

**PROPOSAL FOR AN INTEGRATED MODEL
FOR SOUTH AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMMES:
RSA MONITORING AND EVALUATION
SYSTEM AND RESULTS BASED
MANAGEMENT**

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1 INTRODUCTION

This Paper provides the background to, and justification for, the development of a new development-focussed, results-driven monitoring and evaluation model currently being researched by the SADC Centre for Land-related, Regional and Development Law and Policy. This research takes place within the context of a post-settlement support pilot project (funded by CIDA), in support of the South African Government land reform policy and funded by CIDA. This research also takes cognisance of the fundamental paradigm shifts as regards the role of government in development, from the Bretton Woods' national developmentalist approach ('40s-'70s), through the Washington Consensus' market-driven neo-liberal approach (late '70s to late '90s), to the Post-Washington Consensus of state involvement in development (2000 onwards).

2 INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY PERSPECTIVE

In 2000, the South African Presidency published a comprehensive programme, the *Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme* (ISRDP) and the *Urban Renewal Programme*. However, monitoring and evaluation, and impact assessment, does not feature very strongly in the IRDP.

In light of South African policy and statutory frameworks, the local and district municipalities are responsible for drafting integrated development plans (IDPs), and provinces must draft provincial growth and development strategies (PGDSs). These three sets of plans and strategies must be upwardly aligned. Furthermore, the local economic development plans (LEDs) of individual municipalities (local and district) must be aligned with the provincial economic development programme, as well as with the local and district IDPs and the provincial PGDS.

At national level, the *National Spatial Development Perspective* (NSDP) of 2006 was released on 14 June 2007, to provide a platform for greater alignment and coordination across the three spheres of government and to strengthen the impact of development. At its core, the NSDP focuses on reconfiguring the pre-1994 spatial relations and implementing spatial priorities "in ways that meet the Constitutional imperative to provide basic services to all and to alleviate poverty and inequality".

The PGDSs of the nine provinces and the IDPs of local and district municipalities must contextualise the NSDP's approach. Alignment between the nine PGDSs has been effected by a presidential directive that the existing PGDSs must be assessed using guidelines for the alignment of the PGDSs with the NSDP.

The *Medium Term Strategic Framework* (MTSF) determines government priorities for each five year period, and the *Medium Term Expenditure Framework* (MTEF) determines government priorities for each three year period, which, in turn, informs plans, programmes and projects of all national government departments, provincial departments and public entities. The *Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa* (ASGISA) represents "a set of interventions intended to unlock bottlenecks and address a set of constraints that were found to be preventing the South African economy from growing at the rate required to halve unemployment and poverty by 2014". As regards the fixed economic capital investments, to be brought about by ASGISA, alignment with the NSDP planning methodology must be implemented.

Within the context of land as a key component, the Department of Land Affairs has been responsible for the implementation of legislation providing for development facilitation. The Department of Provincial and Local Government has been responsible for spatial development

initiatives. Processes are under way to co-ordinate the land development function, which will remove a number of contradictions.

3 SOUTH AFRICAN MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM

The September 2005 *Proposal and Implementation Plan for a Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System* (GWM&ES) defines monitoring as “a continuous managerial function that aims to provide managers, decision-makers and main stakeholders with regular feedback and early indications of progress or lack thereof in the achievement of intended results and the attainment of goals and objectives”(2005: 1).

The constitutional foundational value of accountability (2005: 6) and the requirements of the Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999, as well as the implementation of the *Medium Term Strategic Framework* (MTSF) and the *Medium Term Expenditure Framework* (MTEF), have identified the need for governmental activities and spending to be aligned with defined objectives. A key strategic challenge is the need to increase the effectiveness of the public service in order to enable government to achieve its desired outcomes and strategic objectives.

The GWM&E system is based on, amongst others, a comparative overview of the United States Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (which focuses on strategic plans, performance plans and performance reports), as well as of the Australian and New Zealand M&E systems. It was found that, in order to establish a platform for the GWM&E, the system must be both prescriptive about information to be submitted and accommodating with regard to how information was to be collected.

At an operational level, the Presidency and the offices of the nine premiers co-operate in developing types of information needed for purposes of planning and the development of strategies and programmes. At national level, the Presidency, the National Treasury, the Departments of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG), and the Office of the Public Service Commission (OPSC) play key roles in determining the final architecture of the South African GWM&ES.

The Unit for Policy Coordination and Advice Service in the Presidency will be responsible for the overall system management and maintenance. Furthermore, a number of performance indicators have been identified in respect of the performance area concerned (2005: 16).

A number of national M&E principles, which include minimum norms and standards for the monitoring and evaluation of government policies, programmes and projects, were discussed at the June 2006 Monitoring and Impact Assessment Seminar in South Africa. These principles have as yet not been adopted by Cabinet. The context of these principles and standards are provided by the Constitutional Imperatives of accountability and transparency.

