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COORDINATION OF THE GOVERNMENT-WIDE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in the field of Public and Development Management (P&DM)

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DECLARATION

I declare that this report is my own except where authors have been acknowledged. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in the field of Public and Development Management (P&DM) in the University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

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ABSTRACT

Monitoring and evaluation systems in the public sector as a performance framework generated interest in most countries around the world as one of the tools to improve public sector performance. However, the fundamental focus has been on the impact of the objectives in the public sector that have contributed towards service delivery for citizens, and which have necessitated a fundamental shift in the way governments conduct their business. The purpose of the study is therefore to contribute towards improved public service performance through the coordination of South Africa's Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System (GWM&ES). It unpacks the complexity, whilst providing some insight into what could be improved to make coordination of the system yield better results for the public sector. In 2009, the GWM&ES policy framework was approved by cabinet and tabled in parliament, providing a basis for the outcomes approach to address weaknesses in coordinating the implementation of monitoring and evaluation in the public sector. The subsequent establishment of the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in 2010 was a clear demonstration of the government's commitment to ensuring that performance makes a significant impact on the lives of people. Since the implementation of GWM&ES, the DPME has been faced with facilitation pressures in monitoring the performance of the public sector, such as the coordination and integration of the administrative system. The integration of monitoring and evaluating information in the planning and budget decision-making process is another significant factor. For the purpose of this study, implementation theory through the so-called '5C protocol' (content, context, commitment, coalition and capacity) was selected to form a basis for the discussion and the theoretical framework. The research approach used is qualitative, employing various research methods such as in-depth interviews and document analysis. The findings have identified that in theory there is a contextual understanding of Monitoring and Evaluation in South Africa, but in practice the GWM&ES is lagging behind. In most instances, planning is not integrated, causing a disjuncture in performance information for strategic decision-making that could otherwise improve service delivery.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Coordination: defined by Melone and Crowstone (1994) as a process of managing dependencies between activities, an application of systems thinking that requires an examination in how a change in one component of the organisation affects others.

Evaluation: defined as a time-bound and periodic exercise that seeks to provide credible and useful information to answer specific questions to guide decision-making by staff, managers and policymakers. Evaluations may assess relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of a specific programme, plan or project (Kuzek; Presidency, 2007; Moynihan, 2006).

Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System (GWM&ES): this seeks to embed a management system within public sector organisations that articulate the internal ones of others.

Implementation: De Coning (2006) defines this as a representative stage to put into action the adopted policy positions of an institution.

Integration: is defined by Goebel (2011) as an activity by organisations to bring together different plans into a functional system in order to achieve common objectives.

Monitoring: refers to a process that involves continuing collection, analysis and reporting of data on inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts, as well as external factors, in a way that supports effective management (Horton et al., 1993; Moynihan, 2006; Presidency, 2007). It aims to provide managers, decision-makers and other stakeholders with regular feedback on progress in implementation, results and early indicators of problems that need to be corrected. It usually reports on actual performance against what was planned or expected (Presidency, 2007).

Monitoring and Evaluation Systems: comprise a set of organisational structures, management processes, standards, strategies, plans, indicators, information systems, reporting lines, and accountability relationships which enable institutions to discharge their monitoring and evaluation functions effectively (Kabundugun, 2004). In addition to these formal managerial elements are the organisational culture, capacity and other enabling conditions that will determine whether the feedback from the Monitoring and Evaluation

(M&E) influences the organisation's decision-making, learning and service delivery (Morris, 2006).

Systems: Cloete (2009) refers to systems as purposeful structures that consist of interrelated and interdependent elements. These elements continually influence one another to maintain their activity and the existence of the structure, in order to achieve its goals.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Internationally, governments are under pressure to improve their performance, driven by increasing demands for service delivery (Goeble, 2012). Due to poor public service performance they are struggling to gain public confidence in their use of public resources to achieve their objectives. As a result they have shifted focus to effectiveness and efficiency in the public sector so as to achieve value for money and development of an expectation that achieving value for money is no longer regarded as the norm. Contributions to the citizenry have thus necessitated a fundamental shift in the way governments conduct their business (Tune, 2010).

The South African government, in particular, has been looking to improve and enhance public sector performance by learning from international experience (Presidency, 2010). Studies reveal that governments from around the world have introduced various policies and institutions geared to improving efficiency in the delivery of public services (World Bank, 2010). Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), which refers to a set of organisational structures, management processes, standards, strategies, plans, indicators, information systems, reporting lines and accountability relationships, enables national and provincial departments, municipalities and other institutions to discharge their functions effectively (Moynihan, 2006). It has been identified as a vital tool with which the level of service delivery across all spheres and agencies of government could be assessed and improved where necessary. However, it is regarded as a complex, multidisciplinary field which requires intensive skills. Government-Wide M&E (GWM&E) is even more complex, as it requires not only in-depth knowledge across and within sectors of government, but also interactions among planning, budgeting, and implementation functions within those sectors (Tania, 2010).

1.1.1 GLOBAL MONITORING AND EVALUATION BEST PRACTICES

In order to achieve sustainable and stable public service, and in order to gain public confidence that public resources are being used effectively, a range of initiatives designed to improve the performance of the public sector is under way. Most countries have introduced M&E systems as a performance framework to improve public sector performance. Despite the variety of initiatives in public sectors and good practices that have been experienced between different countries, little has been achieved in the field. Previous studies have not been able to establish or quantify the real benefits of these initiatives in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public revenues and expenditures systems (Flynn, 2004). At the same time, there is a proliferation of terminology used to describe performance management initiatives in the public service (World Bank, 2003). Monitoring and evaluation reforms initiated in various countries suggest the need to learn from one another in order to tailor interventions to countries that is, taking into account local specifics and circumstances (Kraak, 2011). Moynihan (2006) recommends a thorough understanding of the context, diagnosis of the issues, assessment of different options, and creation or adaptation of appropriate public sector performance solutions. This is because all governments share the inherent challenge of poor performance and lack of service delivery.

