



THE PRESIDENCY
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The Role of Premiers' Offices in Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation: A Good Practice Guide

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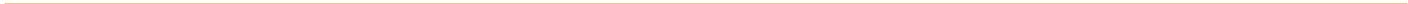
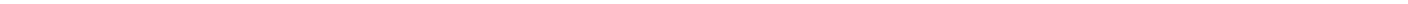
GLOSSARY

BAS	Basic Accounting System, the financial back-office system for most provincial governments
CDW	Community Development Worker
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GWM&E	Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
PGDS	Provincial Growth and Development Strategy
PoA	Programme of Action
IDP	Independent Development Programme
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEC	Member of the Provincial Executive Council
MFMA	Municipal Financial Management Act
SAMDI	South African Management Development Institute
SASQAF	South African Statistics Quality Assurance Framework
SDBIP	Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan

What you should know

After reading this Good Practice Guide for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) within Premiers' Offices, you should be able to:

1. Understand the implications for the *Government-wide M&E Policy Framework* for the Office of the Premier.
2. Identify good practices in M&E which are starting to emerge and practices which should be avoided.
3. Demonstrate greater awareness of challenges facing M&E Units within Offices of the Premier and approaches to managing these risks
4. Identify factors emanating from the recommendations of this document which should be taken into consideration when crafting M&E strategies and plans for the province as a whole and for the M&E Unit itself.



1. INTRODUCTION

Background to the GWM&E Policy Framework

The Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation (GWM&E) system initiative is a key milestone in the long term public service reform trajectory since 1994. It builds on previous public management reforms and aims at consolidating these reforms. It encourages systems integration and articulation across and within spheres of government, guided by a consistent conceptual framework. In 2007, the Presidency published its Policy Framework for Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation. This is supported by National Treasury's Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information and Statistics South Africa's South African Statistical Quality Assurance Framework (SASQAF).

Role of provincial governments in M&E

Hitherto, not much guidance has been given on the Premier's Office role in monitoring and evaluation. As a result, a wide variety of practices and conventions have emerged in the nine provinces which are at various stages in institutionalising M&E. A number of best practices have also evolved which could be communicated to the entire provincial sector to stimulate learning and innovation. Since M&E is a relatively new discipline in the South African public sector with many provinces only recently creating M&E units, it is important that good practice in province-wide M&E be disseminated and bad practices (such as duplicate reporting) be discouraged.

Aims of this good practice guide

The aims of this Good Practice Guide document are to:

- Outline the role of the Premier's Office in province-wide M&E as part of the implementation of the GWM&E framework;
- Review the developing province-wide M&E practices in the nine provincial governments;
- Identify common challenges confronting Premiers' Offices, as well as emerging good practices; and
- Providing guidance on future GWM&E Policy Framework implementation.

While there is an extensive literature on M&E techniques, much of it has been developed by international aid agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) rather than in a public sector context. This literature is extremely useful, but does not, however, address all the nuances of implementing M&E systems which span multiple, complex public sector institutions. It is hoped that this manual will make a contribution in focusing attention on the critical M&E role the Offices of the Premier play, and outline how they feed into the overall GWM&E framework.

1 PREMIERS' OFFICES AND THE GWM&E POLICY FRAMEWORK

This section locates the Premiers' Offices within the broader framework of the GWM&E system, and draws out some of the implications of the GWM&E Policy Framework for Premier's Office M&E functions

1.1 Background

The role of the Premier's office

Premiers' Offices play a pivotal role in providing coherent strategic leadership and coordination in provincial policy formulation and review, planning and overseeing service delivery planning and implementation in support of provincial and national priorities and plans. Effective M&E could therefore contribute substantially to the achievement of Premier's Office objectives.

M&E across the three spheres of government

The South African intergovernmental system is decentralised, with three inter-dependent, inter-related but distinct spheres of government. This introduces a considerable amount of complexity to policy formulation and implementation, as well as M&E. In concurrent functions, it is not uncommon for policy to be set by one sphere of government while budgeting and implementation for that function takes place within another sphere of government. This complexity requires intensive sectoral, intergovernmental, functional and spatial coordination across the policy making, planning, budgeting and implementation processes. Furthermore, joint work (in the form of collaborative programmes, projects and services across the three spheres of government) is becoming increasingly important. Joint work creates a compelling requirement for collaborative M&E. Well functioning M&E systems are therefore indispensable for ensuring the smooth functioning of the machinery of government in a way that policy aims and objectives are achieved. Provincial governments have an especially daunting task since they need to ensure not only that provincial policy and planning frameworks are aligned with national plans and priorities, but also that local government Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) are also harmonised with provincial growth and development strategies and reflect national priorities. In addition, they need to ensure that there is bottom-up feedback: that provincial department plans are indeed responsive to IDPs, enabling the IDPs to inform the alignment of policies, planning and budgeting of all three spheres of government. Offices of the Premier have, furthermore, to monitor the provision of basic services by municipalities (such as water,

M&E across the three spheres of government

sanitation and electricity) to ensure the progressive realisation of the socio-economic rights of citizens of the province. Early warnings of potential service delivery breakdowns or incipient financial crises within municipalities are essential to enabling proactive support by the provincial government when required. Clearly, M&E is also a crucial instrument for effective municipal monitoring, supervision, proactive support and (as a last resort) intervention by provincial governments. Initially there was very little direction to Premiers' Offices on how they should perform their functions. This lack of prescription initially permitted experimentation and innovation in the nine provinces. This current juncture provides an opportunity to share successes and challenges, and to build on good practices in line with the *GWM&E Policy Framework*.

For more on joint work, see the section 2.1.1 National planning frameworks on page 18

1.2 Implications for the GWM&E Framework for Premiers' Offices

Alignment with the GWM&E Policy Framework

The aim of the GWM&E Policy Framework was to encourage M&E good practice, not to be prescriptive. It sketches certain broad over-arching principles, objectives, definitions, practices and standards that would be integrated across the three spheres of government and other organs of state. The Policy Framework has some important implications for the Premiers' Offices. Firstly, it clarifies what an M&E system is: "A monitoring and evaluation system is a set of organisational structures, management processes, standards, strategies, plans, indicators, information systems, reporting lines and accountability relationships which enables national and provincial departments, municipalities and other institutions to discharge their M&E functions effectively. In addition to these formal managerial elements are the organisational culture, capacity and other enabling conditions which will determine whether the feedback from the M&E function influence the organisation's decision-making, learning and service delivery" (Presidency, 2007). By implication, any province-wide M&E framework would also, at least, have to take into account the various components of the system outlined above. Attention should also be paid to the relationship between the various components of the system. So for example, the structure of the M&E function within the Premier's Office would be important, as well as arrangements for M&E within line departments. Management processes and forums for M&E in the province would also be critical for institutionalising M&E in the province.

Alignment with the
GWM&E Policy
Framework

Roles and responsibilities for the roll-out and operation of the M&E system must be clearly identified, including reporting lines and accountability relationships. There needs to be an M&E strategy for the province linked to the provincial growth and development strategy, and these should be supported by annual operational plans for monitoring and evaluation. Indicator frameworks need to be developed to track progress against these plans and strategies. Data sources for these indicators should be identified, and information systems put in place to yield up-to-date, credible information. To enable this, quality standards need to be implemented and enforced.

The elements of
an M&E systems
are inter-related
and mutually
reinforcing.

It should be borne in mind that each of the components of the M&E system could impact on each of the other components. For example, the type of indicators identified could impact on the M&E strategy and M&E plans. Collection of indicator data could have implications for reporting lines and for accountability relationships (e.g. in terms of sign-off of the data), it may also influence M&E management processes (e.g. verification of the data). Each indicator would have to be supported by some sort of information system (either manual, spreadsheet-supported and/or electronic), and would have to conform to some sort of data quality standard. The type and comprehensiveness of the indicator hierarchy could also impact on the skills needed with the M&E function and hence also impact the organisational structure. The effectiveness of the M&E system in achieving its goals of improved executive decision-making, organisational learning and service delivery improvement and innovation will also be mediated by the culture of the public sector institution, its capacity and whether other management systems actively support use of M&E findings. For example, is M&E included in the performance agreements of line managers? Are M&E findings used in the budget allocation process? The culture of the institution is also critical. If the general management ethos is not geared to performance-orientation and critical self-reflection, it is unlikely that M&E systems would achieve its full potential.

Integrating
M&E with other
management
processes

The second major theme of the GWM&E Policy Framework is that M&E should be integrated with other management processes within the public institution: policy making, strategic and operational planning, budgeting, in-year and annual reporting. M&E findings should result in critical reflection on performance, learning, evidenced-based policy refinement and other forms of decision-making and appropriate managerial action. M&E is not an end in itself or there merely to serve compliance or external reporting purposes, but to improve how the public institution's policy outcomes are achieved through conducting its core business.

An M&E strategy with a province-wide focus

Thirdly, each public institution is expected to adopt a formal M&E strategy which is linked to its strategic plan, annual performance plan or IDP. The Policy Framework notes that “While each institutional strategy must focus on monitoring and evaluating its own performance and impact, it should also adopt a sectoral perspective and develop the capacity to report on progress and challenges at that level” (Presidency, 2007). This recognizes the inter-related nature of government service delivery – that typically the efforts of more than one organ of state is needed to achieve a particular policy outcome. So, for instance, an education department cannot only just monitor delivery by teachers and other departmental staff, but should also monitor school access to water, electricity and school security. Even though these may not be provided by the Department of Education itself, they do impact on the environment for teaching and learning in schools. An implication of the sectoral perspective is that Premiers’ Offices need to have M&E arrangements in place to evaluate their own performance and impact (i.e. an internal M&E focus), but also need to have M&E arrangements which enable its provincial and local oversight role as the centre of provincial government (i.e. an external M&E focus).

An M&E strategy with a province-wide focus

Fourthly, the Policy Framework places emphasis on managerial systems, not on electronic IT based systems. Where these do exist, integration across the various electronic systems and easy data interchange are of paramount importance:

“The GWM&E Framework seeks to embed a management system within public sector organisations which articulates with other internal management systems (such as planning, budgeting and reporting systems). This may or may not be supported by IT software and other tools. If this is the case, the emphasis is on systems integration and interoperability.” (Presidency, 2007).

M&E as a managerial system, not necessarily an electronic IT based system

The Policy Framework does not encourage the creation of additional reporting layers which will place further administrative burdens on the public institutions being monitored and evaluated. Instead it encourages drawing on source systems within institutions which are required anyway in order to generate the information required for refining institutional policy, planning and implementation processes. These source systems could then be accessed through derived systems by oversight agencies such as the Offices of the Premier, eliminating the need for duplicated capture of information:

M&E as a managerial system, not necessarily an electronic IT based system

“It is a statutory requirement that the accounting officer of a department or municipality, or the chief executive officer of a public entity, is required to establish a monitoring and evaluation system for the institution. Primary users of the M&E system will use these source systems to refine their planning and implementation processes. The data and information from these source systems will also be used by other stakeholders in the GWM&E system to create an overall picture of national, provincial and local performance. These secondary users may use derived IT systems to collate and analyse the data from the underlying organisational source systems” (Presidency, 2007).

Principles guiding implementation of the GWM&E policy framework

The GWM&E Policy Framework also sets forth a few guiding principles for its medium and long term implementation. Many of the same principles are also highly relevant for the establishment of province-wide M&E systems:

- “The administrative burden of compliance across government should be minimised. Implementation milestones must be linked to existing capacity and the ability to build capacity over the medium term.” Offices of the Premier should avoid the creation of multiple reporting lines from provincial departments and municipalities. As far as possible, data and information should be shared.
- “The implementation plan should be clearly linked with prior public sector reform initiatives”: This acknowledges that different provinces are in different stages of rolling out M&E systems. These M&E initiatives should attempt to build on previous public sector management, budget, accounting and performance management reforms. This evolutionary approach linking M&E to other complementary management good practices facilitates the institutionalization of the M&E function.
- “As far as possible, the GWM&E framework should incorporate and consolidate existing M&E initiatives in the three spheres, aligning them to the overall aims of government”: The Offices of the Premiers’ external oversight role to a large measure focused on intergovernmental relations. Especially vis-à-vis local government (which is a distinct sphere), engagement around alignment in a cooperative government context has to centre on dialogue rather than “command and control” administrative fiat. Therefore there needs to be close coordination between the M&E and intergovernmental relations dimensions within the Offices of the Premier. The ability of the Offices of the Premier to conduct effective M&E will depend ultimately on the credibility and robustness of M&E systems within departments and within municipalities.

Principles guiding implementation of the GWM&E policy framework

- “Roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder should be clearly defined and related to their mandate”: M&E resources are extremely limited across the South African public service. It is very important that the scarce resources available are harnessed for optimal impact, avoiding both unnecessary duplication as well as omissions of key interventions. Effective coordination of efforts is of paramount importance at provincial level, particularly between the Office of the Premier, the provincial Treasury and the Department of Local Government.
- “The implementation plan should adopt a differentiated approach across spheres and sectors”: Although all provincial governments have an interest in effective and integrated M&E, different provinces are at different stages in institutionalizing the M&E function and operate in different operational contexts. While capacity should not dictate the normative long term ideal for government, it does tend to vary across provinces and must therefore be factored into implementation plans and risk managed accordingly.
- Monitoring and the development and enforcement of statistical standards are important pre-conditions for effective evaluation: The sequence of implementation will focus firstly on creating a culture of monitoring service delivery and then feeding back into managerial action. Simultaneously the definition of statistical standards will be concluded with interventions to enable departmental data to be converted into official data. Improvements in the quality of data and information and the creation of knowledge will then lay the foundations for more effective evaluation practices.

1.3 Future GWM&E implementation developments

Generic M&E strategies by sector

While the Policy Framework for GWM&E provides valuable insight to public sector institutions on migration from the conceptual phase to the development and implementation of M&E strategies, it does not sketch in detail how the tracking of indicators informs policy and programming changes or budget allocation. This is understandable, since the role of a policy framework is to provide high level guidance.

The Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation Policy Framework gives a broad outline of the requirements of the M&E strategic plan which public sector institutions are required to prepare:

Generic M&E strategies by sector

“As a component of its strategic plan, annual performance plan or IDP, every Government institution must formally adopt an M&E strategy. M&E strategies must describe the approach the institution is to follow to create and operate M&E systems that produce credible, accurate information on an ongoing basis that gets used to improve service delivery and governance. M&E systems should be integrated with existing management and decision-making systems. M&E strategies will outline how M&E findings will inform strategic and operational planning, budget formulation and execution as well as in-year and annual reporting. The M&E strategy should include an inventory of the institution’s current M&E systems, describing their current status and how they are to be improved as well as mentioning any plans for new M&E systems. An important component of the M&E strategy would be a capacity building plan detailing how the institution will put in place the human capacity to fulfil its M&E functions, and how it will liaise with other stakeholders (such as PALAMA) in effecting this capacity building plan. It is important that an institution’s M&E strategy encompasses the organization’s approach to implementing the Programme Performance Information Framework in preparation for audits of non-financial information, as well as to implementing SASQAF standards (where relevant). For instance, a subset of performance information covered under the Programme Performance Information Framework may be identified by the institution as candidates for certification as “official statistics” in terms of SASQAF”.

The Policy Framework does not however provide detailed directives on the contents and format of the M&E strategy document. Given that M&E is, however, a very new function in government with many institutions only recently developing dedicated M&E capacity, it would be extremely useful to have some advice on how M&E information could be used in practice to influence policy and decision-making. It would also be helpful to provide examples of the indicator/outcome frameworks to serve as examples. Both of these are best addressed in a sector-specific context. These guidelines would then serve as best practice material for those departments that are yet to develop and implement their M&E frameworks.

In recognition of this need for more sector-specific guidance on the content of M&E strategies, the Presidency, with the collaboration of the relevant line departments, will be leading a process to develop a generic template for an M&E strategy per sector. These will then be tailored to the individual sectors.

Rationalisation of indicators by sector data forums

There is still a lack of uniformity in the definitions of indicators, their underlying data requirements and meta-data, as well a duplication of reporting. Streamlining of the various indicator frameworks in order to promote increased integration will be accomplished through the on-going work of various sector based data forums.

Integrating the analysis of financial and non-financial performance

Ongoing budget reform has, over time, yielded financial information which is more comprehensive, more detailed and more credible. Changes to the Standard Chart of Accounts on BAS introduced a new "region" segment. This will enable analysis of expenditure by area. In addition, the Division of Revenue Act requires that grants to schools and hospitals be gazetted individually. This will further enhance the ability to analyse budgets and expenditure spatially, and link them to geo-referenced service delivery outputs and outcomes.

Encouraging the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

Each of the data terrains sketched in the GWM&E Policy Framework has a geographic dimension, although these data may not currently be geographically disaggregated below national level. Most of the indicators and the associated data time series presented in the Presidency's Development Indicators of the Mid-term Review are, for instance, presented at national level only. It would be useful for Premiers' Offices to disaggregate these indicators to provincial, municipal or lower levels in order to track dynamics within their particular jurisdictions. In recognition of this, the Presidency has initiated a project aimed developing a sustainable coordinated GIS in order to support the GWM&E system, and to provide public access to relevant reports and data in forms that are easy to understand. The first phase of implementation would be the collation and publication of existing geographical data sets available within the public sector. The data to be prioritised for inclusion in the GIS would be that which is associated with the development indicators of the mid-term review, with a more in-depth focus on data corresponding to indicators linked to the themes of household and community assets, health, education and crime. Premiers' Offices would be able to tap into this information source, and should consider this in devising their M&E strategies.

Learning networks as a capacity building instrument

The GWM&E Policy Framework envisages a phased approach to implementation. Forums such as a M&E Learning Network (which has been operative since 2006) will continue to play an important role in providing a platform for sharing of key learnings. The focus of the Learning Network forums will be on practical implementation considerations.

2 PREMIERS' OFFICES AND PROVINCIAL M&E

In this section, emergent provincial M&E practices are discussed, and the commonalities and variations in the approaches employed by the nine Premiers' Offices highlighted.

2.1 M&E context

National planning frameworks

Ultimately, all M&E activity relates back to policy or legislative frameworks. South Africa's intergovernmental planning framework is quite complex, spanning short, medium and long term horizons, cutting across sectors, spheres, geographic and functional areas.

2.1.1 National planning frameworks

Central to national government's planning coherence in service delivery and development is the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF). This aims at the integration of policy on a horizontal and also vertical level through the clustering of sectoral line ministries around shared objectives.

State of the Nation Address (SONA)/ Programme of Action (PoA)

The annual State of the Nation address was also supplemented by the Apex of Priorities announced in Feb 2008. Some of these projects require alignment at provincial level (e.g. those relating to the resourcing of poor schools and the monitoring of learning outcomes, the war against poverty, ratcheting up the implementation of the Early Childhood Development Programme, intensifying the campaign on communicable diseases etc). Ensuring integrated planning across all three spheres of government has itself been identified as one of the 24 apex priorities.

The Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) (and the accompanying Medium Term Budget Policy Statement) are also used as tools to encourage cooperation across ministries and departments as well as planning in three year cycles. In order to promote aligned policy implementation between the spheres, the National Spatial Development Perspective (NSDP) was launched in 2003, and has been updated on a regular basis since then, most recently in 2006. It was approved as an indicative planning tool to promote intergovernmental alignment and harmonisation.

The NSDP is not a “national plan”, rather it articulates the normative principles and methodologies to underpin investment, infrastructure investment and development planning decisions of all three spheres. The NSDP forms a nexus with the provincial PGDS, the IDP and LED planning. What also makes alignment of planning complex is that it occurs between spheres as well as between and within the three spheres. Some of this complexity revolves around the following:

- The need for greater cooperation within and across the three spheres of government at a strategic level in planning and implementation;
- The need for more substantive intergovernmental engagement on strategies and plans;
- The need to build a greater understanding of the developmental role of local government across all spheres of government;
- Giving effect to the role of the District or Metro IDP as a platform for a shared understanding and agreement on strategies to unlock development potential and overcome challenges;
- Greater involvement of national and provincial sector departments in the development of IDPs through involving more senior representatives of sector departments in IDP processes; enhancing the understanding of the IDP process in sector departments; and increasing the involvement of parastatals and government agencies in the IDP processes; and
- Finding effective mechanisms for the voice of local government in provincial and national planning processes.

The presidential lead projects (such as ASGISA and JIPSA) also require a high degree of alignment at provincial level. In addition there are also a number of collaborative “joint work” programmes, projects and services which require cooperation across spheres of government. Joint work may vary widely in scale, scope, content and the spheres of government involved. It may be defined as: “Those programmes that transcend the conventional organisational boundaries in planning, budgeting and implementation resulting in a number of departments/ agencies/ministries responsible for one aspect of the programme, although none is responsible for it in its entirety” (G&A Cluster Task Team, 2005). Examples abound in functions which are concurrent competences for national and provincial government (such as education, health, social development services) as well as the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the Municipal Infrastructure Grant, the Urban Renewal Programme (URP), and the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme (ISRDP).

International obligations

South Africa is also a signatory to a number of international conventions, which also requires harmonisation with national and provincial plans. This would include the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and reporting in relation to gender and disability.

Provincial planning frameworks

2.1.2 Provincial planning frameworks

The pivotal instrument for planning and M&E across all provinces is the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (PGDS).

The challenge was to create convergence in the parallel planning processes operating in the various spheres of government, and to improve the quality of plans across government.

In May 2004, the President, in his State of the Nation Address, called for the harmonisation of the NSDP, PGDS and IDPs. By 2005 all of the provinces had finalised their PGDSs. Some of them such as KwaZulu Natal and the Western Cape also had detailed Provincial Spatial Development Plans to support alignment.

In 2005 guidelines were issued for Provincial Growth and Development Strategies in line with the NSDP (Presidency and DPLG, 2005). The PGDS should consist of two parts: (1) a long term strategic view and, (2) an Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation plan. The long term strategic view of the PGDS should take into consideration economic viability, social equity and environmental sustainability in framing strategies, and should include a spatial development plan.

Provincial planning frameworks

Standardised strategic planning formats for concurrent departments (such as education, health, social development and transport) have been driven by the relevant national department and the National Treasury since 2005. This has created increased consistency in reporting across provincial governments. Collectively, more than 500 indicators are collected and reported by provincial line Departments to the National Treasury. Premiers' Offices could access these reports in order to analyse their provincial department's service delivery and financial performance, and even to benchmark its provincial department's performance relative to its counterparts in the other eight provinces.

Provincial planning frameworks

Premiers' Offices also oversee provincial Programmes of Action with cluster targets, and ensure alignment of provincial departmental plans and with the annual State of the Province address by the Premier. Some provinces (such as a Western Cape) also publish province-specific development indicators. Premiers' Offices take the lead in ensuring well-coordinated planning cycles in their respective provinces and establishment of appropriate forums for planning and M&E.

2.2 Good practices and challenges

Emerging M&E systems at provincial level

Since formalised M&E is still a relatively new innovation at provincial level, M&E practices are still emergent. However, from interaction with the various Premiers' Offices, it is clear that a number of good practices have evolved. On the other hand, Office's of the Premier also face common challenges in institutionalising a culture of M&E. A detailed review of common M&E practice by Offices of the Premier in relation to provincial departments is given in Appendix 1. The main themes are summarized in the tables below.

M&E DIMENSION	Is there a dedicated M&E function in the OoP?	How many provincial depts have dedicated M&E functions	Does the M&E unit use consultants/ external service providers?	Is there a province-wide M&E forum?	Name of forum
EC	Yes	All	Yes	Yes	M&E forum/Planners forum
FS	Yes	1	No	Yes	Provincial MRE forum
GT	Yes	8 have dedicated units, 2 in process of establishing M&E unit, and 2 have functions integrated with strategic planning	Yes	Yes	Provincial M&E forum
KZN	Yes	14 out of 16 departments have M&E units according to a situation analysis. All are less 2 Yesears old. GeneralYes consists of a single official	Yes	Yes	Provincial M&E forum, IDP planning forum
LP	Yes	Not known	Yes	Yes	Provincial M&E forum
MP	Yes	Not known	Yes	Yes	Provincial Planning & M&E forum
NC	No	Not known	No	No	N/A
NW	Yes	8 out of 12 departments with two currently in process. Mainly single individuals	Yes	Yes	Provincial M&E forum, local government and planning forum
WC	Yes	3	Yes	Yes	Provincial M&E forum

M&E DIMENSION	Is there a province-wide M&E framework?	Is an electronic system used in M&E?	Name of electronic system	Is M&E training being provided?	Nature of training
EC	Yes	Yes	StratMaster	Yes	Systems training, planning & M&E training
FS	Yes	Yes	INFORM	Yes	Systems training, planning & M&E training, SAMDI partnership with FT Training & Dev Institute
GT	Yes	Yes	IMS electronic system	Yes	Readiness assessment shows training needed in basics, setting up base-lines, analytical skills and statistical literacy
KZN	Yes - Draft	Yes	PBS, SAS Business intelligence, provincial nerve centre	Yes	Office of the Premier has done training, SAMDI for the basics, will get UNDP to train but budget is a constraint
LP	Yes	No	N/A	No	N/A
MP	Yes - Draft	No	N/A	No	No training but have recent Yes met with SAMDI
NC	No	No	N/A	No	Office of the Premier has attended training but are not providing training to line depts
NW	No	Yes	PORTAL	Yes	Principles of M&E by SAMDI, Progress College
WC	Yes - Draft	No		Yes	Inhouse, SAMDI and Provincial Academy

M&E DIMENSION	Is there a Central data repository?	What are the most important challenges to institutionalising M&E in the province?			
EC	Yes	Staff: posts and mobility	Tineous reporting	QualityYes of reporting	
FS	Yes	Human resource constraints	Budget constraints		
GT	Yes	Human capacities in terms of posts	Lack of technical skills	Budget constraints	Lack of coordination of evaluation research
KZN	Yes. SAS will be the central repositiorYes	Budget	Structure of M&E and lack of authorities	Lack of understanding of the role of M&E	Confusion of Office of the Premier and provincial Treasury's roles
LP	No	Capacity	Lack of uniform understanding of the role of M&E across managers	Insufficient direction and support by Presidency on M&E	
MP	No	Budget	HR insufficient	Rank issue with outside depts - structure issue	Despite cooperation a general resistance to M&E by depts
NC	No	No dedicated unit within Premiers Office	Dept M&E reps have other responsibilities and priorities		
NW	No	Lack of capacity and personnel	Financial/budget constraints	Support from national Treasuries and the Presidencies	
WC	No	Need for quality data	M&E capacity building	Coherence of research projects among provincial depts	

M&E DIMENSION	Is a Social Accounting Matrix used in the province?	What is the engagement with SASQAF?	What are the provinces future plans for M&E?		
EC	Yes	MoU with Stats SA	Take M&E to ward level and public entities	Impact assessment	
FS	Yes	No activities yet.	To ensure alignment with GWM&E	Provincial plan	
GT	Yes	MoU with Stats SA, pilots Ided, want accreditation, statistical training started	Revise province wide M&E to be consistent with GWM&E framework	Extend nerve centre to a virtual centre	Lack of coordination of evaluation research
KZN	Yes	Started engagement but has become dormant, had workshops and have been trained	Finalise provincial M&E framework and passed by EXCO	Continue to produce manually but source an electronic system	Confusion of Office of the Premier and provincial Treasury's roles
LP	No	Signed MoU but other activities unclear at this stage	Restructure M&E unit		
MP	No	No activities yet. No MoU signed with Stats SA.	Finalise provincial framework	Extend structure to municipalities	Despite cooperation a general resistance to M&E by depts
NC	Didn't know	MoU and some training by Stats SA for policYes managers	Establish a dedicated unit		
NW	Yes	MoU is being signed but activities will onlYes be considered later in this Year	Develop and consolidate provincial M&E framework	Establish a provincial IT system. Link cluster PoS to a web reporting system	
WC	Yes	SASQAF training already taken place	Develop information architecture	Review the Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Strategy for the province.	

