CASE-STUDY #2:
NATIONAL EVALUATION POLICY IN THE SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa

Official name:	**Republic of South Africa**
Location:	Southern tip of Africa
Independence:	31 May 1961
Form of state:	Constitutional parliamentary republic
Administrative divisions:	9 provinces
Area total:	1.22 million sq km
Population:	50.7 million (UN, 2012)
Language:	11 official languages including English, Afrikaans, Sesotho, Setswana, Xhosa and Zulu
Official currency:	Rand (ZAR)
GNI per capita:	US $6,960 (World Bank, 2011)
Unemployment (% of labour force):	24.7% (UN, 2011)
National Evaluation Association:	South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) founded in 2005
Introduction of NEP legislation:	2011
Economy:	One of continent's biggest economies. Poverty widespread, high crime rate associated with high unemployment
International:	Plays a leading role in diplomatic and anti-poverty initiatives in Africa. Emerged from international isolation in 1994 at the end of the apartheid era

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Acronyms

CLEAR-AA	Anglophone African Center for Learning of Evaluation Results
CREST	Centre for Research on Evaluation, Science and Technology
DCoG	Department of Cooperative Governance
DPME	Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
GWM&ES	Government Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MPAT	Management Performance Assessment Tool
NEPF	National Evaluation Policy Framework
NPC	National Planning Commission
NSG	National School of Government
PALAMA	Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy
PSC	Public Service Commission
SAMEA	South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association

Executive Summary

This case study outlines the process of implementing a government-wide monitoring and evaluation (GWM&E) system in South Africa.

In 2005 the South African Government introduced a government-wide M&E policy framework. This framework served to establish the initial momentum for a structured approach to M&E, which gained added commitment after the national elections in May 2009.

A National Evaluation Policy Framework in South Africa is just three years old and is still evolving. The whole design of the evaluation system is utilization focused, seeking to build from a demand-driven system.

A number of institutions are involved in the implementation of the overall M&E system in South Africa including: The Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, located in the Presidency, National Treasury, the Department of Public Service and Administration, the Auditor-General, the Department of Cooperative Governance, Statistics SA and the Public Service Commission.

M&E is closely associated with the planning process in government. In addition to recent processes directed at affirming long-term plans for the country, South Africa has a five year overarching Medium Term Strategic Framework, five year departmental strategic plans and annual performance plans (APPs). National Treasury monitors quarterly reporting against APPs.

In order to focus government's work, the 'outcomes approach' was introduced in 2009, focusing on 12 strategic priorities. The 12 priorities are translated into performance agreements for ministers, cross government plans for each outcome and quarterly monitoring with reporting to Cabinet. The outcomes approach is becoming embedded. Reports are now taken seriously by the President and Cabinet, and are being made public. This makes it easier for the public to hold the executive to account. However, there are still challenges with respect to data quality and coordination as well as a culture of compliance but not actually using M&E to reflect on and improve performance. There are also weaknesses in the planning system, which is fragmented with different institutions playing different roles, and a lack of effective theories of change.

However, South Africa was able to establish a country-led strategy for national evaluation capacity development to strengthen the enabling environment for evaluation. The country has already a number of good practices including Management Performance Assessment and Front-Line Service Delivery Monitoring.

I. Introduction

1.1. Political, Economic and Development Context

The Republic of South Africa is located at the southern tip of the continent of Africa. It is a multi-racial, majority black southern African country of nearly 51 million with over 50% of the population below the age of 25.

South Africa's pre-1994 history of *apartheid* reflected an authoritarian style of governance, which was exclusionary in character and minority-based in most of its political activities. After the un-banning of the African National Congress, Nelson Mandela was released from prison in the 1990s and the first democratic elections were held in 1994. After political liberation, South Africa is one of the youngest independent African states, which has adopted a progressive Constitution with a Bill of Rights in 1996.

South Africa introduced a semi federal system with three spheres of government: national, provincial and local. Now it is a unitary state, with nine provinces. The national sphere sets policy, norms and standards that should be followed by other spheres. Meanwhile, the provinces are responsible for implementation of most developmental functions (education, health, agriculture, social development, and others), with local government responsible for water, electricity distribution, integrated planning, local roads, and amenities. Provinces have provincial legislatures and a strong degree of autonomy. This system of governance stipulates the implications of planning and M&E systems across these different levels and multiple actors for effective and accountable utilization of public resources.

Poverty remains a problem from the apartheid era (more than a quarter of the population receives government assistance and about half live below the poverty line), though the country ranks 25th in the world in GDP and is a solidly middle-income nation with well-developed financial and industrial sectors. The country's GDP has an unprecedented 62 quarters of uninterrupted economic growth between 1993 and 2007, which rose by 5.1%[1] and decreased to 1.9% in 2013 due to the global financial crisis[2]. South Arica is a member of BRIC group of countries of Brazil, Russia, India and China. The country's biggest trading partners are Germany and China (imports) and Japan and the U.S. (exports). South Africa is the world's largest producer of platinum, gold and chromium.