1.1.2 UNITED KINGDOM

During the 1960s and 1970s the United Kingdom (UK) created history by attempting to implement Programme, Planning, Budgeting (PPB) type systems (Flynn, 2004), but the general verdict was that they were over-ambitious, cumbersome and too remote from the engrained habits of political decision-making to take firm root (Moynihan, 2006). Although they did work better in some departments and programmes they did leave a useful residue of data and analytical capacity. The UK monitoring and evaluation was characterised by budgets being devolved to produce high quality data and were regarded as valuable assets. There was full support and commitment from the highest authorities and performance was an issue at all government levels. Parliament was a key player in this process, and was interested in receiving and using performance information to improve the quality of decision-making (Flynn, 2004).

In 2001 UK saw a turning point in public service performance, when the delivery unit was established as way to reform the public service and the impact of that drive on the country. The delivery unit was first located in the Prime Minister's Unit (PMU), which was responsible for ensuring the delivery of government priorities and practicalities of delivering to the targets rather than new streams of initiatives. The unit has not only focused on what would improve the public service performance in future but has also looked backwards on the existing policies to see if they had been implemented effectively and so avoid repetition of mistakes. Moreover, the system set out to focus on key priorities, unlike other systems in other countries in which there was endless list for the government to monitor and evaluate. In order to garner support, the delivery unit established solid relationships with key stakeholders and high level authorities in government, including the Treasury and the Cabinet Office (World Bank, 2010). Through this relationship the PMU introduced a simplified process of Public Service Agreement (PSA), the target of which was aligned to PM priorities (MacKay, 2011). Currently, the UK M&E approach (delivery unit) around the world is regarded as the best practice for fostering links between a spending review and priorities of government (MacKay, 2011).

1.1.3 CANADA

In the 1970s, Canada used an external audit performance approach, but the system could not produce the anticipated result of ensuring improved performance across government (Schick, 2003). The complexity of government activity and the cost of this kind of review have meant that such audits would not provide systematic coverage of government activity (Curristine, 2005). Performance and value-for-money audits are inherently highly selective, covering only a very small portion of government activity. During the mid-1990s, Canada adopted performance-based management, budgeting, and reporting, following Australia and New Zealand which were amongst the first countries to present performance management and/or budgeting in the late 1980s (World Bank, 2003). The four main reasons for governments having introduced performance-based management and budgeting were to improve efficiency; to improve decision-making in the budget process; to improve transparency and accountability; and to make savings (Schick, 2003).

1.1.4 AUSTRALIA

Between 1987 and 1997, Australia became the first country to lead the world in introducing a medium-term expenditure framework. Australia has established keen interest from countries around the world in creating an evaluation system to support evidence-based decision making and performance-based budgeting (Tune, 2010). The development of the evaluation system was used to systematically evaluate all government programmes every three to five years (Thomas, 2009). The findings were highly regarded by the Cabinet's ultimate policy decision-makers and used widely within line departments in support of their continuing management. Throughout the evaluation system government advocated the principles of programme management and budgeting, with a focus on efficiency and effectiveness through sound management practices, the collection of performance information, and the regular conduct of programme evaluation (Thomas, 2009). The uptake and commitment around the system and dedication by government to its citizenry was through the publication of guidance material on the principles by the Cabinet and departments. In order to ensure effectiveness of the programme reviews, departments were required to prepare plans for the systematic M&E of their programmes and to report these to the government (MacKay, 2011).

The Australian system generated global interest, but was later abolished as a result of change in government and other notable weakness in the programme, such as in the methodology and low evaluation skills (Richard, 2010). The system was then replaced by an Outcomes and Outputs Framework based on a system of performance indicators (Tune, 2010). The newly developed system could not achieve its intended objectives as it encountered implementation challenges by line departments and agencies, and lacked effective oversight by the finance department (Richard, 2010). The indictors-based M&E framework's major limitation was its failure to explain the reasons for performance in a way that would enable performance lessons to be implemented elsewhere (MacKay, 2011).

1.1.5 MONITORING AND EVALUATION PRACTICES ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

Africa has not lagged behind in terms of trying to improve public sector performance and different reforms have been put in place. There are cases such as Burkina Faso, Ghana,

Uganda, and Tanzania, in which the structure of the budget has undergone changes with the introduction of the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) (Robinson, 2007). These countries' governments were able to produce a three-year integrated broad-based budget, with sectoral ministries, departments and agencies having statements of goals and funding to achieve them (World Bank, 2005). Although that is the case there are institutional factors that negatively impact on the effectiveness of results-based budgeting.

The contrast between budgeting and planning have resulted in institutional conflict in Ghana and created failure to link policy-making, planning and budgeting affecting the outcomes (Nalwadd, 2008). There is no effective link between the operational managers as service providers and the budget holders, who tend to be at the head office and the regional levels, therefore resource flows are usually unpredictable. Budgets are still largely formulated on incremental basis as plans tend to be rolled over (Robinson, 2007).

In the case of Tanzania, budget and financial management reforms are required to implement MTEF, but the central government budget is not a reliable guide to the government's fiscal policy. Usually, the original budget overestimates revenues and overstates capital expenditures (Tanzania, 2010). There is large annual budget deficit and the government is unable to cover for budgeted expenditures. There is systematic over-budgeting of recurrent and capital expenditures, however, the ceilings are not linked to an evaluation of the success of programmes in previous years and do not reflect strategic planning (Al-adaleih, 2008). The budget allows informal management to make reallocations, is not binding and is complicated by a lack of transparency. There are inadequate central controls and no systematic monitoring of physical or financial execution (Collin, 2004). In return for medium-term indications of available resources, spending ministries and agencies are formally required to state their mission and longer-term policy objectives; to account for their performance over the recent past; to state the outputs and outcomes they intend to achieve over the outlook period, and the indicators to be used in monitoring; and to justify their resource requirements in terms of these targets (Nalwadd, 2008).

1.1.6 SOUTHERN AFRICA DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITIES' MONITORING AND EVALUATION PRACTICES

The Southern Africa Development Communities (SADC) governments are committed to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other international commitments, all of these factors have led governments to recognise the need for an M&E system. Some member states have devised M&E systems that are country-specific in order to address their broader objectives, whilst others have adopted guidelines on policy frameworks which serve as a tracking indicator system for delivery service (Nalwadd, 2008). There are other existing M&E systems that are sector-specific and that track progress of indicators through National Action Plans ((Laudon, 2006). However, these adopted frameworks have not been adequately utilised as they are largely donor-driven and based on compliance reporting, not necessarily to improve service delivery at community level. The system is complicated by poor quality of collected data that is often incomplete, inaccurate, of limited range and not adequately disaggregated (Al-adaileh, 2008).

