

An assessment of the process and institutional requirements of monitoring and evaluation systems in government: A case study of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture

by  
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## DECLARATION

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## ABSTRACT

This research study was motivated by the apparent disparities and incoherence in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in government departments in South Africa.

An in-depth study was undertaken with the objective to assess the processes followed in designing, developing and sustaining an M&E system. The study also looked into the institutional requirements and arrangements of M&E in government. The aim was formulate recommendations which could be modeled against to improve the M&E systems in government.

In conducting a literature review, emphasis was placed on the theoretical and conceptual frameworks as well as policy and legislative frameworks relevant to M&E. The study followed a qualitative research design and included empirical and ethnological research which followed a case study approach. The primary data was sourced through semi-structured questionnaires or a research schedule which was administered through interviews. The sample considered was comprised of senior management of the Department of Arts and Culture, the M&E unit, focus groups and the Office of the Premier. A content analysis of the key documentation relating to M&E was also conducted.

The study found that institutionalisation transcended beyond structural and organisational arrangements and looked into issues of governance, human resources, value systems, training, capacity and professional associations. The study the readiness assessment was not conducted in the Department to determine the level at which these traits were. However, it was noted that the Department had cultivated a sufficient culture of M&E within itself. This manifested itself through the placement of M&E as a key item on the agenda of management meetings. It was noted that there were sufficient policy and legislative frameworks to support M&E in government. It was also found there was no systematic and logical process followed, as recommended by Kusek and Rist (2004), in designing, building and sustaining results-based M&E in the department.

Based on the findings, the researcher recommended that M&E training be provided to staff in the Department and the readiness assessment be conducted thereafter in order to identify the gaps in this programme and put relevant interventions in place.

## OPSOMMING

Die navorsing is aan die gang gesit deur die klaarblyklike verskille en onsamehangendheid in monitering en evaluasie (M&E) in Regeringsdepartemente in Suid-Afrika.

'n Diepgaande studie is toe onderneem waarvan die doelwitte was om die prosesse te assesseer wat gevolg is in die ontwerp, ontwikkeling en onderhouding van 'n M&E-stelsel. Die studie het ook gekyk na watter vereistes en reëlins nodig is om M&E in die Regering in te stel. Die doel daarvan was om aanbevelings te maak wat gebruik kan word om die M&E-stelsels in die Regering te verbeter.

Met die navorsing wat in literatuur gedoen is, is die klem gelê op die teoretiese en konsepsionele raamwerke sowel as op beleids- en wetgewende raamwerke wat met M&E verband hou.

Die studie het 'n kwalitatiewe navorsingsontwerp gevolg en het empiriese en etnologiese navorsing ingesluit wat 'n gevallestudie-benadering gevolg het. Die primêre data is verkry deur semi-gestruktureerde vraestelle of 'n navorsingslys wat toegepas is deur middel van onderhoude. Die groep wat as voorbeeld gebruik is, het bestaan uit senior-bestuur van die Departement, M&E-eenheid, fokusgroepe en die Kantoor van die Premier. 'n Ontleding van die inhoud van sleuteldokumentasie wat met M&E verband hou, is ook gedoen.

Die studie het gevind dat institusionalisering verder gestrek het as strukturele en organisatoriese reëlins en het gekyk na kwessies van bestuur, menslike hulpbronne, waardestelsels, opleiding, kapasiteit en professionele verenigings. Maar die gereedheidsassessering is nie gedoen om te bepaal op watter vlakke hierdie eienskappe in die Departement bestaan nie. Daar is opgelet dat die Departement 'n voldoende kultuur van M&E in die Departement aangekweek het wat geopenbaar is deurdat M&E hoog op die agenda van bestuursvergaderinge geplaas is. Daar is opgelet dat daar voldoende beleids- en wetgewende raamwerke in die Regering is om M&E te ondersteun. Daar is ook gevind dat geen stelselmatige en logiese proses gevolg is, soos aanbeveel deur Kusek en Rist, in die ontwerp, ontwikkeling en onderhouding van Resultaat-gegronde M&E in die Departement nie. Die navorser het, op grond van die bevindings, aanbeveel dat opleiding oor M&E aan personeel in die Departement gegee word en die

gereedheidsassessering daarna gedoen word om gapings te identifiseer en toepaslike tussenkomste in werking te stel.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION.....</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>OPSOMMING.....</b>	<b>III</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>	<b>VI</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES.....</b>	<b>IXX</b>
<b>LIST OF KEY TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1: RATIONALE AND INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.3 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW: THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK .....</b>	<b>2</b>
1.3.1 DEFINING KEY CONCEPTS .....	3
1.3.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF M&E.....	3
1.3.3 M&E PROCESS .....	4
1.3.4 INSTITUTIONALISING M&E.....	5
<b>1.4 PRELIMINARY POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORKS UNDERPINNING M&amp;E .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.5 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES .....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.5.1 THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY .....	6
<b>1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.7 DATA COLLECTION AND SAMPLING .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.8 DATA ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1.9 CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE OF M&amp;E .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.1 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.2 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.3 USES AND PURPOSE OF EVALUATION.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>2.4 THE ORIGINS OF EVALUATION .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.5 APPROACHES TO M&amp;E .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.6 THEORY OF CHANGE.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>2.7 M&amp;E PROCESS .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2.8 INSTITUTIONALISING M&amp;E .....</b>	<b>29</b>

2.8.1	GOVERNANCE .....	30
2.8.2	VALUE SYSTEM .....	31
2.8.3	STRUCTURAL ARRANGEMENTS .....	32
2.8.4	HUMAN RESOURCES.....	33
2.8.5	TRAINING .....	33
2.8.6	PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT .....	33
2.9	CONCLUSION.....	34
 <b>CHAPTER 3: OVERVIEW OF POLICY AND LEGISLATION RELATED TO M&amp;E.....</b>		<b>36</b>
3.1	INTRODUCTION .....	36
3.2	THE CONSTITUTION OF SOUTH AFRICA, 1996 (ACT 108 OF 1996).....	36
3.3	PUBLIC FINANCE MANAGEMENT ACT, 1999 (ACT 1 OF 1999) .....	38
3.4	THE WHITE PAPER ON TRANSFORMING PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, 1997 (BATHO PELE WHITE PAPER).....	38
3.5	GREEN PAPER: IMPROVING GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE: OUR APPROACH, 2009 .....	41
3.6	POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR THE GOVERNMENT-WIDE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM (GWM&E), 2007 .....	44
3.7	FRAMEWORK FOR MANAGING PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE INFORMATION, 2007.....	45
3.8	NATIONAL EVALUATION POLICY FRAMEWORK (NEPF), 2011 .....	48
3.9	SOUTH AFRICAN STATISTICAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK (SASQAF), 2009.....	50
3.10	GUIDE TO THE OUTCOMES APPROACH, 2010.....	51
3.11	LESSONS FROM BEST PRACTICES ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK .....	53
3.12	CONCLUSION.....	53
 <b>CHAPTER 4: CASE STUDY AND FIELDWORK RESULTS: THE M&amp;E SYSTEM OF THE KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE .....</b>		<b>55</b>
4.1	INTRODUCTION .....	55
4.2	BACKGROUND TO THE CASE STUDY .....	55
4.3	RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY .....	56
4.3.1	RESEARCH DESIGN .....	56
4.3.2	DATA COLLECTION AND SAMPLING .....	58
4.4	CASE STUDY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE (KWAZULU-NATAL).....	59
4.4.1	INTRODUCTION .....	59
4.4.2	VISION, MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES .....	59
4.4.3	ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE .....	61
4.5	ESTABLISHMENT OF AN M&E SYSTEM.....	62
4.6	M&E PROCESS .....	65
4.7	INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR M&E .....	70
4.7.1	GOVERNANCE .....	70
4.7.2	VALUE SYSTEM .....	71
4.7.2	STRUCTURAL ARRANGEMENTS .....	71
4.7.4	HUMAN RESOURCES.....	71



4.7.5 TRAINING .....	72
4.7.6 PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT .....	73
<b>4.7 CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>5.1 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>5.2 FINDINGS ON FIELDWORK RESULTS .....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>5.3 PROCESS OF ESTABLISHING AN M&amp;E SYSTEM.....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>5.4 INSTITUTIONALISATION OF M&amp;E IN THE DEPARTMENT .....</b>	<b>79</b>
5.4.1 GOVERNANCE .....	79
5.4.2 VALUE SYSTEM .....	79
5.4.3 STRUCTURAL ARRANGEMENTS .....	80
5.4.4 HUMAN RESOURCES.....	80
5.4.5 TRAINING .....	80
5.4.6 PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT.....	81
<b>5.7 CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>6.1INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>6.2 ESTABLISHING AN M&amp;E SYSTEM .....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>6.3 M&amp;E PROCESS .....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>6.4 INSTITUTIONALISATION OF M&amp;E .....</b>	<b>85</b>
6.4.1 GOVERNANCE .....	85
6.4.2 VALUE SYSTEM .....	85
6.4.3 STRUCTURAL ARRANGEMENTS .....	85
6.4.4 HUMAN RESOURCES.....	86
6.4.5 TRAINING .....	86
6.4.6 PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT .....	86
<b>6.5 POTENTIAL VALUE OF THE RESEARCH .....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>6.6 CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>7. REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>ANNEXURE A .....</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>ANNEXURE B .....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>ANNEXURE C .....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>ANNEXURE D.....</b>	<b>95</b>

## **LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES**

- Figure 2.1: Complementary roles of results-based M&E
- Figure 2.2: Ten steps to designing, building and sustaining a results-based M&E system
- Figure 2.3: Relationship and linkages between M&E
- Figure 3.1: Key transformation priorities when transforming service delivery
- Figure 3.2: Eight steps to improved service delivery
- Figure 3.3: A typical governance structure of the outcomes performance management approach
- Figure 3.4: The three pillars or data terrains of the GWM&E policy framework
- Figure 3.5: Integration of M&E in other government management processes
- Figure 3.6: Diagram showing the relationship between the core performance information concepts
- Figure 4.1: Example of the findings of fieldwork reflecting multiple responses
- Figure 4.2: Graphical representation of the fieldwork results

## LIST OF KEY TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AG	Auditor-General
APP	Annual Performance Plan
CBOs	Community-Based Organisations
COHOD	Committee of Heads of Department
DAC	Department of Arts and Culture (KZN)
DG	Director-General
DPME	Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
GWM&EF	Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
HOD	Head of Department
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal Province
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEC	Member of Executive Council
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
MTSF	Medium-Term Strategic Framework
NEPF	National Evaluation Policy Framework
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PALAMA	Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy

PGDS	Provincial Growth and Development Strategy
PGDP	Provincial Growth and Development Plan
SAMEA	South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association
SASQAF	South African Statistical Quality Assurance Framework
ToRs	Terms of Reference

# **CHAPTER 1: RATIONALE AND INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

## **1.1 Introduction**

The title of this research is ‘an assessment of the process and institutional requirements of monitoring and evaluation systems in government: A case study of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture’. To undertake this study, the researcher conducted an in-depth examination of the processes followed in government when designing, building and sustaining an M&E system, taking into account that the legitimacy of any phenomenon predominantly relies on two things, viz. the process and the content. Apart from the process, the study also looked into the M&E system itself, including its key ingredients and constituents. The study also examined the institutionalisation of an M&E system in government, looking at both the institutional requirements as well as the institutional arrangements of this system. The research followed a case study approach and was therefore qualitative in nature.

## **1.2 Background and Rationale**

Over the years, the government of South Africa has battled to develop a coherent M&E system through which it can measure the performance of its projects, programmes or policies implemented by various government departments and agencies. The introduction of a Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (GWM&EF) by the presidency in 2007 was a huge milestone in the government’s endeavors to address this challenge.

As a common course of action, various government departments were expected to come up with their own tailor-made M&E systems, taking into account their individual circumstances and dynamics, to be implemented in a manner consistent with the framework. At the time of the study, the researcher was working for the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture (DAC). Two of the components headed by the researcher, namely Executive Support (Office of the Head of Department) and Corporate Strategy, under which M&E in the department fell, had exposed the researcher to high level discussions of government including those related to M&E of government projects, programmes or policies.

By virtue of his position, the researcher sat in the Provincial Executive Council Technical Clusters which comprised of heads of various government departments (structured per sector e.g. Social Protection and Community Health Development, Economic Sector and Infrastructure Development, Governance and Administration). These technical clusters of heads of departments (HODs) processed all documentation that served before the Executive Council such as government's Provincial Growth and Development Strategy, Provincial Growth and Development Plan, Government Programme of Action, quarterly government performance reports, mid-term performance reviews, and so forth.

The apparent lack of coherence and integration in planning and reporting by various government departments triggered an interest and need to critically analyse and examine the M&E systems used in government and how they had been institutionalised, bearing in mind the value of M&E as a management function. The researcher assessed the process of designing, building and sustaining M&E systems in government given the view that the content of any system is as good as the process used to gather the information. Furthermore, the researcher looked at how M&E systems had been institutionalised in government.

The researcher holds the view that the employed M&E systems, and how they are institutionalised, has a tremendous impact on the quality of information generated and on the management decisions taken. The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture was then identified for the purpose of this study and a case study approach was followed.

### **1.3 Preliminary Literature Review: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**

As part of a proposal to undertake the study, the researcher conducted a preliminary literature review covering the theoretical and conceptual framework of M&E. This was necessary to determine if there was sufficient literature on which to base the study. In this review, the key concepts of M&E, the importance of M&E, a process of designing M&E systems, and the institutionalisation of M&E were looked at.

Subsequently, a preliminary overview of policy and legislation relating to M&E was also conducted as part of the proposal of the study to determine if M&E was at all grounded on any policy and legislative frameworks.

### **1.3.1 Defining key concepts**

To ensure that the study was premised on the correct context it was important to first understand the key concepts, namely, M&E and what they mean. It was noted that in practice and in reality the terms M&E are used together and interchangeably as if they mean one and the same thing but it is clear from the definitions that they are distinct and separate functions.

Valadez and Bamberger (1994: 12) define monitoring as a process of tracking the programme or project's performance in terms of inputs, activities and outputs against the pre-determined plans. It is argued that the term evaluation has evolved over the years and, as such, its definition has had different meanings. Of significance is that evaluation is a process of gathering and analysing information for decision-making purposes. The information is descriptive in nature and the process involves making value judgments (Stufflebeam and Shinkfield, 2007: 7 - 8).

Morra-Imas and Rist (2009: 108) distinguish between traditional M&E and results-based M&E. They argue that traditional M&E focuses on the monitoring and evaluation of inputs, activities and outputs (that is, on project or programme implementation) while results-based M&E combines the traditional approach of monitoring implementation with the assessment of outcomes and impacts, or more generally of results.

It is evident that a proper definition and meaning of M&E is important in ensuring that the results of an M&E system are the desired ones. If there was confusion in the understanding of M&E there was likely to be confusion with the results of the M&E system as well.

### **1.3.2 The importance of M&E**

There is general agreement among various authors on the usefulness of M&E in government. M&E provides important information about the performance of government, individual departments, agencies and managers and their staff as well as about government policies, programmes and projects (Mackay and Keith, 2007: 9). Mackay and Keith highlight the contribution of M&E to sound governance and argue that M&E information supports policy making, especially budget decision making which includes performance budgeting and national planning. M&E provides evidence of cost-effective types of government activities and supports policy development, management and accounting as well as policy analysis. In

addition, M&E assists government departments and agencies in managing their activities at sector, programme and project levels.

### **1.3.3 M&E Process**

Mackay (2007: 17) argues that there are various reasons why countries continuously build and improve their M&E systems. These include lessons learnt from other countries about the successes and failures of implementation thus enticing countries to strengthen and improve on theirs. Countries like Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Brazil have been cited as some of the leading countries in M&E. Another reason is a need to improve public accountability in the delivery of services. A growing need to account for donor funding has also influenced this growing trend of M&E systems. The growing number of M&E associations has also contributed to a need to continuously improve M&E systems.

According to Kusek and Rist (2004: 25) the ten steps to be followed in building a results-based M&E system entail an assessment of readiness of an M&E system, determining the outcomes to be monitored and evaluated, agreeing on key indicators to monitor outcomes, determining baseline data on indicators, conducting monitoring of results, defining the role of evaluators, reporting findings, using findings and sustaining the M&E system within the organisation.

The development of M&E systems has seen the emergence of electronic M&E systems. However, electronic systems are not an end in themselves and one should always remember the old adage of ‘garbage in, garbage out’ when employing them.

It is clear from the above discussion that the designing of an M&E system should take into account the objectives of designing an M&E system at any given point in time, people who will be using the results and who would be involved in the process, the key questions and objectives the system seeks to address, the information to be generated and analysed, the format in which the results will be presented as well as roles and responsibilities to be performed in managing and implementing the process.



### **1.3.4 Institutionalising M&E**

It is evident from the preliminary literature review that institutionalisation of M&E is still an exploratory field and there is not sufficient literature available on it. It also emerged that many authors still limit institutionalisation to structural and organisational arrangements and yet the concept transcends these to embrace even ‘soft issues’ such as governance, values, organisational culture, human resources, skills, training and professional support, all of which are examined in detail in Chapter Two.

## **1.4 Preliminary Policy and Legislative Frameworks Underpinning M&E**

This section of the study covers a preliminary overview of the policy and legislation that underpinned M&E. Policy and legislation are mostly the method which government uses to create an enabling environment for its priorities and imperatives to thrive.

M&E is enshrined in the Constitution especially Section 195(1) on public administration, part of which ‘... promotes the efficient, economical and effective use of state resources as well as accountable public administration’. M&E should therefore be viewed as a vehicle to realize this. Sections 92 and 133 of the Constitution further provide for members of the Cabinet and Executive Council to be ‘... collectively and individually accountable to parliament and legislatures respectively for the exercise of their powers and the performance of their functions’.

The Framework on GWM&EF, with its pillars, viz, Evaluations Framework, Statistics and Surveys Framework and Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information, is a critical milestone in government’s effort to achieve accountable and outcomes-based service delivery. The GWM&EF provides for an integrated, all-encompassing machinery of M&E in government.

It should be noted that other legislative and policy frameworks on M&E such as the White Paper on Transforming the Public Service (Batho Pele White Paper, 1997), the Public Finance Management Act, 1999, the National Treasury Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information, 2007 are examined to determine their position on M&E specifically in relation to the promotion of M&E in government.

## **1.5 Research Problem and Objectives**

The apparent lack of coherence and integration in government planning and reporting stimulated the researcher's interest in what M&E approaches and systems are employed in government, how they have been developed as well as how they have been institutionalised, taking into account the findings of the literature review as well as the policy and legislative frameworks on M&E in South Africa.

An in-depth study was undertaken to answer the following research question: How were M&E systems developed in government in terms of processes followed and whether the institutionalisation of M&E in government was geared towards meeting the objectives of M&E on government policies, programmes and projects. A case study of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture was undertaken.

### **1.5.1 The specific objectives of the study**

- To examine the process of building M&E systems in government and whether such processes result in the achievement of the objectives of M&E in relation to government policies, programmes and projects.
- To assess the institutional requirements of M&E systems and examine various institutionalization designs and models of M&E, looking at their pros and cons.
- To critically examine M&E systems and the process used to develop them as well as to assess the institutionalisation of M&E in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture and determine whether they are in keeping with the literature review conducted, policy and legislative frameworks as well as international best practices. Thereafter, come up with recommendations on how M&E in government can be improved.

## **1.6 Research Design and Methodology**

This part of the study looks at research design and methodology. Mouton (2001: 149) argues that a case study approach should take the shape of an empirical study and ethnological research. The study met the requirements of a case study as the Department being

investigated is small. The primary data was obtained directly from the Department through semi-structured questionnaires.

The study was therefore qualitative in nature as it examined the process and institutional requirements of M&E systems in government, analyzing their alignment with policy and legislative frameworks as well as international best practices.

The research study therefore satisfied the definition of a qualitative research design as it conducted an in-depth enquiry and narrative analysis of the two variables, viz, the process of developing M&E systems and institutional requirements of M&E systems in Government (Garson, 2002: 137). Although the qualitative approach was primarily used in the study it should be indicated that limited quantitative data analysis methods were also employed.

Content analysis was also employed as another form of empirical design. The analysis of the Department's strategic plan, annual performance plans, organisational structure, annual reports and audit reports was undertaken to complement the data obtained through the semi-structured questionnaires. These documents became a vital source of data. The Auditor-General and Provincial Treasury provided vital feedback on M&E especially because they provided perspectives of the external stakeholders of the department in the context of this study.

## **1.7 Data Collection and Sampling**

The study followed a qualitative data collection methodology. All senior management, M&E networks or forums and practitioners in the department were identified by means of purposive sampling and provided data solicited through semi-structured questionnaires comprising of both open- and closed-ended questions. Interviews were used to administer the questionnaires in order to ensure that all data was received as intended and the qualitative form of the research design was retained.

The interviews were scheduled with all 30 members of senior management in the Department and the two focus groups that had been identified, viz. the Batho Pele Committee and the M&E Committee in the Department. Out of the 30 interviews scheduled, 20 were actually conducted. This constituted 66.7 percent of the response rate which was acceptable in terms of research standards. A detailed discussion of the findings is contained in Chapter Four.

The data gathered from senior managers helped to ascertain their insights, views and perceptions about M&E in the Department. Focus group discussions with the two committees, established with the sole purpose of advancing the objectives of M&E in the Department, were held. It should be borne in mind that focus groups' members were not essentially M&E line function officials or practitioners and therefore their views provided important outlooks about M&E in the Department.

The Office of the Premier in KwaZulu-Natal was also interviewed as custodians of macro-planning and M&E in the province. The Provincial Treasury was also interviewed as it is the entity which monitors reporting of government departments and agencies in terms of legislation.

The opinions of both the M&E practitioners and senior managers were put to the test and thus provided a sensible view of M&E in the department. This is against the backdrop that M&E practitioners are often seen as 'policemen' by other officials rather than as people who add value to the functioning of the Department.

Documentary analysis was conducted as part of content analysis and focused on reports such as annual reports, audit reports by the Auditor-General, Provincial Treasury and the Department's Internal Control and Risk Management Unit. The documentary analysis helped provide feedback on the perspectives and the status of M&E in the Department. This exercise was crucial especially in view of the fact emphasis placed on the need to ascertain value for money when delivering services to the public. This is amplified in Sections 20(2)(c) and 28(1)(c) of the Public Audit Act which state that '... an audit report must reflect an opinion or conclusion relating to the performance of the auditee against predetermined objectives'.