Source: Questionnaire administered to Office's of the Premier

2.2 Good practices and challenges

A number of good practices have emerged in response to provincial specific contexts. These are discussed in detail below in the hope that they will spark of other innovative ideas in M&E practice.

Provincial departments are using and responding to M&E findings by the Premier's Office

Across all provinces, there is intensive engagement between the M&E unit in the Premiers' Offices and provincial line departments in respect of their progress relative to provincial Programmes of Action and PGDSs. Provincial line departments also do respond to the M&E feedback received. This is important in establishing the credibility of M&E as a strategic governance instrument.

Premiers' Offices are playing a role in developing cross-cutting functional indicators

These enable comparison of progress across provincial departments in respect of policy priorities which affect the provincial government as a whole.

A project management approach is being encouraged

Provinces, such as Mpumalanga have emphasized the need for a project management based approach to give operational substance to the results-based management approach upon which M&E principles are based.

Electronic systems are being used as M&E enablers

A few provinces have developed electronic systems to facilitate reporting and analysis of non-financial information. The advantages of such systems is that they can do preliminary validation of the data; most have some kind of audit trail (e.g. any changes effected can be traced to an individual suitably authorized data) and, once the data is captured, do an automatic consolidation of figures which shortens the reporting cycle considerably and ensures that information is timeous. Electronic systems however require high levels of maintenance and user support, as well as on-going training of users, given the low level of M&E skills in government and government employee attrition rates.

Use of websites to disseminate M&E information

Some provinces such as the Free State have quite comprehensive websites which display in a central place, all PGDS, provincial Programme of Action and progress report data (<http://fsdp.fs.gov.za/scripts/runisa.dll?fsgds>) for both provincial and local government. Gauteng Provincial Government also publishes their progress reports on the provincial Programme of Action on the Gauteng Online web portal. While all of the Premiers' Offices have some sort of web presence, not all of them make use of the website as a mechanism for communicating M&E findings.

Participation of Community Development Workers in M&E

Provinces such as Mpumalanga, make active use of Community Development Workers (CDWs) in M&E (e.g. in respect of the physical verification of projects in municipalities). The Eastern Cape Office of the Premier has introduced service delivery mediators in each district municipality, to play the interface role with the communities. Not only do these service delivery mediators aim to resolve service delivery blockages across the province, but they also perform a monitoring role. Over time, they could play a valuable evaluation role as well, given their grassroots contact with communities.

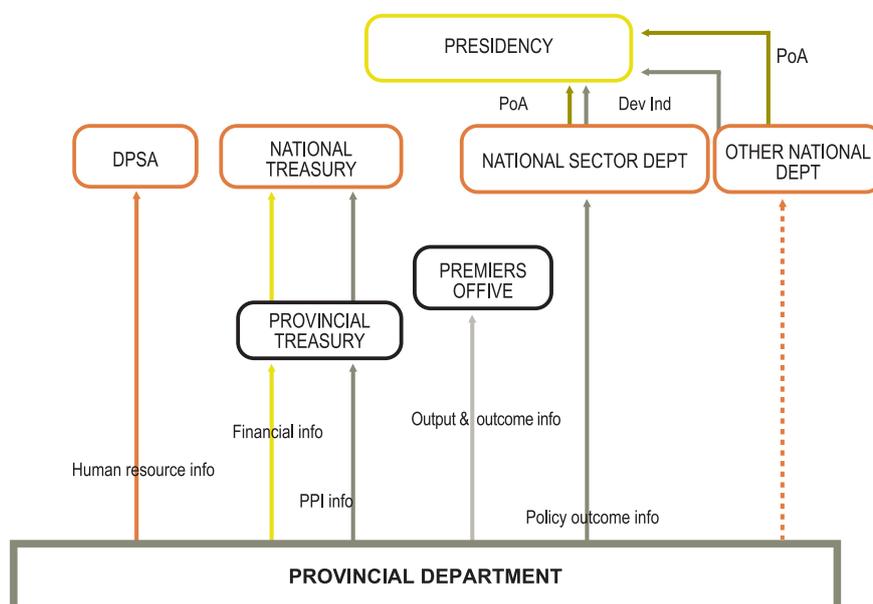
2.2.2 Challenge to institutionalizing M&E

Notwithstanding the emergent good practices outlined above, it is clear that Offices of the Premier also face several challenges in instilling a culture of critical reflection, so intrinsic to effective results based M&E. Some of these obstacles are outlined below.

Streamlining reporting lines

Currently, reporting lines are complex, and there is a fair amount to parallel reporting of essentially the same information, as captured in the diagram below.

Figure 1: Existing reporting arrangements with multiple reporting lines



Existing situation: multiple reporting lines at provincial level

Streamlining reporting lines

Duplicate reporting places an inordinate administrative burden on provincial departments (which often have to report virtually identical indicators and other information to the Premier's Office, the provincial Treasury, National Treasury and the relevant concurrent function national department). It is important that the Premier's Offices avoid running parallel data-gathering systems. Instead they need to be able access the information already being collected by provincial departments for their own management purposes, and concentrate on the analysis of this information

Streamlined reporting would require a greater emphasis on sharing of information. The role of the Premier's Office would shift to greater analysis, with reduced emphasis on gathering and reporting of information.

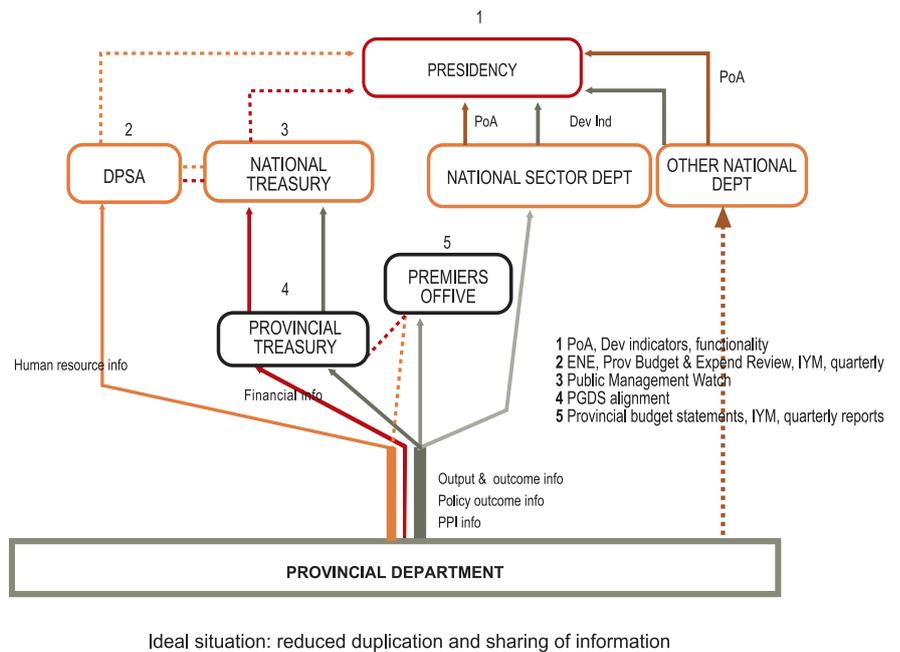


Figure 2: Reduced reporting duplication

Perception of M&E as an administrative “back-office” function

M&E findings are meant to encourage critical reflection by senior decision-makers within departments and the Legislatures and feed into strategic thinking and policy refinement. However, instead of being regarded as a strategic process, M&E is often regarded as a low-level ‘back office’ administrative function. These misperceptions may constitute a barrier to M&E making the desired impact in terms of policy innovation and service delivery improvement.

Improvement alignment of PGDS with departmental strategies and operational plans

Initially provincial growth and development strategies did not feed strongly into departmental strategic and operational plans. While there has been improvement in this regard. Offices of the Premier will have to continue to promote closer alignment. Offices of the Premier will also have to engage with the budgeting process to ensure that MTEF resource allocation also reinforces the articulation between departmental strategic plans and the PGDS.

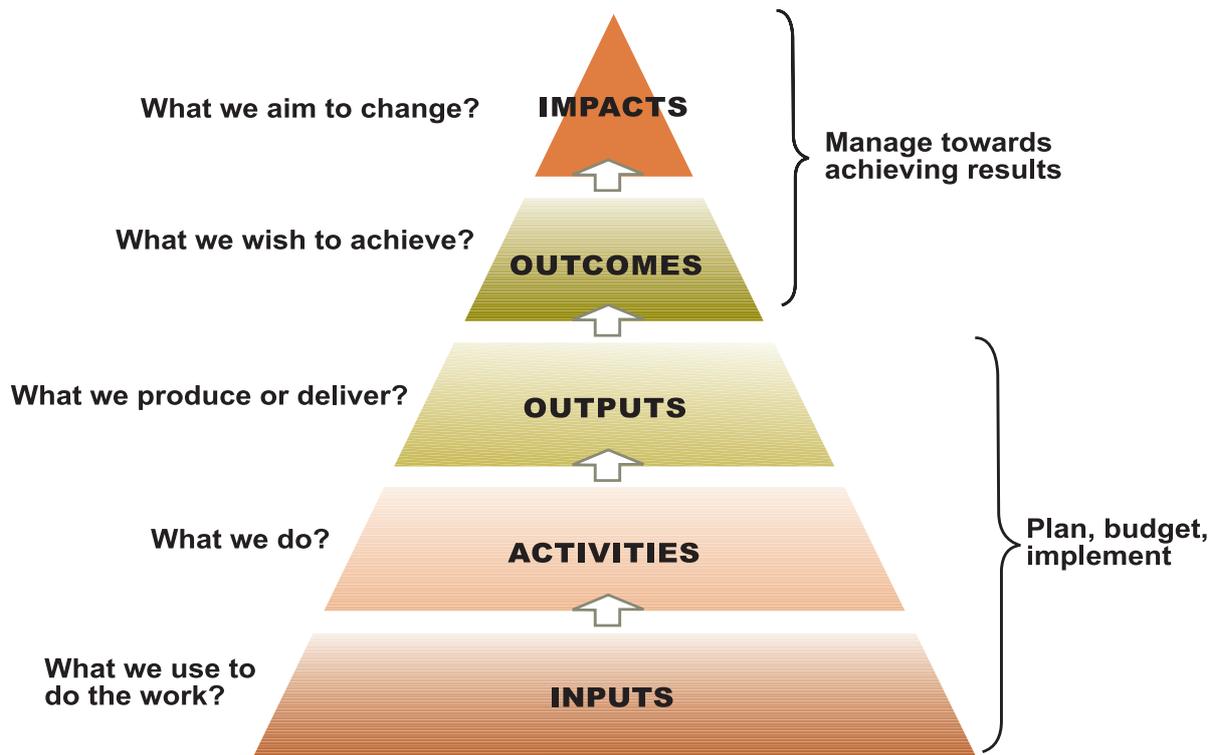
Improving spatial alignment

Many of the provincial growth and development strategies require greater spatial referencing. This would promote spatial alignment of planned programme and project interventions as well as spending patterns focused on areas with the greatest development backlogs.

A focus primarily on monitoring rather than evaluation

Most of the M&E activities conducted by Premiers' Offices have tended to be predominantly related to monitoring rather than evaluation. This is not entirely unexpected given the newness of the M&E specialization, and the personnel and capacity constraints Premiers' Offices face. Institutionalising monitoring, however, could lay foundation for a culture of critical reflection and continuous learning. Some provincial governments have already started work on the development of baseline indicators as well as citizen surveys and perception audits.

Figure 3: Key performance information concepts



Source: National Treasury (2007:8)

A focus primarily on monitoring rather than evaluation

Ultimately, the M&E function of the Office of the Premier should encapsulate all the inter-related performance dimensions illustrated in the figure above, with particular emphasis on the evaluation of policy outcomes and impact.

Lack of a culture of M&E

M&E can only thrive if the overall management ethos is one which is oriented towards performance. Unfortunately a culture of accountability for results is not yet completely entrenched within the South African public sector. As a result, M&E may sometimes be regarded as being intrusive. Line departments may not always be cooperative or may initially view M&E initiatives in a hostile or adversarial manner. This, unfortunately, is the case in most change management initiatives and M&E practitioners will have to play a role in changing mindsets and attitudes and negotiate organisational politics to achieve their M&E objectives.

3 PREMIERS' OFFICES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT M&E

3.1 M&E context

Local government planning framework

Municipal planning in South Africa focuses mainly on the Integrated Development Planning (IDP) process. It provides municipalities with an overall framework for development in the local sphere, and potentially is a vehicle for local government planning to influence all three spheres of government. It also encourages a cooperative government approach to development in South Africa by ensuring a co-ordinated mechanism through which national, provincial and local initiatives are aligned in order to ensure efficient and effective service delivery. The IDP must reflect the priority needs of the community and its municipality. Available resources must then be geared towards addressing these needs by establishing specific service delivery output, outcome and impact targets to be achieved. Public participation and intergovernmental coordination stand central to the success of municipal IDPs.

The IDP process encompasses a phased approach. An Integrated Development Plan (IDP) is a 5-year plan that is synchronized with the local government electoral period. The IDP, furthermore, is reviewed on an annual basis. The phases of the IDP process are:

- In-depth analysis of the existing conditions within the municipality;
- Development of strategies to address the issues identified during analysis;
- Design of projects to implement strategies;
- Integration of all strategies; and
- Approval of the IDP by the council (DPLG, 1998).

Local government planning framework

In the past, the credibility of some municipal IDPs have however been questioned. While the quality of municipal IDPs remains a challenge, the adoption rate of IDPs, according to the DPLG 2007/08 Budget Speech, stands at 98% for the 2006/07 financial year. Credible IDPs are essential to ensure the effective use of scarce public resources, efficient and effective service delivery, mobilisation of additional funds, intergovernmental coordination and the strengthening of institutional transformation (DPLG, 1998). Monitoring and evaluation is seen as crucial to the success of the Integrated Development Planning process in order to track service delivery progress and sustainability, manage institutional performance and evaluate alternative options for service delivery.