1.1.6.1 ZAMBIA

In 2009, the Zambian government developed an M&E system in order to improve government performance (UNICEF, 2012), located within the Ministry of Finance in collaboration with the Cabinet Office. The aim was to review the progress made by programmes and projects in fulfilling agreed objectives through planned activities; to evaluate the process of project preparation and design, and its relevance to the SADC region; and to assess the efficiency and effectiveness with which resources are used to generate results and achieve project objectives, with special emphasis on impact and sustainability. The resulting report is expected to measure the impact of the project upon the livelihoods of beneficiaries, including the impact of the project's institutional capacity building programmes (World Bank, 2010).

Another specific objective of the system is to assess the achievements and challenges encountered in the implementation of the government priorities, in order to influence policy decisions regarding the development of intervention programmes in the country (MacKay, 2010). The focus is on measuring achievements against the baseline data; assessing whether the envisaged outputs have been achieved and gauging the contribution

of the programmes towards the overall objective of regional development (UNICEF, 2012). Although there are challenges within the system there have been notable achievements in the specific policy programmes that enable the Zambian government to deliver on government priorities.

1.1.6.2 NAMIBIA

In 2008, Namibia, through a Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), established a Millennium Challenge Account-Namibia (MCA-N) monitoring unit to monitor programme through specified indicators. The responsibilities of the M&E unit included guiding the establishment of the system and strategy, data-collection, data-analysis and reporting systems; coordinating the installation of hardware and software; and participating in the design of the evaluation strategy in collaboration with the MCC (Namibia, 2010).

The indicators are categorised in four types of indicators that are measured, namely the goals, objectives, outcomes and activity levels. The system also include timelines for measuring objectives, plans for establishing baselines and determining targets, when necessary, and frequency of measurement during the monitoring period. In addition to these four types of indicators, key process milestones are included in the M&E plan (World Bank, 2010). MCA-N produces a regular progress report on data collected through the indicator tracking table, which displays performance targets and tracks progress against them. If necessary, it explains the reasons for deviations from the targets. These reports alert parties to any problems and serve as basis for recommendations for changes to project activities (MacKay, 2011).

The MCA-N conduct Annual Performance Reviews, submit an Annual Supplement to regular quarterly reporting and provide information on accomplishments and developments of implementation related to progress on activities, the consultative process, donor coordination, lessons learned and best practices (World Bank, 2010). The most crucial item is the production of the narrative report by all staff of the MCA-N, which provides a brief description of previous quarter's performance and explains how requested funds will be used in the coming quarter. The narrative report is not a public document, but has the following functions:

- To report on the status of implementation of activities planned during the previous quarter for each component of the programme, and provide explanations in case there are deviations from the plans.
- To highlight challenges that might affect implementation and propose measures to address them.
- Highlight any significant M&E activities that took place during the quarter, such as data collection, M&E procurements and results of any M&E studies.

1.1.6.3 MOZAMBIQUE

Between 2007 and 2008 the government of the Republic of Mozambique and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), on behalf of the United States government signed a Compact Agreement Grant to be implemented over a five-year period (World Bank, 2011). An M&E plan was also established, as a binding document that if not complied with could result in a suspension of disbursement. It also served as a management tool for accountability and transparency; measurement of the efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the programme; providing information for evidence-based management decision-making at the sector, programme and project levels, and supporting policy-making and development at the national level, while preserving institutional memory (Hickey, 2013). The monitoring and evaluation is essential for a results-based approach to programme management, particularly to:

- explain in detail how the Millennium Challenge Account-Mozambique (MCA-M) and MCC will monitor the various projects to determine whether they are achieving their intended results and measure their larger impact over time through rigorous evaluations.

- serve as a guide for programme implementation and management, so that the MCA Management Unit staff, governing council members, Stakeholders' Committee members, programme implementers, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders understand the progress being made toward the achievement of objectives and results, and are aware of variances between targets and actual achievement during implementation.

- establish a process to alert implementers, stakeholders and MCC to any problems in programme implementation and provide a basis for making any needed programme adjustments.

- outlines the flow of data and information from the project sites through to the various stakeholders, both for public consumption and to inform decision-making. It sets the mechanisms that assure the quality, reliability and accuracy of programme performance information and data.

1.1.7 HISTORY OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICA GOVERNMENT

The South African government has been putting in place a system to monitor financial flows, human resources, institutional performance, public service delivery and the performance of the local administration. In addition, the government plans to implement a series of evaluations of government programmes to assess their impact and recommend changes to design and to government policies (Treasury, 2007). The financial and budgetary reforms that were initiated soon after the 1994 election served as a monitoring tool, and the Constitution clarified roles and responsibilities in the three government spheres (Treasury, 2009).

Since the advent of democracy in South Africa very few departments have engaged in any systematic monitoring and evaluation of their policies and programmes. In the late 1990s several early attempts were made by government to introduce the GWM&ES (Tania, 2010), but these were not successful so in 2004 there was a renewed effort. The 2004 election manifesto of the ruling party identified M&E as a priority (Parliament, 2010), whilst other notable initiatives from the presidency for tracking performance on implementation of government priorities, also referred to as a Programme of Action (PoA), included development of a central repository information management system in 2005, and an early warning system for assessing functionality of national government departments. The latter has since evolved into a Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT), for self-assessment of a range of management standards, carried out annually by individual departments and overseen by the DPME as the custodian department for GWM&ES. The Development Indicators Report is an important document in demonstrating early signs of

outcomes-based performance orientation, grouping information into 10 broad themes for which impact of government interventions is tracked over time (Ajam & Engela, 2010).

Prior to the implementation of the current M&E system, a rapid review of the existing monitoring and evaluation practices took place to ensure that the conceived proposal takes account of the existing practices (Presidency, 2007). The review findings indicate that M&E systems are generally underdeveloped and inadequate, although the basic building blocks are usually present as a result of governments strategic planning and budgeting systems. The results also showed that monitoring and evaluation is widely seen as an important area of management that is generally acknowledged as strategically important and useful (Brinkerhoff, 2010).