Written permission was sought from the Head of Department of Arts and Culture to conduct the study. The permission was accordingly granted. However, the researcher was requested to treat the information obtained through the study with sensitivity and maturity at all times, and in a manner that would not bring the department into disrepute, which the researcher endeavored to fulfill throughout the course of the study. All the information gathered sought to provide answers to the research question and objectives.

## **1.8 Data Analysis**

The data collected through the questionnaires and focus group discussion was analysed against the theoretical, conceptual, as well as policy and legislative frameworks reviewed. The data relating to the process followed in developing M&E systems was, for instance, analysed against the recent literature in this regard. Institutional arrangements of M&E in the Department were assessed against the broad institutional requirements of M&E, looking at the merits and demerits of each. The data was also analysed against international best practices in M&E.

The qualitative data analysis, namely documentary and content analyses were also undertaken to analyse key documents such as the department's Annual Report, audit reports by the Auditor-General, Provincial Treasury and Internal Control and Risk Management Unit of the department. The content analysis of documents produced by external stakeholders was viewed as critical in providing objective feedback on the department's M&E systems. As alluded to above, limited quantitative data analysis methods were employed where appropriate.

## **1.9 Conclusion**

The research study keenly observed the emergence and evolution of M&E in the public service and was conducted almost over a year, starting in October 2012. The study assessed the process and institutional requirements of M&E systems in government. Given that the case study approach was followed, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture was used and its M&E systems, institutional arrangements and processes were assessed against the literature, policy and legislative frameworks reviewed. Different approaches to M&E were outlined; the models of building an M&E system examined and different options of institutionalising M&E were also explored, looking at their pros and cons. Centralised versus decentralised options of institutionalising M&E, amongst others, were analysed.

The study culminated in the presentation of findings and the research report which represented the end of a long journey of information and knowledge gathering, and generation to a limited extent.

The chapters follow the chronological order of the research process with Chapter One being a presentation of the background and an in-depth rationale of the research study, the research problem and objectives, overview of the theoretical and conceptual perspectives of M&E, overview of policy and legislative frameworks relating to M&E, research design and methodology, data collection, sampling and analysis. The next chapter presents a literature review which looked in detail at the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of M&E. This chapter covered definitions of key concepts, M&E approaches, processes of building M&E systems, institutionalisation of M&E in government and lessons learnt from international best practice on the South African policy context.

Chapter Three focuses on the policy and legislative frameworks relating to M&E. Chapter Four covers the case study and fieldwork results of the department chosen by looking at a brief overview of its M&E systems, the vision, mission, strategic goals and objectives of the organisation, examining how its M&E systems were built and institutionalised. Chapter Five presents the findings of the case study and fieldwork results which were analysed against the literature review as well as legislative and policy frameworks. Chapter Six presents the conclusions and recommendations made.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE OF M&E**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a theoretical perspective of M&E and highlights the origins of M&E, definitions of the key concepts and the relationships between these concepts, outlines the approaches to M&E and explains how M&E systems are established. This chapter will also provide an overview of the institutionalisation of M&E, and look at the key elements and different options of institutional arrangements of M&E.

An in-depth literature review was conducted with a focus on these aspects in order to bring about a deeper understanding of M&E. Many people have different understandings, expectations and, sometimes, misconceptions about what M&E is, what it can and can't achieve, and how and when it should be carried out and by whom. These trends can be ascribed to a lack of information and knowledge about M&E.

Following this theoretical perspective, the next chapter will provide an overview of the policy and legislative contexts of M&E.

### **2.2 Definition of Concepts**

Definition of concepts is vital to gain insight into the field of study that is being examined at a particular given time. In the context of M&E, Valadez and Bamberger (1994: 13) argue that, although it is customary to refer to M&E together, as if they mean the same thing, they are actually two distinct functions with separate objectives. They define monitoring as:

A continuous internal management activity whose purpose is to ensure that the programme achieves its defined objectives within a prescribed timeframe and budget. Monitoring involves the provision of regular feedback on the progress of programme implementation, and the problems faced during implementation. Monitoring consists of operational and administrative activities that tract resource acquisition and allocation, production or the delivery of services, and cost records.

On the other hand Valadez and Bamberger (1994: 14) define evaluation as:

An internal or external management activity to assess the appropriateness of a programme's design and implementation methods in achieving both specified objectives and more general development objectives; to assess a programme's results, both intended and unintended and to assess the factors affecting the level and distribution of benefits produced.

The UN ACC Task Force on Rural Development (1985: 13 - 14) defines monitoring as "... the continuous or periodic review and surveillance (overseeing) by management at every level of the hierarchy of the implementation of an activity to ensure that input deliveries, work schedules, targeted outputs and other required actions are proceeding according to plan". On the other hand evaluation is defined as "... a process for determining systematically and objectively the relevance, efficiency effectiveness and impact of activities in the light of their objectives. It is an organizational process for improving activities still in progress and for aiding management in future planning, programming and decision making".

Evaluation is said to be concerned with the assessment of effects which have benefits, costs or disadvantages, which are intermediate objectives, as well as have an impact of long-term benefits on beneficiaries (UN ACC Task Force 1985: 14).

Schalock and Thornton (1988: 3) define evaluation as a systematic collection and analysis of information about alternatives. They argue that evaluations may be informal, quick, or they may be complex, highly structured efforts.

While the different approaches to M&E will be discussed at a later stage, it is important to mention at this juncture that, while monitoring is only carried out during implementation, evaluation takes place at various stages, one of which is during implementation, which is called ongoing evaluation. Ongoing evaluation is defined as:

The analysis during the implementation phase of an activity, of its continuing relevance, efficiency and effectiveness and present likely future outputs, effects and impact. It can assist decision makers by providing information about any needed adjustment of objectives, policies, implementation strategies, or other elements of the project, as well as providing information for future planning (UN ACC Task Force 1985: 14).



It is observed that there are a variety of definitions of evaluation and that the differences in definitions reflect differing emphases on the purpose of evaluation. According to Imas and Rist (2009: 8), the Oxford English Dictionary defines evaluation as ‘... the action of appraising or valuing (goods, etc.) or determining the value of (a mathematical expression, a physical quantity, etc.) or estimating the force of probabilities, evidence, etc. They define evaluation as a process of determining, in a systematic and objective way, the worth or significance of an activity, policy or programme’.

It has also been noted that there are approximately sixty different terms of evaluation that apply in one context or another. Such terms include adjudge, appraise, analyse, assess, critique, examine, grade, inspect, judge, rate, review, score, study and test (Imas & Rist, 2009: 8).

Kusek and Rist (2004: 13) note that it is evident from the definitions of monitoring and evaluation that the two are distinct yet complementary in that monitoring gives information of where the policy, programme or project is at any given time relative to respective targets and outcomes. Monitoring is outlined as descriptive in intent. On the other hand, evaluation gives evidence of why targets and outcomes are or are not being achieved. Evaluation seeks to, *inter alia*, address issues of causality.

Imas and Rist (2009: 108) differentiate between traditional M&E and results-based M&E. They argue that traditional M&E focuses on the monitoring and evaluation of inputs, activities, and outputs especially in projects or programme implementation. On the other hand, the results-based M&E combines the traditional approach of monitoring implementation with the assessment of outcomes and impacts, or more generally of results.

Valedez and Hamberger (1994: 13) argue that when the two functions are kept separate, there seems to be substantial support for monitoring project implementation but limited support for evaluation. They argue that evaluation is given much lower priority because it is seen as an activity that would be supported only if time and resources permitted – which, unfortunately, is seldom the case. As a result, little effort is made either to evaluate the extent to which projects have achieved their objectives or to use the experience from completed projects to improve the selecting and design of future ones.

Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2007: 4) introduce a new dimension to evaluation by defining it as a societal matter and stating that evaluations should thus be designed to address issues

facing society. This is an important view, especially given that evaluation is often seen as a technocratic, bureaucratic activity. This dimension should be viewed in the context of what M&E in general is used for in government.

It can be deduced that most definitions of evaluation entail the concept of making judgments of the value or worth of something. Evaluation can be of a planned, on-going or completed intervention.

**Figure 2.1: Complementary roles of results-based M&E**

Monitoring	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses on clarifying programme objectives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Places emphasis on analyzing why planned results were or were not realised.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a link between activities and their resources and objectives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examines specific causal relationships between activities and results.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Converts objectives into performance indicators and defines targets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutinizes the implementation process.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistently gathers data on these indicators, and matches actual results with targets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explores inadvertent results.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports improvement to managers and draws their attention to glitches.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides lessons, highlights substantial achievements or programme potential, and provides recommendations for enhancements.</li> </ul>

**Source: Adapted from Kusek and Rist (2004: 14)**

It is clear that in this study the terms of monitoring and evaluation should not be considered in isolation but should be understood as complementing each other and not mutually exclusive.

### **2.3 Uses and Purpose of Evaluation**

It is important to note that the analysis of M&E looks beyond the definition of concepts and considers the value and purpose of M&E as well as the benefits that can be derived from M&E. The development of any system is dependent on the use and purpose for which it was established hence the inclusion of this section in the study.

According to Imas & Rist (2009: 15) evaluation findings can be employed in a multiplicity of situations ranging from taking decisions relating to the allocation of resources, reviewing the root causes of a particular problem, identifying problems as they emerge, making a decision on competing or best alternatives, sustaining innovations and reform in the public sector and creating common understandings on the causes of a problem and how such problems should be addressed.

While there are various views about the purpose of evaluation, Imas and Rist (2009: 11) maintain that the prevalent view is that evaluation has four distinct purposes namely, an ethical purpose which entails reporting to political leadership on how a project has been implemented and what results have been realised, a managerial purpose which focuses on the allocation of resources for the achievement and betterment of results, a decisional purpose which is concerned about making decisions on whether or not the programme or project should be continued, terminated or reshaped and, lastly, an educational and motivational purpose which assists in educating and motivating public agencies and their partners on the environment in which they operate which helps them improve the processes to achieve better results.

It has been observed that prominent evaluators in the field argue that evaluation can be used to bring about positive social changes in society, enhance democracy and its values, enforce oversight and compliance, advance the principles of accountability and transparency, generate and provide platforms for sharing information and knowledge, generate lessons for improvements in an organization and encourage discourse and collaboration among key stakeholders. It should be noted that determining programme, project or policy relevance, implementation, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability are an integral part of evaluation.

Evaluation can focus on different elements of development such as the project, programme, policy, organisation, sector, theme or country as a whole (Imas & Rist, 2009: 14).

It is clear that the purpose of M&E is multi-dimensional and can range from promoting good corporate governance, decision making to generating new knowledge to measure the results of the policy, programme or project performance. It is also clear that M&E can be applied at different levels and scenarios depending on what the expected outcomes of M&E are.

## **2.4 The Origins of Evaluation**

The M&E profession in the public sector dates as far back as 2000BC. Significant strides have been made to get it to where the profession is now. (Imas & Rist, 2009: 19).

Research shows that M&E originated at different times in different countries and that the use and purpose thereof was motivated by various reasons. The areas of evaluation ranged from education, agriculture, health and social programmes in general.

According to Rabie and Cloete (2009) the evaluation discipline was influenced by public policy analysis and general social research approaches and methods both of which are specialized social science disciplines. Significant shifts have been observed in the policy analysis discipline and are characterized by a shift from opinion-driven policy choices, to evidence-influenced and evidence-based policy making.

## **2.5 Approaches to M&E**

This section of the study provides an overview of the various approaches to M&E. An understanding of the approaches is vital in ensuring that the correct approach is used at the correct time so as to achieve the desired results.

Imas and Rist (2009: 9) hold that evaluations can be prospective, formative and summative. They argue that a prospective evaluation is to a large extent similar to an evaluability assessment and examines the probable outcomes of projected policies, programmes or policies. In essence prospective evaluation considers if at all the programme or project is worth evaluating.

Prospective evaluation is sometimes called an *ex ante* (before the fact) evaluation. Such evaluations include programme theory reconstruction or assessment and scenario studies as

well as synopses of existing research and evaluation to create the empirical support for planned initiatives (Imas & Rist, 2009: 11).

Formative evaluation, on the other hand, focuses on the manner in which the programme, policy or project is implemented. This evaluation is similar to process evaluation. It ascertains whether or not the implicit 'operational logic' tallies with actual operations and recognizes the (instant) consequences the implementation (stage) produces. The aim of formative evaluation is therefore to improve the programme, policy or project. Summative evaluation is ordinarily executed at the end of the programme or project or on a mature intervention to ascertain the degree to which the expected results were realised. This kind of evaluation focuses on results and empowers decision makers to decide whether or not to continue, reproduce, increase or finish a given policy, programme or project. Summative evaluation typically provides evidence on the worth and impact of a programme. Such evaluations include cost-effectiveness investigations, impact evaluations, quasi-experiments, randomised experiments and case studies (Imas & Rist, 2009: 10).

Schalock and Thornton (1988: 2) hold that there are three evaluation phases, viz. the setup, marshaling the evidence, and interpreting the findings. Rabie and Cloete (2009: 9) argue that within a relatively short space of time the evaluation profession has already been characterised by a number of philosophies, approaches, models, traditions, practices and theories. They argue that at some stage a list of 26 approaches to evaluation was suggested and classified into five categories, namely Pseudo-Evaluation, Question- and Methods-Oriented Evaluation Approaches (Quasi-Evaluation Studies), Improvement - and Accountability - Oriented Evaluation Approaches, Social Agenda and Advocacy Approaches, and finally Eclectic Evaluation Approaches. They commend this classification system and regard it as the latest comprehensive attempt aimed at systematising evaluation approaches. However, they argue it can still be refined as it contains too many overlapping approaches.

Rabie and Cloete (2009: 9) in their attempt to close the gaps and supplement the existing classification systems, proposed an alternative classification system which they call a new typology of monitoring and evaluation approaches with the three main classification categories, viz. the scope of the evaluation study, the approach or underpinning philosophy of the evaluation study and, finally, the evaluation study design and methodology which provide the parameters for collecting and assessing data to inform the evaluation.

The proposed model seeks to provide a more accurate combination of parameters, implicit or explicit normative or value frameworks underlying the evaluation exercise and alternative designs and methodologies for evaluation. However, the new typology of monitoring and evaluation approaches is not discussed in detail here because of its limited relevance to the objectives of the study.

It may be argued that that other functional areas such as gender and transformation are not covered anywhere and as such there is a great need to conduct research in this category. It is clear from research which has been conducted that, while there are many approaches to M&E, Rabie and Cloete's classification of approaches into three main categories has emerged as the most ideal and recommended type of classification.

## **2.6 Theory of Change**

The Theory of Change (ToC) approach is reported to have first arisen in the United States in the 1990s with the objective of enhancing evaluation theory and practice in the field of community initiative. The ToC is an element of wider programme analysis or programme theory. It emanated from the tradition of logic planning models such as the logical framework approach developed in the 1970s. The ToC was conceptualised in 1995 and was understood as a way to describe the set of assumptions that explain both the mini-steps that lead to a long-term goal and the connections between these activities and the outcomes of an intervention or programme (Stein and Valters, 2012: 3). It is argued that the ToC has been termed a number of things, such as a roadmap, a blueprint, an engine of change and a theory of action, to name but a few.

Stein and Valters (2012: 2) argue that the investigation into the (ToC), which included a review of concepts and common debates, came to the conclusion that there is no consensus on the definition of the Theory of Change save to say it is generally understood as an articulation of how and why a particular intervention will lead to specific change.

According to Kusek and Rist (2004), a ToC is a representation of how an intervention is expected to lead to desired results. The ToC models normally have five main components; namely, inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts which some include other features such as target groups, and internal and external factors. The development of the programme

theory has brought about confusion in terminology especially among terms such as logic models, outcome models and theory models (Imas and Rist, 2009: 165).

It is argued that a logic model can be distinguished from a ToC by the fact that the former depicts a reasonable, self-justifying and chronological order from inputs through to activities to outputs, outcomes and impacts. The ToC, on the other hand, should also stipulate and explicate assumed, hypothesised, or tested causal connections. The ToC should depict a causal chain, specify influences and detect key assumptions (Imas & Rist, 2009: 165).

According to Stein and Valters (2012: 5), the ToC can be categorized into four based on purpose, viz, strategic planning wherein organisations basically map the change process, monitoring and evaluation wherein the objectives and outcomes are revised, description which entails communicating the change processes to internal and external stakeholders and, lastly, learning which is a process wherein people illuminate and build the theory relating to their organisation or programme.

The Kellogg Foundation (2004: 14) argues that there are three main elements of a ToC that are manifested in the typical life of a programme: clarifying the programme theory which is programme planning, demonstrating the programme's progress which can also be referred to as programme implementation, and programme evaluation which comprises evaluation questions and indicators.

According to Weiss (1998: 55) a programme can easily be referred to as a theory and an evaluation can be regarded as its test. For the evaluation to be effective and yield the expected results, the evaluator should essentially appreciate the theoretical grounds on which the programme is constructed (Kellogg Foundation, 2004: 9). Against this background, it is indicated that there are three approaches to logic models and it is critical for one to know and recognize which one fits one's programme. The three approaches are the following: theory approach models – which emphasise the theory of change that has influenced the design and plan for the programme. This model provides reasons for choosing a particular programme and selecting certain types of solution strategies, and explaining the assumptions made, outcomes approach models – which focus on aspects of programme planning and attempt to connect the resources and/or activities with the desired results in a workable programme. This model sub-divides outcomes and impacts over time to describe short-term and long-term results based on a set of activities carried out. Schalock (2001: 10) commends the outcomes-based evaluation because he argues it can apply the methodological pluralism model. He says

this model is effective as it guides and clarifies the evaluation process, all measurements and assessments are focused on agreed upon outcomes, and it allows for the use of mixed-method evaluations which include triangulation, complementarity and initiation (recasting of questions or results from one strategy with questions or results from a contrasting strategy), and activities approach models – which focuses on the implementation process. It provides detailed steps to be followed and activities to be executed in implementing the programme.

Against the above background, it is clear that there is a need for M&E practitioners to be conversant with the various M&E approaches and the situations in which they should be utilised. Otherwise there is a risk of using the correct approach in the wrong scenario, resulting in non-achievement of objectives. Further, it may be argued that many organisations purport to have constructed a ToC. The question may then be: why are the results not achieved as expected, and this is normally the case. The researcher argues that the mere existence of the ToC is not sufficient to achieve the results, but what is critical is a properly constructed one which has analysed the situation to the fullest.

## **2.7 M&E Process**

The role of the state has changed and evolved during recent history and good governance has become key to achieving sustainable socio-economic development. The state is confronted with pressure and demand for improvement and reforms in public management with meager resources at its disposal. Such pressures have compelled the state to look outside and seek assistance from donor governments, the private sector and NGOs. This has called for greater accountability and transparency, and enhanced the effectiveness of development programmes on the side of the state. Results-based M&E has become a powerful public management tool that can be used by policy makers and decision makers to track progress and demonstrate an impact on a given policy, programme or project.

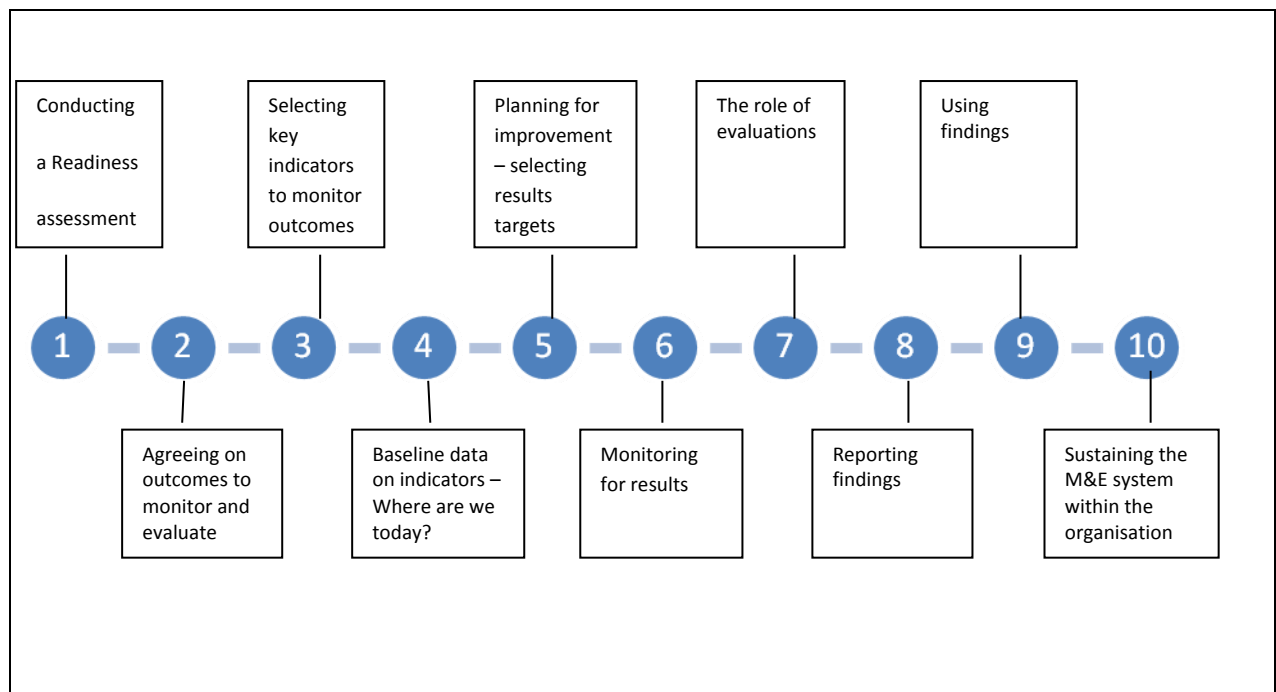
Kusek and Rist (2004: 23) argue that, although experts vary on the specific sequence of steps in building a results-based M&E system, all agree on the overall intent. Different experts propose four- to seven-step models. However, they argue that, regardless of the number of steps, the essential actions involved in building an M&E system include formulating outcomes and goals, selecting outcome indicators to monitor, gathering baseline information on the current condition, setting specific targets to reach and dates for reaching them,



regularly collecting data to assess whether the targets are being met and analysing and reporting the results.

The interesting question is why these systems are not part of the normal business practices of government agencies, stakeholders, etc. if there is already an agreement of what a good system should contain. Kusek and Rist (2004: 23) notes that one evident reason for this is that those designing M&E systems often miss the complexities and subtleties of the country, government, or sector context. Further, the needs of the end users are often only vaguely understood by those ready to start the M&E building process and too little emphasis is placed on organisational, political, and cultural factors. In this context, Kusek and Rist (2004) have developed a ten-step model which they argue differs from others because “it provides extensive details on how to build, maintain – and perhaps most importantly – sustain a results-based M&E system”. The ten-step model also differs from other approaches in that it contains a unique readiness assessment which is conducted before the actual establishment of a system – which is the first step of developing the system and will be discussed in detail below.