The current monitoring and reporting framework for municipalities has been heavily influenced by the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) (No.56 of 2003). As such, the Act stipulates that municipalities must fulfill comprehensive reporting requirements which are outlined below.

Monthly Financial Reports.

Section 71 of the MFMA requires municipalities to submit, on a monthly basis, information regarding actual expenditure and revenue collection. As such these reports capture information regarding:

- Actual revenue by source;
- Actual borrowings;
- Actual capital and operational expenditure by vote;
- Allocations received;
- Actual expenditure on allocations; and
- Explanations for material variances

In all instances, the actual expenditure and revenue must be compared with the amounts projected in the municipal budget. This provides municipalities and other stakeholders with the needed information to monitor municipal expenditure and revenue collection.

Mayor's Quarterly Reports

In accordance with Section 52 of the MFMA the mayor must, on a quarterly basis, submit a report to the council regarding the municipal financial state of affairs and the implementation of the budget. This report combines elements of both financial and non-financial information monitoring.

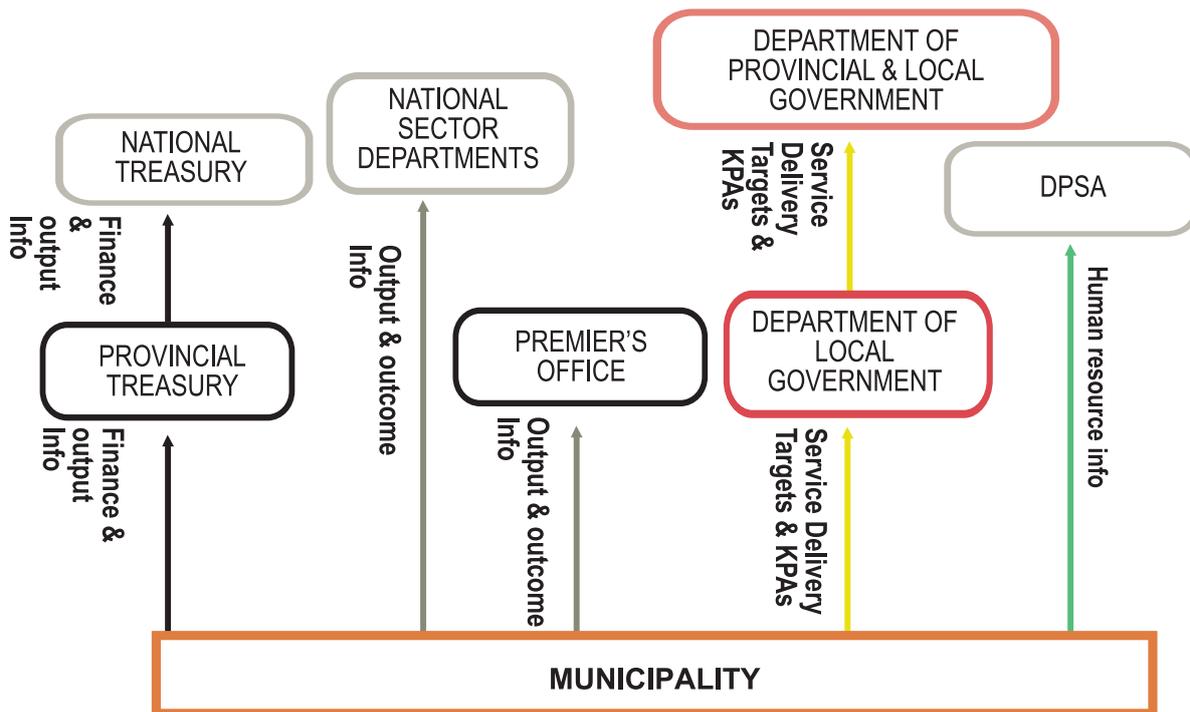
Mid-Year Performance Assessment Reports

This report, compiled by the accounting officer, must be completed by the 25th of January of every financial year. This report assesses the performance of the municipality for the first half of the financial year, taking into account the Section 71 monthly reports, the annual report and the municipal service delivery performance.

Annual Reports

The municipality's annual report provides information regarding the activities of the municipality over the course of the financial year. The report assesses actual municipal performance against the budget and non-financial targets as set at the beginning of the year. The annual performance report, as required by the Municipal Systems Act (Section 46), is included in this report, as well as the Auditor-General's audit report.

The current reporting requirements for municipalities are quite onerous, with a duplication of information being reported on to multiple stakeholders, as can be seen from the diagram below.



Existing situation: multiple reporting lines at local government level

3.2 Challenges and good practice

A detailed review of common M&E practice by Offices of the Premier in relation to municipalities is given in Appendix 1. The main themes are summarised below.

Good practices

Some provinces have are considering utilising Community Development Workers (CDWs) for the verification of data. CDWs are ideally located and work in communities, thereby able to physically verify the progress of projects within communities. The capacity of CDWs can be greatly enhanced by providing training around various monitoring tools and techniques, such as around the utilization of Rapid Appraisal Techniques.

One province in particular has appointed Monitoring and Evaluation personnel to district level (Eastern Cape). These personnel fulfill both a monitoring and service delivery mediation role in order to address service delivery bottlenecks as they arise. This particular province furthermore have specific engagements with municipalities in order to ensure that municipal IDPs are credible and aligned with the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy, as well as the 5-Year Strategic Agenda of Local Government.

Good practices

It is important to note that some Offices of the Premier are, in general, coordinating and working closely with provincial Treasuries and provincial Departments of Local Government in order to monitor the performance of municipalities. Both the provincial Treasuries and provincial Departments of Local Government have existing and comprehensive reporting processes in place, geared towards monitoring both financial and non-financial performance of municipalities. This should be seen as a good practice, as it prevents the duplication of reporting for municipalities and is of special importance where Offices of the Premier experience significant capacity constraints.

Challenges in M&E within the local sphere

In a number of instances, planning processes do not provide a sufficiently rigorous platform for effective monitoring. Challenges are experienced with the articulation of the Integrated Development Plans of municipalities and the Provincial Growth and Development Strategies of provinces which makes monitoring against these plans challenging. This could potentially lead to a situation where the PGDS objectives of provinces are not attained due to misalignment between provincial and local government planning and implementation. Active ongoing monitoring of the alignment and realisation of these two planning frameworks is essential.

Focused attention needs to be given to capacity-building of all stakeholders in the monitoring and evaluation process. For municipalities, this intervention need to include training around the compilation of Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plans, as these plans integrate the monitoring of the strategic plan, budget and performance management processes within municipalities. The capacity of Monitoring and Evaluation Units to monitor municipal progress in service delivery is often lacking. Most units do not have sufficient resources to adequately cater for this function.

Challenges in M&E within the local sphere

Duplication of reporting information must be addressed in order to ensure that an additional reporting burden is not placed on municipalities. Instances were mentioned by some Offices of the Premier where information requested by them and the provincial Department of Local Government were often the same, just in different reporting formats. Most Offices of the Premier currently focus on municipal monitoring and reporting responsibilities with very little attention being given to evaluation of outcomes and impact. There is an acknowledgement that this will have to be addressed over time and within available resource constraints.

There is often a lack of understanding of municipal processes and systems within provincial government departments, which compromises the ability of provincial departments to monitor the service delivery progress of municipalities accurately and to provide the necessary support.

Quality and validity of data being reported on remain problematic as there is often currently no independent verification of data reported on being done. Timeliness and completeness of reporting is also an issue.

These are required in terms of the Municipal Finance Management Act of 2003.

4 ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENT

Consolidation of findings

The optimum design of a Monitoring and Evaluation unit in the Office of the Premier is premised both on the emergent practices across the provinces but also in response to critical design considerations. Both of the aforesaid are informed by the findings articulated throughout this guide with reference to organisational design among other; and consolidated below:

- There is a lack of clarification of role and structure of M&E units primarily because of a lack of national guidance or a common framework in this regard
- As a result of the above, institutional designs have emerged organically in response to the contextual dynamics of their provinces; and the importance attached to this function
- The requisite competencies and unit capabilities are generally not found within the M&E units; and posts and staff numbers vary dramatically across provinces
- M&E units deal differently with monitoring, evaluation and planning functions and responsibilities depending on the scope given by their political and administrative principals; and by the Provincial Treasuries. For example in one province the M&E unit is allowed to analyse departmental monitoring reports and give critical feedback; while in other provinces, this remains the preserve of the Provincial Treasury. In this regard the M&E unit acts as a post office and merely processes these reports for consumption by others. In articulating a good practice organisational design for M&E units, key design considerations need to be taken into account. The approach to articulating an optimum design is not intended as a one-size-fits-all approach, as cognisance is given to the fact that contextual and environmental dynamics differ across provinces. The approach is to reflect considerations that argue for the basic minimum or generic arrangements that can be used as the basis for re-aligning (and in the case of the Northern Cape, establishing) M&E units in the Offices of the Premier.

Design considerations

Recommended roles of the M&E units

The role of the M&E unit is to process and consolidate the M&E reports from departments, sectors, Local Government and clusters in a province that pertain to the following:

- Budget performance (planned against actual expenditure)
- Human resource utilisation
- Planned outputs and outcomes against actual outputs and outcomes in terms of programmes and projects
- Outcomes and impacts in relation to provincial (PGDS) and national imperatives (POA, etc)

While Provincial Treasury is largely responsible for assessing budget performance, the M&E unit will assist in consolidating non-financial data such as service delivery outputs and impacts. Added roles for the M&E unit is to process, analyse and re-package these reports into consolidated reporting for political and administrative principals in the province; so as to inform decision making, prioritisation and policy improvement. The M&E unit acts as a single reference point for monitoring and evaluation data and reports for the province that inform 'state of the province' addresses, Cabinet meetings, Provincial legislative oversight functions, legotlas; and African Peer Review Mechanism reports. Finally, an emerging role relates to reporting from Local Government (District Councils) implying that the M&E unit will facilitate the interface between local and provincial level reporting. Finally, the M&E unit is expected put in place and manage a provincial M&E framework, supported by an M&E IT solution.

Monitoring and evaluation

It is clear judging from emergent practices that monitoring takes up an inordinate amount of time given that reports are generated on a quarterly basis by all departments and other reporting configurations. This implies that monitoring represents the biggest function area within the M&E unit; and will in effect have the largest staff establishment. As noted under reporting configurations, the cluster approach to monitoring seems to offer a good grouping of departments and sectors; but the interface with local government is relatively new and consideration needs to be given to the deployment of human resources to give reporting support and effect to the interface between local and provincial level reporting. The Eastern Cape has deployed staff employed on its establishment, to the local government level for example; an approach that can be emulated by others as a preferred hands-on approach. An alternative approach would be to have staff on the M&E unit establishment with a local government focus but as a roving team supporting Councils when and where needed.

Evaluation on the other hand is considered a smaller functional area in comparison to monitoring; and is largely an outsourced function where consultants and external resources are contracted to do the assessments. The approach to using expert resources to do the evaluations is widely accepted and implies that M&E units largely coordinate evaluations; calling for competencies such as project management skills and the management of consulting resources. In addition, the evaluation role has functional areas that refer to formative assessments (including helping departments establish baseline data and inform better strategic and annual planning); normative assessments that refer to midterm assessments; and summative assessments that refer to end of term impact studies.

These are the key functional areas that can be applied to the different configurations in a province. However, planning is singled out as a priority support need. As noted below, M&E depend on effective planning and while some M&E units have dedicated planning sub units; consideration can also be given to grouping evaluation and planning functions so as to balance the staffing numbers in the organisational design (optimally grouping functions but also ensuring that as a guide, no more than six persons report to one person for the sake of efficiency). The danger of having a dedicated planning sub unit as opposed to the approach of planning support to departments from an M&E lens is that the M&E unit may usurp the roles of the planning divisions in the Office of the Premier; and / or may be doing work that extends beyond its scope.

Different reporting configurations

There is a host of reporting configurations and requirements that need to be taken into account when organizing work within the M&E unit. These refer to reporting at departmental, sector, cluster, local government; and in some provinces, flagship programme levels. In this regard, provinces need to decide what relative value is attached to M&E reporting outputs of the said configurations and how they in effect align with each other; that may inform how work is organized within the M&E unit. The cluster arrangement assumed by the province makes good sense as a functional grouping of various departments, sectors and even flagship programmes; while the interface with local government may warrant a dedicated focus. However, the cluster approach also needs to take account of the three departmental mandates that absorb the largest share of provincial budgets such as Health, Education and Social Development; given the volume and complexity of their data and reporting. These three mandates normally fall within the Social Cluster arrangement; and in the context of the M&E unit, more staffing will be needed to manage the load of work such as quarterly reports of the bigger departments.

M&E depend directly on effective planning

Monitoring and evaluation depend directly on effective planning and clear definition of indicators and targets. If strategic plans for argument sake are not results orientated, do not use credible baseline data against which targets will be measured; or where indicators are inappropriate or ill –defined, then monitoring and evaluation outcomes are seriously compromised.

The challenge for the M&E unit is to assist departments improve their planning and strategic plans that in turn will improve the integrity of the M&E reports.

. This implies close collaboration with the Planning units in the Office of the Premier to help orchestrate capacity development and support processes in planning and M&E throughout the province; that in turn implies the need for a planning support function in the M&E unit.

Knowledge management and Information Technology

The M&E unit obviously generates a significant amount of information and data that need to be processed, analysed and re-packaged for a number of consumers within the province; and nationally. The scale of information dealt with requires an IT solution and according to the findings of this guide, a number of M&E units in provinces are using IT systems to assist with data analysis and reporting. However, there is no single standard when it comes to IT systems and much work is needed to generate generic user requirements; systems design that can be used by provinces; and systems integration with existing government systems. In terms of organisational design it is clear that dedicated resources with defined skills are needed to manage the information systems and the generation of knowledge in M&E units. As in the case of many provinces, this dedicated support is needed to identify and institutionalise an IT solution in the first place. By ring fencing functions related to IT and to generation of reports for consumers such as Premier, Cabinet, Provincial Legislature, Legotla meetings, etc; specific and defined skill areas can be identified and persons with relevant experience, recruited.

