape reports in the DPME repository.

Table 50: QA scores for Western Cape evaluations

	Overall Score	Planning and Design	Implementation	Report	Follow-up and Use	Partnership Approach	Free and Open Learning Process	Evaluation Ethics	Coordination and Alignment	Capacity Development	Quality Control	Project Management
An Evaluation of Mass Participation, Opportunity and Access, Development and Growth (MOD) Centres	3.02	3.34	3.49	2.57	3.14	3.66	2.69	2.5	3.22	3.08	3.01	-
An Evaluation of the Market Access Programme	3.5	3.82	3.51	3.17	3.6	3.6	3.63	2.89	3.52	3.25	3.42	-
Cape Gateway Evaluation	3.3	3.62	3.37	3.44	2.45	3.03	4	2.83	3.75	1.25	3.53	-
Evaluation of Clubs within the Club Development Programme	3.2	3.26	3.19	2.87	3.75	3.34	3.11	2.39	3.13	3.08	3.21	-
Evaluation of the Availability, Extent, and Utilisation of Agricultural Economic Databases	3.4	3.35	3.63	3.18	3.53	3.64	3.39	4.3	3.47	2.6	2.88	-
Evaluation of the Impact of Agricultural Learnership in the Western Cape	3.4	3.11	3.34	3.42	3.65	3.73	3.51	3.06	3.74	3.75	3.04	-
Evaluation of the Implementation and Impact of Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') Decision Making	3.4	3.54	2.89	3.61	3.33	3	3.22	3.57	3	2	3.66	-
Impact Assessment - Department of Social Development: Homes for the Aged	3	2.69	3.26	2.68	3.64	3.13	2.61	2.94	3.26	2.67	2.89	-
RED Door Impact Study: Phase Two	3.7	3.24	3.33	3.98	3.62	3.48	4	4.17	3.58	2	3.78	-
Report for the Evaluation of the "Ke Moja, I'm fine without drugs" Programme	3.8	3	4.07	3.9	3	3.13	-	4.22	2	1	4.15	-
The Burgundy Cheese Project	2.8	2.84	3.13	2.86	2.33	2.27	3.36	2.71	3	2.22	2.84	-
Work & Skills for 100 000 Programme Evaluation	2.7	2.41	3.11	2.67	2.58	2.35	2.79	3.22	3	2.25	2.61	-
Average	**3.27**	**3.18**	**3.36**	**3.20**	**3.21**	**3.19**	**3.02**	**3.23**	**3.22**	**2.43**	**3.25**	**-**

Source: (DPME, 2017)

Participation of Other Actors

There is a need in the provinces for more evaluators, and departments are trying to get universities on board to increase the pool of available evaluators. Respondents stated that they have had some success in this as all three universities in the province (UCT, UWC and Stellenbosch) all offer some form of M&E course (either a short course or postgraduate diploma). The universities in the WC also act as peer reviewers, and supplement evaluation budgets by co-funding evaluations.

Early adopter departments also have good connections to private sector partners who participate in evaluations by forming part of the steering committees and commenting on evaluation TORs. In this way, they try to improve

the relevance of evaluation findings upfront during the beginning stages of evaluation process. This is done so that improvement plans include activities that are relevant to improving their service offer for beneficiaries of programmes.

Use

For evaluation use to be effective staff need to (i) understand the relevant evaluation terminology; (ii) understand the evaluation process. Some provincial departments have found that negative evaluation findings could constrain the demand for evaluations. One department has addressed this challenge by placing evaluations in programme managers KPIs and ensuring that evaluation findings do not filter into performance management processes.

To encourage the use of evaluation, respondents reported that it helps to do an evaluation of a programme that is already considered successful. This helps to demonstrate the value and benefits of evaluation in an effort to encourage further evaluations to be conducted and recommendations to be used for programme improvement.

Respondents stated that some recommendations from completed evaluations were not suitable for the department to implement. In other cases, recommendations helped improve internal processes which benefited the departments involved; helped inform decisions regarding improving a programme; completely changed programmes and helped programmes receive increased funding.

M&E officials from the Western Cape who participated in national evaluations (by serving on steering committees, facilitating fieldwork process or being consulted during fieldwork) reported being dissatisfied with the national dissemination strategy, indicating they were not notified if and where the evaluations they had been involved in were published. M&E officials noted that having access to evaluations conducted by other departments was useful as it showcased the evaluations, it benefits, use, successes and challenges.

Many of the interviews conducted throughout the provinces indicated that provinces had been undergoing a process of fiscal consolidation. Respondents stated that there are incidents of funding for evaluations being reallocated towards service delivery. Different respondent had different opinions about this, some indicated that they thought this was appropriate as the service delivery was main function of the department. Others disagreed and stated that the use of evaluation could enhance service delivery by making projects and programme more efficient.