This study focuses on the challenges experienced in adhering to one of the principles identified above, i.e., strengthening government's ability to co-operate across the three spheres of government and work as a single mechanism. Previously, M&E was carried out unsystematically, mainly by the National Treasury, the Presidency and a handful of sector departments and premier's offices using different systems. It identifies the factors leading to challenges faced by DPME as the custodian department in the coordination of GWM&ES, despite other existing complimentary M&E systems within the spheres of government. It seeks to understand constraints and challenges facing the DPME with regard to coordination and integration, evaluation, information usability and validity. The inadequacies of these systems are that they do not speak to one another and suffer from a lack of clear delineation of work between the various departments.

1.2 MONITORING AND EVALUATION: A BROAD PERSPECTIVE

Monitoring is a continuing 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 (DeLeon, 2006). Monitoring involves reporting on actual performance against what was planned or expected according to pre-determined standards. Monitoring generally involves collecting and analysing data on implementation processes, strategies and results, and recommending corrective measures (Layman, 2003).

Evaluation is a time-bound exercise that systematically and objectively assesses the relevance, performance, challenges and successes of programmes and projects. Evaluation can also address outcomes or other development issues (DeConing, 2005). It usually seeks to answer specific questions to guide decision-makers or programme managers and should advise whether underlying theories and assumptions were valid, what worked, what did not and why. Evaluation commonly aims to determine relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability (Cameron, 2007). The purpose of policy outcomes is not limited to measuring outcomes and outputs; however, it serves as a mechanism to guide the direction of policy implementation to ensure that the policymakers are addressing the prioritised items on the agenda (Kotze & Taylor, 2010).

Evaluation of public policies explains their results and effects on society with respect to the goals pursued in terms of indirect or undesirable effects. Aside from control function, evaluation fulfils the functions of a decision-making aid, management tool and catalyst in initiating collective learning process for the decision-makers and public servants (Taylor, 2010). Evaluation seeks to identify potential gaps between legislative programmes and the way they are actually carried out, explain them and suggest measures to offset shortcomings in implementation or gaps in the design of the public policy itself (Ball, 1990 & Kaul, 1997).

In the South African context, evaluation of public policies is an important tool for promoting accountability of elected officials and public servants, improving or changing policies, and promoting learning within public sector organisations (Cloete, 2009). For recommendations based on evaluations to be used, it is essential that they are credible. The credibility of an evaluation is influenced by the competence of the evaluation team and their personal credibility, the quality of the evaluation and, importantly, the extent to which the evaluation meets the requirements of independence. Evaluation independence, quality and credibility can be considered as complementary facets of evaluation excellence (Chabane, 2009; Kotze & Taylor, 2010). The National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF), adopted in 2011, provides the picture, setting out the basis for government-wide evaluation and focuses on government priority areas. Intended to contribute to the establishment of a culture of continuous improvement in service delivery, it was followed by approval of the National Evaluation Plan (NEP) in June 2012, designed to improve policy or programme performances, accountability and decision-making, and ultimately

increase knowledge about what works and what does not, with regards to policies and programmes (NEP, 2012).

A monitoring and evaluation system is a set of organisational structures, management processes, standards, strategies, plans, indicators, information systems, reporting lines and accountability relationships, which enables national and provincial departments, municipalities and other institutions to discharge their M&E functions effectively (DeLeon, 2006). In addition to these formal managerial elements are the organisational culture, capacity and other enabling conditions, which determine whether the feedback from the M&E function influences the organisation's decision-making, learning and service delivery (Cameron, 2007).

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In 2005, the Presidency developed a comprehensive framework for the implementation of a Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System (GWM&ES) and two years later one was introduced. The aim of the system was to contribute to improved government and to enhance the effectiveness of public sector institutions and organisations (Tania, 2010). Specifically, the system aimed to collect, analyse and disseminate information on the progress and impact of government programmes in order to ensure transparency and accountability, promote improvements in service delivery, ensure compliance with statutory requirements, and promote a learning culture within the public sector (Presidency, 2007).

Despite massively increased public expenditure since 1994, significant levels of poverty, joblessness and inequality persist (Goebel, 2012). There has been inadequate attention to the achievement of outcomes and impacts in the key priority areas identified by government (Davies, 2012). The key performance indicators in areas such as education and health have generally not been improved in line with increases in expenditure (Kraak, 2011). The GWM&E policy framework approved by Cabinet and tabled in Parliament in 2009 provided a basis for an outcomes approach to address these weaknesses (Cloete, 2009). The subsequent establishment of the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in 2010 was a clear demonstration of the government's commitment to

ensuring that its performance would make an effective impact on the lives of people (Presidency, 2011).

As the public sector continues to look for ways to improve service delivery through better performance it is increasingly important that it has the information necessary to inform decision-making (Angela & Ajam, 2010). One of the challenges currently faced by the public sector to deliver services effectively and efficiently is the lack of availability of performance information to support implementation of the GWM&ES, that is, lack of data to generate M&E information that would manage improved performance. The PoA system by the DPME attempts to respond to this issue of lack of information, however, the data availability and its credibility for making informed decisions remains a challenge (Manala, 2010).

The DPME has an evaluation process to evaluate programmes and projects of government. In South Africa, in particular, theory for the evaluations precedes practice in that there are policies, framework documents for implementation and guideline documents in place that do not tally with evaluations conducted to date, for example the one on evaluations approved by Cabinet in November 2011. Few evaluations have been completed, and of those the follow up on findings is minimal, which undermines the premise and overall objectives of evaluation as outlined in the GWM&ES. As early as 2012, the DPME commissioned a number of impact and implementation evaluations, aimed at improving the potential use and value of these evaluation studies (Presidency, 2012).

Despite the government of South Africa having been able to identify priorities clearly, an increasing number of crosscutting issue, for example, job creation, capacitation programmes and skills development, that require structural adjustments, also put pressure on the coordination and integration of the implementation of GWM&ES within the public sector.

1.4 PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of the study is to contribute towards improved public service performance through the coordination of the GWM&ES. It unpacks the perceived complexity in the implementation of the GWM&ES whilst providing some insight into what could be

improved to make coordination of the systems yield better results for South Africa than it has since the tool was adopted in 2009. The main aim is to strengthen the GWM&ES to deal with the identified impediments to coordination, by interpreting the findings and analysing results, then making recommendations regarding improving public service performance through the GWM&ES.