Directorate or Chief Directorate

All but one of the M&E units across the provinces operate as a chief directorate. The rest are directorates with sub units and the findings in this guide confirm that this remains a problem. The units are not taken seriously because of rank; and as a result there is the argument that the M&E unit should be elevated as high as possible in the Office of the Premier, given the critical role it plays. This argument is fully endorsed and the approach in the guide is to advocate a chief directorate based on the following:

- A minimum of three directorates can be justified
- Given the realities of the bureaucracy and the preoccupation with rank, it is expedient to have a chief directorate
- The critical roles of the M&E unit; and its level of responsibility and accountability with respect to reporting for local, provincial and national consumption; warrants at least a Chief Director as head of the unit

Design considerations

However, the M&E unit should be able to reinforce the recognition it deserves by virtue of its location in the Office of the Premier; and by virtue of the fact that departments are required by law to report. What the unit requires of departments is what is prescribed and not the subject of exercising authority. This point is made for those M&E units that function at a directorate level where raising awareness and appreciation of the role and value added of the unit may make more of a difference than raising its rank to chief directorate level.

Verification

Effective M&E reporting depends to a large extent on verification processes for its integrity and accuracy. What M&E units essentially do is to validate reports against plans and intent. Without the benefit of in-the-field checking and confirmation (verification); reports can still be considered as incomplete or untruthful. Verification is an energy intensive task requiring human resources in the field to visit service delivery sites to confirm if delivery has been effected (houses have been built); and according to minimum quality standards – as indicated in the reports by departments. For the M&E unit this requires a critical mass of staff that may not be feasible but some options can be considered:

- The deployment of staff to local government level (e.g Eastern Cape) that can be tasked to assist with verification
- The use of Community Development Workers to do verification visits as part of their responsibilities at local government level (Mpumalanga)
- Build verification into the work of the Monitoring directorate perhaps on a random basis (given the workload); or where there is a focus on specific departments in a year

Generic organizational design

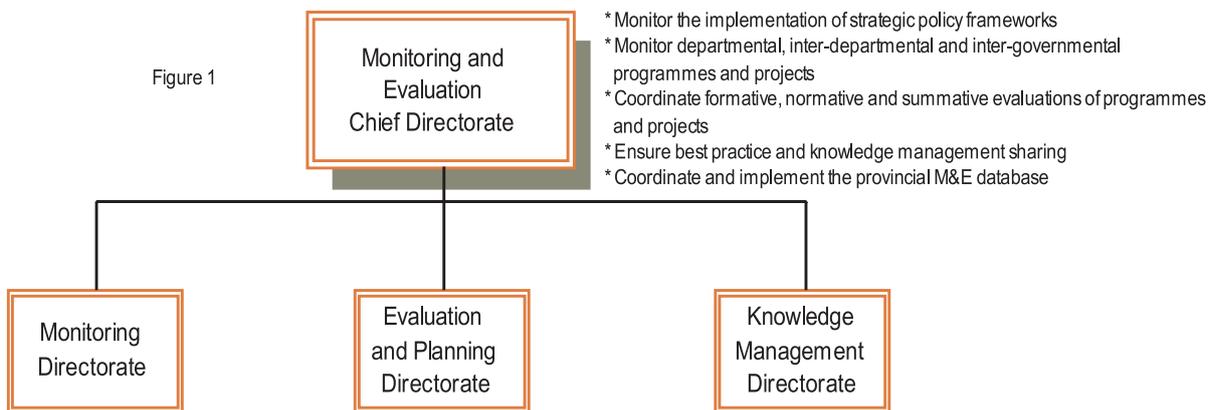
In view of the considerations, a number of organisational designs can be considered but much depends on where the M&E unit is at; the scope and recognition by political and administrative principals in the province; the contextual issues and contestations that may exist with reference to M&E; staffing capacities and other. In this respect it will not be useful to table specific and detailed organograms given the differences across provinces. The approach taken here is to outline a generic design that should reflect minimum, key functional areas when it comes to M&E. The more detailed designs can be left to the M&E units in the provinces to finalise in response to nuances, demands, and dynamics; all of which is not feasible to capture in a guide.

Generic organizational design

Balance monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management
The illustration below (figure 1) reflects a balance between monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management. These are arguably the most critical functions that the M&E unit needs to manage where the following must be noted:

- The monitoring function can include verification, is arranged along cluster lines; and must extend to District Councils
- The evaluation function includes in this case planning support to departments but this can be separated out as a sub unit of its own. However, it may be more efficient for the M&E unit to offer planning support from an M&E perspective; rather than emulate a whole planning sub unit that should be managed by the planning division within the Office of the Premier.
- The Knowledge management function includes information technology (managing the provincial M&E database); and the drafting and packaging of reports

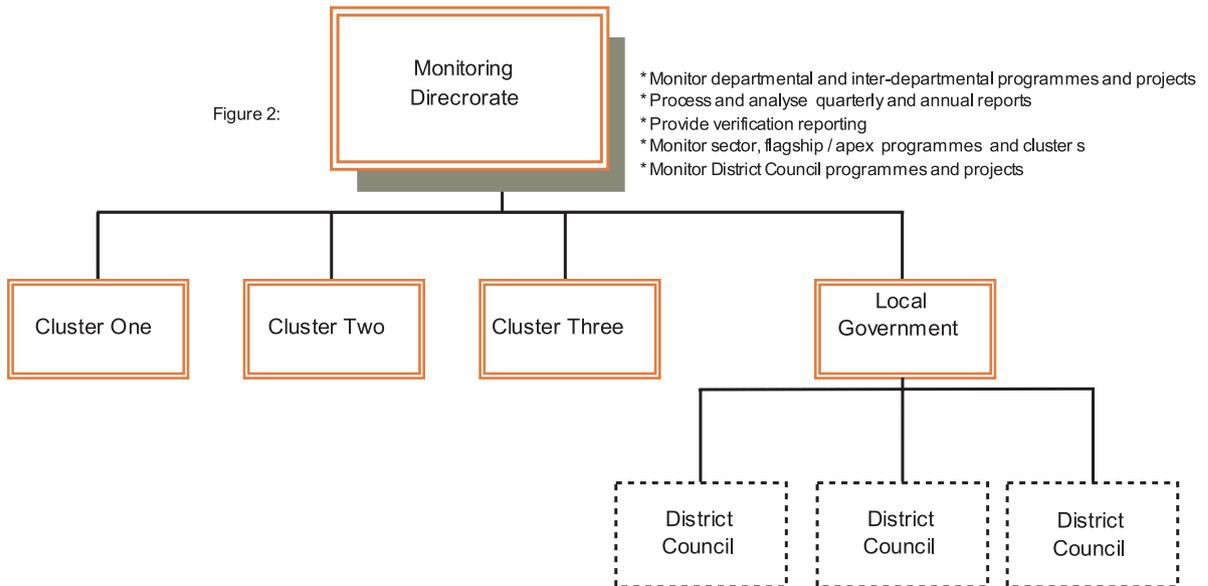
Figure 1



Monitoring function

- The monitoring function as suggested can be grouped in the clusters used by the province. In addition to the clusters, there may be need for a dedicated function for Local government monitoring. This is depicted in figure 2. Depending on the number of clusters (normally an average of three); and with the addition of the local government focus, there could be four sub units within this directorate. Each sub unit could have a Deputy Director and an Assistant Director as the staffing complement. Each cluster arrangement can take care of departmental, sector, cluster and flagship level reporting; including verification. The verification function could be one that is deployed to District Councils (as a preferred option but this will demand more posts) such as an additional staff member to District Councils and managed by the relevant cluster subunit at provincial level. Alternatively to rationalise posts, the cluster sub unit staff could also do the verification visits and explore using Community Development Workers as possible field verifiers to assist them.

Figure 2:

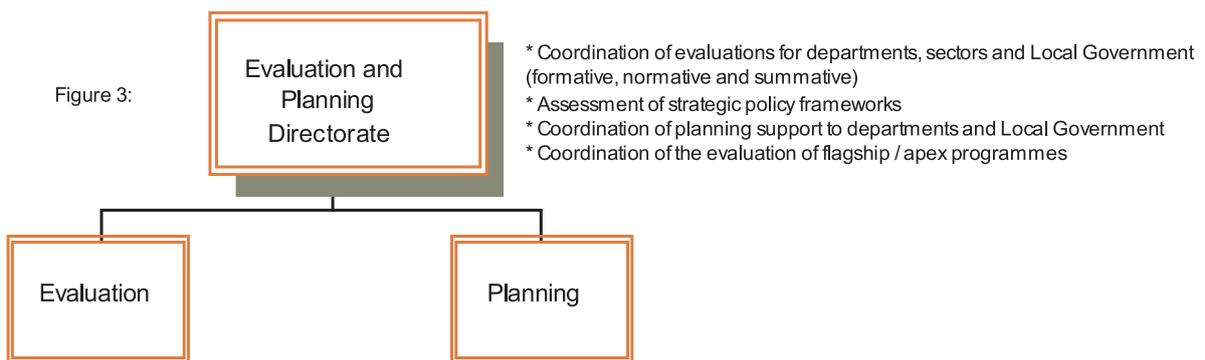


Evaluation and planning

The evaluation and planning functions as noted in figure 3 below need not be combined but given that planning is not the competency of this unit, it is more expedient to combine these functions. Both functional areas are essentially coordination functions whether it is the coordination and management of a midterm assessment; or planning support to a department busy with its strategic plan. Technically, planning can also be combined with monitoring if one wishes to engage in conceptual debate but this will expand the numbers under this sub unit; and the emphasis in organisational design is also to balance staff numbers and functional areas.

Under each functional area there could be a Deputy Director and Assistant Director supported by an Administrative Officer.

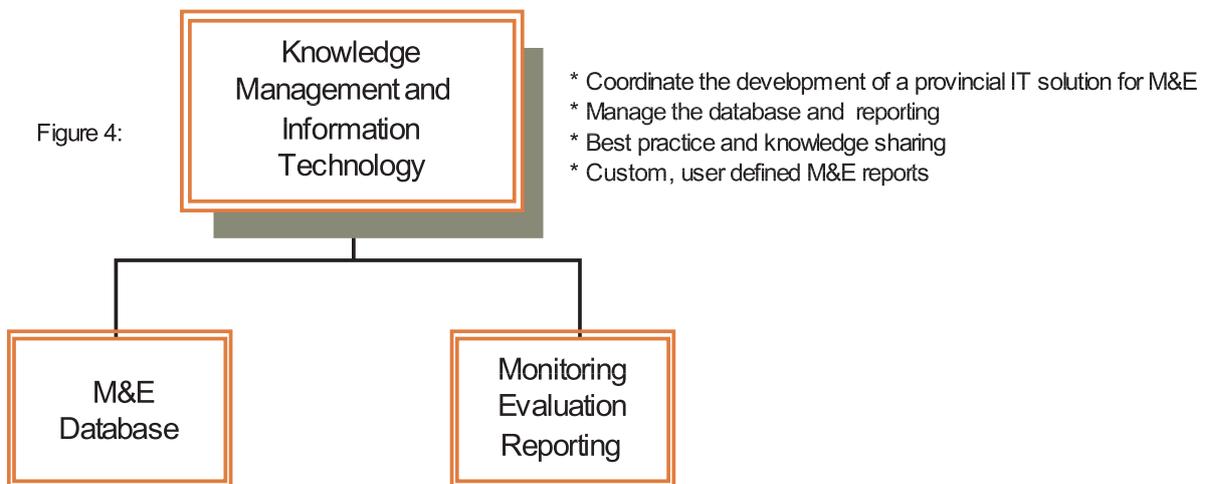
Figure 3:



Knowledge Management and Information Technology

The key functional area under information technology (IT) is the establishment and management of the provincial M&E database. This includes having IT capacity to manage and support a database (there are software, platform, web based and other IT considerations). The requisite IT skills need to be attracted to the unit in terms of remuneration and it may be advisable that the IT element features more strongly in the Director post requirements. The sub unit staffing could then include a Deputy Director and perhaps an Administrative Officer as part of the workload is to input data as well. The knowledge management function includes the database but here it may be strategic to get a team that is good at writing and synthesising information and data. M&E units are always challenged to do custom reports whether for provincial or national consumption and it will ease the pressure on monitoring and evaluation staff to constantly prepare more defined reports (such as reports for the Lekgotla meeting or a parliamentary committee for example). Furthermore, there are other monitoring reports that are done at national level such as non-financial data managed by National Treasury; Public Management Watch of DPSA, Statistics South Africa, Public Service Commission and other that pertain to the province. This sub unit can draw on these reports to add to the quarterly or annual reports in a province.

Figure 4:



Minimum required capacities

All the senior and technical staff in the M&E unit must have at least a basic degree with direct M&E experience and must fulfil most of the following basic requirements:

- Command a good understanding of the context of departmental planning, department strategic and implementation plans; and provincial and national level plans such as the PGDS, Programme of Action and other
- Understand local conditions, changes and impacts (district, provincial and national)

Minimum required capacities

- Understand and apply the basic principles and practices of M&E
- Be able to analyse data
- Be able to provide action-oriented feedback to the appropriate sources and principals in a department or flagship programme
- Deliver required reports that are timely and high quality
- Be able to raise critical issues based on M&E findings at the highest possible levels
- Understand and implement results based programming and indicator development
- Understand validation and verification processes and know how to conduct these and what to do with the results
- Be able to manage consulting resources or technical assistance in an effective manner
- Be able to understand and share / explain concepts such as impact, monitoring and evaluation, indicators and other

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis above, a number of tentative recommendations are made in order to stimulate further discussion on M&E within Premiers' Offices, and how M&E can be implemented effectively at provincial level.