Despite post-apartheid national socioeconomic gains, South Africa remains a highly unequal society with respect to wealth and income distribution and access to jobs, social services, utilities, and land. Most blacks are poor, and average black incomes are far smaller than those of the historically privileged white minority. Blacks also suffer very high unemployment rates (24,7% in 2011[3]), and have far less access to education. Shortages of quality housing, utilities, and social services in townships—the vast, high-density housing settlements where many of the poor live—spur ongoing social and political tensions. Other key problems include public corruption and widespread violent crime. Vigilante justice and mob violence is not uncommon, and heavy-handed police tactics sometimes result in human rights abuses.

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[1] http://www.southafrica.info/
[2] http://thebricspost.com/sa-gdp-growth-slows-to-1-9-in-2013/#.Uy3pLah_vVU
[3] UN, 2011

South Africa also suffers high rates of HIV/AIDS. It has the second-highest number of HIV/AIDS patients in the world. Around one in seven of its citizens is infected with HIV. Free anti-retroviral drugs are available under a state-funded scheme.

South Africa is the 53rd largest recipient of official humanitarian assistance (2011)[4]. It received the equivalent of 0.3% of its Gross National Income (GNI) as aid (ODA) in 2010, i.e. $1.4 billion. Meanwhile, it gave the equivalent of 0.05% of its GNI as foreign assistance in 2011, i.e. $95 million.

1.2. M&E Context

Prior to 1994, South Africa did not have the integrated system of measuring performance and little attention to M&E was in place. Majority of black people were excluded from official data and the impact of apartheid policies on the majority was consequently underestimated. Generally, the racial perspective narrowed the scope of data collection, hence could not provide any indication of the performance of government. The passage from Apartheid served to bring immense changes and confirmed the vital role of the state in mediating social and economic relations in a highly unequal society.

During the 2000s, there was a growing interest in M&E, and the M&E role in the Presidency began to strengthen. In 2005, the Cabinet approved a plan for the development of a Government Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System (GWM&ES). It was approved by Cabinet in 2007 and included the need for program performance information, statistical data quality and evaluation with an aim to strengthen the links between the Presidency, the Treasury, and the national statistics agency.

However, the real increase in emphasis on M&E took place only after national elections of 2009 due to:
- Widespread service delivery protests at municipal level;
- Loss of some support by ruling party in 2009 elections;
- Negative results of Fifteen Year Review of Government which identified shortcomings including poor education and health results relative to expenditure per capita, frequent quality problems with services and corruption[5].

These pressures led to increased political consensus within ruling party on importance of *improving performance of government* and also a move to balance the perceived over-concentration of power in Treasury through a greater focus on M&E. As a result, the Ministry of Performance M&E was created in the Presidency in 2009, and the Department of Performance M&E (DPME) in January 2010. The National Planning Commission (NPC) as an advisory body was also established in the Presidency to focus on a long-term 2030 plan.

The M&E framework in South Africa was developed based upon experiences of Mexico and Colombia with regard to evaluation policy and Canada relating to assessment of management performance.

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[4] Global Humanitarian Assistance Data

[5] 15 Year Review Report on the State of Intergovernmental Relations in South Africa, DPLG, March 2008

II.   Institutional setting of NEP in the South Africa
2.1.   *NEP's Focus and Purposes*

The focus of the National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF) is to address the use of evaluation to promote improved performance and impact of government programmes, and at the same time improve accountability and decision-making. It aims to link evaluation to planning and budgeting processes, improve the quality of evaluations undertaken, and ensure that evaluation findings are used to improve performance. The NEPF focuses on different government interventions including policies, plans, programmes and projects. It envisages evaluation as a process carried out throughout the intervention lifecycle. The NEPF was approved by Cabinet on 23 November 2011.