1.5 PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on the background outlined above, the main research question is:

- What does the GWM&ES comprise and, specifically, what structures, mechanisms, processes and practices does the DPME, as the custodian of monitoring implementation of the GWM&ES, employ to ensure coordination and integration of systems, programmes and action plans of the reporting departments to support implementation?

1.6 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Secondary research questions are as follows:

- What are the factors leading to challenges in the coordination of the GWM&ES?
- What are the trends in the implementation of the GWM&ES?
- What are the strategies for consideration in the implementation of a government M&E system?
- Which approaches are applied to collect, handle and analyse data that would lead to informed decision-making through the implementation of the GWM&ES?

1.7 CONCLUSION

Most countries have introduced M&E systems as a performance framework to improve public sector performance (Mackay, 2011). Governments around the world are under pressure to improve their performance and gain public confidence, with studies revealing that they have introduced various policies and institutions geared to improving efficiency

in the delivery of public services (Tune, 2010). The focus on approaches to effectiveness and efficiency in the public sector is to achieve value for money and develop an expectation that achieving value for money in the public sector is being mainstreamed. Monitoring and evaluation has been identified as a central tool with which the level of service delivery across all spheres and agencies of government could be assessed and improved where necessary, however, it is regarded as a complex, multidisciplinary field which requires intensive skills. Government-wide monitoring and evaluation is even more complex as it requires not only in-depth knowledge both across and within sectors of government, but also interactions among planning, budgeting, and implementation functions within those sectors.

This paper seeks to indicate how improved coordination of the GWM&ES could strengthen interaction within and between various sectors of the public sector, thereby improving service delivery.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Analysis in this chapter is of the social theoretical frameworks concerning the linkage that informs the introduction of M&E systems and presents debates for the implementation of government-wide monitoring and evaluation systems (GWM&ES) in order to improve performance of the public service. The goal of this section is not to build a theory but to develop findings that will enhance the learning process. It is believed at this point that a universally acceptable predictive theory cannot be developed, so the purpose of this section is to identify the key clusters of explanatory variables that might allow a better understanding of integration and coordination during the implementation phase, in this instance that of the GWM&ES in South Africa. Prior to the identification of the set of critical variables that are generally accepted by many implementation scholars it is important to discuss facets of it and what assumptions are made about them (Anderson, 1997).

The study is informed by public policy theories especially those pertaining to implementation as well as those with regard to monitoring and evaluation systems, principal-agent theory and coordination and integration theories.

2.1.1 OUTCOMES FACILITATION AND COORDINATION OF THE GWM&ES

It is difficult to achieve optimal coordination and prevent duplication of activities between other core M&E stakeholders (Tania, 2010), which not only result in duplication of resources but also create very confusing and contradictory messages. At present, the coordination of the M&E activities is carried out on a basis of co-operative institutions for the GWM&ES outcomes based approach.

The first point is clarity on what coordination means in the context of achieving integration in GWM&ES implementation. For Peters (1998:296) it refers to an end-state in which the policies and programmes of government are characterised by minimal redundancy (when more than one organisation performs the same task), incoherence (when policies with the

same clients have different goals and requirements), and gaps (when no organisation performs a necessary task).

Although some literature is closely linked to this particular research project, the specific area around the coordination and integration of GWM&ES implementation still needs to be thoroughly researched. This section examines the role of the designated body or responsible institution as the focus of coordination and integration in the implementation of GWM&ES. The study will thus also contain a description of the role of the DPME in coordinating GWM&ES system in government, providing an overview of published research material on this particular issue of the perspectives on South African GWM&ES and internationally.

2.1.2 DESIGN OF THE GWM&ES

According to Ijeoma (2010:344), in both theory and practice, M&E systems could be treated as an integrated activity, whereas Tania (2010) argues that they are separated by their objectives, reference periods, and requirements of comparative analysis and users. Therefore, monitoring and evaluation should be considered independently while there are common features that highlight the relationship between them (Muller, 2004). In many cases the same data collection and analysis system could be used for both the indicators for monitoring, and maybe included in the range of information required for evaluation. The monitoring of government may itself reveal such significant departures from expectations that it calls for an interim, intermediate or impact evaluation.

Ijoema (2010:346) states that while monitoring is integrated within a government's functional structures, evaluation needs to be viewed as a broader concept, and not necessarily as an integrated component of the management function, influenced by the requirement of independence from role players and key stakeholders. Evaluation covers periodic reviews, as well as a more formally designated process at fixed points in time, such as mid-term evaluation, terminal evaluation and ex-post evaluation. The DPME calls for evaluation of government department programmes and projects as part of the plan, with evaluation covering the mid-term as a continuous process that will vary with the types of evaluation. Horton (1998), quoted by Ijoema (2010), states that evaluation draws significantly on the data base created during the monitoring process, enhancing this

information as essential with project data, and reviewing the combined information over an extended period to judge achievement. Currently, the DPME does not have a monitoring data base, but rather the evaluation process is based on each departmental programme's performance. It identifies possible departmental programmes and projects to be evaluated, therefore the DPME engages the departments for them to agree whether they can be evaluated (Presidency, 2012).

According to Robinson (2011), internal evaluation forms part of the management function, but formal evaluation which measures the change that has taken place and the amount of this change attributable to the programme or project which requires additional information does not. For a long time, South Africa has been monitoring government policies but there is currently a paradigm shift taking place to monitor programmes and projects. This emanated from the observation that there is less attention on the outcomes of programmes and projects in which there has been too much expenditure without positive impact (Presidency, 2012). The task of the DPME is not only to evaluate the achieved results but also to improve the implementation of government programmes and projects. The system is less about good financial management, which is more concern about the value for money, and more about making a link between outputs and resource allocation for the intended outcome. Helmuth (2011) points out that certain continuing activity undertaken for monitoring purposes feed into the evaluation process. The impact of the project can only be conducted after it has fully been developed, given the timeframe and limited budget. The intervention by the DPME is slightly different from the direct product that has been of concern to the departments, including an impact evaluation conducted in order to assess benefits and impacts to be derived in the future (Presidency, 2012).