4.1 Do not create parallel reporting systems

As noted in the above review of actual M&E practices across provincial governments, there is often a degree of duplication where provincial departments report virtually the same information multiple times to the Premiers' Offices, the provincial Treasury, the National Treasury and the relevant national sector department.

Reporting is only one of many monitoring and evaluation tools that can be employed. As such, M&E Units should diversify the number of monitoring tools employed. Reliance on departments' and municipalities' reports on their own performance can provide a skewed picture of performance. The perceptions of performance by citizens and other key stakeholders are also important to capture and analyse.

Action point:

- Premiers' Offices should conduct an audit of all existing reporting requirements by provincial line departments.
- Based on this audit, duplicate reporting should be eliminated, and mechanisms should be put in place to share information.

4.2 Access by Premiers' Offices to sector data in national Department and National Treasury data

National departments which are concurrent functions (e.g. health, education, housing etc) often have fairly sophisticated systems for gathering and analyzing non-financial data from departments. Often Offices of the Premier do not have access to these systems. National concurrent data should be made easily accessible to Offices of the Premier. This would prevent duplicate reporting lines and enable the Premier's Office to focus more on the analysis of the data. While the national sector departments would be conducting analyses to compare performance of a particular sector across provinces, the Offices of the Premier would be using data from each sector department in order to get a province-wide view.

Provincial departments are collectively already reporting on more than 500 indicators to the National Treasury. Most Premiers' Offices have not fully utilised this rich source of data. Accessing and analysing National Treasury datasets, would therefore, be a priority.

Action point:

- The Presidency should facilitate access by Premiers' Offices to national Department data
- Premiers' Offices should, as far as possible, prioritise the analysis of these data, rather than requesting the same data directly from departments.
- Generic formats for departmental M&E strategies per sector will be introduced by the Presidency. Premiers' Offices should incorporate these generic formats within their own provincial M&E strategies.

4.3 Improving quality of information

The ability of the Offices of the Premier to conduct effective M&E will depend fundamentally on the credibility and robustness of the underlying M&E systems within individual provincial departments and within municipalities. Instead of concentrating efforts on setting up elaborate and often parallel reporting structures, Offices of the Premier could play a support role in leading improvement in the quality of data emanating from systems in the provincial line departments and the municipalities. Much of the effort of Premiers' Offices to date has been ensuring that information is provided timeously and in the correct reporting formats. As noted previously, there has been correspondingly less emphasis on verification of the information (not surprisingly given binding human resource capacity and budget constraints). Engagement by the Offices of the Premier and Statistics South Africa around the SASQAF could be an important vehicle for improving the quality of administrative datasets. This endeavour should, ideally, be a short to medium term goal of the various Premiers' Offices.

Action point:

- As part of the province-wide M&E framework, Premiers' Offices need to devise a five year plan for the implementation of the South African Statistics Quality Assurance Framework whereby departmental administrative data can be accredited as official statistics.

4.4 Moving from data gathering to analysis

To some degree, Premiers' Offices are already engaged in the analysis of monthly and quarterly data within the fiscal year, as well longer term reviews. Nevertheless, given the newness of some of the reporting requirements, a lot of effort has been aimed at getting the relevant line departments to report on time, and on the completeness and accuracy of reporting. Access to data, is however, not equivalent to useful information. The data must be analysed in order to give rise to M&E insight. As these reporting procedures become institutionalized, it is hoped that increasing attention can be paid to the detail analysis of departments and their progress in relation to cluster objectives. Greater emphasis on analysis will create greater skills requirements, and therefore a greater emphasis on capacity building and recruitment of specialized skills.

Action point:

- Greater emphasis should be placed by M&E units in their plans on the analysis of data gathered, and the communication of the M&E findings emanating from the analyses.

4.5 Moving from monitoring to evaluation (outcome and impact studies)

Whereas the Presidency is concerned with developmental outcomes and government Programme of Action (PoA) targets for the country as a whole, the focus of the Premier's Office would be on assessing the provincial impact of policies and the spatial impacts of budgets and service delivery.

The Premier's Office needs to monitor progress in relation to the long term impacts delineated in the PGDS, such as poverty eradication. These typically manifest after a lag of some years and are impacted by external factors (social, political, economic etc). Sector outcomes arising from the clusters are instrumental in achieving these long term impacts (e.g. the building of social capital). Premiers' Offices need to have a more nuanced understanding of the cause-and-effect relationships between the outputs outlined in departmental strategic and annual performance plans and budgets, their associated immediate and intermediate outcomes and their final impacts on the well-being of communities.

An emphasis on evaluating impact will require Offices of the Premier to have a greater understanding of potentially useful data source (kind of data, level of aggregation, periodicity of release etc.) Appendix 4, outlines the various data sets that are available from Stats SA.

Action point:

- The Premier's Office should conduct an audit of all evaluations done in the province and provide a central point for sharing of information on evaluations undertaken both internally by departments themselves and those outsourced.
- Premiers' Offices should play a greater role in coordinating evaluation activities across provincial line departments.
- Base-line data profiles for the province should be compiled (e.g. demographics, gender, income breakdowns).

4.6 Preparation for audits of non-financial information

While financial and regularity audits have long been a feature of public sector governance, auditing of non-financial information is still very new. Many provincial line departments are still currently ill-prepared for audits of non-financial information. Offices of the Premier, in cooperation with the provincial Treasury, can play an important role in helping to prepare departments adequately for audits of non-financial information. There should be a clear link between monitoring of non-financial information and the audit of non-financial information.

Action point:

- The Premier's Office and the Provincial Treasury should offer guidance to line departments in preparing for audits of non-financial information.

4.7 Institutional location of M&E units

M&E Units, in terms of hierarchy within departments, should be situated at an appropriate level to ensure that monitoring and evaluation is taken seriously by all stakeholders concerned. Buy-in from political principals and officials, in both local and provincial government, is essential towards ensuring a successful monitoring and evaluation system. M&E Units should therefore be sufficiently close to the Head of Department and Director-General in order to ensure that monitoring and evaluation information is taken seriously, is represented at senior decision-making forums and M&E findings have a platform to feed back into decision-making.

Many respondents indicated that they would welcome additional guidance on the role and structure of M&E Offices. Some of these issues are covered in the section 4 Understand the implications for the Government-wide M&E Policy Framework for the Office of the Premier. in this manual.

Action point:

- Premiers' Offices should review the organisational structure and institutional placement of the M&E function to ensure that their province-wide M&E frameworks are adequately supported.

4.8 Future acquisition of electronic systems

Where a province is contemplating the acquisition of an electronic system to support province-wide M&E, it is important that the user specification is able to ensure that the system meets the requirements of the GWM&E Policy Framework. Integration of this system with administrative systems within line departments is critical to prevent the proliferation of stand-alone systems and prevent duplicate capture of data.

Action point:

- The user specifications of all new electronic systems should include compliance with the GWM&E Policy Framework, National Treasury's Programme Performance Information Framework and Statistics South Africa's South African Statistics Quality Assurance Framework.
- In order to ensure systems integration, inter-operability of data and information and elimination of duplicate data capture, each proposed system should deal with these issues in a systems integration master plan.

4.9 Developmental indicators at provincial level

In monitoring outputs, direct/immediate outcomes, intermediate outcomes and impact, Premier's office could replicate the development indicators published by the Presidency for their specific jurisdictions. Some of provinces which publish development indicators make them public – this is a practice which should be encouraged.

Action point:

- Offices of the Premier, if not doing to already, should consider the generation, analysis and publication of developmental indicators which relate specifically to their province. This information should be broken down to District Municipal level.

4.10 Departmental functionality back office indicators

The Presidency collects functional indicators across national departments in relations to human resources, finance, strategic planning and leadership. A similar exercise could be done at provincial level where a standardized set of indicators could be collected across the provincial departments, especially when they relate to transversal priorities.

Action point:

- Premiers' Offices could devise their own functionality indicators in order to monitor provincial line department "back office" functions. The system developed in the Presidency could be a starting point.

4.11 Capacity building and technical support

Considerable attention needs to be given to capacitating officials in local and provincial government on the technical and statistical dimensions of monitoring, evaluation and indicator development. Furthermore, a clear understanding of local government and its functioning needs to be instilled in provincial departments. Many of the respondents interviewed indicated that the level of technical support and training in rolling out M&E systems to date was perceived as being insufficient. There are very few technical specialists, even internationally, who have hands-on experience in rolling out government-wide M&E systems. The Presidency, through partnerships with multi-lateral organisations like the OECD, could play an important role in sourcing technical expertise and making this available to the relevant provinces. Provinces which have conducted training needs analysis have highlighted the need not only for elementary M&E training in the basic concepts and principles, but also more advanced training in the design of baselines and indicator selection, analytical and statistical skills. Ideally training should speak to the varying needs of the M&E practitioners, M&E managers and M&E users (line managers). Training standards should be assessed on the basis of the PALAMA M&E curriculum to ensure the creation of the necessary skills (see Appendix 3).

Action point:

- Premier's Office should conduct a training needs assessment not only for their internal M&E component, but in relation to M&E for the entire province.
- The PALAMA curriculum for M&E training should be built into the province's capacity building strategy.
- The capacity building strategy should outline the arrangements for training provision both within the M&E unit for the Office of the Premier, and for line departments, including budget arrangements.
- Offices of the Premier are encouraged to participate actively in the M&E Learning Network (more information can be found on the Presidency website <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za>).

4.12 Change management and the role of line managers in M&E

Through training, capacity building, M&E forums and other modalities, Offices of the Premier need to strive to promote a culture of M&E in their respective provinces. This includes creating a common understanding of what M&E is and what it intends to achieve. In particular, line manager's performance agreements need to reflect that ongoing M&E for their programmes, projects and other interventions are primarily their responsibilities. They are required to act upon M&E findings and engage in internal reflection and self-evaluation. The role of the M&E unit is to put systems, processes and forums in place in order to facilitate M&E within the institution and across the provincial government as a whole.

Action point:

- Line managers should be sensitized to the need for M&E and trained on the use of M&E findings
- The performance agreements of line managers should include an M&E component.

4.13 Creating a demand for M&E

Much of the reforms around government-wide M&E have focused on improving the supply of M&E findings, for example, through promoting regular evaluation and improving the quality of data and the credibility of analysis. At the end of the day, however, all this effort and investment is futile unless M&E findings actually influence the way government institutions actually go about their core business.

It cannot be simply assumed that generating M&E findings will automatically lead to their adoption and use. On the contrary, any M&E strategy should consciously build the demand for M&E within individual departments and within the provincial government as a whole.

It is important that the M&E Office produce work of high quality. If reports and insights provided are of sufficient standing, these reports will influence executive decision-making in regard to policy formulation, refinement and alignment across the three spheres of government. In addition, M&E should also feed into the MTEF process and the allocation of resources within all three spheres of government.

On an operational level, M&E could feed into the ongoing management of service delivery (e.g. through option analysis of various service delivery modalities). Finally M&E could also play a role in legislative oversight.

Any M&E strategy should consider ways in which departments and other institutions – as well as individual managers - can be incentivised to implement M&E systems and use M&E findings. Internationally, a number of approaches have been employed. At an institutional level, these include high level endorsement from provincial EXCOs and departmental top management, awareness raising workshops to demystify M&E and alleviate anxieties about M&E introduction, awareness of the need for compliance with non-financial reporting regulations in order to prepare departments for audits of non-financial information, relating M&E to the budget proposal process, requiring performance exception reporting where there is material under-performance, benchmarking M&E progress of a public sector institution against other similar institutions.

Incentives for individual managers include: specifically mentioning M&E responsibilities of line managers, having awards, prizes or other forms of acknowledgement in recognition of good practice evaluations.

Action point:

- In crafting their M&E strategies, Office of the Premier must consider how they will create demand for, and use of, M&E findings.
- M&E responsibilities should be included in the performance agreements of all line managers, not just M&E staff.

4.14 Improving spatial referencing and the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

Many of the Provincial Growth and Development Strategies do not really have a strong spatial dimension. This inhibits spatial integration with the IDPs of municipalities and could compromise, for instance, the “massification” of infrastructure projects or seamless integrated service delivery. Greater spatial referencing could contribute to assessing the geographic impact of national, provincial and local government on particular locations, especially those classified as poor and under-served.

Action point:

- Premier’s Office should strive to improve the spatial referencing of the Provincial Growth and Development Strategies.
- GIS should be used increasingly to assess the spatial impact of policies, service delivery implementation and public resource allocation on communities and other key stakeholder groups in the province.

4.15 Extending provincial monitoring to local government level

Many of the Offices of the Premier have focused virtually exclusively on provincial departments' contribution to the realization of provincial growth and development plans and other provincial and national priorities. In order to ensure that IDPs feed into provincial planning processes and that the PGDS also influences IDPs, it should be considered that district municipalities participate in provincial M&E forums. As noted below, it is not necessary that municipal M&E be located within the Office of the Premier itself, but rather that there is close coordination with other departments involved in local government oversight.

Representation of local and district municipalities in provincial M&E Forums is essential to ensure a clear picture of local government progress and service delivery. These forums can also serve as an early warning system for potential challenges. Input from these forums must feed into discussions within provincial cluster structures to ensure that monitoring information.

Capacitating and utilizing Community Development Workers for physical verification of data is an innovative approach which could help address some of the capacity constraints of M&E Units.

Resources permitting, the posting of M&E personnel at district level could function as a valuable resource for municipalities in fulfilling their monitoring and reporting obligations and enable the Office of the Premier to monitor municipal progress. Alternatively, district municipal officials can be capacitated to fulfil this function at district municipal level.

Action point:

- Premiers' Offices should review the indicators reported to monitor progress with the Five Year Local Government Agenda and incorporate these in their oversight of municipal basic service delivery and financial condition.
- Representation of local government on provincial M&E forums should be reviewed with a view to assessing whether representation is adequate.
- Mechanisms for extending M&E to local government level should be put in place by provincial governments.