**Figure 2.2: Ten steps to designing, building and sustaining a results-based M&E system**



**Source: Kusek & Rist (2004: 25)**

The ten steps to designing, building and sustaining a results-based M&E system are discussed below.

### **Step 1: Conducting a Readiness Assessment**

This step entails ascertaining the capacity and willingness of a government and its development partners to construct a results-based M&E system. Conducting a readiness assessment involves the following: incentives – which entail identifying what incentives exist that, can encourage the development of an M&E system as well as disincentives that can hamper advancement. This question looks into the need for developing an M&E system, the champions who will be behind the development and use of the system and well as the beneficiaries of the system at large, roles and responsibilities – this aspect is more concerned about defining roles and responsibilities.

An assessment is usually conducted to determine the availability of technical skills to design, implement and manage an M&E system, the available data systems and their quality as well as the technology that is available to support the system, and barriers – the assessment in this context should be undertaken to determine the impediments in the successful implementation of the M&E system. The assessment should unearth if there is deficiency of financial resources, no political will and no champion to drive implementation of the system. This exercise should identify strategies to overcome the barriers. According to Imas and Rist (2009:115) international best practice indicates that a successful establishment and implementation of an M&E system should be anchored on a clear mandate for M&E at the national level, strong leadership and cooperation at most senior levels of government, dependable information which may be applied for policy and management decisions, and a civil society that is amenable to establishing a partnership with government.

Once the readiness assessment has been concluded, senior government officials will have to decide whether or not to proceed with constructing a results-based M&E system.

### **Step 2: Agreeing on performance outcomes to monitor and evaluate**

This step should focus on formulating the outcomes and impacts the organisation is trying to achieve rather than focusing on implementation issues such as inputs, activities and outputs. It is important to understand that resource allocation should be driven by strategic outcomes and impacts which should be derived from the strategic priorities of government as a whole. This process should take into cognizance national or sector goals that have been pronounced, political promises made and the government's commitment on the Millennium Development Goals.

Agreeing on the outcomes should be understood as a political process which necessitates a buy-in, agreement and commitment from all stakeholders. Once the outcomes have been agreed upon it is critical that the indicators are framed in such a way that they are able to measure progress of the attainment of the outcomes. It is therefore clear that agreeing on the outcomes forms a crucial element of designing and developing a results-based M&E system.

### **Step 3: Selecting key indicators to monitor outcomes**

According to Imas and Rist (2009: 117), an indicator is a measure that, when tracked systematically over time, indicates progress (or lack thereof) towards a target. This principle of formulating is based on the saying that what gets measured gets done. Indicators answer the question: how will we know success when we see it? In the new M&E systems all indicators should be quantitative and qualitative indicators can be developed later when the M&E system is more mature.

Developing indicators is a core activity in building an M&E system, it drives all subsequent data collection, analysis and reporting (Imas & Rist 2009: 117).

There is general consensus that indicators should meet the 'CREAM' criteria or standards, that is, they should be clear (precise and unambiguous), relevant (appropriate to the subject at hand), economic (available at reasonable cost), adequate (able to provide sufficient basis to assess performance) and monitorable (amenable to independent validation).

Kusek and Rist (2004) argue that the performance indicators selected, and the data collection strategies used to collect information on these indicators, need to be grounded in reality. It is therefore crucial that this process should consider the data systems that are in existent, the type of data that need to be produced and the capacity that exists to process the data.

### **Step 4: Gathering baseline data on indicators**

This step maintains that knowing where one is before embarking on any future planning is important. It therefore calls for the description and measurement of initial conditions in order to be able to measure progress or a lack thereof. Imas and Rist (2009: 119) argue that performance baseline is critical as it provides information about performance on an indicator at the beginning of the intervention. It is noted that baseline data can be obtained from written records (paper and electronic), people working with policy, programme or project, the

general public, trained observers, mechanical measurements and tests as well as geographical information systems.

Once the sources of baseline data have been selected, the next step would be to identify and develop data-collection instruments. Examples of such instruments are surveys, interviews, and observations. Baseline data can be collected from either primary or secondary sources.

### **Step 5: Planning for improvements: selecting realistic targets**

Targets are formulated after the indicators have been developed which marks the final step in developing a performance framework. Kusek and Rist (2004: 91) agree that “... in essence, targets are the quantifiable levels of the indicators that a country, society or organization wants to achieve by any given time.” Given that outcomes and impacts can be achieved over a relatively long period of time, targets are useful in gauging progress toward an outcome and impact to be achieved, in what timeframe and with what level of resources. Direct and proxy indicators, as well as the use of both qualitative and quantitative data, can be used to measure performance against targets. Imas and Rist (2009: 122) argue that, if an organisation reaches its targets over a given time, it will have achieved its outcomes provided it has a good theory of change and has successfully driven it. It is critical that the following is considered when setting targets, viz, baseline data, performance trends, a theory of change and a way of disaggregating it into a set of time-bound achievements, financial and human resources over the timeframe of the target, political considerations, organisational or managerial experience in delivering the programmes or projects at hand.

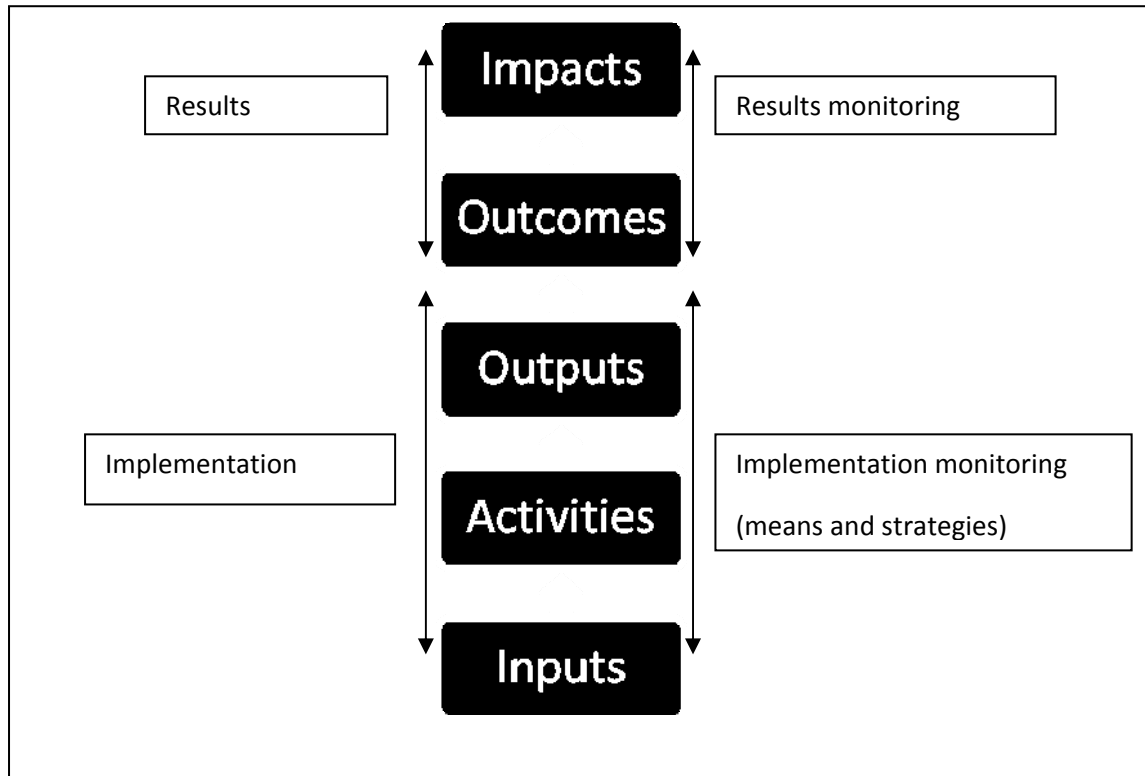
### **Step 6: Monitoring for results**

According to Imas and Rist (2009: 124), a results-based monitoring system tracks both implementation (inputs, activities and outputs) and results (outcomes and impacts). Linking implementation monitoring to results monitoring is crucial.

It is clear that an effective M&E system should be supported with requisite resources such as budget and personnel, especially in the light of the fact that it involves administrative and institutional tasks such as establishing data collection, analysis, and reporting guidelines, designating personnel for specific tasks or activities; establishing quality control measures, determining timeframes and costs, and establishing guidelines on the transparency and dissemination of information.

The diagram below makes it clear that all the facets of M&E are important and interrelated. The diagram shows linkages that are encapsulated in the Theory of Change that was discussed in detail earlier in this chapter under 2.7.

**Figure 2.3: Relationship and linkages between monitoring and evaluation**



**Source: Imas and Rist (2009: 124), adapted from Binnendijk, 2000**

Imas and Rist (2009: 127) maintain that ownership, management, maintenance and credibility are critical in developing and sustaining a successful and effective M&E system.

It should be noted that the entire value chain of M&E should be considered and each of the elements are important in their own right.

### **Step 7: Using evaluation information**

Evaluation is critical as it supplements information obtained through monitoring progress towards outcomes and impacts. Imas and Rist (2009: 127) argue that while monitoring focuses on what is being done relative to indicators, targets and outcomes, evaluation is concerned about whether or not we are doing the right things (strategy), doing things right (operations) and if there are better ways of doing things (learning).

Evaluation goes beyond monitoring and begins to confirm or challenge causal assumptions about a particular problem or issue being addressed using theory-based evaluation and logic models.

Imas and Rist (2009: 128) note that evaluation can be used in addition to monitoring in the following circumstances: When there is an unexpected result or performance that needs further investigation; when resource or budget allocations are being made across policies, programmes or projects; when a decision has to be made whether or not to expand a pilot; when there is a long period with no improvement without a clear explanation as to why; when similar programmes or policies report divergent outcomes or when indicators for the same outcome reveal divergent trends; and when learning about the merit, worth and significance of the programme or policy.

It is important that information obtained through an M&E system be qualitative and trustworthy in order to be relied upon.

### **Step 8: Reporting Findings**

This step entails taking into account what the M&E findings will be used for and understanding the audiences to which the findings will be presented. The emphasis is on ensuring that the presentation of performance data is clear and in an understandable form.

According to Kusek and Rist (2004: 130), M&E findings play many different roles and can be used to demonstrate accountability, e.g. to deliver on political promises made to citizenry and other stakeholders, to convince people using evidence gathered from the findings; to educate – when reporting findings with an aim of helping organisations, to explore and investigate to determine what works, what does not and why, to document for the purposes of recording and creating an institutional memory and to involve and engage stakeholders through a participatory process, demonstrating results to help gain support among stakeholders and to promote understanding by reporting results to enhance understanding of policies, programmes and projects.

Knowing and targeting the audience entails developing a communications strategy which will answer the following questions: who will receive what information; in what format, when, who will prepare the information, and who will deliver the information.

Kusek and Rist (2004: 130) argue that everyone with an interest in the findings should be constantly and regularly informed of progress so as to avoid any surprises. This can even be done informally by way of phone calls, email, fax and conversations. The data or findings should be presented in a concise manner. Data should be presented in a simple, clear and easily understandable format and only the most important data should be presented. Acronyms and jargon should be avoided (Kusek & Rist, 2004: 133).

Against the above background, it is clear that the manner in which, and the time when, the findings are presented have a bearing on their usefulness to the targeted audience.

### **Step 9: Using the Findings**

This step looks at the uses of M&E findings, additional benefits of using the findings, as well as strategies for sharing information.

Kusek and Rist (2004: 138) argue that the main purpose of building an M&E system is to use findings to improve performance. It is therefore important that the findings reach the intended users in time so that it becomes useful.

The uses of M&E systems have been adequately explained above. OECD (2001: 60) notes that “... evaluation feedback has been broadly defined as a dynamic process which involves the presentation and dissemination of evaluation information in order to ensure its application into new or existing development activities. Feedback, as distinct from dissemination of evaluation findings, is the process of ensuring that lessons learnt are incorporated into new operations”.

M&E findings can also be used to promote knowledge and learning in governments and organisations. “Learning in the context of a results-based M&E system has been described as a continuous dynamic process of investigation where the key elements are experience, knowledge, access and relevance. Learning requires a culture of inquiry and investigation, rather than one of response and reporting” (UNDP, 2002: 77).

Kusek and Rist (2004: 143) argue that when M&E systems are utilised effectively they can be an institutionalised form of learning and knowledge. According to UNDP (2002: 76) “... a monitoring and evaluation framework that generates knowledge, promotes learning and guides action is, in its own right, an important means of capacity development and sustainability of national results”.

However, the ability of M&E findings to generate knowledge and learning can be undermined by a number of factors such as organisational culture which inhibits openness and learning, pressure to spend and thus pressure to achieve targets which is normally characterized by shortcuts being taken, lack of incentives that encourage learning, tunnel vision, when staff are jammed in the old ways of doing things, loss of institutional memory usually caused by rotation of staff or consultants appointed on a short-term basis, insecurity amongst staff usually as a result of ambiguous objectives or constant shift of departmental priorities (Kusek & Rist, 2004: 145).

According to Kusek and Risk (2004: 147), there are a number of strategies that governments and organisations can employ to disseminate M&E findings or information. These strategies include using the media as an essential partner, passing laws that promote freedom of speech and access to information, introducing e-government, publishing information on internal and external internet sites, issuing for public consumption yearly budget reports, interacting with civil society and citizen groups, firming up parliamentary oversight mechanisms, reinforcement the role of the Office of the Auditor General and keeping development partners updated of M&E findings.

### **Step 10: Sustaining the M&E System within the Organisation**

The final step of Kusek and Rist's (2004) model of developing a results-based M&E system, is sustaining the system itself. This step emphasises that an M&E system should be viewed as a long-term phenomenon as opposed to a short-term effort limited to the duration of the policy, programme or project.

This M&E step looks at six critical elements of the process of sustaining a results-based M&E system, viz, the significance of incentives and disincentives, likely challenges to be experienced, validating and evaluating M&E systems and information and M&E systems inspiring constructive cultural change in governments and organisations.

Kusek and Rist (2004: 152), argue that the following components are critical in sustaining results-based M&E systems, namely: a sustained demand and use for M&E information as opposed to ad hoc and episodic information needs, clear roles and responsibilities as well as formal organisational and political lines of authority, trustworthy and credible information which is transparent and available to all stakeholders, accountability which is not selective and sees to it that information produced is timely, accurate, available and responds directly to



government performance, capacity which entails both technical and managerial skills, modern technologies and financial resources required to sustain the system; incentives which include acknowledging and rewarding success, addressing problems when they arise and valuing organisational learning.

Incentives necessary for sustaining results-based M&E systems include clarity of roles and responsibilities, financial and other physical rewards, activity support such as financial support, hiring competent staff and partners with the right attitudes, instilling a culture that encourages and complements good work, showing use of M&E data and displaying this in an interesting manner and providing feedback to data collectors and information providers on how their data was used. Disincentives on the other hand are the direct opposites of the incentives mentioned above (Kusek & Rist, 2004: 158).

Possible problems in sustaining a results-based M&E system would include personnel training needs, system cost and feasibility, changes in legislative and organisational priorities, fear and resistance from programme managers, and politics.

More often than not, M&E systems encounter political challenges as opposed to technical ones. This is as M&E systems bring about cultural changes in the way organisations operate. M&E systems are meant to bring about positive cultural changes that lead to improved performance, enhanced accountability and transparency, and learning and knowledge (Kusek & Rist, 2004: 160). All of the challenges cited above are dealt with in detail under the next point of discussion in this study.

This final step provides a logical, strategic link with the institutionalisation of M&E systems. It may be argued that institutionalisation is possibly one of the forms of sustaining an M&E system in an organisation.

## **2.8 Institutionalising M&E**

It can be deduced from analysing the above literature review that building an M&E system consists of three critical elements; namely, designing a framework, undertaking the building process of an M&E system; and, lastly, building capacity or institutionalising an M&E system. This final element of institutionalising an M&E system is examined in this section.

It should be noted that institutionalisation goes beyond just organisational arrangements. In fact the key issues to consider in this regard are governance, value systems, structural arrangements, human resources, training, professional associations as well as linkages of M&E to related functions such as policy, research, information, communication and decision making.

### **2.8.1 Governance**

Governance requires that the role of the state, e.g. the developmental state and its roles, the nature of the state including its structure as well as the relationship of the state and civil society, should be understood and appropriately contextualised when developing an M&E system. Holistic, integrated, seamless governance is crucial among all governance structures starting with the legislature, to the executive, judiciary, boards of entities, and the different spheres of government. The relationship amongst these structures and between the structures and the civil society is also vital. Leadership on the other hand means there must be a political will to have M&E in the organisation. Political champions can also be appointed to provide leadership in M&E.

It may be argued that governance is an overarching phenomenon which is inclusive of leadership and management, structural considerations, functions to be performed in the M&E and human resource skills and requirements.

The GWM&EF (2007: 14) serves as a springboard and a cornerstone for institutionalization of M&E in government. This is one of the key issues investigated by this study; namely, the institutional requirements of M&E in government employing a case study approach.

The framework entrusts the responsibility for M&E to all levels in an organisation, ranging from the political office bearers and executive heads right down to programme managers, dedicated M&E units and accounting officers. The institutional arrangements were assessed against the following key criteria, viz, the use of M&E information and findings, the people who will be using the information and the level at which M&E occurs. The criteria were analysed against the various organisational designs and structure models. The aim was to assess whether these designs and models supported a successful implementation of an M&E system in the organisation.

The researcher noted that great strides had been made in government in respect of M&E which manifested itself through, amongst other things, the establishment of the Department

of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) and its placement in the Presidency in 2009. The location of M&E in the highest office of government demonstrated the President's seriousness about service delivery and performance of government. This is amplified in the DPME's vision which entails striving for continuous improvement in service delivery through performance monitoring and evaluation (DPME Strategic Plan 2012/13 - 15/16).

Various institutional arrangements of M&E to include locating an M&E unit in the planning unit, M&E unit as a standalone unit, M&E sub-contracted out, and M&E unit located in the operations unit. These options are assessed in Chapter Two, with a focus on their pros and cons.

### **2.8.2 Value system**

According to VOPEs (2013: 268), the SAMEA board has actively advocated the integration of the values of equity, gender, social justice, empowerment, improvement and internal locus of accountability into evaluation. The values in question must be coherent and must have a golden thread binding them. The SAMEA board has always emphasised a need to go beyond values that may arguably be implicit in many evaluation approaches to mainstream explicit values in evaluation through its conferences and workshops.

The value system and culture of an organisation are critical in the institutionalisation of an M&E system. This includes whether or not the management and staff in general of an organisation appreciate the value of M&E, accept M&E as an important decision-making tool and have a positive attitude towards M&E. All of this could be manifested through the support the management provides to M&E which could be through the allocation of requisite resources.

The value system also integrates issues of transparency, openness, integrity, trustworthiness and accountability in relation to M&E in an organisation.

The value system is part of what the researcher may call 'softer issues', critical in the institutionalisation of M&E, such as the right skills, paradigms and culture of an organisation, existence of shared values and organisational culture, management buy-in, staff commitment, hard and soft elements, citizen and stakeholder participation in the process.

### 2.8.3 Structural arrangements

Structural considerations examine where M&E can be located in an organisation. Various options can be considered, looking at their pros and cons. The options include locating M&E in operational units within an organisation, in independent units either in centralised units or decentralised units, or in supporting functions either in one unit or in different units. M&E can also be outsourced.

Valadez and Bamberger (1994: 411) argue that the way M&E is organised or institutionalised will have a significant impact on the kinds of studies that are conducted and how the M&E practitioners conduct their work in general.

In examining the various options regarding the location or structural arrangements for M&E it became clear that locating an M&E unit in the planning unit is advantageous because the M&E functions are better linked to policy and planning processes, the M&E unit is likely to play a stronger role in regular review processes and there are better opportunities to mainstream M&E in an organisation. This location seems to be in keeping with the option of locating M&E in corporate services or in a unit with similar functions such as policy and planning. However, this arrangement has its own limitations in that it is characterised by less authority, autonomy and power, there are more bureaucratic processes, it can be managed by a person who may not be technically proficient in M&E and the M&E spokesperson may not be an advocate of M&E.

The M&E Unit as a standalone unit has the advantage that it has more autonomy, authority and power, there is quicker decision making and there are less bureaucratic procedures. This may be classified as a centralised approach especially if the M&E unit reports directly to the Head of Department. However, some argue that in this scenario M&E may be seen by staff as a policing function, it may be difficult to mainstream M&E within the organisation or within planning and policy processes.

The other option is decentralisation wherein M&E is placed in the operations management or programme management branch of an organisation. This is not ideal as staff may not see the distinction between M&E and programme management.

In an interview with Professor de Coning on 19 August 2013 he argues that sub-contracting out M&E is not an option in the South African context and it was therefore not examined in this study. He argues that the disadvantages and costs of this option far outweigh the benefits.

#### **2.8.4 Human resources**

Integral to the institutionalisation of M&E is human resource requirements which entail having M&E practitioners with requisite knowledge, skills and competencies to do their job. Such practitioners should be lateral thinkers with the ability to integrate cross-sectoral issues and should also have a strong conceptual understanding of M&E concepts and methodology. In their entirety M&E units should have the same skills, and more advanced units should possess analytical, quantitative and qualitative as well as good technical skills, and statistical analysis ability.

#### **2.8.5 Training**

The Public Administration and Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA) have designed a curriculum framework for M&E in the public service even though there are concerns of slow implementation thereof. Various universities and other service training providers offer a range of relevant Masters Degrees, diploma courses as well as certificates and short courses in the field of M&E.

Individual capacities should be developed to be able to implement and manage evaluation. VOPEs (2013: 182) notes that, in the context of Indonesia, developing individual capacities enables M&E practitioners to check the quality of their M&E system design, assess an evaluation plan, assess relevance and address ethical issues in evaluation.

It is clear that the provided training should be multi-faceted and cover areas of management and technical skills. Training should take into account the links M&E has to related fields such as policy, research, information, communication, decision making and statistical analysis.

#### **2.8.6 Professional support**

The value of professional associations, e.g. SAMEA, AFREA, EES and AEA, to expand M&E capacity should be appreciated. All of these add to government's efforts to set norms and standards for evaluations and evaluators and thus to professionalise M&E.

VOPEs (2013: 183) argues that professional associations provide a platform for engaging and influencing key stakeholders in M&E such as government officials, members of parliament, academia, M&E officials working in NGOs, CSOs or projects or programmes funded by donor agencies, independent evaluators and media people.