2.2.   *Legal and Policy Framework*

The policy framework for M&E functions in South Africa is laid down in a number of legislation, regulations and policy documents:
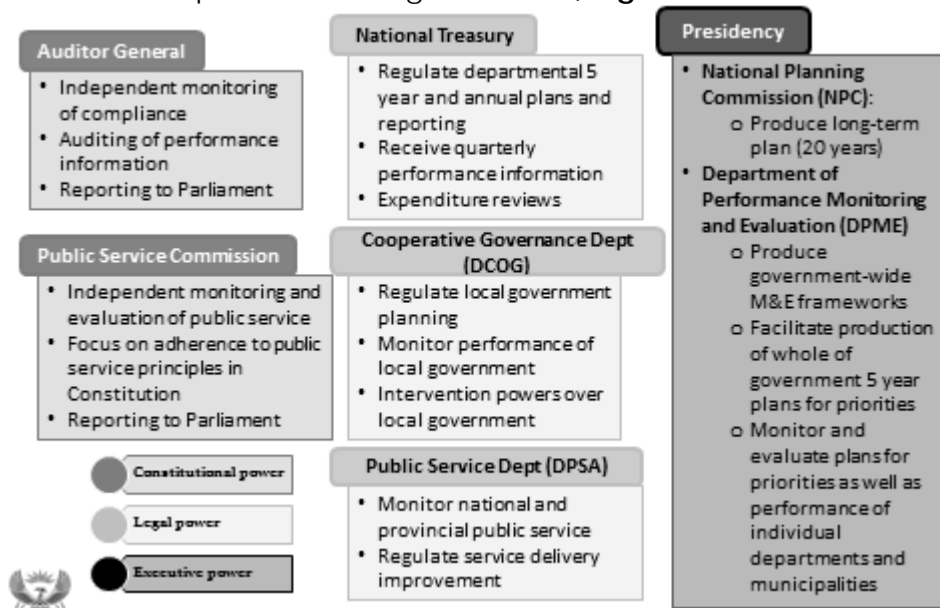
1. **Constitution (sections 195, 92 and 133) of 1996** states that the state is obliged to deliver services and uphold the rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights.
2. **Public Service Act of 1999** provides the modalities for the functioning of national and provincial departments, and the appointment and performance of government personnel.
3. **Public Finance Management Act of 2003 (sections 27 and 45)** modernizes the financial system of government and to move away from an input approach to finance towards a focus on outputs and the exercise of responsibility.
4. **Municipal Finance Management Act of 2003** provides the obligation of the municipalities to use their resources effectively, efficiently, and economically.
5. **Government–wide Monitoring and Evaluation System of 2005** identified the need to create three frameworks:

2007- Framework for Programme Performance Information issued by the National Treasury;
2008 - South African Statistical Quality Framework issued by the Statistics South Africa;
2011 – National Evaluation Policy Framework issued by the Presidency.

South Africa has a number of actors with legal or constitutional mandates for monitoring and evaluation:

Institution	Mandate
The Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation in the Presidency	Constitution (1996) – section 85, President's State of the Nation addresses (2010/2011), Minister for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation - Policy Framework on Performance Monitoring and Evaluation – Our Approach
National Treasury	Constitution (1996) - sections 215 and 216
The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA)	Public Service Act (1999)
The Auditor-General	Public Audit Act (2004) - sections 20(1c) and 25
Department of Cooperative Governance (DCoG)	Constitution (1996) - Chapters 3 and 7, Municipal Structures Act (1998) and Municipal Systems Act (2000)
Statistics SA	Statistics Act (No. 6 of 1999) - section 14.6 (a), (b) and (c), January Cabinet Legkotla (2002) and State of the Nation Addresses (2004/ 2005)
The Public Service Commission (PSC)	Constitution (1996) - sections 195 and 196

2.3.   *Institutional Arrangements*

In total, **seven institutions** are involved in implementation of the GWM&ES in the South Africa from different branches of power including **executive, legal and constitutional**.

Auditor General
- Independent monitoring of compliance
- Auditing of performance information
- Reporting to Parliament

National Treasury
- Regulate departmental 5 year and annual plans and reporting
- Receive quarterly performance information
- Expenditure reviews

Presidency
- National Planning Commission (NPC):
  o Produce long-term plan (20 years)
- Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME)
  o Produce government-wide M&E frameworks
  o Facilitate production of whole of government 5 year plans for priorities
  o Monitor and evaluate plans for priorities as well as performance of individual departments and municipalities

Public Service Commission
- Independent monitoring and evaluation of public service
- Focus on adherence to public service principles in Constitution
- Reporting to Parliament

Cooperative Governance Dept (DCOG)
- Regulate local government planning
- Monitor performance of local government
- Intervention powers over local government

Public Service Dept (DPSA)
- Monitor national and provincial public service
- Regulate service delivery improvement

Constitutional power
Legal power
Executive power

Nevertheless, DPME is the custodian of M&E in government, coordinates the GWM&ES and has the following mandate:

✓ Facilitate the development of plans for the cross cutting priorities or outcomes of government and monitor and evaluate the implementation of these plans (delivery agreements);

✓ Monitor the performance of individual national and provincial government departments and municipalities;

✓ Monitor frontline service delivery ;

✓ Manage the Presidential Hotline;

✓ Carry out evaluations in partnership with other departments;

✓ Promote good M&E practices in government;

✓ Provide support to delivery institutions to address blockages in delivery.