4.16 Ongoing cooperation between Offices of the Premier, Departments of Local government and Provincial Treasury in local government M&E

Close cooperation between the Provincial Treasury, provincial Department of Local Government and the Office of the Premier is essential in order to ensure a coordinated, efficient and effective monitoring system and process for municipalities. In this manner, reporting processes for municipalities can be streamlined and duplication prevented by ensuring that information needs are covered in existing reporting requirements of the provincial Departments of Local Government and provincial Treasuries. These reports can then be used by the Office of the Premier for monitoring purposes. Close cooperation would furthermore address possible role confusion between the departments.

Action point:

- Premiers' Offices, provincial Treasuries and provincial Departments of Local Government should define clear roles and responsibilities for rolling out the province-wide M&E system in a manner which integrates non-financial and financial analysis of provincial department and municipal performance.

4.17 Putting in place province-wide M&E Frameworks

Existing provincial M&E frameworks should be reviewed in order to improve alignment with the GWM&E Policy Framework. Electronic M&E systems may also need to be updated and revised in order to reflect the principles outlined in the Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation Policy Framework and the National Treasury's Programme Performance Information Framework. This would also entail that systems need to move from the focus on monitoring outputs to the inclusion of outcome and impact monitoring and evaluation.

Province-wide M&E frameworks which are still in draft form should also be reviewed relative to the requirements of the GWM&E Policy Framework.

Action point:

- All existing province-wide M&E frameworks should be reviewed relative to the requirements of the GWM&E Policy Framework. Any gaps should be identified and filled.

M&E frameworks in draft form should also be reviewed for the same reason.

5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Premiers' Offices play a pivotal role in promoting good governance and effective, efficient and equitable service delivery in their respective provinces. Effective M&E is a crucial vehicle for giving effect to these policy intentions. Premiers' Offices can encourage the institutionalisation of M&E systems and processes across the province, and fostering a performance-oriented, mature management culture which is open to critical reflection and learning.

Different provincial governments are in different stages of the M&E development trajectory. There is therefore much scope for sharing experiences and disseminating good practices in developing province-wide M&E systems. It is hoped that this document has contributed in some way to attaining these objectives and will facilitate further dialogue among M&E role players at provincial and national level.

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APPENDIX 1: REVIEW OF COMMON M&E PRACTICES

Institutional arrangements for provincial M&E

Six of the Premiers' Offices could describe in detail the status of M&E arrangements in the province, having already undertaken some sort of situational analysis or readiness assessment. Three Offices of the Premier were in the process of gathering this information in May 2008. Most of the provincial line departments did not have dedicated M&E units, but the function was most often carried out by a single, relatively junior official. Often the M&E function was integrated with other functions, such as strategic planning. Where dedicated M&E units had been established in provincial line departments, these were very new, less than two years old generally.

M&E processes

All of nine provinces had a province-wide M&E forum which acts as a platform for the Office of the Premier to engage with line departments around M&E issues. Sometimes representation on the provincial M&E forum is also extended to local government representatives from the district municipalities and metros.

By May 2008, four of the nine provinces had provincial M&E frameworks (Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng and Limpopo). Three more of the provinces had provincial M&E frameworks in draft form, pending formal approval (KwaZulu Natal, Mpumalanga and the Western Cape). The Northern Cape and the North West had not yet finalized a final draft provincial M&E Framework. Some of the existing M&E frameworks, which were formulated in 2005, may have to be slightly re-aligned to be completely congruent with the 2007 Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

Most of the M&E activities conducted by the provincial Offices of the Premier focus on the monitoring of departmental outputs in relation to the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy, the State of the Province Address and the provincial Programme of Action. Analysis of strategic and annual performance plans, quarterly performance reports, monthly financial reports and annual reports is the foundation for provincial monitoring. The amount of attention and emphasis given to analysing the standardised quarterly performance reports from provincial departments to the National Treasury does however vary from province to province. Work has still be done to integrate financial and non-financial oversight. Very little verification of the information received from Departments takes place. This may not be problematic per se if departments have their own internal systems for quality assurance of their data.

Typically, monitoring findings (for example, deviations from annual performance plans) are reported both the individual departments directly in bilateral meetings, as well as to the clusters.

M&E systems

Office of the Premier in five of the nine provinces use electronic systems to discharge their M&E functions. The Eastern Cape uses the STRATMASTER system, an open source web-based system. The STRATMASTER System gives various performance perspectives including the Eastern Cape Provincial Growth and Development Plan, POA, cluster, dept, Head of Department Performance Agreement, Supply Chain Management, Compliance, Auditor General issues, legislature findings, etc. The system allows independent scoring by the Premier, Heads of Departments, Portfolio Committees of the various performance perspectives and can store the documents on the basis of which the scores were determined.

The Free State uses the INFORM system, which is also a web-based system. Gauteng uses the IMS (Information Management System). These systems are stand-alone systems (i.e. they do not electronically draw information directly from department's source systems), but every department in the province can submit data via the web. Gauteng's IMS system sends automatically generated emails to remind the relevant personnel a week before reporting due dates, on the date and – in the case of non-submission, 5 days later. KZN uses the Performance Budgeting System (PBS) which links financial and non-financial service delivery information, as well as SAS business intelligence. The North West uses the PORTAL system which stores information from the various departments.

Most of the other provinces are also contemplating acquisition of electronic systems. Most of these are in the user requirements definition phases or the procurement phases.

M&E tools and methodologies

Premiers' Offices rely on reports from line departments to support M&E. They do not, in general, access line department administrative datasets directly. Other data sets used include: Statistics SA data, Global Insight, HSRC data, Medical Research Council, Institute of Race Relations, etc. In some cases, customer satisfaction surveys were also commissioned periodically.

Offices of the Premier generally compile periodic reports on the provincial Programme of Action and the PGDS, as well as mid-term reports. Provinces such as Limpopo also publish citizens' report at year end. The North West also publishes provincial sustainable development indicators and the *North West Barometer*

M&E tools and methodologies

Six of the nine provinces have, to date, provide M&E training within the province. Where the province has an electronic system supporting Premier's Office M&E, some of the training revolves around how to use the system. For the rest, training has been very elementary, dealing with M&E principles. A few of the provinces have already had SAMDI training and others are liaising with SAMDI in relation to training (Free State, Mpumalanga). All provinces reported a need for more training and capacity building around analytical skills, creation of baselines and statistical skills. SAMDI has developed a comprehensive curriculum for M&E which should go a long way in addressing these needs.

Six of the nine provinces also make use of Social Accounting Matrices, which are either driven by the Premiers' Offices, or by the provincial Treasury in partnership with the Premiers' Offices. While some provinces reported increased use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in M&E such as the Free State, GIS was not used intensively in other provinces. Some Office of the Premier had their own GIS capability (e.g. KwaZulu-Natal) while others relied on GIS in line departments such as Department of Transport.

Premiers' Offices are also at different stages with engaging with the South African Statistics Quality Assurance Frameworks. A few have not yet started giving this concerted attention (Free State and Mpumalanga). Others are in the initial stages, having signed Memoranda of Understanding with Statistics SA (Eastern Cape, Limpopo and North West). Some provinces have statistical training and are in the process of designating pilots (Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape and the Northern Cape).

A few offices of the Premier have also begun improving their information architecture and management e.g. the Western Cape has outline a *Core Director of Common Information Sources for the iKapa Growth and Development Strategy*.

Common M&E practices for local government

Institutional arrangements for local government M&E

The Monitoring and Evaluation Units established within the Offices of the Premier are responsible for the monitoring of municipal performance against the Government Programme of Action and the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy. Premiers' Offices however report a lack of capacity to monitor fully both the financial and service delivery performance of municipalities in an integrated manner.

Institutional
arrangements for
local government
M&E

The majority of the Offices of the Premier reported insufficient staff complements to fulfill their monitoring and evaluation role adequately for municipalities. Budgetary allocations are also perceived as insufficient to fund the monitoring of municipal performance. As a result a number of Premiers' Offices are heavily reliant on the provincial Departments of Local Government for the monitoring of municipal performance. Consolidated reports from the Department of Local Government is then utilised for monitoring purposes. Reports from provincial Treasuries are employed to a lesser degree by the Offices of the Premier.

Some Offices of the Premier reported plans for the future roll-out of monitoring and evaluation personnel to district offices. Currently only one province (the Eastern Cape) has staff performing M&E functions located at district offices. In this instance, staff are utilised both for data verification and service delivery mediation purposes.

Institutional
arrangements for
local government
M&E

Engagements with municipalities revolve primarily around the Premiers' Coordinating Forums and Monitoring and Evaluation Forums on which mostly district municipalities are represented. Municipal councilors are represented on the Premiers' Coordinating Forums which provides for inputs and discussions regarding progress against achieving outcomes as defined within the IDPs of municipalities as well as progress against achieving the outcomes of the Provincial Growth and Development Strategies. The Monitoring and Evaluation Forums provide municipal officials with an arena in which to discuss progress and challenges in regards to service delivery performance with provincial officials.

Some provinces reported that municipalities are not represented on their provincial monitoring and evaluation structures. These forums are then reliant on municipal reports submitted to the provincial Treasury and Department of Local Government to gauge progress and challenges in municipalities.

M&E processes for local government M&E

Municipalities are currently represented on some provincial M&E structures, as reported in the above section. The 5-Year Strategic Agenda for Local Government and Government Programme of Action forms the backbone for the monitoring of municipal progress in service delivery. Alignment with Provincial Growth and Development Strategies are in most instances not systematically monitored. Municipalities are currently reporting on this progress on a quarterly basis, as well as through the Mid-Year Performance Assessment Reports submitted to provincial Treasury. No Offices of the Premier currently have sufficient capacity to evaluate the performance of municipalities. Some M&E Units are relying on outsourcing this function to a limited extent.

From the interviews, it would appear that, currently provinces are following one of two approaches to the inclusion of municipalities in monitoring processes and structures,

- Utilising Premiers' Coordinating Forums. Mayors from municipalities serve on these forums. Decisions made in these forums then lead discussions and give directions to the clusters in the monitoring process
- Utilising Monitoring and Evaluation Forums. Officials dealing with monitoring and evaluation within municipalities are represented on these forums along with provincial stakeholders.

Inputs received from these forums are fed into the cluster system at provincial level in order to determine progress and which manner of support can be provided to municipalities.

M&E systems for local government M&E

As noted in the previous section, many of Premiers' Offices report having M&E systems in place. A number of these systems date from before the publication of the Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation Policy Framework and is therefore not completely aligned with the national policy framework or National Treasury's Programme Performance Information Framework.

Current monitoring and evaluation systems in most instances do not monitor the alignment of municipal IDPs with the PGDSs. This could create a situation where PGDS objectives are not attained due to a lack of integration and alignment with the service delivery implementation happening within local government. This could furthermore lead to funding misalignment between provincial and local government. The Offices of the Premier are aware of this deficiency and extension of the provincial M&E system to include local government is being anticipated for the future.

M&E systems for local government M&E

The majority of Premiers' Offices are relying on information gathered by the Departments of Local Government and to a lesser degree information gathered by the Provincial Treasuries for the monitoring of municipalities. With few monitoring systems comprehensively taking the 5-Year Strategic Agenda for Local Government into consideration in the monitoring process, there is a heavy reliance on Provincial Departments of Local Government to monitor progress against the 5-Year Strategic Agenda for Local Government.

M&E tools and methodologies within the local sphere

The Offices of the Premier rely on the reports submitted to Departments of Local Government for the monitoring of municipalities. Notably on the quarterly reports produced by municipalities on progress made towards achieving output targets.

Some provinces also analyse the Mid-Year Performance Assessment Reports that municipalities submit to the Provincial Treasuries. Comprehensive data verification, however, appears lacking, except for one Office of the Premier which utilises personnel at the district offices for data verification (Eastern Cape). Currently verification is carried out sporadically for specific programme or projects. One other Office of the Premier is investigating the possibility of utilising Community Development Workers for the purpose of data verification.

The Offices of the Premier rely on reporting as a method for monitoring municipal performance whilst other monitoring and evaluation tools are relatively neglected.

ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Location of M&E Offices

Eight of the nine Offices of the Premier had established dedicated M&E units by May 2008. In the Northern Cape the M&E function is discharged by the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy Unit and the Programme of Action Unit within the Office of the Premier. Establishment of dedicated M&E unit is being considered in the Northern Cape. The M&E unit in most of the provinces is at the level of a Directorate within a Policy, Planning and Governance Branch. In KZN the M&E Unit is lead by a Chief Director.

The relatively low rank of the M&E unit, and the lack of authority of M&E practitioners, was perceived as an impediment to M&E practitioners' engagement with more senior policy management in line departments. This fostered the impression that M&E was a "back-office" function rather than a strategic function.

As can be seen from the table below, the establishments for the M&E function varies markedly by province. In relation to total posts (filled posts and posts approved but not yet filled), three provinces have 4 to 8 posts, four provinces have between 8 to 10 posts. One province has between 1 and 4 posts (the North West) and one province has more than 10 posts (the Eastern Cape).

The larger size of the Eastern Cape establishment is because this is the only province which has extended the provincial M&E system to district level.

Table 1: M&E posts as at may 2008

	Total filled ¹	Posts created but not filled	Total filled and unfilled posts
EC	27	6	33
FS	1	7	8
GT	5	1	6
KZN	5	2	7
LP	5	0	5
MP	10	0	10
NC	5	4	9
NW	2	1	3
WC	7	3	10

1 Posts include both M&E practitioners at various management levels and support staff

Except in one province, most M&E offices were not involved in internal M&E for the Office of the Premier itself as a department. Their role is primarily externally focussed oversight. The internal M&E for the Office of the Premier (e.g. preparing quarterly reports) is therefore typically discharged by another component within the Office of the Premier. In fact the Premier's Office M&E Office often liaises with the relevant component doing the internal M&E on a monthly basis in the same way that they liaise with the M&E function within the other line departments. One advantage of having a purely external orientation is that it creates a clear focus for the M&E unit's activities, rather than constant reconciliation of internal and external roles.