2.1.3 COORDINATION THEORY

Malone (1990) defines coordination theory as a body of principles about how activities can be coordinated by actors working together harmoniously to end conflict and foster cooperation. Crowstone (1998) refers to coordination theory as a "still developing body of theories about how coordination can occur in adverse kinds of systems. Actors in organisations are faced with coordination problems, in line with this study and its focus is

on finding out the challenges faced by the DPME in coordination of the implementation of GWM&ES.

The mandate of the DPME features well in this theory as it brings together the functionality of different players for the achievement of the 12 outcomes. The theory will also assist in examining how DPME ensures integration of systems, programmes and action plans by the departments reporting into the GWM&ES. It will also assist the DPME in playing an observational role in judging the results produced by actors from their beliefs or conflict of interests. Crowstone and Aronson (1998) strengthen the applicability of this theory in the study by stating that it resembles work on systems theory in attempting to find generalisations that apply across disciplines and across levels of analysis.

Prior to the introduction of the GWM&ES there were numerous M&E systems but findings indicated that all were underdeveloped. Therefore, the theory will shape the direction on the structures, mechanism, process and practices that the DPME should employ to ensure coordination and integration of systems, programmes and action plans of the reporting departments into the implementation of GWM&ES. Malone and Crowstone (1994) state that the need for coordination arises from organisations being a complex aggregation of diverse systems, which need to work in concert to produce the desired outcomes. This statement resonates well with the study as it attempts to look at how the DPME coordinates the interests of different departments and their interactions to achieve a particular outcome, but cannot answer all the study questions.

2.1.4 SYSTEMS THEORY

According to Cloete (2001), systems theory has the potential to provide a trans-disciplinary framework for simultaneously critical and normative exploration of the relationship between perception and what is happening in the real world. This theory will help to answer the study question on how the DPME can ensure integration into the GWM&ES of systems, programmes and action plans by the reporting departments. Niekerk (2002) points out that systems theory has benefited from the parallel emergence and rise to eminence of information theory and the widespread application of these to the humanities. The emergence of a performance information system in government designed to monitor performance progress was a clear indication of its commitment to ensure that

performance made an appropriate impact on the lives of the people. The theory will provide direction in order to understand approaches applied by the DPME to collect, handle and analyse data in an integrated and co-ordinated manner.

Wissink (2004) observed that various conceptual frameworks of the systems approach and related areas have much to offer for the construction of a holistic methodology of perceptual inquiry. Through the outcomes-based approach the DPME intends to measure various elements of the result chain, starting from inputs, budgets, activities, service delivery outputs and ultimately the outcomes (Presidency, 2009). In addition to measuring the impact, the outcomes-based approach will be used to provide direction in the implementation of various policies and assessment of their validity. The system seeks to integrate with existing performance management systems to assess and monitor performance at individual and institutional level (Mackay, 2007; Presidency, 2011).

The systems approach consists of the interrelated parts, which are the environment, inputs, processing, outputs and feedback. The environment supplies resources to the institution. Van Wissink (2004) explains that systems require the inputs from the environment, in the form of needs and demands to the legislature by sections of the public. The processes in the system convert inputs into outputs, which are related to objectives of the system. The outputs are actions taken by public institutions in solving the policy problem and meeting the needs and demands of the public. The final part of the system is feedback, which is needed for the system to adapt conversion processes and outputs to the needs of the environment.

Some of the disadvantages with the systems model, as identified by Cloete and Wissink (2004), are that when applied to the policymaking process they are similar to a production system. They fail to describe how the actual transformation of inputs into outputs takes place, an approach that says very little about political change and why certain policies evolve as a response to it. Systems design also advocates anticipatory democracy, in which people actively apply their skills to the analysis and design of socially and ecologically sustainable systems by becoming active participants in shaping their future.

2.1.5 PRINCIPAL AGENT APPROACH

The principal agent approach is the theory through which there are two role players i.e. the principal is the decision maker and the agent implements the set priorities reporting back to the principal for set performance targets to be met (Robinson, 2007). The principal agent theory in relation to the study seems to further complicates the M&E system—for example, the principal (Cabinet in the South African case) sets performance targets to be achieved by an administration over a period of time, but the agent (DPME/Coordinating Departments) does not always have the means and resource to achieve these targets as they may be based mostly on political reasons than available technical data which in turn affects the decision making by the principal as the setting of targets was not holistic making coordination cumbersome (Robinson, 2007; Helmuth, 2011). Wherein the foregoing applies within coordination, M&E challenges within principal-agent relationships are inherently characterised by classified sovereignty and information asymmetries. These relationships thus have implications for who monitors performance and how information is subsequently reported which results in several challenges for the GWM&ES as outlined in this study.

The principal agent approach has been popular and developed from different professions, including economists and political scientists to analyse intergovernmental transfers to states (Agent Policy Review Team (APRT), 2002). Flynn (2004) defines problems associated with principal agent theory as the conflict of interests and moral hazard that arise when a principal hires an agent to perform specific duties that are in the best interest of the principal, and which they might be costly, or not in the interest of the agent.

In 2005, the Presidency developed a comprehensive framework for the implementation of a GWM&ES, which was introduced two years later. The aim of the system was to contribute to improved government and to enhance the effectiveness of public sector institutions and organisations. The establishment of the DPME in 2010 was a clear demonstration of the government's commitment to ensure that its performance made a significant impact on the lives of people. The literature states that even if all the problems of principal-agent relationship could be solved by the performance contract between two parties there is a chain of principal-agent relationships, each pair with its own difficulties of information asymmetry and the potential contrary selection, moral hazard and opportunism that arise from it. An integrated performance management system attempts to

solve all the principal-agent problems simultaneously (Flynn, 2004). The outcomes-based approach attempts to circumvent challenges related to the alignment of government planning, budgeting, activities, reporting and accountability for shared outcomes by introducing new institutional mechanisms, such as performance agreements between the president and the minister through sector delivery agreements (Presidency, 2012).

Literature on the principal-agent problem also predicts that agents will find ways to act in their own interests, whatever contracts are written and whatever monitoring is put in place (APRT, 2002). Specifically, the system aimed to collect, analyse and disseminate information on the progress and impact of government programmes in order to ensure transparency and accountability, promote improvements in service delivery, ensure compliance with statutory requirements, and promote a learning culture within the public sector (Presidency, 2007).