DPME consists of **four main branches**, aligned to main budget programmes:

Branch	1. Outcomes Monitoring and Evaluation Branch	2. Public Sector Oversight Branch	3. M&E Systems Coordination and Support Branch	4. Administration Branch
Function	Outcomes approach; evaluation	Performance monitoring of individual national and provincial departments and municipalities; monitoring of front-line service delivery; and the Presidential Hotline	The POA; data management services for the department; development of M&E capacity across government	Provides corporate services

DPME is placing evaluation units or departments in each of the three tiers of government, at the national level located in the Office of the Presidency, at the provincial level located in the Office of the Premier in each of the 9 provinces, as well as in local government offices. DPME has also established the **National M&E Forum** and the **Forum of Heads of M&E from the Offices of the Premier**. These stakeholder forums as well as the M&E learning network of government officials enhance the sharing of knowledge and good practices on M&E. **DPME** has a **staff of approximately 200 posts** and a **budget of approximately USD $20 million**.

DPME has introduced a number of initiatives since its establishment, including a focus on **12 government priority outcomes**; the **assessment of the quality of management performance** of national and provincial departments; a new system of **monitoring front-line service**s; a **national evaluation system**; and a **municipal performance assessment tool**, which was developed and is piloting.

2.4. M&E Tools, Components, Evaluation Methodologies and Quality of Data

Principal components of South Africa's M&E system include:

1. Outcomes based approach
2. Planning process
3. Monitoring the management performance of departments
4. Monitoring front line service delivery
5. National evaluation system
6. Monitoring of local government

Outcome based approach

The move towards outcome approach was set by the green paper 'Improving Government Performance: Our Approach' issued by the Presidency in January 2009 due to significant level of poverty, unemployment and inequality in South Africa.

Government has adopted 12 outcomes (education, health, safety, employment, skills, economic infrastructure, rural development, integrated human settlements, local government, environment, internal and external relations, and public service) with a view to achieve effective spending on the right priorities.

In April 2010, the President signed performance agreements with all Cabinet Ministers. In these performance agreements, Ministers were requested to establish and participate in Implementation Forums for each of 12 outcomes. The Implementation Forums have developed delivery agreements for the outcomes. All departments, agencies and spheres of government that are involved in the direct delivery required to achieve an outcome, are party to the agreement. The performance agreements specify the outcomes, output targets and relevant indicators. The delivery agreements unpack these and develop a results chain to achieve them, describing sub-outputs and activities.

The Programme of Action (POA) electronic system monitors progress of the delivery agreements. It tracks and reports on the key aspects through indicators and targets for the outputs, sub-outputs and in some cases, activities. The reporting system uses a traffic light approach. Generally red indicates the need for intervention and green signals that progress is expected. The information in the system is updated on a quarterly basis. The reports are then taken to Cabinet Subcommittees and the Cabinet. Outcome facilitators also produce independent progress briefings for the Cabinet. The outcomes approach is considered an innovation in South Africa.

Linking performance monitoring to planning

In South Africa, until 2009, there was no clear planning mandate in government, and no national plan. The Treasury established the basic planning and M&E system for South Africa's government, in which national and provincial departments produce five-year strategic plans and annual performance plans (APPs) that are monitored quarterly. This system was applied to provincial departments in 2000 and national departments in 2010.

Monitoring the management performance of departments

DPME has been mandated to regularly assess the quality of generic management practices in departments. A methodology for doing this (the Management Performance Assessment Tool) was developed by the DPME in collaboration with the Offices of the Premier, National Treasury and the DPSA, and in consultation with the Office of the Auditor General and the Office of the Public Service Commission.

The methodology has been informed by similar management performance assessments carried out in other countries such as Russia, the UK, Canada, New Zealand, Kenya, Turkey and India. It involves working with the management of national and provincial departments to carry out self-assessments which are then moderated by subject matter experts and by cross-referencing to data produced by bodies such as the Auditor General, Public Service Commission, National Treasury and DPSA.

The assessment process involves the Head of Department and senior management of departments undertaking a self-assessment against 32 standards, and then providing evidence to justify their assessment. The system embodies four specific areas of focus:

1. Employees, systems & processes: Organizational design, HR management (planning; performance; discipline; recruitment; development; personnel admin; retention); information management and facilities management.

2. Financial management: Financial management; asset management; compensation of employees; revenue management; transfer payments; supply chain management and budgeting.

3. Governance & accountability: Management structure; ethics; accountability; internal audit; risk management; stakeholder management and organizational culture.

4. Strategic management: Project management and delivery of programmes; monitoring & evaluation; strategic planning.

These assessments are planned to carry out annually. The aim of these assessments is to get managers of departments to regularly monitor the quality of their management practices and to implement improvement plans where necessary.