Rabie (2010: 12) argues that a South Africa's M&E system should follow best practices and be driven from the top level by a capable, respected ministry. It should also focus on outcomes or results of public programmes and policies, be institutionalised in core government processes such as planning and budgeting and should give guidelines to ensure the use of evaluation information.

According to Rabie (2010: 13), the World Bank has summarised lessons which are a prerequisite to the successful institutionalisation of M&E systems in government and these include a substantive demand for M&E systems and the information they produce, avoiding over-engineering (e.g. too many indicators and M&E systems and excessive data collection) which does not necessarily produce a successful system, suitable structural arrangements of an M&E system (e.g. a powerful, capable ministry should drive M&E), a diagnosis of the strengths and weaknesses of existing M&E systems, introducing incentives to ensure good M&E systems and utilisation of evaluation information, developing reliable data systems to ensure good quality information and existence of technical capacity among officials to design and implement M&E systems.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

Following the literature review, it became clear to the researcher that M&E is key to the success of any organisation. In fact, it is through M&E that an organisation can determine its success or failure. If utilised properly, M&E is an extremely useful and effective tool, which therefore calls for its users to appreciate the dynamics and intricacies around it. Users need to appreciate the meanings and definitions of M&E, the contexts, perspectives and approaches to M&E as well as the uses and purpose of M&E. The existence of an M&E system becomes necessary especially if an organisation wants to achieve the full benefits of M&E which might otherwise not be realised if ad hoc and haphazard means are employed.

The Kusek and Rist ten-step process of designing, building and sustaining a results-based M&E system has proven to be comprehensive and ideal for adoption by organisations. It also

became clear from the literature review that the success of an M&E system was dependent on its institutionalisation in an organisation. A red flag was also raised against the risk of tending to limit institutionalisation, as both a concept and phenomenon, to structural, organisational arrangements. Institutionalisation has to be looked into holistically and consider the issues of governance, value systems, structural arrangements, human resources, skills, training, professional support and association.

## **CHAPTER 3: OVERVIEW OF POLICY AND LEGISLATION RELATED TO M&E**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides an overview of the policy and legislation related to M&E in South Africa. It should be acknowledged that the policy and legislative frameworks of M&E in South Africa have developed over the years, especially since 1995, to what it is today. Relevant frameworks will be unpacked with a view to determining the extent to which they promoted M&E in the country.

Special consideration will be given to how the policy and legislation on M&E shaped and supported the process of the development and institutionalisation of the M&E systems in government. The previous chapter provided the context for this, especially from theoretical and conceptual perspectives.

### **3.2 The Constitution of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996)**

In its preamble the Constitution lays the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people. It also lays a foundation for the improvement of the quality of life of all citizens. The preamble serves as a solid base which calls for government to be able to quantify services it delivers to its citizens. In this research study, the literature review explicitly revealed the strengths of M&E to achieve all of these ideals in the Constitution.

Sections 195-197 of the Constitution deal with public administration and serve as a cornerstone for M&E. Section 195 focuses on basic values and principles governing public administration and defines how public administration must be run if it is to meet its objectives and satisfy the needs of the citizenry.

Section 195(1) stipulates that public administration must be governed by the democratic values and principles enshrined in the Constitution which include that “ ... a high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained, efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted, public administration must be development-oriented, services



must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias, people's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making, public administration must be accountable, transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information, good human-resource management and career-development practices, to maximise human potential, must be cultivated, public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation”.

According to Section 195(2) of the Constitution, the above principles apply to administration in every sphere of government, organs of state and to public enterprises. The Constitution further makes provision for government to put in place legislative and other measures to give effect and regulate the above matters.

Section 196 establishes the Public Service Commission which is independent, must be impartial and “... must exercise its powers and perform its functions without fear, favour or prejudice in the interest of the maintenance of effective and efficient public administration and a high standard of professional ethics in the public service”.

Section 196(4) outlines the powers and functions of the Commission which include promoting the values and principles set out in Section 195 throughout the public service, investigating, monitoring and evaluating the organisation and administration and the personnel practices of the public service, and proposing measures to ensure effective and efficient performance of the public services.

Section 197 discusses the public service which is imbedded in public administration. This section states that public service must function and be structured in terms of national legislation and must loyally execute the lawful policies of the government of the day. It also outlines the roles and responsibilities surrounding recruitment, appointment, promotion, transfer and dismissal of employees. Human resources are a crucial element of effective M&E systems.

Chapter 2 of the Constitution on the Bill of Rights also gives citizens certain rights to take against the state if they believe their constitutional rights have been violated, and to have access to information held by the state which they need in order to be able to do so.

Chapters 4 to 7 of the Constitution deal with parliament or the legislative authority and executive authorities at national as well as legislatures or legislative authorities and executive authorities at provincial level stating their powers and functions. It must be mentioned that part of those powers and functions include issues of oversight and ensuring accountability over governmental bodies which are predominantly elements of M&E.

Lastly, Chapter 9 of the Constitution establishes and vests the powers and functions of institutions supporting constitutional democracy, part of which is the public protector and the Auditor-General. Part of the functions of these institutions is to promote M&E in government.

### **3.3 Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999)**

This Act is reviewed in the study in order to identify aspects that promote M&E in Government. Section 36 of the PFMA makes provision for the appointment of an accounting officer of department.

Section 38(1) states that the accounting officer of a department, trading entity or constitutional institution must put in place effective, efficient and transparent systems of financial and risk management and internal control as well as appropriate procurement and provisioning system which is fair, equitable, transparent, competitive and cost-effective. The accounting officer is therefore given overall responsibility in respect of sound governance issues.

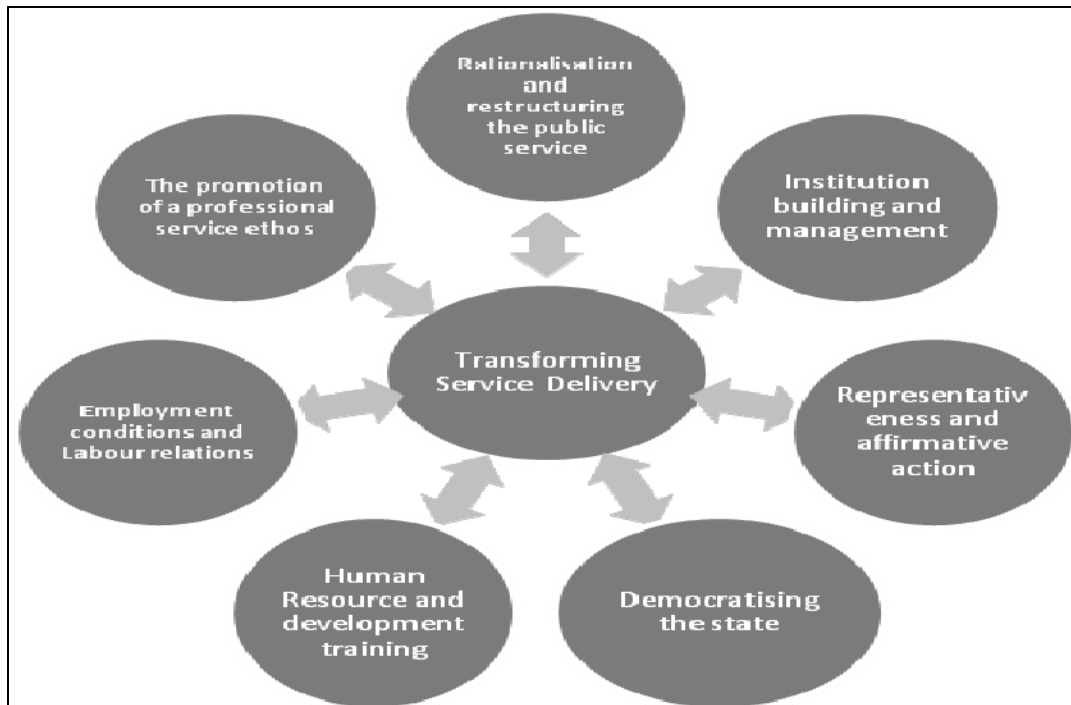
The Treasury Regulations for departments, trading entities, constitutional institutions and public entities issued by National Treasury in terms of the PFMA, 1999, elucidate more on the issues relating to M&E. The Regulations make provision for the MTEF planning as a basis for operational objectives.

### **3.4 The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997 (Batho Pele White Paper)**

The purpose of the Batho Pele White Paper (1997) is to provide a policy framework and a practical implementation strategy for the transformation of public service delivery. The White

Paper is primarily about how public services are provided, and specifically about improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the way in which services are delivered. It is not so much about what should be delivered. However, it stresses that decisions about what should be delivered will only be improved through the Batho Pele approach. The White Paper, in line with the Constitution, calls on national and provincial departments to make service delivery a priority. The White Paper argues that access to decent public services is no longer a privilege to be enjoyed by a few; it is now a rightful expectation of all citizens, especially those previously disadvantaged. Batho Pele is all about ‘putting people first’ in service delivery. It promotes that citizens should be treated like customers.

**Figure 3.1: Key transformation priorities when transforming service delivery**



**Source: Batho Pele White Paper (1997:9)**

In transforming the public service, the White Paper requires government departments to identify a mission statement for service delivery together with service guarantees, the services to be provided, to which groups, and at what service charges. They also need to stipulate the principle of affordability and the principle of redirecting resources to areas and groups previously under-resourced in line with the RDP, service standards, defined outputs and targets and performance indicators benchmarked against comparable international standards, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and structures designed to measure progress and introduce corrective action where appropriate, plans for staffing, human

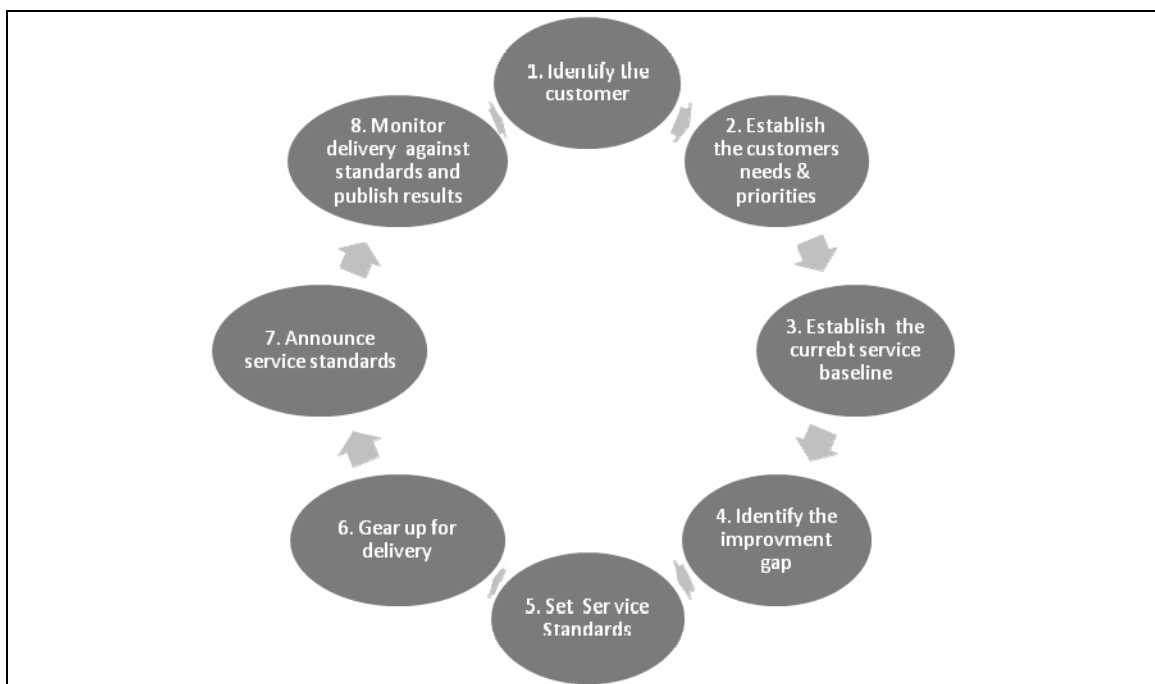
resource development and organisational capacity building, tailored to service delivery needs, the redirection of human and other resources from administrative tasks to service provision, particularly for disadvantaged groups and areas, financial plans that “link budgets directly to service needs and personnel plans, potential partnerships with the private sector, NGOs and CBOs which will provide more effective forms of service delivery, and the development, particularly through training, of a culture of customer care and of approaches to service delivery that are sensitive to issues of race, gender and disability”.

In essence, the above should be contained in service delivery plans for M&E to effectively take place and be able to realise the benefits thereof. The eight principles of Batho Pele, as determined in the White Paper, are (1) consultation, which demands that citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public services they receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice about the services that are offered, (2) service standards, which entail telling citizens the level and quality of public services they will receive so that they are aware of what to expect, (3) access, which calls for all citizens to have equal access to the services to which they are entitled, (4) courtesy, which dictates that citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration, (5) information, which entails giving citizens full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive, (6) openness and transparency which calls for citizens to be told how national and provincial departments are run, how much they cost, and who is in charge, (7) redress, which dictates that if the promised standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy, and when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic, positive response and, (8) value for money, which calls for public services to be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best possible value for money.

The Batho Pele White Paper (1997) encourages innovation and rewarding of excellence; harnessing of skills and energy of public servants; assessment of the performance of individual staff in contributing to improving service delivery and ensuring a conducive environment and enhanced staff capacity for the delivery of services. The White Paper also calls upon government to establish partnerships with a wider community wherein business and industry, NGOs, CBOs and academic institutions have a role to play in improving service delivery to citizens.

The Batho Pele White Paper (1997) acknowledges that improved service delivery cannot be left to chance and accordingly introduces institutional mechanisms for service delivery transformation, which include a service commitment charter and service delivery improvement plans. These entail, amongst others, the following: setting out the existing levels of service and the proposed service standards to be adopted in the short, medium and long term; outlining how service standards will be monitored and reported on; depicting organisational and systems arrangements which will ensure that standards are met.

**Figure 3.2: Eight steps to improved service delivery**



**Source: Batho Pele White Paper (1997:26)**

It is clear from the above diagram that service delivery can only be improved if mechanisms are put in place to give impetus to it. The eight steps suggest that there needs to be a systematic and logical process to improved service delivery.

### **3.5 Green Paper: Improving Government Performance: Our Approach, 2009**

A number of mechanisms have been put in place by way of policy frameworks and legislative means with a view to managing performance in government. Unfortunately these mechanisms are fragmented with roles and responsibilities for their implementation also vested in different governmental bodies.

This Green Paper is an aggressive means through which government is trying to rectify the above challenges which characterise M&E in government. Although it is a Green Paper at this stage, which is predominantly a discussion document, it seeks to provide a strategic direction and close the vacuum on M&E in the country.

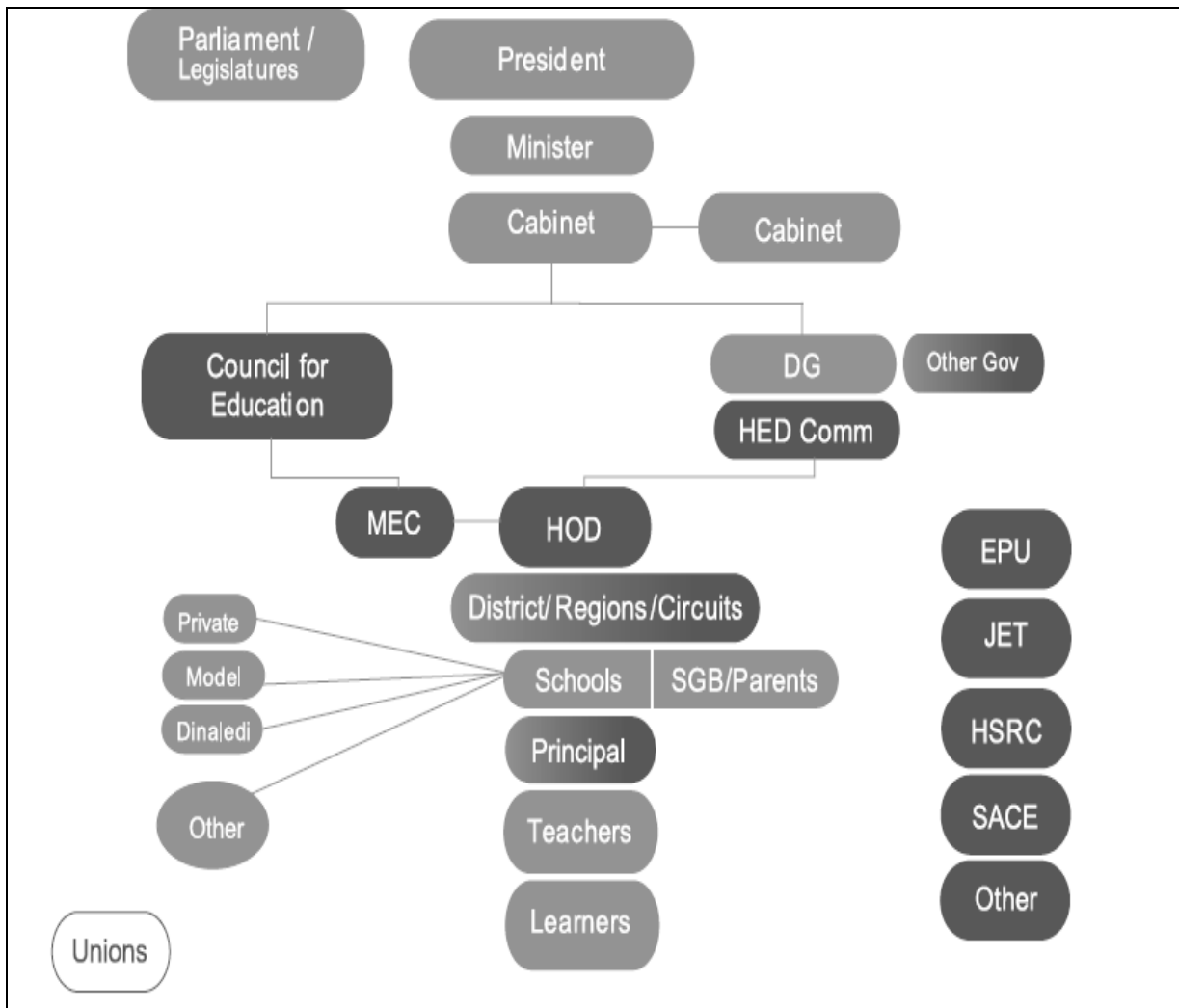
The Green Paper introduces the outcomes approach to service delivery. It acknowledges that previous government's focus on outputs and increased expenditure on service has not yielded the desired results. It provides for government to agree on the 25 to 30 outcomes based on the Medium-Term Strategic Framework which relates to the five priorities of government of education, health, job creation, rural development and safety and security.

The outcome-based performance management approach entails the following facets agreeing on the outcomes, key outputs and performance indicators as well as identifying key activities and inputs required to achieve the outputs, setting up institutional arrangements for outcomes performance management including signing of performance agreements between the president and ministers, establishing service delivery forums which enforce coordination and integration and bringing on board all relevant stakeholders critical for service delivery. Forums may comprise of a Minister, MECs, NGOs and CBOs relevant to the achievement of a particular outcome, service delivery agreements produced through a negotiation process by the service delivery forum and establishing the delivery units which may focus on a particular outcome, e.g. health.

The Green Paper draws a clear relationship between M&E and performance management which was alluded to in Chapter One. It suggests that M&E should not be dealt with in isolation but should be seen as an integral part of Performance Management. The context being introduced here by the Green Paper is commitment to service delivery which is demonstrated through the signing of and entering into service delivery agreements and establishment of forums.

The diagram below depicts a relationship amongst the key stakeholders in service delivery as envisaged by the Green Paper. It also highlights the service delivery structures and forums and how they should relate to each other. Of significance is that the relationship and structures are multi-disciplinary cut across public and private sectors, and include both the providers of services and the recipients. Oversight structures such as parliament and legislatures are also part of the matrix.

**Figure 3.3: A typical governance structure of the outcomes performance management approach**



**Source: Green Paper: Improving Government Performance (2009: 10)**

The Green Paper: Improving Government Performance (2009: 12 - 17) lists the following principles of outcome performance management: caters for measurement of politically designated outcomes for accountability and focuses on sectors rather than departments, builds on previous initiatives as it is aligned to the National Strategic Plan, the country's Vision 2025, the annual MTSF, existing sectoral and intergovernmental forums and M&E processes, links performance monitoring, planning and coordination, recognises the intergovernmental budgeting cycle, links with the Government-Wide-Monitoring and Evaluation Policy Framework, links to existing performance management systems, e.g. the individual performance management system driven by DPSA, and recognises the role of the Office of the Auditor-General and its focus on the audit of performance or non-financial information.

It is clear that the Green Paper has introduced remarkable milestones for service delivery and placed an emphasis on performance management. There is no doubt that there would have been great improvement had the Green Paper being developed further, adopted as a policy and implemented in full.

### **3.6 Policy Framework for the Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System (GWM&E), 2007**

GWM&EF was introduced by the presidency in 2007 with a view to coordinate M&E within government for better results. The policy framework aims to create a common understanding of M&E, describe the GWM&EF system, outline institutional arrangements for M&E, explain how the system should be implemented as well as define the key concepts in M&E.

It should be noted that GWM&EF is an overarching policy framework for M&E in the South African government. It sketches the policy context for supporting frameworks which will be looked later on in this research paper such as the National Treasury's Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information, Statistics South Africa's South African Statistics Quality Assurance Framework (SASQAF) and now the presidency's National Evaluation Policy Framework. The policy framework is applicable to all entities in the national, provincial and local spheres of government.

The framework emphasises the importance of M&E in measuring government's performance and effectiveness of its programmes. However, it acknowledges the complex, multi-disciplinary and skill intensive nature of M&E.