Six **guiding principles for evaluation and impact assessment**, as well as **feasibility principles** (focussing on the need for an evaluation to be realistic, prudent, diplomatic and frugal) have been identified. As regards the requirement that evaluations must comply with **legal and ethical** considerations, taking into account the welfare of both those involved in and those affected by the evaluation, a number of **criteria** were identified that must be complied with. In order to ensure that the manner in which an evaluation is done will provide reliable information, some **accuracy standards** were also identified. These principles and standards are still to be formally adopted by the South African Cabinet.

A subsequent draft framework was made available in 2006, namely the *Draft National Guiding Principles & Standards for Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies and Programmes in South Africa*. This document identifies four steps for monitoring and evaluation: policy selection, policy elaboration, follow-up and feedback, and their subphases.

The June 2006 government publication puts a strong emphasis on the preparation of a Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) containing, amongst others, the plan for data collection, the relevant indicators, the Strategic Support Objectives (SSOs), the Special Objectives (SOs) and the Intermediate Results (IRs), and, in most cases, preliminary baselines and targets, critical assumptions, standards and indicators. Lower level indicators in respect of inputs, outputs and processes, as well as how they would be monitored, must also be included.

Baseline information needs to be collected, and a process of benchmarking has to be implemented. Each indicator also needs a detailed definition (e.g. technical elements of the indicator's statement), including a unit of measurement. In addition, the data sources as well as the methods of data collection, the frequency and schedule of data collection, and the responsibilities for acquiring data, as well as plans for data analysis, reporting, review and use, and, finally, plans for communicating and using performance information must also be included. It goes without saying that budgetary matters must also be addressed.

In terms of the 2006 approach (which differs in a number of respects from the above-mentioned 2005 perspective), evaluations, which should always address the general public interest, are to be guided by the six **principles for evaluation**.

Programme evaluation (2006: 31) focuses on the collection of information "about a programme or some aspect of a programme in order to make necessary decisions about the programme". Three major types of programme evaluation have been identified (2006: 34 – 37):

- Goals-based evaluation (determine whether a programme has achieved/is achieving its pre-determined objectives)
- Process-based evaluation (gaining an understanding of how a programme really works)
- Outcomes-based evaluation (identifying benefits to beneficiaries/clients).

Outcomes usually take the form of either enhanced learning (e.g. knowledge, skills) or enhanced conditions (e.g. increased literacy, self-reliance). Outcomes should also be distinguished from outputs (units of service – e.g. number of clients of a programme) (2006: 36).

In addition, the following principles and standards are identified (2006: 46 – 47).

- **Feasibility principles**, which aim at ensuring that an evaluation will be "realistic, prudent, diplomatic and frugal" are *practical procedures*, *political viability* and *cost-effectiveness*.
- The **propriety principles** aim to ensure that evaluations will be done legally, ethically and with regard for the welfare of those involved and affected by the evaluation.
- **Accuracy standards** will ensure that the evaluation will "review and convey technically adequate information about the features that determine worth or merit of the programme being evaluated" (2006: 47), are:

The GWM&ES must be evaluated every five years.

A number of recent developments indicate to what extent the South African government has succeeded in establishing M&E structures and implementing the government-wide M&E system.

At national level, the South African Presidency published a key report, *Development Indicators Mid-term Review* in early 2007, which identified 72 indicators. Based in part on (the) Ten Year

Review's human development indicators, they are markers that help define the milestones in the journey of social change." The report gives a summary of the data in respect of trends of the last twelve and a half years. Furthermore, ten broad themes have been identified for purposes of the clustering of the relevant information.

4 RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT (RBM)

RBM aims to improve management effectiveness and accountability by defining realistic expected results, monitoring progress toward the achievement of expected results, integrating lessons learned into management decisions and reporting on performance (UNDP, 2000: 2).

The use of RBM therefore permeates throughout the whole project or programme cycle. For the comprehensive implementation of an RBM orientated project or programme, RBM has to be a fundamental management approach of the implementing agency.

Pivotal to the RBM approach is the results-chain, where human and financial resources (as inputs) are utilised in activities which produce direct short term results such as actions or products (that represent outputs), which in themselves contribute to medium term results representing the expected consequence (outcomes) of a project or programme, whilst in the long term, outcomes are expected to result in a lasting impact (Hatton & Schroeder, 2007: 427). It is this results-chain that helps in delineating how an organisation should employ its resources to achieve long term impacts beyond the direct outputs of the action.

In order to effectively and efficiently manage the human and financial resources invested into a project or programme, RBM techniques provide for a myriad of tools that assist in the methodological planning of an intervention. As an initial step towards planning a project or programme, it is essential to develop a narrative context and rational order in order to establish what the scope of the project or programme will be and what the roles of different partners will be.