Assessments started in November 2011. During the first cycle, 103 national and provincial departments were assessed. The results showed that 44% of national and provincial departments are not compliant with the legal requirements on M&E, and that only 13% are being "smart," in this case implementing evaluation. As a result, the Cabinet decided in June 2012 that all 156 national and provincial departments must participate in the next assessment cycle. The MPAT process allowed identifying areas of management where national policy departments need to implement support initiatives. In general, managers are very interested in how their departments perform compared to others, and many departments have already implemented improvements in preparation for the next assessment cycle.

Monitoring front line service delivery

The Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring (FSDM) Programme was developed by the DPME in The Presidency to undertake hands-on monitoring at targeted service delivery facilities. The programme is a joint initiative between the Offices of the Premiers and DPME and involves collecting data directly from users of government services at service delivery facilities. The programme was developed to continuously verify (1) if government is meeting the expectations of the citizens; (ii) where government is doing well; assist government

departments to direct scarce resources where they are needed and (iii) to direct improvements where needed.

It consists of three initiatives supporting monitoring-led improvements at the coalface of service delivery:

1. Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring	Assess the state and quality of frontline service delivery using unannounced visits by DPME officials, Offices of the Premier and members of the Executive.
2. Citizen-Based Monitoring	Develop structured engagements with civil society to enable the monitoring of frontline service delivery by citizens.
3. Presidential Hotline	Give access to the Presidency to citizens who want to report service delivery problems outside of the existing fault reporting and grievance channels.

1. Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring

The Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring Project has been running since June 2011 in South Africa. It uses unannounced visits to government service sites (e.g. schools, clinics, police stations, licensing offices etc.) to catalyze service delivery improvements and highlight the importance of frontline monitoring to service delivery departments. The visits are conducted by monitoring teams comprising officials from the DPME and officials from the M&E units in the provincial offices of the premier. During the monitoring visits, the teams interview users and staff for their view on system performance and a scorecard is produced for each facility, as well as an improvement plan.

Between June 2011 and July 2012, about 200 sites were visited. Community users have been very appreciative of the presence of officials from the Presidency and the Offices of the Premier at service delivery sites. Monitoring data have identified policy and system weaknesses, such as poor facility maintenance and the lack of effective operational management systems. When policy and system weaknesses are identified, they are escalated to senior department management or to the ministerial level as needed.

2. Citizen-Based Monitoring

The Framework for Strengthening Citizen-Government Partnerships for Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring was approved by Cabinet in August 2013. The framework aims to support government departments (in particular those that deliver services to the public) to institutionalize ways to bring the views and experiences of citizens into their monitoring and evaluation systems. The tools were developed and will be piloted on three sites: South African Police Services (SAPS), Department of Social Development (DSD) and the Department of Health (DoH) from September 2013 to March 2015. No evaluation yet exists of the effectiveness of this approach. However, it is popular with political representatives and Members of the Executive.

3. **Presidential Hotline**

It was established by the Presidency in September/October 2009. It is a facility to receive and facilitate resolution of service delivery complaints. Citizens use the toll-free number to reach the call center, and can also communicate through letters. There are 15 call agents taking calls between 06h00 and 22h00 (Mondays to Fridays) and callers have the option of speaking to a call agent in a language of their choice. All calls are logged on an automated information system, a reference number is assigned to each case and each case is assigned to a specific government department or agency to investigate and resolve. Every department and province is expected to review its hotline cases daily and to record the outcome of the investigation against each case. The DPME in the Presidency has a directorate dedicated to managing the Presidential Hotline. This team also receives correspondence-based cases from citizens (faxes, letters, and emails) and ensures that these cases are also recorded and assigned for investigation. This team works closely with all departments and provinces to ensure that they are following up on the cases assigned to them. Where required, the Presidency team facilitates the creation of task teams from different departments to address complex cases. Regular analysis is done of the types of complaints received and the responsiveness of departments in solving the complaints. These issues are reported to Cabinet at least twice a year.

Citizens get feedback on their complaints, either directly from the departments to whom the case was assigned, or through contacting the call center. Since October 2012, satisfaction surveys have been conducted on a monthly basis to assess the level of citizen satisfaction with case resolution.

Average 14 000 calls per month answered and average 450 calls per day received. 154 549 cases were logged through September 2009 to January 2013. Case resolutions have being improved by all provinces from 39% in November 2009 to 89% in January 2013.

National evaluation system

A National Evaluation System is being established in South Africa by Cabinet in November 2011 to **institutionalise evaluation system** across Government, ensure **common language** and **conceptual base** for evaluation; improve **quality** of evaluations and ultimately, **utilisation** of evaluation finding to improve performance.