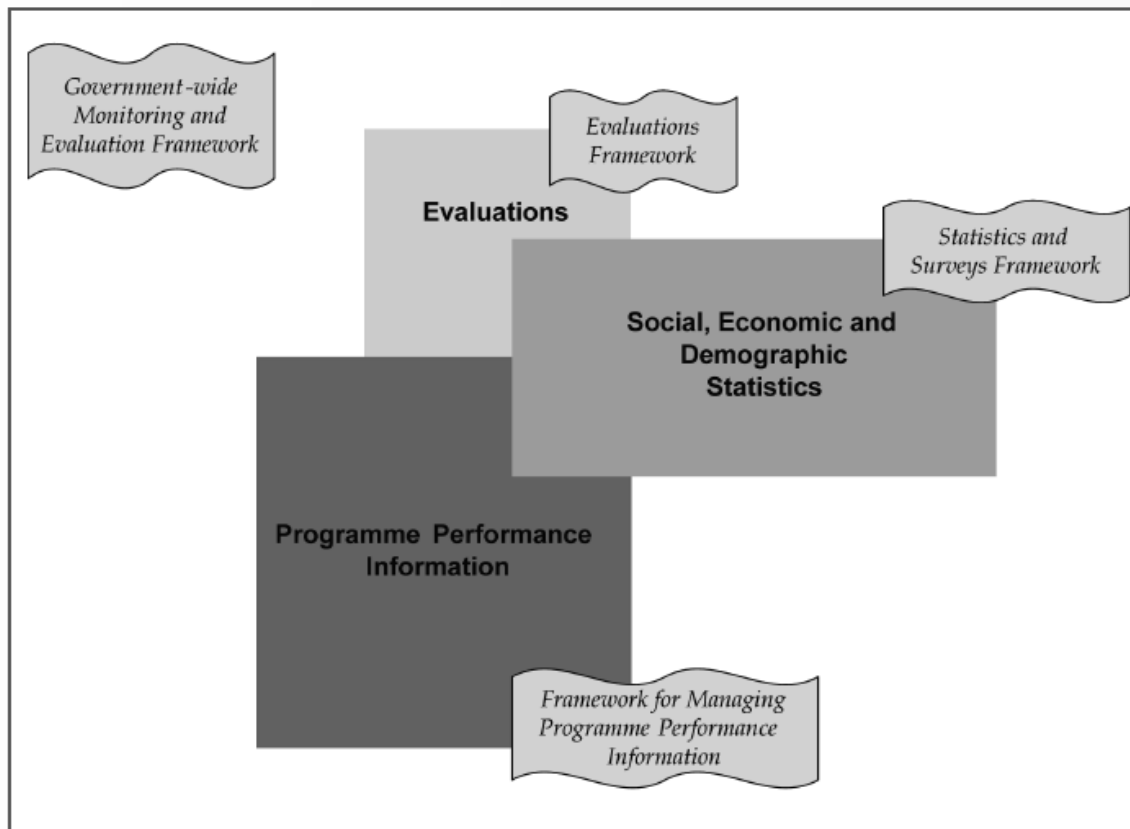
The researcher noted that the principles of the GWM&EF placed emphasis on soft issues which are often neglected in policy management. This policy framework has given consideration to ethics, integrity, transparency, respect, accountability, values, and views these soft issues as key in the successful implementation of M&E and improved service delivery.

The GWM&EF notes that the following should be considered when effectively implementing M&E: linking and integrating M&E with other management systems, building demand by meeting needs, creating a central repository where M&E information can be stored for easy access, making regular follow-ups and ensuring that M&E recommendations are



implemented, creating mechanisms for sharing knowledge and wisdom generated through M&E, building capacity for M&E such as skills, adequate staff, etc.

**Figure 3.4: The three pillars or data terrains of the GWM&EF policy framework**



**Source: GWM&EF (2007:11)**

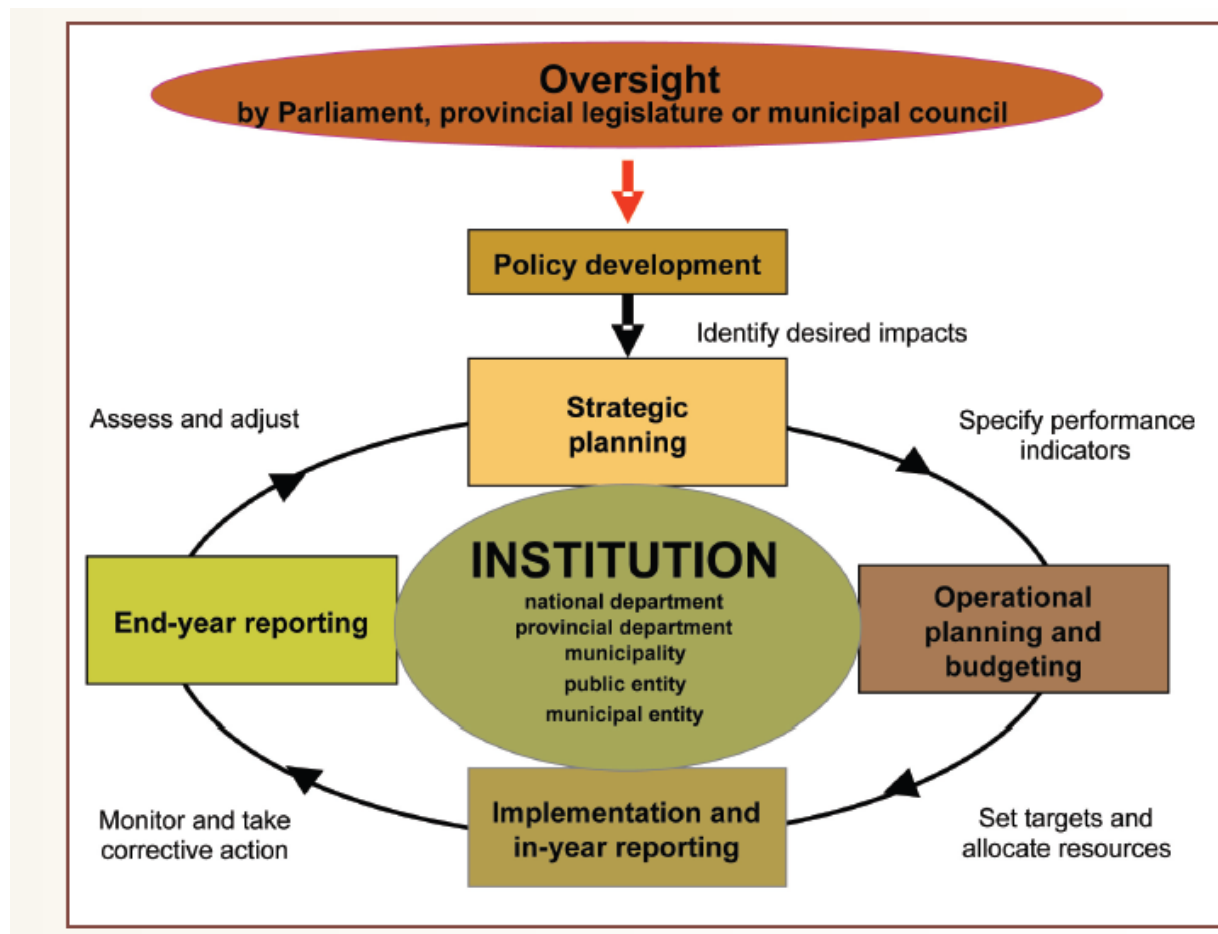
The above diagram has overlaid the key pillars of the GWM&EF framework. It is evident that the government has not fully implemented the GWM&EF considering that this was introduced in 2007 and only one of its pillars, (the framework for Managing Programme Performance Information) was introduced in the same year. The rest of the pillars followed in the subsequent years with the Statistics and Surveys Framework being introduced in 2009 and the Evaluations Framework only in 2011.

### **3.7 Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information, 2007**

This framework is one of the three components of the GWM&EF. Performance information indicates how well an organisation is meeting its aims and objectives, and which policies and processes are working.

The framework aims to provide explanation on definitions and standards in order to produce performance information that supports regular audits of such information where deemed necessary, advance integrated structures, systems and processes essential to manage performance information, delineate roles and responsibilities for managing performance information and foster accountability and transparency through supplying timely, accessible and accurate performance information to the public, municipal councils, legislatures and parliament.

**Figure 3.5: Integration of M&E in other government management processes**

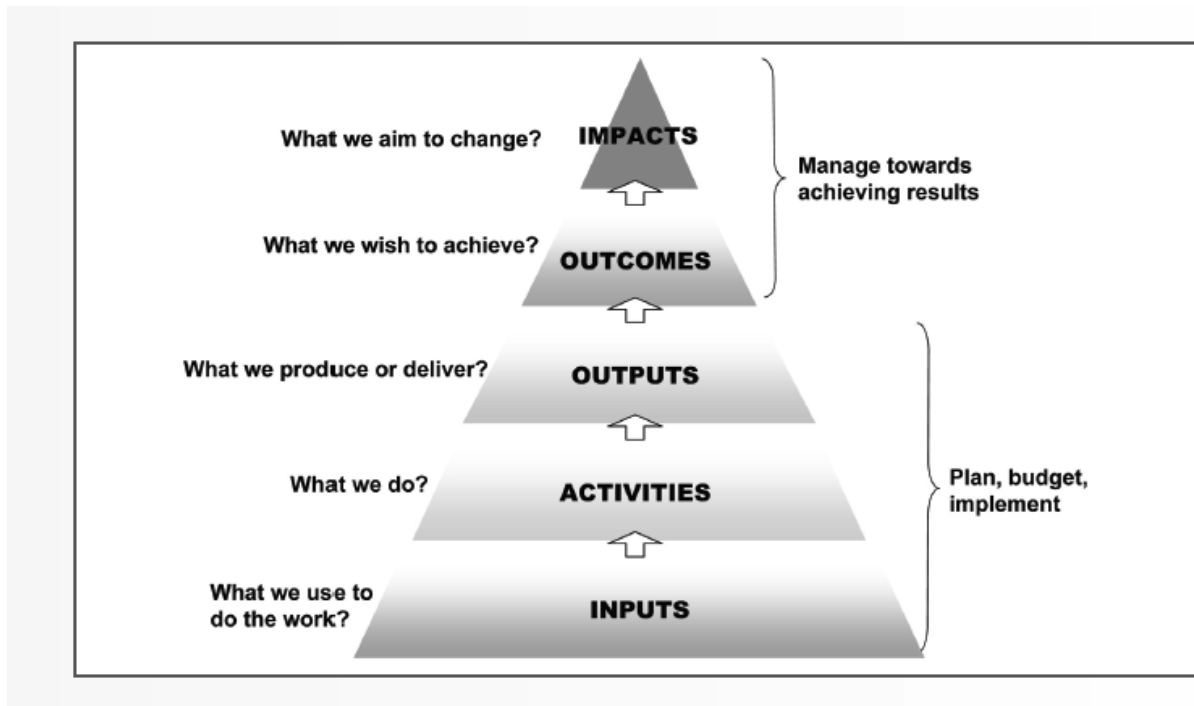


**Source: Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information (2007:4)**

Figure 3.5 above depicts how M&E has been integrated into other government processes such as policy development, strategic planning, operational planning, implementation and in-year reporting as well as end-year reporting. The figure also shows that M&E has been elevated to the legislative structures responsible for oversight.

This being the only framework or pillar that was introduced in the same year, 2007, as the GWM&EF it may follow that the emphasis of government M&E has been placed on this pillar for obvious reasons, as it is the oldest and has reached some level of maturity. This framework marked the beginning of the implementation of the GWM&EF.

**Figure 3.6: Diagram showing the relationship between the core performance information concepts**



**Source: Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information (2007: 6)**

The above diagram explains in simple terms the key concepts used in the framework for Managing Programme Performance Information. This is critical as most often concepts are used without necessarily understanding their correct meanings. Understanding concepts is important in the successful implementation of M&E as people implement things the way they understand them. If concepts are not correctly understood or incorrectly interpreted implementation is likely to be incorrect.

The framework also provides an outline of how M&E should be integrated into other performance management systems; defines the technical capacity required to manage performance information and the systems and processes to be followed in collecting, collating, verifying and storing data and evaluating performance information; guides interaction with stakeholders on the key elements of performance information; and assigns roles and responsibilities to individuals for performance and reporting purposes.

### **3.8 National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF), 2011**

The NEPF provides the basis for a minimum system of evaluation across government. Its aim is to ensure that evidence from evaluation is used for planning, budgeting and on-going project management purposes. The NEPF focuses on and defines the six types of evaluation as diagnosis, synthesis, design evaluation, implementation evaluation and impact evaluation.

The key elements of the NEPF are providing for periodic evaluation of big and strategic programmes as well as which are of major interest or concern to the public, setting minimum standards for planning so that effective evaluation can take place, allowing for the formulation of three year and annual national and provincial evaluation plans, putting evaluation plans in the public domain and ensuring that they are peer reviewed and the results are communicated to different audiences, ensuring that evaluations include recommendations and plans to action and monitor the recommendations, provision of technical support and quality assurance for evaluations by DPME and Office of the Premier, institutions of higher learning are to build evaluation capacity in the country while PALAMA provides appropriate training courses.

The framework seeks to address the challenges currently facing evaluation, such as the, “lack of clear policy and strategic direction around evaluation, a need to promote the use of knowledge from both evaluation and research, confusion on what is evaluation, performance auditing, research, etc., evaluation work existing but not being known, lack of coordination between organizations and fragmentation of approaches, poor quality plans making evaluation difficult, inadequate use of evaluation, leading to a perception that it is a luxury and a lack of institutionalization of evaluation in government” (NEPF, 2011: 27).

The framework confirms what was been articulated during the literature review, that the purposes of evaluation include judging the merit or worth of doing something; improving policy or programme performance, improving accountability and generating knowledge.

The framework says good evaluations should be analytical, systematic, reliable, issue-oriented and user-driven. It also clarifies some of the activities closely associated with evaluations. These include inspection or investigation which detects wrongdoing and verifies information, the performance audit which ensures oversight through assessing performance, review which is a form of evaluation but is less comprehensive, rigorous and in-depth, and

research whose purpose is to test the hypotheses or propositions through observation of reality.

The diagram below explains the different types of evaluation. As alluded to in Chapter One, people use the term M&E as if monitoring and evaluation mean the same thing, yet they are different. This diagram is therefore important as it displays the descriptions of the various types of evaluations thus making it easier to compare information. Worthy of mention is that there are similarities between monitoring and implementation evaluation as both focus on the same aspects of the interventions such as the resources injected, activities carried out, outputs and outcomes achieved and the causal relationship between them.

The NEPF proposes the following calendar for evaluation in terms of new programmes, viz, Year 0 can contain diagnostic evaluation to inform the intervention design, design evaluation to check design and baseline for impact evaluation if one is planned. Year 1 can hold the design evaluation to confirm if the intervention design is correct. During year 2, the implementation evaluation can be conducted to check if the intervention is working appropriately, Year 3 is the interim impact evaluation and implementation evaluation to check if the intervention is working appropriately, and Year 5 is for full implementation. The framework says the principles of all programmes should be evaluated on a five year cycle.

NEPF (2011: 10) categorizes the types of evaluation across government into diagnosis - which is research that is conducted prior to the intervention to establish the current situation and to influence the intervention design, synthesis – which is often used to acquire an overall and comparative outlook of the design, strategic planning, coverage and targeting mechanisms, operation, beneficiary perception, and results, design evaluation - which examines the inner logic and consistency of the programme, usually before it begins or during the initial phases of implementation, implementation evaluation – which looks at activities, outputs and outcomes, use of resources and the causal links and impact evaluation – which measures challenges in outcomes often using experimental or quasi-experimental designs, but should be combined with implementation evaluations to understand the cause-effect relationships.

### **3.9 South African Statistical Quality Assessment Framework (SASQAF), 2009**

This framework acknowledges that, although South Africa has made some progress in respect of the management of statistics, national statistics is still characterised by an information gap in terms of relevant statistics that meet the needs of the users; a quality gap in terms of common standards, including concepts, definitions, classifications, methodologies and sampling frames; as well as a capacity gap in terms of human resources and infrastructure.

It is against this backdrop that the SASQAF, through its flexible structure for the assessment of statistical products, aims to achieve self-assessment by: producers of statistics, by data users based on the producing agency's quality declaration, by international agencies based on the quality declaration, and through reviews performed by a Data Quality Assessment Team (DQAT) in the context of the NSS work.

The framework sets the prerequisites and the eight dimensions of data quality as relevance, accuracy, timeliness, accessibility, interpretability, comparability and coherence, methodological soundness, and integrity. The prerequisites of quality refer to the institutional and organisational conditions that have an impact on data quality such as legal and institutional environment, privacy and confidentiality and commensurability of resources.

The framework provides for certification of statistics in terms of four levels, viz, Level four: these are quality statistics that meet all the quality requirements as set out in the framework. They are 'fit for use' statistics and deductions can be made from them. This level applies to highly-developed statistical activities. Level three: these are classified as acceptable statistics and they meet most, but not all, the quality requirements as articulated in the framework. However, deductions can still be drawn from these statistics despite their limitations. Level two: these statistics are questionable and only meet a few of the quality requirements as stipulated in the framework. Very limited deductions can be made out of them. They are typically not 'fit for use' for the purpose for which they were designed. Level one: these are poor statistics and meet almost none of the quality requirements as stipulated in the framework. No deductions can be made from these statistics.

The categorisation of the levels and quality of statistics is important because it provides the user with information in advance on what type and quality of statistics are provided and thus what type of decisions can be made using such information.

Stats SA has adopted the following principles developed by the Economics and Social Council Statistics Commission of the United Nations in its endeavor to provide users with quality information which holds relevance, impartiality and equal access, professional standards and ethics, accountability and transparency, prevention of misuse, cost-effectiveness, confidentiality, legislation, national coordination, international standards and international cooperation.

### **3.10 Guide to the Outcomes Approach, 2010**

The guide describes the government performance monitoring and evaluation system and the management of the outcomes as approved by cabinet. The 12 outcomes approved by cabinet for the period 2009 to 2014 are as follows: (1) improved quality of basic education, (2) a long and healthy life for all South Africans, (3) all people in South Africa are and feel safe, (4) decent employment through inclusive economic growth, (5) a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path, (6) an efficient, competitive and responsive economic infrastructure network, (7) vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities with food security for all, (8) sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life, (9) a responsive, accountable, effective and efficient local government system, (10) environmental assets and natural resources that are well protected and continually enhanced, (11) to create a better South Africa and contribute to a better and safer Africa and World, and (12) an efficient, effective and development-oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

It should be indicated that there are proposals in place to have outcome 13: social protection and outcome 14: transforming society and uniting the country. However, the two additional outcomes will have to be approved through the normal Cabinet processes.

Each outcome has a set of measurable outputs and sub-outputs accompanied by clear targets. The outcomes approach process follows four steps. Step one is about agreeing on and adopting a set of strategic outcomes with measurable outputs, sub-outputs and activities, step two entails the signing of performance agreements between the president and ministers, step three involves converting high level outputs and metrics into detailed service delivery agreements involving key partners critical for the achievement of outputs and, lastly, step

four, looks into the establishment of effective coordination structures to drive the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of delivery agreements.

It must be mentioned that the outcomes approach is designed to ensure that government is focused on achieving the expected real improvements in the lives of all South Africans. It intends shifting the focus of government from outputs to outcomes.

The outcomes approach focuses on results, makes explicit and testable the chain of logic in our planning, links activities and outcomes and tests what works and what doesn't, ensures that expectations are clear and unambiguous, provides a clear basis for discussion, debate and negotiation about what should be done and how, enables learning and regularly revising and improving policy, strategy and plans through experience, and makes coordination and alignment easier.

The guide also tries to standardise the use of the following terms: inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes. It stipulates that the four components that underpin the outcomes approach are problem analysis, theory of change, intervention logic and clear indicators, baselines and targets.

The guide asserts that for M&E to be effective it needs to be institutionalised and accordingly lists and defines the roles of government departments and agencies that are at the centre of M&E. At national level these are the presidency, National Treasury, Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), Department of Provincial and Local Government, Statistics South Africa and PALAMA, and at provincial level, the Office of the Premier, Provincial Treasuries and line departments. Constitutional institutions are the Public Service Commission, Auditor-General and Human Rights Commission.

The document also provides various perspectives of M&E, starting from an idea of M&E, the balanced scorecard (financial, customer, learning and growth and internal business process perspectives), programme performance perspective; financial perspective, government perspective, human resource management perspective to ethics perspective of M&E. The values and principles of public administration as outlined in Section 195 of the Constitution are also unpacked.

The Developments Indicators, 2011 and the Basic Concepts in Monitoring and Evaluation, 2008 documents were published as an attempt to strengthen M&E in the country however



they are not discussed in the study because they do not constitute an authoritative policy framework on M&E.

### **3.11 Lessons from Best Practices on the South African Legislative and Policy Framework**

This part provides an overview of the lessons learnt on M&E especially in relation to international best practices Rabie (2010: 14 - 18) has summarised the lessons learnt from international best practice, and made the following deductions and conclusions in relation to the South African policy framework, viz, M&E in South Africa has been placed in the highest office i.e. the presidency; existing policy framework does not give specific details on how the outcomes, integration and coordination of M&E at various levels of government will be achieved; the M&E policy framework is vague and does not deal with issues of non-performance and how M&E should be integrated with other government and management functions such as planning and budgeting; SASQAF is complex with no capacity on the part of government to implement it; development indicators do not place significance on environmental matters; lack of capacity by government departments to develop proper measurable indicators; M&E systems as well as management information systems (MIS) are fragmented and uncoordinated; MIS are complicated and sophisticated and thus not easy to employ; lack of skills base to operate these systems; and ad hoc training as opposed to 'massification' which is key to creating sufficient M&E capacity.

At this stage of the research, while acknowledging that this chapter discussed the policy and legislative review related to M&E, it should be indicated that the researcher noted the lessons on M&E shared by Rabie as discussed above. The case study which follows will provide a detailed account of how the department being investigated related to these lessons.

### **3.12 Conclusion**

It is clear from the study that government has made strides in creating a conducive environment for the implementation of M&E through putting in place policy and legislative frameworks. This is evident in the number of the policy frameworks produced; the design thereof, the norms and standards in place as well the thematic areas they cover. However, having frameworks is one issue and implementing them is another.

The researcher agrees with Rabie's lessons as covered in 3.13 above. These lessons were taken into consideration in the case study.

Both the policy and legislative frameworks on M&E formed the basis of the case study which is dealt with in detail in chapter 4 and the subsequent chapter 5 on the research findings.

# **CHAPTER 4: CASE STUDY AND FIELDWORK RESULTS: THE M&E SYSTEM OF THE KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE**

## **4.1 Introduction**

This Chapter provides a background perspective to the Department of Arts and Culture with a special focus on its orientation towards M&E. It will highlight the top level organisational structure, where the M&E unit is located, outline goals and objectives of the Department, its existing M&E systems and how they have been institutionalised. It will also outline the research design and methodology, data collection and sampling as well as data-analysis methodologies that will be employed. Lastly, this Chapter will present the fieldwork results as gathered. The analysis of the results and findings will be presented in the next Chapter while the conclusions reached and recommendations made will be dealt with in the final Chapter of this research.