Through the outcome-based approach, the President signs performance agreements with ministers and intergovernmental protocols with premiers, which outline outcomes for a specific sector, input activities and output measures. The ministers and premiers report back to the President on predetermined output indicators (Presidency, 2010). Despite a formal signing of delivery agreements there are persistent challenges in the translation of them into implementation programmes in individual departments, that is linkage between collective planning and departmental planning. Goebel (2011) points out that the reporting template provided by the DPME, which has not yet been prescribed by the M&E guidelines, interferes negatively with departmental plans. There has been setting of low targets, reporting on processes rather than results, and production of the reports delegated to low levels in the organisation (Presidency, 2011). There is a lack of top management focus on implementation, monitoring and reporting, and varying levels of ownership of process (Kraak, 2011). The literature concludes that the principal-agent paradigm has failed. There is no chance of government authorities arriving at specifications for services they do not use and then enforcing those through a contract (Flynn, 2004).

2.1.6 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION POLICY

Cloete (2005) states that from the adoption of public policy to its implementation there is often a wide gap or a circular flow between emergence, formulation and implementation.

Policy implementation is understood as the process by which governments translate their political vision into programmes and actions to deliver outcomes that are desired changes in the real world. O'Toole (2000) defines policy implementation as what develops between the establishment of an apparent intention on the part of government to do something, or to stop doing something, and its ultimate impact on the world of action. This stage is critical as political and administrative actions at the frontline are seldom if ever perfectly controlled by objectives, programmes and laws (Hogwood, Gunn, 1984). Therefore, policies and their intentions will often be changed or even distorted (Ball, 1990). Implementation is the execution and delivery of public policies by organisations or arrangements among institutions (DeLeon, 2002).

From the South African perspective, De Coning (2006) claims that policy implementation is a multifaceted concept, attempted at various levels of government and often pursued in conjunction with the private sector, civil society and NGOs. While the definition of policy implementation assists in understanding the complexities of translating policies into practice, evaluating the implementation path cements the foundation of the origins of policy implementation (DeLeon, 2002).

2.1.6.1 THE 5C PROTOCOL FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AS A COMPLEX PROCESS

Ball (1990) regards policy implementation as complex political process, rather than a mechanical administrative one. According to (DeLeon, 2002) the study of policy implementation becomes an attempt to disentangle the complexity of following policy as it goes through "the dynamics of implementation, to understand how it changes its surroundings and how it is changed itself by its environment in the process; and, most importantly, to see how it can be influenced to better accomplish the goals it set out to achieve" (Dunn, 1994). The 5C protocol, developed by Petrus Brynard but drawing on a substantial body of international literature, will assist in the process of research by outlining the key aspects relevant for successful implementation of any policy. The so-called '5Cs' are content, context, commitment, coalition and capacity, to be considered separately in the sections below.

2.1.6.2 CONTENT

There is also an extensive implicit realisation that "the content of policy is important not only in the means it employs to achieve its end but also in its determination of the ends themselves and how it chooses the specific means to reach them" (Dye, 1995). Lowi (1963) proposed in his influential typology of policy that content is distributive, regulatory, or redistributive. In order to express this in broad terms, distributive policies create public goods for the general welfare and are non-zero-sum in character. Whilst redistributive policies attempt to change allocations of the wealth or power of some groups at the expense of others, regulatory policies specify rules of conduct with sanctions for failure to comply. When the DPME tries to coordinate and integrate the implementation of GWM&ES, the reports it produces should provide evidence as to whether the content of the system itself is being followed and anticipated results are being achieved.

2.1.6.3 CONTEXT

Implementation scholarly community generally agree that "a context free-theory of implementation is unlikely to produce explanations or accurate predictions" (Berman, 1980:206). Grindle (1980) argues that the political, administrative, economic, technological, cultural and social environments within which action is taken must be conducive to successful implementation. Earlier insights by O'Toole (1986) revealed a gap with respect to contextual analysis in implementation research continues to exist: "The field of implementation has yet to address, as part of its research strategy, the challenge of contextually, beyond fairly empty sanctions for policy makers, implementers, and researchers to pay attention to social, economic, political and legal setting." The focus here is institutional context, which will necessarily be shaped by larger context of social, economic political and legal realities of the system. This does not attempt to understate the importance of the larger contextuality, but merely to emphasise how it impacts on implementation process, primarily via the institutional corridor through which implementation must pass and explore the support of client and coalitions. Warwick (1982:188) argues that bureaucratic contexts favourable to implementation more often grow out of human interactions than hierarchical regulation.

2.1.6.4 COMMITMENT

DPME may have the most logical policy imaginable and may have a bureaucratic structure that would be reliable, but if those responsible for carrying out the GWM&ES are unwilling or unable to do so little will happen (Angela; 2012 & Mahesh, 2011). This sentiment, most often associated with bottom-up scholars, is also central to the top-down perspective, often under the title of 'disposition'. While both DPME and government departments consider the coordination and integration to be critical for effective implementation, a hard line top-down perspective would view implementer commitment as being fashioned primarily by the content of the policy and its capacity provisions, both of which can supposedly be controlled from the top.

2.1.6.5 COALITION

The importance of this discussion is the government bringing a coalition of interest groups and outside actors who actively support an implementation process of GWM&ES. This is illustrated by a power shift among the different outside interest groups that produces a corresponding shift in the implementation process. With this theory, it will assist the DPME to strengthen the ability to shape and oversee government departments during the implementation of the GWM&ES. Elmore (1979: 610) regards as one of the most robust findings of research, overall, the observation that implementation is critically affected by a particular policy. Elmore's statement gives pictures on the policies that serve as activities for implementation to achieve outcomes as an implementation process for the GWM&ES.

2.1.6.6 CAPACITY

In the context of this study, the capacity of the DPME is conceptualised in general systems thinking as the structural, functional and cultural ability to coordinate and integrate the implementation of the objectives of GWM&ES and the ability of public services to deliver those outcomes. The system is aimed at raising the quality of life of citizens, which the government has set out to deliver, effectively as planned over time. Capacity refers, inter alia, to the availability of and access to concrete or tangible resources, for example, human, financial, material, technological, and logistical, to achieve a goal or objective.