The National Evaluation Policy outlines the **6 type of evaluations** to be conducted:
1. Diagnostic evaluation – identifying the root cause of problems, and potential options to address them;
2. Design evaluation - a short program design evaluation by M&E units within departments to ensure designs are robust, ideally before implementation starts;
3. Implementation evaluation - measuring an intervention's progress and determining how it can be strengthened;
4. Impact evaluation - identifying the impact of interventions and its attribution, and how they can be strengthened;
5. Economic evaluation - the cost-effectiveness or cost benefit of interventions; and
6. Evaluation synthesis - drawing lessons across a number of evaluations.

The framework uses a strategic approach that focuses on important policies/programs/plans, and those selected are embedded in the National Evaluation Plan. Large or strategic programmes, or those of significant public interest or of concern, must be evaluated at least

every 5 years. The evaluation topics selected must be linked to 12 outcomes especially top 5 priorities key areas of health, crime, jobs and rural development. Key evaluations for government are to be proposed by sector departments and approved by Cabinet (8 evaluations in 2012/13, 15 in 2013/14, 20 in 2014/15 and 20 per year thereafter). Evaluations are conducted jointly by the department(s) concerned and the DPME, and the DPME partially funds the evaluations (average of US$60,000 per evaluation). The results of all evaluations in the evaluation plan must be in the public domain, on departmental and DPME websites (excluding classified information). Improvement plans to address the recommendations from the evaluations must be produced by departments and their implementation must then be monitored.

The National Evaluation System is led by the Evaluation and Research Unit (ERU) in the DPME consisted of 10 persons and supported by a cross-government Evaluation Technical Working Group. It is responsible for producing a series of guidelines and practice notes on the detailed implementation of the policy framework, to elaborate various aspects of the system and to set quality.

As of the end 2013, TORs for Evaluations, Guideline for Peer Reviews, Template for Evaluation Project Plan, TORs for Evaluation Steering Committees and Guideline for Inception Phase, Management Response, Improvement Plan, Communication, Provincial Evaluation Plans and Guideline on Planning Implementation Programmes were developed by the ERU. Also, 5 draft guidelines have been produced on Diagnostic Evaluation, Implementation Evaluations, Impact Evaluations, Economic Evaluations and Evaluation Synthesis.

Monitoring of local government

Local government is performing poorly, and at present there is no integrated set of minimum norms or standards of performance (administrative, political, or service delivery). Drawing on the monitoring of management performance of national and provincial departments, the DPME is working with key national and provincial partners to establish a similar process for municipalities to provide an integrated and holistic picture of performance for each municipality. The objectives are threefold: (i) enable strategic leadership of the local government sector and inform policy reform initiatives; (ii) provide evidence for tailored and coordinated support and/or intervention measures to specific municipalities; and (iii) guide national and provincial departments to better support municipalities in identified areas of underperformance.

The municipal assessment tool was drafted and covers planning, human resources, finances, service delivery, community engagement, and governance. It was piloted in selected municipalities in 2012/2013 fiscal year and will be rollout in the 2013/14 fiscal year.

2.5.   Professional Capacity for M&E

South Africa was able to establish a country-led strategy for national evaluation capacity development to strengthen the enabling environment for evaluation. It was achieved through three main initiatives:

1.   Offering of the Evaluation Degrees in the Universities

Specialized capacity building courses for specialists were introduced in the national universities through the Anglophone African Center for Learning of Evaluation Results (CLEAR-AA) and Centre for Research on Evaluation, Science and Technology (CREST) with initial financial support from the World Bank and DFID.

As of now, **5 post-graduate programmes in M&E** are offered by two universities in the South Africa:

✓   **CLEAR at the University of the Witwatersrand**:
▪   The Monitoring and Evaluation Postgraduate Diploma (to Masters) Programme (PDM-M&E)
▪   Master of Management in the field of public and development sector: monitoring and evaluation (MM-M&E)

✓   **CREST at the University of Stellenbosch**:
▪   Postgraduate Diploma in Monitoring and Evaluation Methods
▪   MPhil in Monitoring and Evaluation
▪   PhD in Evaluation Studies

2.   **Rolling out of M&E courses by the National School of Government (NSG) replaced by the Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA)**

The National Development Plan identifies the need for a capable, developmental professional and responsive state of which the National School of Government is in support of: to professionalize the public service. In October 2013, the National School of Government (NSG) was launched and replaced the South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI) formed in 1996 and Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA) formed in 2008. The NSG will provide a Government Leadership Programme for political and administrative leadership from all three spheres of government. This programme will also include courses on M&E to address key competencies to undertake M&E and to gather, analyze, report and use evidence, which were reviewed by PALAMA and DPME in 2011.

3.   Proposing In-Service Training for Government Officials

Four M&E courses were developed by DPME in partnership with CLEAR-AA and are delivered **to government stakeholders** across South Africa.