## **4.2 Background to the Case Study**

The Department is one of 15 Departments in the provincial Government of KwaZulu-Natal. It was established in 2004 and prior to this it was a branch within the then Department of Education and Culture. When the culture branch was excised from Education, it was combined with tourism from the then Department of Economic Affairs and Tourism to form the standalone Department of Arts, Culture and Tourism. However, during the general elections in 2009, which came with the new administration, the Department was reconfigured, which saw tourism being excised, to form a new Department of Arts and Culture. The year 2013 therefore has marked approximately nine years since the Department of Arts and Culture was established notwithstanding other components which have from time to time been attached to it.

It must be stated that, out of the nine provinces and provincial departments, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture is the only one that is configured in this unique way. In all the other eight provinces this Department is configured as a single Department of Arts,

Culture, Sport and Recreation whereas in KwaZulu-Natal it is two separate Departments of Arts and Culture, and Sport and Recreation. However, both these departments are politically headed by one MEC. Also of interest is that the heritage component of Arts and Culture is located in the Office of the Premier which was previously the same case with Museum Services which was only moved to the Department of Arts and Culture in 2010.

The Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) derives its mandate from, among others, the following pieces of legislation:

The Constitution of the Republic, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996), Culture Promotion Act, 1983 (Act 35 of 1983), Cultural Affairs Act, 1989 (Act 65 of 1989), South African Geographical Names Council Act, National Language Policy Framework Act, 2003, Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB), 1995 (Act 59 of 1995), The KwaZulu-Natal Parliamentary Official Languages Act (Act 10 of 1998) and The KwaZulu-Natal Archives Act (Act 5 of 2003). Other transversal pieces of legislation such as the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 and the Public Service Act, 1994 become applicable as in any other public service institution.

The department is also guided by the White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage, 1996, in terms of policy landscape.

## **4.3 Research Design and Methodology**

### **4.3.1 Research design**

The study was conducted using qualitative research. It adhered to the description by Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005: 88) who argue that qualitative research can be described as an approach rather than a particular design or set of techniques which seek to describe, decode and translate phenomena occurring in the social world. They therefore argue that a qualitative approach is fundamentally a descriptive form of research.

Welman, et al. (2005: 188) noted that qualitative field studies were used successfully in the description of small groups, communities and organisations. As was envisaged during the preliminary literature review, this kind of research took the shape of an empirical study and ethnological research which followed a case study approach. The DAC was chosen for the purposes of the case study. This Department is relatively small when compared to other Government departments and at the time of this research (2013) it had a staff complement of

approximately 480 people (filled posts) out of a post establishment of 800. It was therefore suited to the case study approach which is ideally applied in small organisations (Mouton, 2001: 149).

Welman, et al. (2005: 193) noted that the qualitative approaches originated from the ethnological methods which were applied by cultural and social anthropologists in their field studies of social groups and communities. However, these approaches have been adapted by sociologists, psychologists and educationists.

Ethnography is described as a descriptive design suited to investigating individuals or groups within a community or organisation. This approach looks at behavioral regularities, attitudes and rituals which can be expressed as patterns, roles and language. Ethnological research which is primarily done through collecting field notes, seeks to uncover and explicate the ways in which people in a particular environment come to understand, account for, act and manage their situations, including difficulties and problems. The uncovering and explication processes can be done through successive observations and interviews.

At the time of this study, the researcher was employed by DAC and deemed it appropriate to conduct the study of its M&E system and the institutionalisation thereof so that the findings could be utilised to improve the situation internally should it be found wanting. This was particularly important given that M&E in government was still at its infancy stage and no government department or agency could claim to have mastered M&E in terms of systems design and implementation.

The case study approach entailed the researcher conducting an analysis of the goals, plans, resources, needs and problems of the case in its natural setting with a view to preparing a detailed report of the case. The report includes descriptive and judgmental information, perceptions of various stakeholders and experts and the conclusions.

According to Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2007: 314-315), in the case study approach the researcher establishes patterns of data to formulate issues, triangulates key observations and bases for interpretation, selects alternative interpretations to pursue and develops assertions or generalisations about the case.

Welman, et al. (2005: 193) holds the argument that the terms ‘ethnography’, ‘case study’ and ‘participant observation’ can practically be regarded as the same type of research approaches.

The study was qualitative in nature especially in view of the fact that primary data was obtained directly from the Department through semi-structured questionnaires. Linda, Mora, Ray and Rist (2009: 292) confirm this view by noting that a semi-structured data-collection approach may be systematic and follow general procedures but argue that data is not necessarily collected in the same way every time. The researcher therefore followed this approach as a set of broad questions were prepared to guide the interviews. This approach was also useful in that it enabled the researcher to obtain the perceptions, attitudes and views of the interviewees which could otherwise have been difficult to gather.

Content analysis as a form of empirical design was also employed. This entailed reviewing the Department’s Strategic Plan, Annual Performance Plan, Annual Report, audit reports and other documentation which provided in-depth information and insight that contributed to the attainment of the objectives of the study.

The significance of the documents analysed was that they had been audited and almost all had been published and were therefore in the public domain. The documents had been tabled with the legislature, National Treasury, office of the Auditor General and other relevant authorities and therefore the information contained therein formed part of commitments made by the department to the public.

#### **4.3.2 Data collection and sampling**

The data-collection method followed was therefore qualitative. Linda et al. (2009: 294) asserts that qualitative data is data in a non-numerical form, which normally deals with descriptions and may include making observations about relationships and behaviors. This description works well with the objective of the study which is to conduct an assessment of the process and institutional requirements of M&E in the government.

Purposive sampling was conducted, with the senior managers and M&E networks, forums and practitioners (M&E unit) in the DAC being the target of the study. Interviews were conducted guided by the questionnaire containing semi-structured questions.

A questionnaire was designed and circulated to the target group in the Department to solicit their views on M&E. The Office of the Premier was also interviewed to give their perspective of M&E in the province. A content analysis of relevant M&E documentation was done to obtain primary data.

## **4.4 Case Study of the Department of Arts and Culture (KwaZulu-Natal)**

### **4.4.1 Introduction**

This section provides details on the purpose of, or reasons for, the Department's existence and where it aspires to be in the medium- to long-term. This is articulated through its vision, mission, goals and objectives. The values the Department subscribes to are also outlined as they form an integral part of the institutionalisation of the M&E system. An overview of performance indicators is also provided as indicators are critical in gauging performance in any organisation.

### **4.4.2 Vision, mission, goals and objectives**

The department's vision as encapsulated in the Department's Strategic Plan 2010-2015 is:

“Prosperity and Social Cohesion through Arts and Culture”.

Its mission statement is “to provide world class services in arts and culture for the people of KwaZulu-Natal by: Developing and promoting arts and culture in the Province and mainstreaming its role in social development, developing and promoting the previously marginalised languages and enhancing the linguistic diversity of the province, collecting, managing and preserving the archival, museum, library and other forms of information resources; and integrating and providing seamless arts and culture services to the communities of the province”.

In the execution of its duties the Department conformed to the following values: “... pride in our work, service excellence, professionalism, team work, integrity, accountability to the people of KwaZulu-Natal, caring, empathy, honesty, fairness and transparency.” (Department's Strategic Plan 2010-2015).

It is clear from these values that the Department subscribed to the Batho Pele principles which mean putting people first.

According to the Department's Strategic Plan 2010-2015, the following are the strategic goals and objectives of the department. It should be noted that these goals and objectives are sector specific and were agreed upon nationally and thus adopted by all the arts and culture departments in the nine provinces.

**Strategic goals:**

The thrust of the strategic goals of the Department is promoting good corporate governance, creating a conducive environment for the development and preservation of art forms and cultures in the province, creating sustainable livelihoods, nurturing emerging entrepreneurs and facilitating transformation and economic growth through the arts and culture sectors, providing equitable access to library, information, archive and museum services, and strengthening collaborative strategic partnerships for improved service delivery for the benefit of the people of the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

**Strategic objectives:**

The Department's strategic objects entail provide efficient, effective and economical administrative support to all stakeholders in an equitable manner; ensuring cultural diversity and the advancement of artistic disciplines into viable industries; enhancing social cohesion by promoting programmes; accelerating transformation of the country's heritage landscape by establishing and managing museum services; promoting multilingualism, redressing past linguistic imbalances and develop the previously marginalised languages; and provide library and information services which are free, equitable and accessible; providing for information, reading and learning needs of people and promote a culture of reading, library usage and lifelong learning; and the acquisition, preservation and documentation of both public and non-public records of national and provincial significance; proper management and care of public records and equitable access and use of archives;

The Department's strategic goals and objectives are included in the study in order to provide insight on what the organization stood in relation to its priorities. They are also critical as they shape the organisational structure, which is discussed below.



#### 4.4.3 Organisational structure

**Annexure A** depicts the top management structure of the Department. The organisational structure of the Department was approved by the Executive Authority in 2008 when tourism was still part of the then Department of Arts, Culture and Tourism. Tourism was then excised from the Department in 2009 when the new administration took over as described earlier in this study. Since then, the Departmental structure has undergone several reviews, never culminating into formal approval of the new structure. Against this background the 2008 version of the structure (still containing tourism) remained the official, approved structure of the Department to date (2013).

At the top of the organisational structure is the Executive Authority, normally called the office of the MEC in the context of the provincial sphere of Government. The Executive Authority is a public office bearer and provides political leadership and direction to the Department. Administratively, the Department is led by the Head of Department (HOD) who is also the accounting officer of the Department.

The Department consists of two branches and a chief directorate which report directly to the HOD. The branches are headed by the senior general managers (deputy directors-general) and the chief directorate by a general manager (chief director). The first branch is Operations Management, which comprises the core functions of the Department, namely the chief directorates of Cultural Affairs, Libraries, Archives and Museums, and Regional Office Management. The second branch is Corporate Services which comprises of the chief directorates of Financial Management (Chief Financial Officer) and Administrative Services as well as Infrastructure directorate. The chief directorate Corporate Governance, headed by the researcher, which is the only one reporting directly to the HOD, consists of the directorates of Executive Support (Office of the HOD), Corporate Strategy, Special Projects and Events, Legal Services and Security Services (**Annexure B**). The M&E Unit is located under Corporate Strategy. The organisational arrangement of this chief directorate, which depicts the location of the M&E Unit under Corporate Strategy directorate, is attached as **Annexure C** (Department of Arts and Culture Organisational Structure, 2008: 20).

The programme structure, which is basically the budget structure of the Department as determined by the National Treasury in consultation with the arts and culture sector, comprises Programme One, with the Office of the MEC and Corporate Services as sub-programmes. Corporate Services in this context comprises Administrative Services, Financial

Management and Corporate Governance chief directorates as well as Infrastructure directorate. Programme Two is Cultural Affairs, which consists of the sub-directorates of Management, Arts and Culture, Museum Services and Language Services. Programme Three is made up of the sub-directorates of Management, Library Services, Archive Services and Community Library Services Conditional Grant (DAC Annual Performance Plan, 2013-2015: 9)

The programme structure has been highlighted in the study to show discrepancies that exist in the way the Departments of Arts and Culture are structured in South Africa, which inevitably has a bearing of how performance of the sector is measured and thus on how M&E systems are developed and institutionalised. As was indicated earlier on in the study, in KwaZulu-Natal the Heritage function resides in the Office of the Premier and this function would ordinarily be located under Cultural Affairs or Programme Two. Museum Services in the KZN DAC is also located and managed under Programme Three, which is usually and purely Library Services and Archive Services. In all the other eight provinces, except in KZN, where the Departments of Arts and Culture and Sport and Recreation are combined and are one department, Programme Four would ordinarily be Sport and Recreation.

#### **4.5 Establishment of an M&E System**

The establishment of an M&E system, a process followed in establishing the system as well as the institutional arrangements of an M&E system, formed the basis of the research and are therefore the basis of the key questions and objectives of the study. The fieldwork was aimed at understanding how the Department related to these questions. A research schedule (**Annexure D**) was designed to facilitate the interview process with the target participants, viz, senior managers, focus groups and practitioners in the Department as well as the Office of the Premier.

The fieldwork took into account that the research conducted was qualitative in nature. According to Marson (2009: 24), qualitative research is characteristically exploratory, fluid and flexible, data driven and context-sensitive.

The documentary analysis established that the Department has a policy called Programme Performance Management Framework which was approved by the HOD in 2009. Upon

perusal, the policy makes it clear that the Department had taken into account the national policy and legislative frameworks of M&E when it was designed.

The Department had an approved strategic plan with the vision, mission, goals and objectives as discussed earlier on in the study, as well as the Annual Performance Plan (APP). The APP is based on the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and contained performance indicators and targets set on an annual basis over the MTEF period, with the first year's targets broken down per quarter.

Performance indicators for Programme One were not nationally and sector determined and hence not standardised. Each province and department determined their own indicators for Programme One. The total number of indicators for Programme One is 58.

Programme Two contained both, the sector specific, nationally agreed performance indicators as well as those that were determined by provinces taking into account their unique circumstances. The number of sector specific performance indicators for Programme Two is 5 versus 30 determined by the Province of KwaZulu-Natal and by the DAC in particular while for Programme Three there are 6 sector specific indicators versus 20 determined by the province.

This brought the total number of Programmes Two and Three performance indicators, which are core functions of the Department, to 61 while Programme One alone has 58. Therefore, the total number of indicators in the Department contained in the 2013-2015 Annual Performance Plan is 119.

The Department's Annual Report for 2012/13 contained, amongst other things, information on the Auditor-General Audit Report and findings. The Report reflects the findings on two aspects, namely financial statements and performance information. However, it should be stated that the AG's opinion is only expressed in respect of one aspect, that is, financial statements.

The AG Audit Report on legal and regulatory requirements in respect of the 2012/13 financial year and the pre-determined objectives found that there were no material findings on the annual performance report concerning the usefulness and reliability of the information. However, the Report indicated as a matter of concern that, out of 101 targets planned for the year, 31 targets were not achieved for the year under review. The reason advanced for this was that indicators and targets were not suitably developed during the strategic planning

process. The Report also indicated that the financial statements submitted for auditing were not prepared in accordance with the prescribed financial reporting framework. While the material misstatement of disclosure items identified was subsequently corrected, the uncorrected material misstatements and/or supporting records that could not be provided resulted in the financial statements receiving a qualified audit opinion. The material misstatements were with regard to library books which could not be accounted for.

The KZN Provincial Treasury conducted an audit on performance information in the Department in 2010 and a Report Number 173 – 2011 dated 6<sup>th</sup> February 2012 was produced. The audit reviewed the Department's programmes against the APP, Five-Year Strategic Plan, APP 2011-2012, quarterly reports for the 2011/12 financial year, as well as the Annual Report for 2010/11. The overall opinion expressed by the audit was that the Department's systems and processes in this regard were satisfactory. The Department was found to have complied with the planning and M&E frameworks.

In terms of the establishment of the M&E system, the fieldwork results showed that 75 percent of the senior managers who responded had a general understanding of M&E, both as a concept and a system as well as its use and purpose. When describing their understanding of M&E, the following key terms featured prominently in their responses: it is a regular collection of information about projects and programmes to be able to draw conclusions on their effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, organisation learning experience to improve practices and accountability, a tool to monitor organisational performance, measurement of inputs and activities to determine the value for money, collecting data on projects to assess whether the objectives have been met, gathering information for decision making, part of a management cycle to ensure that we do things right, determining the achievements and failures of projects and developing strategies based on best practices to address the gaps and gather information to track if the interventions were achieving their set objectives.

The response to the question on the use and purpose of M&E was more or less similar to that on the understanding of M&E. However, the additional terms provided in response to this question included the following: ensuring that the planned targets, goals and government priorities were met, improving service delivery, using information gathered for planning and budgeting purposes for efficient utilisation of resources and being able to work smarter rather than harder.

It was pleasing to note that all (100%) of the respondents confirmed that the Department had an M&E system in place. When asked to explain what the system entailed, various responses provided ranged from the mention of the existence of an M&E policy, M&E unit, Strategic Plan, APP, procedure manuals for gathering data and reporting tools which culminate in the production of the monthly, quarterly and annual reports. It was further indicated that the tools were both electronic and manual and were mainly interpreted into templates for the standardisation of data collected. All reports were reportedly tabled with the HOD and the MEC as the Executive Authority.

All (100%) of all the responses received from senior managers explained their roles and responsibilities regarding M&E in general terms, such as, to monitor the activities of their respective units, ensure the implementation of activities to achieve set targets, keep a portfolio of evidence for projects implemented, track under-achievement and over-achievement of targets and implement remedies, monitor and evaluate staff, and prepare M&E reports for approval by the HOD for outside bodies and entities on behalf of the Department.

On the question of the contribution of an M&E system to the achievement of the government priorities as enshrined in the National Development Plan (NDP), 95 percent of the responses pointed out that the NDP goals were already part of the Department's Strategic Plan and APP, hence constant monitoring of these plans means indirect monitoring of the NDP and Government priorities. The Department's plans which was part of an M&E system as alluded to above ensure that the Department stays focused and geared towards the achievement of the priorities.

#### **4.6 M&E Process**

Kusk and Rist's ten steps to building a results-based M&E system formed the basis of the fieldwork and all the questions for the interviews were based on these ten steps.

On the question of whether the readiness assessment was conducted when an M&E system was developed, 90 percent of the respondents responded in the negative and stated that they were not aware of such an assessment ever being conducted. Ten percent indicated that they remembered the assessment being conducted which led to the appointment of M&E champions from their components. It should be noted that the ten percent of respondents

referred to were from the Corporate Strategy Unit under which the M&E unit falls hence one cannot rule out the possibility of self-defense or bias.

Five of the respondents, which is 25 percent, indicated that the M&E champion in the Department was the Deputy Manager: Performance Management (M&E), the other 25 percent indicated it was the Senior Manager: Corporate Strategy (under which the M&E Unit falls), the other 25 percent indicated it was the General Manager: Corporate Governance, who is the researcher and to whom the two officials or units mentioned as champions above report. Approximately five percent indicated that they had an M&E champion in their own component. The remaining 20 percent indicated they did not know who the M&E champion was.

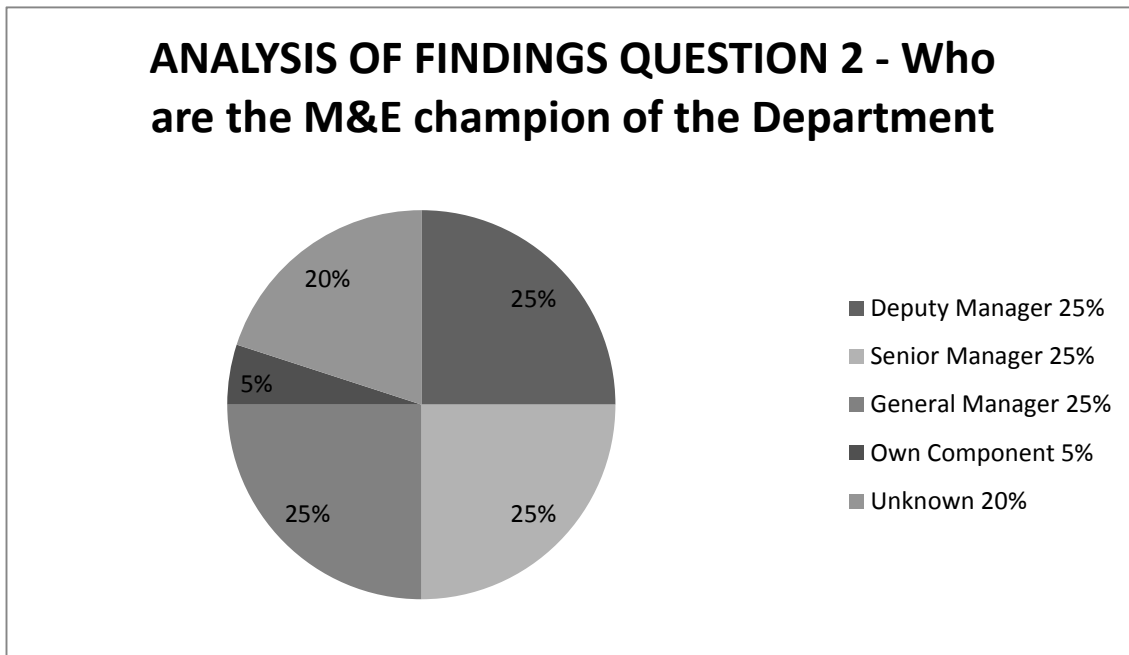
**Figure 4.1: Example of the findings of fieldwork reflecting multiple responses**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Responses to Question 2 on who the M&amp;E champion of the Department was.</b>
1, 3, 7, 9 & 14	Deputy Manager: Performance Management
4, 11, 12, 16 & 19	Senior Manager: Corporate Strategy
5, 8, 10, 13 & 15	General Manager Corporate Governance
2	A certain official in own component.
6, 17, 18 & 20	Do not know.

**Source: Fieldwork results**

The above table indicates how the findings relating to the establishment of an M&E system were summarised and reported. The respondents were numbered one to twenty. The table focused specifically on the question of who the M&E champion was in the department. In this regard a wide range of answers or multi-responses were provided. Simple arithmetic calculations were done to obtain percentages based on the respondents views to specific questions.

Figure 4.2 below depicts a graphical representation of the findings of the analysis of the fieldwork results. This kind of representation made it easy to read and interpret the findings of the fieldwork results.

**Figure 4.2: Graphical representation of the fieldwork results**

The 80 percent of the respondents who named the champion provided responses on the roles and responsibilities of the champion which ranged from providing technical expertise on M&E in the Department, ensuring that the portfolio of evidence was compiled in respect of the targets that were reported to have been met, collating, checking and providing summary reports to the HOD and the MEC and ensuring that the Department complied with legislative and policy requirements.

On the question of whether the M&E roles and responsibilities were clarified, it should be noted that all (100%) of the respondents responded in the affirmative.

On the question of M&E incentives, 70 percent of the respondents were able to connect M&E findings with individual staff performance through a process referred to as Employee Performance Management and Development System (EPMDS). The respondents argued that high performers were incentivised and rewarded through the Department Service Excellence Awards and issuing of Best Performers certificates, recognition of best performers at management meetings and provision of salary notch increments while poor performers were reprimanded through 'naming and shaming' them at management meetings. The remaining 30 percent of the respondents argued that there were no M&E incentives in place in the department.

With regard to the second step of the process of agreeing on the outcomes, 80 percent of the respondents indicated that the process entailed deliberations and engagements at Departmental strategic planning sessions, chief directorate meetings and Departmental management meetings. Ten percent of the respondents indicated that the outcomes were pre-determined by cabinet and national Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) processes. The balance of the respondents indicated that they were not aware of the processes.