Seven of the provinces indicated that they had made use of external service providers/ consultants for M&E function. This was mainly for evaluation purposes or for specialist technical functions.

In some provinces, the division of labour between the Office of the Premier, Treasuries, Departments of Provincial and Local Government was not clear in some areas. These roles and responsibilities need to be clarified.

Institutional challenges

Seven of the nine provinces indicated human resource constraints were one of the three most important challenges facing M&E Offices. This refers both to the perception that the number of posts available are inadequate, and that the technical skills of incumbents are insufficient (e.g. in respect of determining baselines, statistical literacy etc). Staff mobility was also, to a lesser extent, cited as a factor. As line departments establish their own M&E units, they establish posts at higher levels to those in the M&E unit in the Office of the Premier. This results in a movement of staff from the Premiers' Offices to the line departments. There is also recognition that evaluation is more research and statistical skill intensive. More emphasis on evaluation would create greater requirements for these skills to be located within M&E Offices.

Five of the nine provinces also cited budget constraints as another challenge to the institutionalisation of M&E in the province. Other perceived challenges include:

- A lack of uniform understanding across the province about the role of M&E.
- Lack of timeous reporting by line departments.
- Poor quality reporting by line departments.
- Despite compliance by the line departments, there is often resistance to M&E.
- Insufficient coordination between the Office of the Premier and line departments in respect of evaluation research.
- Confusion about the role of Office of the Premier and the Provincial Treasury.
- Insufficient direction and support from national Departments such as the Presidency and National Treasury.
- M&E personnel in the Departments are often not dedicated resources, but have other competing roles and responsibilities

APPENDIX 2: CONTACT LIST

The process of formulating this Good Practice Guide relied on an extensive survey of international good practice on GWM&E systems.

This was supplemented by a detailed questionnaire submitted to each of the nine provincial Offices of the Premier. A semi-structured interview held with each of the respondents thereafter to clarify various issues and obtain further information.

PROVINCE	SECTION/COMPONENT NAME	CONTACT PHONE
Eastern Cape	Provincial Policy, Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation	Tel: 040-609 6301 Fax: 040-635 1166 Website: www.ecprov.gov.za
Free State	Policy Coordination, Monitoring & Evaluation Unit	Tel: 051-405 5799 Fax: 051-405 4803 Website: www.fs.gov.za
Gauteng	Information Management & Monitoring	Tel: 011-355 6000 Fax: 011-836 9334 Website: www.gautengonline.gov.za
KwaZulu Natal	Monitoring and Evaluation Unit	Tel: 033- 341 3407 Fax: 033–342 7368 Website: www.kwazulunatal.gov.za
Limpopo	Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Analyses Unit	Tel: 015-287 6000 Fax: 015-295 3840 Website: www.limpopo.gov.za
Mpumalanga	Monitoring and Evaluation Unit	Tel: 013-766 1000 Fax: 013-766 2494 Website: www.mpumalanga.gov.za
Northern Cape	Policy Evaluation and Implementation Unit	Tel: 053 - 802 4500 Fax: 053 – 830 8663/ 0866 198 903 Website: www.northern-cape.gov.za
North West	Monitoring and evaluation Unit	Tel: 018-387 3134 Fax: 018-387 3008 Website: www.nwpg.gov.za
Western Cape	Chief Directorate: Monitoring, Evaluation & Review	Tel: 021 – 483 3806 / 3911 Fax: 021 – 483 2744 Website: www.capegateway.gov.za

APPENDIX 3: SAMDI CURRICULUM

MONITORING & EVALUATION COURSES

COURSE NAME	DURATION	TARGET AUDIENCE	CONTENT	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	STATUS
M&E OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT COURSES					
Basic M&E orientation course	1 day	SMS MEC's Parliamentarians, etc Trainers to customize course to needs and context of target audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differences and similarities between evaluation, monitoring and research Differences between inputs, processes, activities, results: outputs, outcomes, impact Primary and secondary data sources The use of indicators for measuring inputs, processes, activities, outputs, outcomes and impact Concepts of baseline and performance targets The components of a monitoring system Three key uses of data in relation to monitoring – i.e. for project management, feeding into evaluations and sharing and reporting to others The link between monitoring and evaluation systems and the Government Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System The key roles of government institutions in performance information management The importance of monitoring as a management tool 	NONE	Course has been piloted and will be rolled-out by September 2008

APPENDIX 3: SAMDI CURRICULUM

MONITORING & EVALUATION COURSES

COURSE NAME	DURATION	TARGET AUDIENCE	CONTENT	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	STATUS
M&E OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT COURSES					
Strategic Planning and M&E Course	2 days	SMS Middle managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of the principles of strategic planning and management, Brief explanation and discussion of M&E concepts and definitions Understanding M&E findings, with particular emphasis on quality issues. How M&E findings can be used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation of previous strategic plans. How to use M&E findings to improve new strategic planning. 	Completed basic or general M&E Orientation Course	Course is scheduled to be piloted in August and should be ready for roll-out by October 2008
M&E and performance Management Course	Estimated: 2- days	SMS Middle managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principles of performance management, drawing up performance contracts & cascading performance contracts downwards. Explanation and discussion of M&E concepts and definitions, The cyclical nature of planning in government in relation to performance contracts. Applying M&E principles to performance management contracts, taking into account inputs, processes, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts. 	Completed basic or general M&E Orientation Course	Course is scheduled to be developed in 2009

APPENDIX 3: SAMDI CURRICULUM

MONITORING & EVALUATION COURSES

COURSE NAME	DURATION	TARGET AUDIENCE	CONTENT	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	STATUS
M&E OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT COURSES					
General M&E Orientation Course	3 days	Middle managers M&E staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using M&E information sources for performance-management, including existing databases, qualitative and quantitative research, baseline studies, surveys, annual reports, financial information, etc. How M&E findings can be used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of existing performance contracts and to improve them. Introduces basic M&E concepts and links them to the government planning process, indicator development, measuring inputs, activities, processes, outputs, outcomes and impacts. 	None	The course is ready for roll-out Please contact Moses Mailula or Evelyn Lucas at the Academy call centre: 012- 3211207, Ext 117 or 118 to make a booking or find out more about training dates

APPENDIX 3: SAMDI CURRICULUM

MONITORING & EVALUATION COURSES

COURSE NAME	DURATION	TARGET AUDIENCE	CONTENT	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	STATUS
M&E COMPETENCY/ SKILLS COURSES					
M&E / Qualitative Research	7 days	M&E professionals/ practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarises basic M&E concepts and links them to the principles of effective qualitative research methods, including undertaking situational analyses, systematic observations, rapid rural assessments and other appraisals, case studies, focus-group discussions and individual interviews; developing observation sheets, open-ended questions, discussion guides, analyzing qualitative data, including content analysis techniques linking M & E and qualitative research to inputs, activities, processes, outputs, outcomes and impacts 	Completed general 3 days orientation course.	October 2008
M&E Quantitative Research and Data analysis	5 days	M&E practitioners; professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links between quantitative research and M&E and description of quantitative research, including Basic methods of quantitative research including: surveys and other research designs Basic principles of measurement including: dependent, independent, intervening and extraneous variables and control methods. 	Completed general 3 days orientation course and the 7 days qualitative research course	October 2008

APPENDIX 3: SAMDI CURRICULUM

MONITORING & EVALUATION COURSES

COURSE NAME	DURATION	TARGET AUDIENCE	CONTENT	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	STATUS
M&E COMPETENCY/ SKILLS COURSES					
M&E/ Database Development & Use	12 days	M&E practitioners/ professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nominal, ordinal and interval measurements Basic statistical principles and techniques used in research, including: central tendencies, distributions, probability and non-probability sampling, sampling and non-sampling errors Data capture and analysis, basic maths & statistical principles for data analysis, principles of tabulation and using graphs to analyse data, linking indicators to data. 	Completed general 3 - days orientation course	October 2008

APPENDIX 3: SAMDI CURRICULUM

MONITORING & EVALUATION COURSES

COURSE NAME	DURATION	TARGET AUDIENCE	CONTENT	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	STATUS
M&E COMPETENCY/ SKILLS COURSES					
M&E/ Report writing	12 days	M&E practitioners/ professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarises basic M&E concepts and links them to the principles of effective report writing, use of indicators, maths & statistics in reports, linking inputs, activities, processes, outputs, outcomes and impacts 	Completed general 3- days orientation, qualitative research, data-base development and quantitative research courses.	September 2008

Please do not hesitate to contact **Nadia Carolissen** (0835615553/ Nadia@samdi.gov.za) or **Tiego Vuma** (0826889414/ Tiegov@samdi.gov.za) for additional information.

APPENDIX 4: ACTION POINT LIST

- Premiers' Offices should conduct an audit of all existing reporting requirements by provincial line departments.
 - Based on this audit, duplicate reporting should be eliminated, and mechanisms should be put in place to share information.
 - The Presidency should facilitate access by Premiers' Offices to national Department data
 - Premiers' Offices should, as far as possible, prioritise the analysis of these data, rather than requesting the same data directly from departments.
 - Generic formats for departmental M&E strategies per sector will be introduced by the Presidency. Premiers' Offices should incorporate these generic formats within their own provincial M&E strategies.
 - As part of the province-wide M&E framework, Premiers' Offices need to devise a five year plan for the implementation of the South African Statistics Quality Assurance Framework whereby departmental administrative data can be accredited as official statistics.
 - Greater emphasis should be placed by M&E units in their plans on the analysis of data gathered, and the communication of the M&E findings emanating from the analyses.
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- The Premier's Office should conduct an audit of all evaluations done in the province and provide a central point for sharing of information on evaluations undertaken both internally by departments themselves and those outsourced.
 - Premiers' Offices should play a greater role in coordinating evaluation activities across provincial line departments.
 - Base-line data profiles for the province should be compiled which should include demographics, gender, income breakdowns.
 - The Premier's Office and the Provincial Treasury should offer guidance to line departments in preparing for audits of non-financial information.
-
- Premiers' Offices should review the organisational structure and institutional placement of the M&E function to ensure that their province-wide M&E frameworks are adequately supported.
 - All existing province-wide M&E frameworks should be reviewed relative to the requirements of the GWM&E Policy Framework. Any gaps should be identified and filled.
 - M&E frameworks in draft form should also be reviewed for the same reason.
 - Offices of the Premier, if not doing to already, should consider the generation, analysis and publication of developmental indicators which relate specifically to their province.
 - Premiers' Offices could devise their own functionality indicators in order to monitor provincial line department "back office" functions.
 - Premier's Office should conduct a training needs assessment not only for their internal M&E component, but in relation to M&E for the entire province.

APPENDIX 4: ACTION POINT LIST

- The SAMDI curriculum for M&E training should be reviewed and built into the province's capacity building strategy.
- The capacity building strategy should outline the arrangements for training provision both within the M&E unit for the Office of the Premier, and for line departments, including budget arrangements.
- Offices of the Premier are encouraged to participate actively in the M&E Learning Network coordinated by the Presidency (More information can be found on the Presidency website <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za>).
- Line managers should be sensitized to the need for M&E and trained on the use of M&E findings
- The performance agreements of line managers should include an M&E component.
- In crafting their M&E strategies, Office of the Premier must consider how they will create demand for, and use of, M&E findings.
- M&E responsibilities should be included in the performance agreements of all line managers, not just M&E staff.
- Premier's Office should strive to improve the spatial referencing of the Provincial Growth and Development Strategies.
- GIS should be used increasingly to assess the spatial impact of policies, service delivery implementation and public resource allocation on communities and other key stakeholder groups in the province.
- Premiers' Offices should review the indicators reported to monitor progress with the Five Year Local Government Agenda and incorporate these in their oversight of municipal basic service delivery and financial condition.
- Representation of local government on provincial M&E forums should be reviewed with a view to assessing whether representation is adequate.
- Mechanisms for extending M&E to local government level should be put in place by provincial governments.
- Premiers' Offices, provincial Treasuries and provincial Departments of Local Government should define clear roles and responsibilities for rolling out the province-wide M&E system in a manner which integrates non-financial and financial analysis of provincial department and municipal performance.

APPENDIX 6: STATISTICS AVAILABLE FROM STATSSA

Website

System of Statistics in Stats SA

National Accounts

Monthly Statistics	Quarterly GDP	Annual GDP GDP per Region supply and use tables	Tourism Satellite Accounts Social Accounting Matrix Natural Resource Accounts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumer Price Index (heading) Rural Consumer Price Index Production Price Index Mining: Production & Sales Manufacturing: Production & Sales Generation & Consumption of Electricity Tourism & Migration Wholesale Trade Sales Retail Trade Sales Motor Trade Sales Liquidations & Insolvencies Building Plans passed & completed Civil cases for debt 	<p>Quarterly Statistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment & Earnings Employment & average monthly Earnings Labour Force Statistics Financial Statistics of Private Sector Enterprises Manufacturing: Utilisation of Production Capacity by Large Enterprises Financial Statistics of Municipalities Tourist Accommodation Food & Beverages Bulletin of Statistics 	<p>Annual Series</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial statistics of Private Sector Enterprises Financial Statistics of Consolidated General Government Institutions Financial Statistics for Extra Budgetary Accounts & Funds Financial Census of Municipalities Financial Statistics of Higher Education Institutions Financial Statistics of Provincial Government Non-financial Census of Municipalities Capital Expenditure of the Public Sector Financial Statistics of National Government Economic Activity Survey Selected Building Plans Passed & completed, including Municipal Info Buildings completed per Annum General Household Survey Mortality & Causes of Death Recorded Live Births Mid-year Population Estimates Marriages & Divorces 	<p>Periodic 2-3 Yearly</p> <p>Large Sample Surveys on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Services Mining Manufacturing Wholesale & Retail Trade Motor Trade Post & Telecommunications Transport Agriculture <p>5-10 Yearly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income & Expenditure Living Conditions Survey Agriculture Census Population Census Community Survey

Business Address Register

Spatial Frame/Physical Address Register