The curriculums of the short M&E courses are as follows:
Course 1: How to Manage Evaluations focusing on how to understand the national evaluation system as outlined in the National Evaluation Policy Framework.
Course 2: Deeping Evaluation concentrating on quality of evaluation reports, development of management responses and improvement plans.
Course 3: Planning Implementation Programmes aiming on strengthening implementation

programme design and planning though the usage of logframes as outlined the Draft Guideline for the Planning of new Implementation Programmes released in July 2013.

Course 4: The Logframe centering on introduction to Logframes and Indicators for Implementation Programmes using the model of the DPME Implementation Programme Guidelines.

Only for the period of August to November 2013, a total of **145 government officials** were trained on these evaluation in-service short courses.

4. Establishing Cooperation of Government with National Evaluation Association

DPME has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association to collaborate in promoting M&E in South Africa. SAMEA was founded in 2005 and includes more than 391 members (289 individuals, 63 students, and 39 institutional members from 5 institutions) as of August 2013. DPME and SAMEA cooperate in 5 main areas:

1. Co-organising capacity building and learning activities;
2. Dissemination of M&E by reaching a wider group of M&E Practitioners;
3. Collaborating on evaluation standards and competencies;
4. Working towards professionalizing evaluation in South Africa;
5. Encouraging citizen participation and reporting.

The major results of this collaboration so far include the following:

• Drafting of the National Evaluation Policy Framework and its approval by Cabinet on 24 November 2011;
• Launching of Provincial M&E Association in KwaZulu-Natal in September 2012;
• Developing Standards and Competencies for Evaluation in Government;
• Developing an Action Plan and holding regular face-to-face Board meetings.

5. Developing of M&E Learning Network to promote the sharing of good practice and learning across government

a) Conduction of study visits to countries which demonstrate good practice in performance M&E

As of the end of 2013, study visits by South African officials were held to Mexico, Colombia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Australia.

b) Establishing of the National M&E Forum and the Forum of Heads of M&E from the Offices of the Premier

In the beginning of 2011, a provincial M&E forum of heads of M&E from the nine premiers' offices was established. This forum has become a catalyst for partnership between DPME and the provinces in driving good M&E practice. This has led to collaboration in the development, piloting and rolling out of M&E initiatives, building capacity in the process in provinces and in DPME.

In November 2011, the National M&E Forum was launched by DPME, composed of heads of M&E from national government departments, to share ideas and coordinate M&E practices in the national sphere of government. On these meetings, presentations by departments on their own work are delivered.

c) Creation of repository of evaluation reports on DPME web-site

DPME undertook an audit in 2011 to find evaluations undertaken since 2006. 83 evaluations

were assessed using quality assessment tool and were included in the online Repository. All new evaluations conducted since 2011 will be placed there as well.

2.6.   Utilization of M&E

The demand for improved use of information was first articulated in the Presidency 2009 green paper 'Improving Government Performance: Our Approach'. The document demanded M&E to drive instrumental data use directed at the improvement of service delivery throughout all spheres of government. However, historically the data usage by government ended with completion of the report. It was stimulated by the legal requirements to submit annual progress reports and outputs indicators to Treasury, which were later checked by the Auditor-General. The driven demand for reporting leads to a lack of ownership and formation of a compliance culture just to report, but do not use information.

DPME is trying to change this approach and promote utilization of evaluation results. It was done through establishing a system of management response to follow up on evaluation findings and recommendations as part of adopted NEPF in November 2011. Once the evaluation report is approved as factually correct and methodologically sound by the Evaluation Steering Committee, the DG of DPME writes officially to the relevant DGs requesting a management response on the evaluation report within one month, and that work should start on the Improvement Plan. In the Management Response the departments(s) involved indicate whether they agree with the recommendations and if not why not. After this month a presentation on the evaluation findings is made to the relevant cluster, and then on to Cabinet Committee and Cabinet. Once Cabinet has approved a letter is written to the relevant portfolio committee indicating that the evaluation has completed and they may want the department to present on the findings. The Improvement Plan addressing the findings should be completed within a maximum of 4 months of the approval of the report by the Steering Committee. 6 monthly reports are requested on the Improvement Plan.