On the selection of performance indicators, 90 percent of the respondents stated that the indicators were selected through engagement at departmental planning sessions and chief directorate meetings which took into account the priorities of Government as articulated in the NDP and the Department Strategic Plan. The respondents also mentioned that some indicators were determined at national and sector levels notwithstanding that there was a leeway for provinces to determine province-specific indicators which took into account their unique circumstances. Ten percent of the respondents, all from the support functions of the department, admitted they were not aware of how the indicators were selected. Documentary analysis revealed that the department had 122 indicators.

In terms of the process of collecting the baseline data, 80 percent of the respondents indicated that historical data from annual reports, previous project information, budget speeches, national DAC, National Treasury and Provincial Treasury was their common source of baseline data. Ten percent indicated that the data was obtained from the Corporate Strategy unit while the balance indicated they did not know.

Ninety percent of the respondents indicated that historical data, previous programme performance including the achievability of the targets were used to determine future targets. The targets were set taking into account the resources available such as personnel capacity, both in terms of numbers and skills, as well as the budget. Line function components set the targets. Ten percent of the respondents raised a concern that reliance and dependence on line function components to determine targets was a problem and needed to be reviewed as there were no checks and balances on the data provided. Some respondents cited political pressure on the setting of targets, thus resulting in unrealistic targets being set and eventually not being met. It should be noted that some indicated that targets were reduced if the previous ones were not met.

With regard to the monitoring of results, all of the respondents indicated that the results were monitored through monthly, quarterly, mid-year and annual reports as well as management



meetings such as Exco, senior management meetings and chief directorate meetings. Ten percent of the respondents indicated that, further to this, performance agreements and work plans were also used as a tool to monitor the results.

On the question of programmes that have been evaluated, 80 percent of the respondents indicated no programmes were ever evaluated in the Department, while ten percent indicated that all the programmes contained in the operational plans were evaluated, however the evaluation findings had never been shared with anyone to improve the results. The remaining ten percent indicated that one programme was evaluated by way of programme implementation evaluation.

Given that no evaluations in the true sense of the term evaluation were conducted, except the purported programme implementation evaluation, the question of the format of reporting the evaluation findings fell away as is the question on the strategy to disseminate evaluation information.

On the question of how M&E could be sustained and improved in the department, the respondents came up with the following suggestions: to have regular sessions of M&E (quarterly or half-yearly) in order to keep abreast of M&E trends and developments, sessions should be practical and be based on departmental projects for relevance, using them as case studies, knowledge of M&E should not only be shared with M&E champions and senior management but should cascade down to the rest of the staff who actually do the work, capacity on M&E should be strengthened through the filling of critical posts, it should be ensured that recommendations on the monitoring findings are implemented to improve performance, target setting should be supported by research, the M&E unit should be capacitated so that it can be involved in the programmes at least on a monthly basis and not just rely on the reports presented by line functions as this would ensure that interventions were carried out on time. The presentation of M&E reports should also be a standing item in management meetings in order to instill a culture of M&E and get other role players to participate as well as clarify roles and responsibilities on M&E and increase communication of performance information among the components so that M&E is viewed as a learning experience and a tool to improve performance and not just a compliance matter.

## **4.7 Institutional Arrangements for M&E**

As mentioned, **Annexure C** depicts the exact location and structural arrangements of the M&E unit within the Department. This also reflects the reporting lines in relation to the M&E unit within the Department.

It is clear from the diagram that the M&E Unit is a sub-directorate which is headed by a deputy manager: performance management and assisted by an administrator who is at the level of an administration officer. This sub-directorate reports alongside with the other sub-directorates of Planning and Research and Intergovernmental Relations to the senior manager (director) for Corporate Strategy. The directorate: Corporate Strategy, alongside the other four directorates, of Legal Services, Security Services, Executive Support (Office of the Head of Department) and Special Projects and Events, in turn report to the general manager (chief director): Corporate Governance, who is the researcher conducting this study. The latter reports directly to the Head of Department, who is the Accounting Officer, alongside two branches which are headed by Senior General Managers, viz. Operations Management and Corporate Services, respectively.

It should be noted that the fieldwork was based on the key elements that constituted institutionalization, viz, governance, value systems, structural arrangements, human resources, training and professional support. The results of the fieldwork in respect of the institutionalisation of M&E in the Department are discussed will now be discussed.

### **4.7.1 Governance**

In terms of governance, the respondents were asked to indicate how the top management of the Department promoted and supported M&E. The respondents' view was that top management supported M&E in a number of ways such as by making it a standard ExCo agenda, through conducting ExCo quarterly visits to delivery sites (which started in 2013) in order to allow for opportunities to identify service delivery bottlenecks and come up with interventions early, through the presentation of M&E reports to the MEC on a monthly basis, the establishment of an M&E Committee which was escalated to be a sub-committee of Exco and by recognizing good performance through hosting the Departmental Service Excellence Awards.

#### **4.7.2 Value system**

On the question of the value system that underpinned M&E, 80 percent of the respondents believed the M&E system of the Department was characterised by transparency, openness, credibility, authenticity of information as well as accountability. However, 20 percent were of the view that reliability of information was questionable and raised a concern that officials were asked to produce the same information over and over again. It was submitted that this posed difficulty in tracing the information previously submitted and thus the same information tended to have discrepancies when produced at different times and for different purposes. In this regard there was a suggestion to have an integrated information management system which would be able to produce the same information in different formats and for different audiences when required.

#### **4.7.3 Structural arrangements**

In terms of the structural arrangements, the respondents were tested on their knowledge of whether or not an M&E unit existed in the Department. Their responses were 100 percent in the affirmative. Further to this, 80 percent of the respondents indicated that the M&E unit was headed by a deputy manager while 20 percent indicated that it was headed by a senior manager: Corporate Strategy. When probed further as to whom the M&E unit head reported to, those who responded by saying it was headed by the Deputy Manager indicated that the head in turn reported to the Senior Manager, while the other 20 percent indicated that the M&E unit reported to the General Manager. These questions were posed in order to establish if senior management understood the structural arrangements of M&E in the Department.

#### **4.7.4 Human resources**

All staff in the M&E unit of the Department, (the Senior Manager: Corporate Strategy under whom M&E unit falls, the Deputy Manager: Performance Management (M&E) and the Administrative Officer) were interviewed separately and the key questions posed were on their salary levels, training on M&E, budget for M&E in the Department, their views about the location of M&E in the Department, whether they have had any undue pressure put on them regarding their M&E findings and, lastly, what their proposals were for improving M&E in the Department.

All respondents confirmed that there were effectively only two officials in the M&E unit, namely the Deputy Manager and Administrative Officer and that none of them had any formal qualification on M&E except short training courses and workshops they had attended. The respondents also confirmed that the department had only R125 000 operational budget for M&E which was centralised in the M&E unit. The respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the location of M&E unit in the Department as it was getting the necessary attention and that they have never been pressured or persuaded to adjust their M&E findings against their will which could have happened based on the level of the position. All suggested that additional funding was required as well as the review of the organisational structure to create more posts.

#### **4.7.5 Training**

Regarding the question of M&E training, 60 percent of the respondents indicated they had not received any training on M&E, 30 percent indicated they attended workshops on M&E organised by the SAMEA and the Office of the Premier, while ten percent indicated they did an M&E module while in pursuit of their academic studies. All the respondents confirmed that there was never M&E training organised by the Department.

When asked about the general challenges of M&E in the Department, 90 percent of the respondents cited a lack of capacity in M&E both in terms of staff shortages and skills to execute M&E functions. The problem was reportedly prevalent at delivery site level as well as management level. The challenge of lack of tools to collect, quantify and validate data was also reported as a problem and, in the context of the Department, an example was made that the Department did not have tools to quantify the number of participants at Departmental cultural events. This challenge impacted negatively on the setting of realistic targets and baselines. There was no evidence that the M&E findings and lessons learnt in the previous year informed future plans thus bridging any gaps identified. Lack of effective electronic and information management systems was also raised as a challenge. The remaining ten percent could not mention any challenges.

In terms of possible solutions, 70 percent of the respondents suggested more staff should be appointed so that there were M&E practitioners placed at all service delivery units to collect, collate and consolidate data for onward transmission to management. Data-collection tools should also be designed. 20 percent felt funding should be secured to buy an electronic

information management system for the efficient management of information. Ten percent suggested the Department should put in place punitive measures to deal with non-compliant officials.

#### **4.7.6 Professional support**

The following questions were posed to the focus groups i.e. M&E and Batho Pele Committees of the Department: what M&E role they performed, who they report their findings to, what their relationship with the Department on M&E was, what support they received from the Department on M&E, challenges they have identified and suggestions of how those challenges could be overcome.

The focus group's role was reportedly to ensure that the Batho Pele Principles were adhered to in the delivery of programmes by the Department. They indicated that they reported their findings to Exco and that they were working closely with the M&E unit because the latter's officials were part of the Committee. The group indicated that they were receiving tremendous support from the Department in that they were part of the Exco M&E quarterly visits to service delivery points. Their biggest worry was that evaluations have never been conducted hence more staff and budgets were required as well as the enhancement of skills of existing staff.

Eighty percent of the respondents indicated that they were not members of any M&E forum while 20 percent cited they were either members of the Departmental M&E Committee, KwaZulu-Natal Provincial M&E forum or SAMEA.

The key questions posed to the Office of the Premier sought to establish whether there was any M&E forum for the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, how it was established, whether there were any terms of reference (ToRs), their frequency of meetings, whether the forum was still active, its membership, what the M&E system of the province entailed, their relationship with other Government departments responsible for planning such as the National Treasury, the Presidency, etc., capacity constraints identified on M&E. The questions also solicited suggestions to address the weaknesses.

The fieldwork established that the committee of HODs (COHOD) in the province took a resolution and established the M&E forum which comprised of representatives from individual Departments which were appointed by their respective HODs. The membership

mainly comprised of M&E officials of Departments. The forum was established in 2010 and only held two meetings in that year. It has not met since then. There were no ToRs formulated.

It is clear that the provincial M&E forum was ineffective. At the time of the study, the forum had not met for at least two successive years. However, the researcher noted that the Office of the Premier had produced a KwaZulu-Natal Community-based M&E Framework as well as the Monitoring and Evaluation Regulatory Plan for KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government Public Policies and Programmes dated August 2010, which was commendable. However, there was no indication that the Framework and the Plan had been applied and the forum representatives interviewed had no knowledge of such a framework or plan. It was indicated that there is a provincial nerve center which was an M&E system for storing and integrating M&E information from various Government departments in the province.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

It was noted from the fieldwork conducted that staff had different perspectives about M&E and that their levels of appreciation of M&E varied. This suggests a need to continuously workshop staff to achieve a common understanding of M&E issues.

The next chapter presents the findings arrived at by the researcher after the data analysis. The findings are reported using the policy and legislative frameworks as a guide. Theoretical perspective and international best practices on M&E were also taken into account. The findings will also be presented following the main themes of the study, viz, establishing an M&E system, M&E process and institutionalization of M&E. The latter considers soft issues such as governance, value system, structural arrangements, human resources, training and professional support.

## **CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings of the research study which were obtained after a qualitative data analysis. The findings entailed the analysis of semi-structured in-depth individual interviews, focus group interviews and the content of the various Departmental reports. The findings are a culmination of a lengthy process which started with the formulation of the research aim and objectives, review of relevant literature, choosing an appropriate research design and data collection methods, fieldwork and content analysis. During fieldwork and interviews in particular, field notes and transcripts were prepared and later converted into write-ups. Write-ups are regarded as intelligible products that are easy to read, edit, comment on and analyse.

Themes were then identified as part of the research. According to Welman, et al. (2005: 211), themes are umbrella constructs which are usually identified by the researcher before, during and after data collection and by reviewing the original field notes. In this regard, it is argued that word analyses, reading of larger units, intentional analysis of linguistic features, physical manipulation of texts as well as secondary data analysis are techniques used in identifying themes.

The researcher was mindful of the challenges associated with reducing voluminous data into manageable and understandable texts through data coding. Welman, et al. (2005: 214) noted that data coding was important to be able to analyse and make sense of the data and that codes enabled one to attach meaning to the raw data or notes collected during fieldwork. The types of codes included descriptive codes, interpretative codes, pattern codes, reflective remarks and revising codes.

### **5.2 Findings on Fieldwork Results**

Against this background, the findings on the fieldwork results and interviews with senior managers in particular are outlined below. The findings are presented against the identified themes of the research, viz, process of establishing an M&E systems and institutionalization

of M&E. These themes relate back to the aim and objectives of the study. It should be mentioned that while the study is primarily qualitative in nature, limited quantitative data analysis methods were employed. The findings therefore are presented in line with the themes.

The majority of the senior managers interviewed demonstrated insight and understating of M&E as a concept. However, their understanding was varied and at different levels. It was clear that managers did not draw a distinction between monitoring and evaluation and they used the terms interchangeably as if they meant one and the same thing. The repercussions are that either of the two will suffer if these are treated as one. It was also clear from the documentary analysis conducted (of monthly and quarterly reports) that the emphasis was on monitoring.

The responses to the question on the use and purpose of M&E demonstrated that it was difficult to define and describe M&E without simultaneously explaining its use and purpose. To this end there was a significant overlap of responses to this question and to the question which requested that the participants articulate their understanding of M&E. Of significance, though, is the fact that certain critical information emerged which showed the relationship between M&E and other management processes. In this regard, it was established that M&E provided information that was important for planning and budgeting purposes. It was also indicated that M&E was important for measuring the achievement of government priorities. The latter point demonstrated that the senior managers understood that M&E should also measure results as opposed to a mere monitoring of inputs, activities and outputs. It is clear that the current M&E system of the Department which relied on reporting against the APP simply measured outputs and not the results. The senior management therefore understood the linkages of M&E with other management processes, as alluded to above.

The fact that 100 percent of the respondents confirmed that the Department had an M&E system bode well for the Department. However, the fact that there were different responses to the question of what exactly constituted the Department's M&E system suggests that some staff needed training on the different aspects of an M& E system. The 100 percent positive response reflects a positive element of the institutionalisation of M&E in the Department. The fact that the M&E reports of the Department, ranging from monthly to annual reports, landed on the desk of the HOD and MEC for consideration demonstrated the attention and interest of top leadership of the Department in M&E.



None of the responses provided by senior managers in respect of the roles and responsibilities used relevant M&E terminology such as data collector, data capturer, data analyst, data monitor or evaluator. None also made mention of roles like validating data, checking data for reliability and credibility, or signing off data for their respective units. This shows a gap in the understanding of the segregation of the roles on M&E. This calls for workshops on the roles and responsibilities on M&E.

The 95 percent of responses by senior management explaining how an M&E system of the Department contributed to the achievement of the NDP goals was noted. The managers all pointed out that the NDP goals were already incorporated into the Departmental plans hence monitoring of the plans meant the monitoring of the NDP goals indirectly. This suggests that the majority of senior management were familiar with the NDP and how it related to the M&E system of the Department.

### **5.3 Process of Establishing an M&E System**

The fact that 90 percent of the respondents indicated that they were not aware of any readiness assessment being conducted in the Department should be a cause for concern for the organisation. The danger of this is that the system in place might not have taken into account the skills, knowledge and maturity of officials who were going to use the M&E system. This could have severe effects and could result in the system not being able to yield the desired results.

The fact that the respondents provided different names of an M&E champion showed that there was no certainty on whom the champion was. All the names provided were of the officials in the hierarchy of one chief directorate: Corporate Governance. It should be remembered that an M&E champion has specific roles and responsibilities in respect of M&E and the uncertainty either suggests that the respondents were not aware of the champion or the roles and responsibilities of the champion were not clearly defined or performed.

However, it should be noted that in this particular instance the respondents were able to articulate the roles and responsibilities of an M&E champion, although it appeared that the roles identified were similar to those of an M&E unit in general.

The fact that all (100%) of the respondents indicated that the M&E roles and responsibilities in the Department were clarified reflected a deeper appreciation of M&E by senior management in the Department.

It transpired that the respondents understood and knew that there was a process in place for agreeing on outcomes. It was mentioned that the process entailed conducting strategic planning sessions and chief directorate meetings wherein the goals and outcomes as contained in the NDP would be discussed and their relevance and alignment to the Department interrogated.

While 90 percent of the respondents knew how the indicators were selected, the remaining ten percent were a cause for worry, especially given that they were part of senior management who were responsible for setting performance standards and indicators and for guiding the rest of the staff in the organisation in this regard.

The Department investigated had too many indicators. There was also no consistency in the formulation of these indicators. This is what Rabie (2010) termed “over engineering” of the indicators.

While 80% of the respondents indicated that historical data was used in determining baseline information, the 20% who did not know where they collected data from was a cause for concern and that had negative implications for the reliability and credibility of baselines formulated and thus on the projections and plans produced and results achieved.

In terms of setting realistic targets, the tendency of reducing targets simply because they were not met in the previous year should be revisited. Before this is done there should be a systematic process in place to find the root causes of failure to deliver. It could be discovered that reduction of targets was not a solution, had a thorough diagnosis and postmortem been done. Reduction may have dire consequences on the achievement of the set results. The researcher agreed with the respondents who argued that target setting should be validated at some level and should not entirely left to line functions.

It came out that there was a need to manage political pressure so that unrealistic targets were not imposed on staff. Risk assessment should be conducted and the findings thereof be presented to the MEC, explaining the basis of arriving at the set Departmental targets. In addition, some authors have argued that the current measurement tools of monthly, quarterly,

mid-year and annual reports was a traditional system which only measured the inputs, activities and outputs and did not measure the results and impacts.

It was clear from the findings that formal evaluations of projects, programmes and policies in the Department had never been conducted. The 20 percent of respondents who indicated they had conducted evaluations were actually referring to the monitoring of programmes and their implementation and not to evaluations. Therefore, the question of formats for reporting evaluation findings fell off. Same applied to the strategy for disseminating evaluation information to the stakeholders.

The researcher supported all the suggestions advanced by the respondents as means of sustaining and improving M&E in the Department. The suggestions have been carried forward to the next chapter on recommendations of the study. However, it should be borne in mind that the true test of any recommended action is always in its implementation. It should be noted that the recommendations were made by senior managers who were predominantly decision makers in the organisation.

## **5.4 Institutionalisation of M&E in the Department**

### **5.4.1 Governance**

The findings were that institutionalisation in terms of governance was in existence and there was sufficient evidence to support the perspectives of senior management in this regard. Minutes and agendas of Exco and senior management meetings showed that M&E was indeed a standard item in these management structures. There were also files signed off by the HOD to the MEC of monthly and quarterly reports which showed that the MEC had taken a keen interest in M&E reports.

### **5.4.2 Value system**

While the findings were that the Department upheld positive values of M&E, questions and doubts on the reliability of information were raised. In this regard, suggestions were made to have an integrated information management system. This system would be able to retrieve

information in different formats, at any time and for various audiences without compromising quality.

### **5.4.3 Structural arrangements**

It was clear from the responses received that the senior management did not know who the head of M&E in the organisation was. This indicates that the senior management is not fully aware of the structural arrangements pertaining to M&E in the Department. When asked about the rank of the head of M&E, some indicated that the head was at Deputy Manager Level, while others indicated a Senior Manager level. This confusion suggested an overlap or lack of clarity of the roles and responsibilities of M&E in the Department.

### **5.4.4 Human resources**

None of the respondents in the M&E unit indicated they had M&E qualifications. It was therefore clear there was inadequate capacity in terms of skills, expertise and number of staff to drive M&E in the Department. It transpired that the budget was also too small to be able to make a meaningful contribution to addressing the needs of M&E in the Department and hence needed to be increased. It was also clear that there was a need to appoint M&E specialists and to raise the level of the head of M&E in the Department in order to enhance his authority and independence and thus enhance decision making on M&E matters.

The focus groups recommended that the staff be capacitated and budget increased if improvements were to be made to M&E in the Department.

### **5.4.5 Training**

The fact that 60 percent of the respondents indicated that they had never attended any M&E training or any workshops organised by the Department on M&E was a cause for concern. This suggested that the Department did not make an effort to capacitate its staff, let alone senior management on M&E yet they were expected to undertake M&E activities. This was despite one of the Key Results Areas in the Performance Agreements of senior management being M&E. On the other hand, the fact that there is a Departmental M&E Committee and that some of the members of senior management are members of M&E associations outside the Department should be noted.

On the question of challenges to M&E in the Department, it is clear that a sore point amongst the managers interviewed is the lack of capacity in terms of staff numbers and skills to execute M&E functions. The other challenge raised was the lack of M&E tools which hindered the performance of M&E functions in the Department.

The respondents made suggestions to improve M&E in the Department, which included employing staff as M&E practitioners at each service delivery point. However, the researcher argues that it would not be merely a question of employing practitioners, but also designating and capacitating the existing staff.

#### **5.4.6 Professional support**

It was clear that the provincial M&E forum was non-functional. The Office of the Premier therefore needs to devise a means of resuscitating the forum so that the M&E matters affecting the province can be dealt with collectively. This could contribute to coherence and integration of M&E systems and information. The usefulness of the nerve center was also questionable as no reports were generated by it. Further, officials in the Department could not indicate for certain what types of reports the nerve centre generated and what those reports were used for.

### **5.7 Conclusion**

It is clear that the Department has both pockets of excellence and gaps in terms of M&E. The former has to be sustained and improved where possible whereas measures to address the gaps must to be developed. There is also a need for the Office of the Premier to resuscitate provincial M&E structures and to play a meaningful role in terms of M&E coordination in the province. The next Chapter will outline the conclusions reached and the recommendations made in respect of the research.

## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This Chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study. These focus on whether or not the objectives of the study have been met. The chapter also expresses the researcher's conclusions on the processes followed in developing M&E systems in Government with special reference to the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture which was used as a case study. It also articulates conclusions reached from the assessment of the institutional requirements and arrangements of M&E in the Department. The conclusions and recommendations are made in accordance with the key themes identified in the study, viz, establishing an M&E system, M&E process and institutionalization of M&E. The recommendations aim to address what the study identified as shortcomings in respect of M&E. However, in reaching the conclusions and formulating the recommendations, the researcher took cognisance of the limitations of generalising the findings of the case study of the Department.

### **6.2 Establishing an M&E system**

The study revealed that the current M&E system focuses merely on the monitoring of inputs, activities and outputs. In this regard there is a need to develop systems that focus on the measurement of results. Such systems should be in keeping with the intentions of the Government's outcomes approach which advocates for a results-based M&E.

Key aspects of the M&E framework and constituents of an M&E system also need be explained. Roles and responsibilities in respect of the M&E system are to be clarified so as to ensure there are no overlaps or gaps in the implementation of M&E. This will also ensure there is segregation of duties and a relay in the carrying out of M&E duties.

It is clear the senior management in Department is well conversant with the national government priorities and how these relate to the Departmental M&E system. It is recommended that this be replicated at all levels of staff in the Department so as to share a common vision.