To determine the logic inherent to a project or programme, a Logical Framework (LF) is drawn up to describe the intent of the intervention and monitor the progress of actions towards results. Presented in a matrix, the LF presents how financial and human resources will be allocated to achieve certain outputs and how these will in turn lead to various outcomes and the long term impact. It also reflects the various performance indicators selected to determine the achievement of results and an analysis of risks associated with these results. The LF will assist in understanding the results-chain and provide an initial logical investigation into the assumptions made in determining the results and their respective indicators. The selection of appropriate indicators is vital to the successful determination of whether results have been achieved. There are six criteria which should be considered during the selection of indicators (Meier 2003: 19):

1. Validity – Is the required result measured?
2. Reliability – Does it remain a dependable measure over time?
3. Sensitivity – If a result changes, is the indicator sensitive to those changes?
4. Simplicity – Will the collection and analysis of the information be easy?
5. Utility – Will the collected information be useful?
6. Affordability – Can the project or programme afford to collect the information?

From the above it can be seen that much thought must go into the design of indicators. As information on these indicators is collected on an ongoing basis, an updated performance measurement is consistently available. This provides implementers and partners with accurate information on how financial and human resources are being utilised and to what extent results are being achieved. It also informs project or programme managers about outputs and the achievement

of short and medium term outcomes whilst identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the intervention.

As projects or programmes are not implemented in a controlled environment, factors beyond the control of the implementing agency could lead to failure. It is necessary to determine what conditions are required for the successful implementation of the project or programme, analyse what risks exist and develop mitigating strategies for each of these risks. Through analysing the assumptions underlying the successful implementation a variety of risks will be identified. These risks should then be classified in order of probability and the potential effect they will have. This will assist the planners to determine what levels of risk would be acceptable and to design alternative solutions before any problems are experienced.

With appropriate indicators to be monitored and alternative strategies to be employed when certain risks occur, the project or programme manager will be in a position to manage for results. The ability to manage in this manner is crucial, as shortcomings will be identified whilst implementation takes place and quick and decisive action will be required to design and implement the necessary changes for improved performance.

5 INTEGRATION OF RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT INTO RSA M&E: A NEW MODEL

An essential part of the work carried out by any government department in the implementation of a project or programme is measuring the results and outcomes of those efforts. In many cases governments are only evaluated on their activities. However, citizens increasingly demand to see that their taxes have been utilised to properly address problems and issues.

If projects and programmes were based on results-based management principles, the evaluation of those projects and programmes will also be results-driven (Bruning & Ofir, 2005:1). Through this approach a government department will be able to assess whether it has actually achieved what it had initially set out to do.

Following a results-based evaluation approach will require governments, to move beyond their reporting on inputs, activities and outputs, and also include outcomes and impact (Kusek & Rist 2002:1). This would require a strong political will to evaluate the effectiveness of a government in its delivery of public services. To implement such an approach will furthermore require that substantial consideration be given to matters of budgeting and the allocation of resources for integrating monitoring and evaluation in the implementation of government projects, as well as ensuring the effective implementation of an inter-governmental relations policy. Specialised skills will be required to utilise the information obtained, and to coordinate between departments how the results will be utilised. The decision to expand an M&E system to also encompass a RBM performance management system will place an additional burden on public servants.

Number of projects and programmes implemented by the South African government are sometimes criticised for short-sightedness and for not providing full value for money. The implementation of a government-wide results-based management system is being considered at present. The utilisation of RBM principles in certain projects and programmes will improve performance in terms of service delivery. In this regard, the Results-based or Performance Management Framework being developed by the National Treasury and the Presidency should be consulted.

Within the South African context, significant resources, both financial and human, are currently being applied to the establishment of the Government Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System (GWM&ES). Within the *Proposal and Implementation Plan for a Government-Wide Monitoring*

and Evaluation System as well as in the *Draft National Guiding Principles & Standards for Monitoring and Evaluation of public policies and programmes in South Africa*, much emphasis is placed on the importance of the development of rigorous and durable indicators, but limited mention is made of placing these indicators within a results-chain. The further enhancement of the GWM&ES – that would put additional emphasis on results, outcomes and impact is being finalised by the Presidency; this would enhance the importance of outcomes and impact, and the assessment of the potential medium and long term impact.

As the South African government is now embarking on the road to establishing and implementing a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework system, full consideration should be given to the comprehensive incorporation of results-based management principles into the final strategy.

6 CONCLUSION

Linking service delivery, within the context of the implementation of Government projects and programmes, to specific impacts that the government wishes to bring about, as well as to continuous monitoring, evaluation and reporting of activities and resources, will result in the implementation of the constitutional values of increased transparency and accountability.

It is suggested that the further transformation of the South African society, and for that matter, all societies in the developing world, depend on (a) coherent, transversal national development and planning frameworks, (b) a comprehensive, results-focussed, monitoring and evaluation system, and (c) an integrated model for sustainable and sustained development, which incorporates both (a) and (b).

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