III. Achievements and Challenges

o **Main Achievements**

✓ **Increased strategic focus of government on achieving a limited number of outcomes.** Quarterly reports enable the Cabinet to regularly monitor progress in meeting the government's key strategic agenda.
✓ **Introduction of whole-of-government planning linked to key cross-cutting outcomes**, which clearly links inputs and activities to outputs and outcomes.
✓ **More systematic M&E** is beginning to **facilitate more efficient use of limited resources**.
✓ Emphasis on measuring results is working as a **catalyst for change** in government - some departments are embracing the approach and focusing on measurable results and improving their data and their information management systems.
✓ Generally **positive responses** to management performance assessment, frontline service delivery monitoring, and evaluation, with managers putting in place improvement plans, seems to be attributable to participatory approach of these initiatives.
✓ Building a **coherence and platform** around M&E in government at different levels.

o **Factors of Support to develop M&E system**
1. High-level political commitment to a strong M&E system from the president.
2. Establishment of the DPME and development of a high-quality team.
3. Using best practices on M&E of others countries rather than reinventing wheels.

o **Key Challenges**

Outcome based approach
▪ The difficulty of keeping delivery agreements short and strategic;
▪ The difficulty in formulation of results level indicators and focusing more on the activity level indicators;
▪ Poor translation of the delivery agreements into departmental plans, and from strategic to operational plans.
▪ Culture of public service – focus on activities than achieving outcomes.
▪ Lack of culture of coordination.
▪ Lack of clear division of the roles and responsibilities of all institutions involved in M&E.

Planning Process
▪ Identified misalignment between budget reform based on expenditure programs and M&E reform based on implementation programs.

National Evaluation System
➢ Duplication of reporting.
➢ **Evaluation** applied sporadically and not informing planning, policy-making and budgeting sufficiently - missing the opportunity to improve Government's effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

Utilization of M&E

➢ Evidence and analysis not used sufficiently in decision-making, planning, or budgeting, particularly of programmes.

➢ 44% of national and provincial departments not regularly using monitoring reports to improve performance.

➢ Monitoring undertaken as compliance, not as part of culture of continuous improvement

IV. Good Practice(s)

1. Management performance monitoring

▪ Focuses on assessing state of management practices;

▪ Enables managers to test their own management practices against others and identify management practice improvements that will enable to improve service delivery;

▪ Provides a basis for ongoing learning about improved management practices;

▪ Catalyzes improvements in management;

▪ Enables the targeting of supporting programmes and interventions;

▪ Establishes the baseline management performance of institutions against management benchmarks;

▪ Enables tracking of improvements against the baseline performance.

2. Evaluation competence framework for Government

▪ Useful in describing the competences (knowledge, skills and abilities) for the managers and users of evaluations (programme managers, M&E advisors and Evaluator) conducted through the national evaluation system.

▪ Set up benchmarks of quality evaluation practice.

3. Standards for Evaluation in Government

• Encourage the utilization of findings by putting NEPF into operation.

4. National Evaluation Plan

• Provides details of evaluations approved by Cabinet as priority evaluations to undertake during a fiscal year and summarizes the situation with ongoing evaluations.

5. Monitoring frontline service delivery

▪ Unannounced visits to service sites allows to check whether:

✓ service delivery standards are in place and being monitored;

✓ basic minimum management systems and practices are in place;

✓ basic information is available for users of the service;

✓ Government is meeting the expectations of the citizens.

▪ Assist to identify where improvement initiatives should be targeted;

▪ Enable relevant line function departments to facilitate or put in place interventions to address identified weaknesses;

▪ Identify and give recognition to good front line service delivery practice;

▪ Inform evaluations of government performance and performance of departments;

▪ Outputs are reports on quality of frontline service delivery, which provided to management.

6. **Presidential hotline**

- Important source of information for government-wide performance monitoring and evaluation, and for monitoring impact of government on citizens;
- Enables government to track what are the important issues for citizens;
- Enables government to track its responsiveness to the concerns of citizens;
- Data collected from the interactions with citizens is an asset that can be effectively used for a number of policy, programming and monitoring purposes.

V. Conclusion

The National Evaluation System is young in South Africa and is implemented only during last three years. However, it shows that when the situation is sufficiently favorable, an M&E system can be rapidly developed and implemented, and also how using international experience can speed up the process. South Africa has tried to establish the M&E system across both national and provincial levels, and is now developing the local government element of the system. This shows that M&E can be implemented at the local level, although it does increase the complexity of the process, adding many different stakeholders who have to buy into the system and change their behavior.

The DPME has been determined to use performance and result-based management to improve the effectiveness of government and considered as good practice around the world as part of the process of developing the M&E systems. The DPME has introduced a number of initiatives since its establishment, including a focus on 12 government priority outcomes; the assessment of the quality of management performance of national and provincial departments; a new system of monitoring front-line services; a national evaluation system; and a municipal performance assessment tool, which is still in development. These tools have contributed to a major increase in the availability of evidence for policy and decision making.

There are a number of challenges because the system is not yet consolidated across the multiple actors, and there is a long way to go in developing a culture of M&E in the government system. A critical issue is the relationship between the key center of government stakeholders, notably the DPME and the National Treasury, and considerable work is underway to strengthen that relationship through practical collaboration at the technical level as well as higher-level relationship building.

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VII. Interviews held

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