### 6.3 M&E process

The process of establishing an M&E system in the Department was found wanting. It is apparent that the readiness assessment was not conducted when an M&E system was introduced into the Department. In this regard, it is recommended that a readiness assessment still be conducted, the results of which can be used to refine and inform the existing M&E system. The results can also close the gaps that have been identified.

It is also recommended that the Department designate an official as an M&E champion and attach clear roles and responsibilities to this designation. This will ensure that there are no uncertainties, gaps and overlaps on the functions of M&E in the Department. However, the Department should build on the strength that most of the senior management understood the roles and responsibilities of an M&E unit save for the champion.

The researcher recommends that the Department exploit, in the best possible way, senior management's understanding and appreciation of M&E and use such as a springboard to develop and institutionalise M&E in the Department.

The gaps identified call for workshops and training of senior management on the relationship between M&E systems and individual performance management systems. This is particularly important as most officials see M&E as a panacea for all the problems of service delivery. An understanding of the fact that M&E alone cannot address the performance challenges should be instilled among the officials. Tied to this is a need to enhance the incentives for high performers.

While senior management provides avenues for agreeing on the outcomes, there is room for a process to engage all levels of staff in this regard so as to achieve a total buy-in of the Departmental outcomes from everyone in the organisation.

The question of too many indicators, which were also inconsistent in terms of formulation, needs to be addressed. The Department needs to review the existing indicators, reduce them and focus on the key ones which are geared towards measuring performance and the results. The indicators also need to be refined to ensure consistency in terms of design.

The small percentage of respondents who did not know how the baseline was obtained is a cause for concern as these raised questions on the credibility and reliability of the baseline

data collected. In this regard, it is recommended that workshops be organised for senior management on the different sources data collection, including their pros and cons, in order to improve planning. Ideally the workshops could be designed to include training on basic research skills required to be able to gather and validate data.

Another area which was found wanting is target setting. It is clear that the set targets are mostly unrealistic. In this regard, it is recommended that risk assessment be undertaken when targets are set to ensure that all the risks associated with these targets are taken into account and mitigated where possible.

Considering that the current Departmental M&E system focuses on measuring the inputs, activities and outputs, the study recommends that the Department design a system to monitor and measure the results which will be able to determine if the Department was making a difference and impact in people's lives with the programmes it delivers.

The study also showed that there is total neglect of the evaluation of projects, programmes and policies in the Department. In this regard evaluation needs to be given impetus. It is recommended that the Department do evaluations on small scale projects first and then gradually move on to complex projects over time and with the accumulation of the required expertise. Senior management should also be educated on programme evaluation so that they can be able to execute it to determine the worth of the programmes they carried out and whether such programmes should be continued. The education envisaged in this regard can take the form of workshops, seminars and formal training courses depending on the level of knowledge various managers possessed. Such education should equip managers with basic skills to be able to start with basic evaluations and then graduate to complex ones depending on the need. The formats of reporting evaluation findings should also be covered, including the strategy for disseminating information to the stakeholders.

Suggestions made by senior management themselves in terms of sustaining and improving an M&E system in the Department were supported by the researcher. The suggestions revolve around capacitating staff through workshops and training and equipping them with the requisite skills to be able to successfully implement M&E in the organisation.



## **6.4 Institutionalisation of M&E**

One of the objectives of the study was to assess the institutional requirements and arrangements of an M&E system in government. As alluded to, earlier on in the study, institutionalisation looked at the issues of governance, value system, structural arrangements, human resources, training and professional support. The findings of the study suggest that, while there are positive observations, there is also room for improvement.

### **6.4.1 Governance**

In terms of M&E governance, it is clear that M&E enjoyed tremendous support from the top leadership of the Department and what was critical was ensuring that the momentum was sustained. This fared well for the organisation and gave hope for great prospects of growth of M&E in the Department.

### **6.4.2 Value system**

The positive values in respect of M&E, displayed by senior management, need to be sustained and enhanced. However, the findings of the study recommend the employment of an integrated information management system in order to enhance the credibility of information.

### **6.4.3 Structural arrangements**

The indications that the structural arrangements of M&E were not fully understood in the Department, suggest that awareness campaigns should be carried out to familiarise staff with the M&E system that was in place within the Department. The fact that some senior managers indicated that the head of M&E was at deputy manager level while others indicated senior manager level suggests there is disparity in the understanding of the institutional arrangements of M&E in the Department. The recommended campaigns are to be geared towards clarifying the roles and responsibilities of various officials within the Department.

The research noted the existence of M&E and Batho Pele Committees within the Department; however it recommended that their functionality be monitored to ensure that they served the purpose for which they were established.

#### **6.4.4 Human resources**

The research also revealed the shortage of key institutional staff and skills. In this regard, it is recommended that more staff with the requisite technical skills on M&E be employed to beef up the existing M&E unit. Once staff with technical skills has been employed, the process of designing M&E tools and information management systems could be embarked upon.

Another recommendation the study makes is to designate and capacitate staff as M&E practitioners and place them at service delivery points. This will go a long way in institutionalising M&E in the Department. Such processes will introduce both the decentralised and bottom up approaches to M&E in the Department which are critical for a collective buy-in of a system in any organisation.

The study also recommends that the M&E budgets be increased to be able to cope with the rising demands of M&E in the organisation. This is important especially if the Department plans to embark on evaluations which are relatively costly.

#### **6.4.5 Training**

It is clear that officials lack adequate, requisite skills to implement M&E systems in the Department. In this regard, it is recommended that the Department encourage and organise workshops, seminars and training on M&E in order to graduate officials from a mere awareness and appreciation of M&E to impart skills required to successfully implement an M&E system. The training could be designed to instill a deeper understanding and knowledge of the concepts of M&E and their correct application in order to avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations which could hinder the achievement of the desired results.

#### **6.4.6 Professional support**

The study came to the conclusion that the Office of the Premier is not playing a meaningful role in the coordination of M&E in the province. In this regard it is recommended that, to start with, the M&E forum of the province should be resuscitated and should develop an agenda geared towards addressing the constraints and building capacity of M&E in the provincial Government.

## **6.5 Potential Value of the Research**

The research has unearthed a body of knowledge that was often not readily available in the public domain, let alone to the public service officials who were expected to lead and drive M&E in Government. The research has dealt with the definitions of key concepts, approaches, processes and institutionalisation of M&E, all of which could be shared with M&E practitioners and senior management and equip them with basic information on the value and uses of M&E in Government. The sharing of information could improve the M&E of projects, programmes and policies in Government and thus yield improved results.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

This Chapter concludes the thesis with the presentation of a summary of conclusions reached and recommendations made in respect of the findings of the research. If the recommendations were to be implemented, there is no doubt that M&E in the Department could be improved. The limitations of the case study approach have been noted especially as they relate to the generalisation of the findings and conclusions. While the latter relate to the Department that was investigated they could serve as lessons to be considered when dealing with issues of M&E in other settings or situations.

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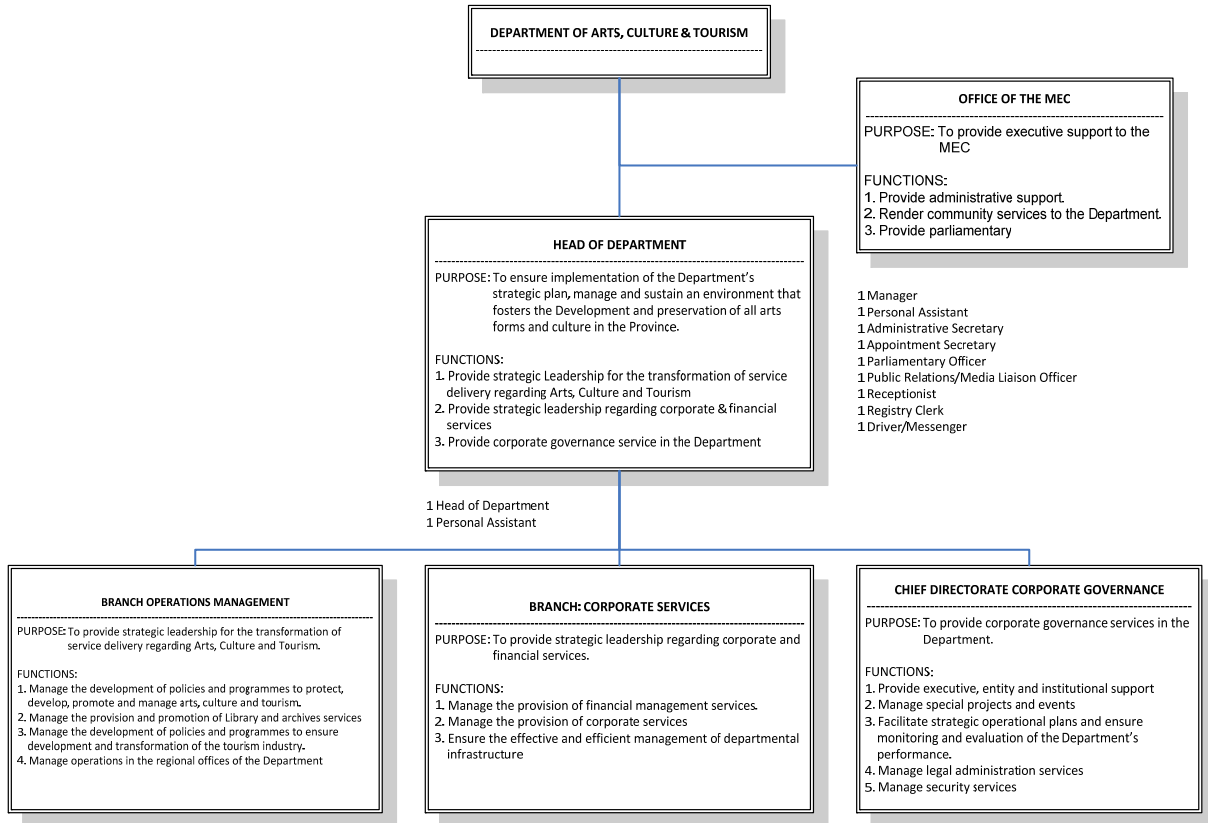
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# ANNEXURE A

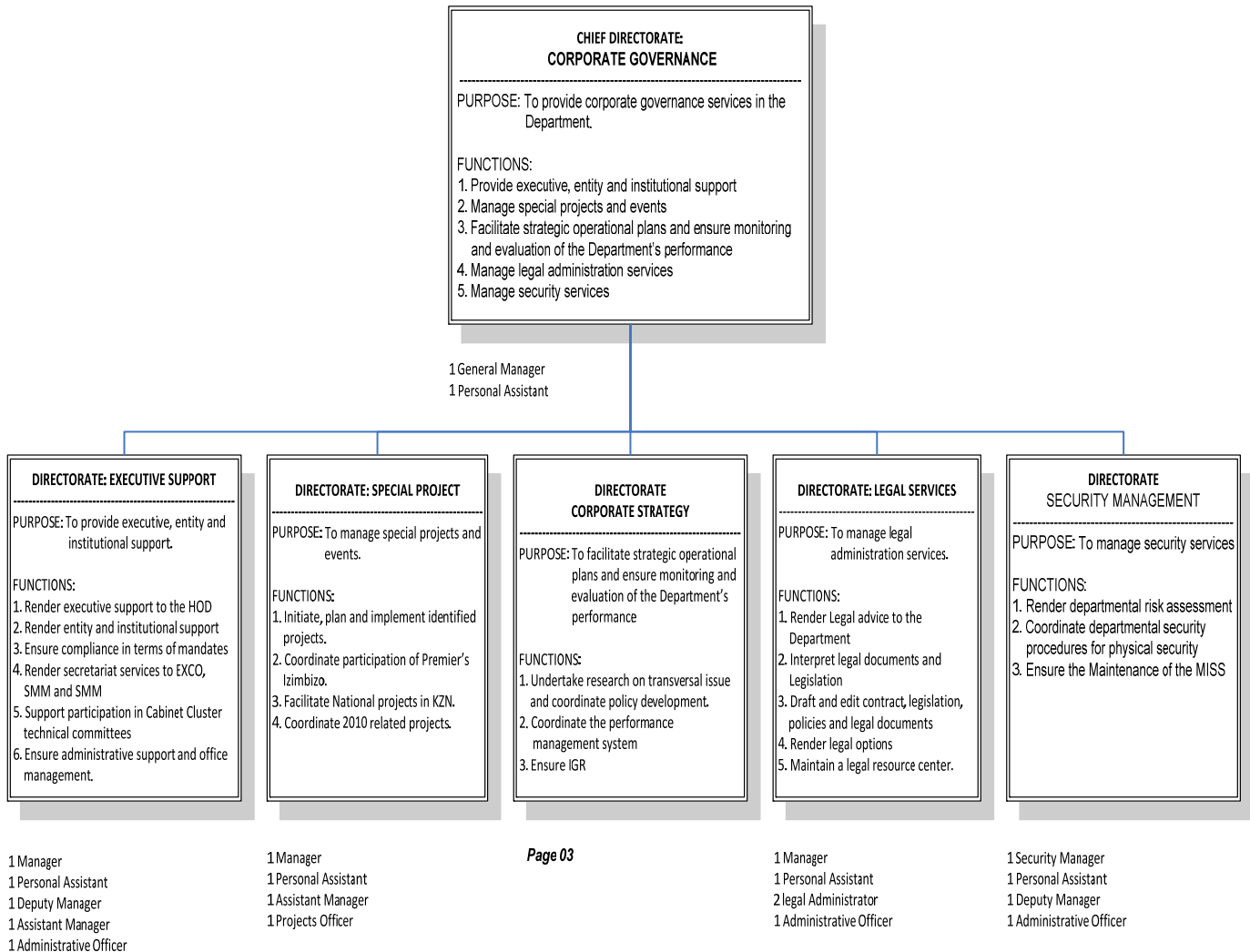
## KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, CULTURE & TOURISM RECOMMENDED MACRO ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE





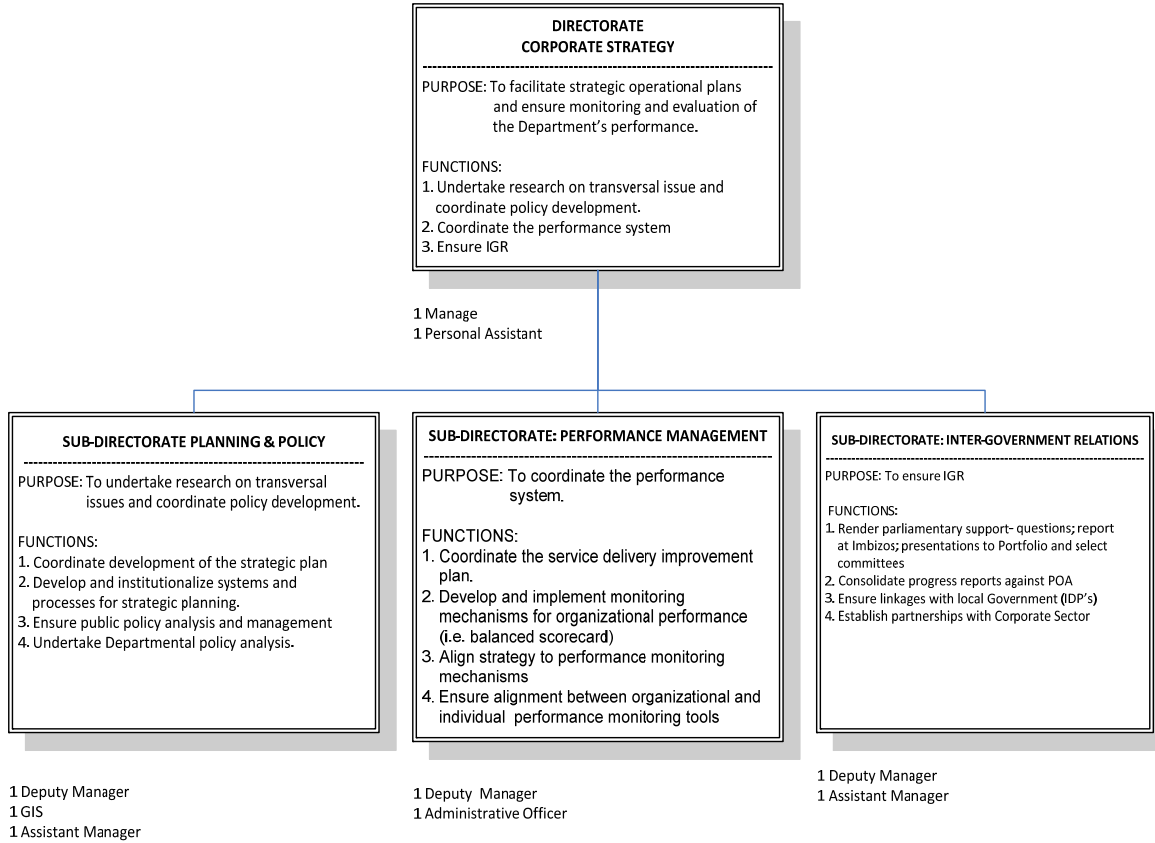
# ANNEXURE B

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, CULTURE AND TOURISM: APPROVED MACRO ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE, CHIEF DIRECTORATE:  
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE (AS DETERMINED BY DPSA)



# ANNEXURE C

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, CULTURE AND TOURISM: APPROVED MACRO ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE, CHIEF DIRECTORATE:  
DIRECTORATE CORPORATE STRATEGY



## ANNEXURE D

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### RESEARCH SCHEDULE

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THIS RESEARCH IS TO BE CONDUCTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF A MASTERS DEGREE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH

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### TITLE

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PROCESS AND INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS IN GOVERNMENT: A CASE STUDY OF THE KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE

SUPERVISOR: PROF CHRISTO DE CONNING

CELL: 0824637866

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## **RESEARCH ETHICS STATEMENT**

This study will comply with the ethical considerations specified by the Ethics Policy of the University of Stellenbosch. Permission to conduct the research has been obtained from the University's School of Public Leadership and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture. The identified participants will be invited to be part of the study. The objectives and reasons for the study will be explained to them as well as the reasons why they were chosen. It will be emphasised that their participation and input are important to the study.

Participants will be informed that their participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw at any stage. Consent to participate will be obtained from each participant or focus group before the interviews and focus group discussions are conducted.

The research schedule will be used as a guide and completed by the interviewer in an interview situation and focus group may be audio-taped with the permission of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture and participants. The identity of all participants will be treated with the strictest confidence and will not be included in any recording, reporting or publication.

## RESEARCH SCHEDULE

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### PART A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Name and Surname		
Gender		
Please indicate your age	20 – 29	
	30 – 39	
	40 – 49	
	50 – 59	
Department/Organisation		
Component/Section		
Position		
Rank		
Contact details		

### PART B: ORGANISATION M&E SYSTEM: PERSPECTIVES OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT

1 What is your understanding of M&E?


2 What is the main use and purpose of M&E?


- 3 Does your organisation have an M&E system? What does the M&E system entail? Please explain.


- 4 What is your role and responsibility in the M&E system?


- 5 How does your M&E system contribute to the achievement of government priorities as enshrined in the National Development Plan?


**PART C: PROCESS OF ESTABLISHING AN M&E SYSTEM:  
PERSPECTIVES OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT**

1. Was the readiness assessment conducted when an M&E system was developed in your organisation? Please explain.


2. Who is the M&E champion in your organisation or component?


- 2.1 What is the role of the M&E champion?


- 2.2 Were the roles and responsibilities in respect of M&E clarified?


3 What M&E incentives are there in your organisation/component?


4 What process was followed in agreeing on the outcomes to be monitored and evaluated?


5 How were performance indicators used to monitor the outcomes selected? Please explain.


6 How was the baseline data on indicators collected?


7 What process did/do you follow in ensuring that the targets formulated were/are realistic?


8 How are results monitored?


9 What programmes have been evaluated in your organisation? What were the findings and how were they used to improve the programme results?


10 What format is used to report the M&E findings?

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11 What strategy is used to disseminate evaluation findings to your stakeholders?


12 How can the M&E system be sustained or improved in your organisation?


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**PART D: INSTITUTIONALISATION OF M&E: PERSPECTIVES OF SENIOR MANAGERS**

1 How does the organisational top leadership promote and support M&E?


2 What values does your organisation uphold on M&E? Please explain.


3 Is there an M&E unit in your organisation?

--

3.1 At what level/rank is the head of the M&E Unit?

--

3.2 Who does the M&E head report to?

--

4 What M&E training did you receive?




5 Are you a member of any M&E forum? Please state.

--

6 What challenges are you experiencing regarding M&E in the organisation?


7 What can be done to address the challenges and improve the M&E system in your organisation?


**END OF QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR MANAGEMENT**

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**PART E: DETERMINING M&E CAPACITY: TO BE COMPLETED BY M&E UNIT OFFICIALS ONLY**

1. Please complete the following table to determine the capacity of the M&E unit within the organisation.

Post title	Rank	Job purpose and nature of duties	Who do you report to	Formal M&E qualification: yes/no
1				
2				
3				
4				

2 What is the operational budget of M&E in the department?

--

3 Is the M&E budget centralised or decentralised?

--

4 Where is the M&E Unit located in the organisation?


5 Where would you wish the M&E Unit to be located in the department and state your reason why?


6 Have you ever requested, advised or been pressured either by the supervisor or any other senior official including office bearers in the organisation to change or adapt your M&E findings against your will? Please explain.


7 What can be done to improve M&E in the organisation?


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**PART F: TO BE COMPLETED BY FOCUS GROUPS ONLY: M&E FORUMS/NETWORKS**

1 What M&E role do you perform? Please explain?


2 Who do you report your findings to?


3 What is your relationship to the group with the department on M&E?


4 What support do you get from the department in respect of M&E functions you perform?


5 What challenges have you identified in the department with regard to M&E?


6 How can these challenges be addressed.


**PART G: TO BE COMPLETED BY M&E UNIT IN THE OFFICE OF THE PREMIER**

1 Do you have an M&E forum in the province? What is the legal standing of the forum? Is it a statutory body?

--

2 Does it have approved terms of reference?

--

3 What is the frequency of its meetings?

--

4 When last did the forum meet?

--

5 Who are members of the forum? Please name them by category.


6 What does the M&E system of the province entail?


7 Is there an approved M&E framework for the Province?


8 What is the role of the Office of the Premier in respect of M&E and in relation to government departments?


9 How is the relationship between National/Provincial Treasury and the presidency/Office of the Premier respectively structured in terms of their role on M&E in relation to government departments? Please explain.


10 What capacity constraints in terms on M&E have you identified in the province?


11 Is there a plan in place to address those constraints? Please explain.


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Signature of the Respondent

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Date

NB: Please provide documentary proof where possible.