Capacity further includes the intangible requirements of leadership, motivation, commitment, willingness, courage, endurance and other intangible attributes needed to transform rhetoric into action (Kabundugun, 2004).

In the context of the new network approach to service delivery, Savitch (1998) regards capacity-building as a total (structural, functional and cultural) transformation of government necessary for mobilising all available resources to achieve policy objectives. This amounts to a paradigm shift regarding the nature of government, but the critical question of understanding how capacity within the DPME may influence implementation effectiveness is not simply one of what is required and where, but also how this capacity can be created and operationalised. A study by O'Toole (1986:189) reveals that the answer to the question of what capacity is needed to meet policy implementation objectives. It seems that both the commitment and ability to implement pragmatic ways are elements of accepted strategic management that are appropriate in a given context.

2.1.2 CONCLUSION

The literature review has examined various theories that are used in the implementation of M&E systems; however, not all the theories were able to answer all the study questions. Taking into account that theories are formulated to solve identified problems at a certain time (Ijoema, 2010), consideration was also given to the merits of the other theories discussed in the study and their possible relevance to the South African scenario as the M&E systems mature**.** Monitoring and evaluation should be considered independently of each other, bit while there are common features highlighting the relationship between them (Muller, 2004), essentially the purpose of each must be clear. In many cases the same data collection and analysis system could be used for the indicators for monitoring and may be included in the range of information required for evaluation. The monitoring of government may itself reveal such significant gaps or disjunctures between what was expected from the objectives, necessitating calls for an interim, intermediate or impact evaluation, which is one indication of how monitoring and evaluation processes are linked and feed off each other

The literature on the principal-agent problem predicts that agents will find ways to act in their own interest, whatever contracts are written and whatever monitoring is put in place.

As indicated, the DPME is regarded as the agent when reporting to parliament, and as analysis was confined them it was considered inappropriate to adopt this theory. Instead, implementation theory through 5C protocols was selected as the basis for the discussion and the theoretical framework for the paper.

Despite its principles and the outlined strengths of the implementation theory, the 5C protocol seems to be the most closely aligned to the South African scenario to date, with the M&E System still maturing and so illustrating most characteristics. When tested, the implementation theory enabled the researcher to answer most of the study questions and from the implementation context protocol it emphasises how GWM&ES impacts on implementation processes, primarily via the institutional corridor through which they must pass and explore the support of client and coalitions. The objective of the implementation of the GWM&ES is to improve government performance through programmes and projects in the various government institutions, and to contextualise in such a way that it provides solutions to poor performance and ultimately improves lives of people (Presidency, 2010). The literature generally supports the view that government performance can improve through a concerted effort from all the parties involved. The implementation theory states that both the DPME and government departments should consider the information, evaluate programmes when required, and include coordination and integration as critical steps for effective implementation. A hard-line top-down perspective would view implementer commitment being fashioned primarily by the content of the policy and its capacity provisions, both of which can supposedly be controlled from the top. From the literature review it was concluded that the theoretical framework for this study is the implementation theory through the 5C protocol.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the research methodology employed to address the coordination of Government-Wide monitoring and evaluation. The research approach is selected by examining the methods debate presented by different authors. For instance, Leedy and Ormrod (2005) define research methodology as the general approach the researcher takes in carrying out the research project, to some extent dictating the particular tools the researcher selects. According to Webb and Auriacombe (2006), research methodology refers to methods, techniques and procedures that are employed in the process of implementing the research design or plan. The two broad approaches to research design are qualitative and quantitative, followed by a number of methods and techniques available for both these approaches. The focus of this section is on research approach, design, data collection and implementation of the study.

3.1.1 QUANTITATIVE APPROACH

According to Burns (2000), the quantitative research approach is concerned with the collection and analysis of data in numerical form, applied to relatively large-scale and representative sets of data, often presented or perceived as being about the gathering of 'facts'. This approach was not applicable to the study because it was not numerically based and had certain limitations. For instance, quantitative methods indicated by Cameroon (2009) in his study on assessment of poverty levels in South Africa have important limitations in evaluating performance of the public service impact of development programmes and policies. Many of the challenges that the poor face cannot be understood without direct, qualitative reference to the context in which the poor live, and this is as a result of poor public service performance. Punch (1998) states that quantitative research may be mostly used for testing theory and also for exploring an area and generating hypotheses and theories. The purpose of this research is not to build or test the theory but rather to enhance and to develop findings that will enhance the learning process.

According to Neuman (1994), quantitative methods allows the researcher to produce causality statements, through the use of controlled experiments. The purpose of the study is to interpret the findings and analyse results and provide recommendations for strengthening the system to deal with the identified challenges. For this study, there is no need to use statistical techniques that would allow complicated and sophisticated analyses, the purpose being to contribute towards improved public service performance through the coordination of the GWM&ES.

Ely (1991) states that because of the complexity of human experience it is difficult to rule out or control all the variables. The GWM&ES is beyond budget allocation, and is a system that emanates from the policy framework. It results in less acquiescence to shared implementation and accountability. Usually, there is no evidence that proportionally equitable funding is being allocated to shared outcomes, which are being achieved through integrated planned activities and outputs. Furthermore, quantification can become an end in itself, failing to take account of people's unique ability to interpret their experiences, construct their own meanings and act on them. It leads to the assumption that data is factual and the same for all people at the same time (Hammersley, 2008). The actual spending of the budget allocation is usually not presented adequately enough to give a picture of expenditure.

In this study the emphasis is on the commitments that form the basis for performance assessment and making links to underlying strategic policy direction and maximum impact that is anticipated through programmes and projects of government. There has been some evidence that increased allocation in certain sectors, for example health and education, has not been able to produce satisfactory results. Due to the nature of this method it often produces banal and trivial findings of little consequence, with restrictions on the controlling of variables (Bryman, 2003). The objective of the study is not about how much government has spent on programmes and projects, however, it also investigates the maximum impact reached through policy programmes. Spending and non-spending of the budget would not result in presenting the challenges, and ultimately the results of the intended impact and the reasons they are not being achieved.

3.1.2 QUALITATIVE APPROACH

Webb and Auriacombe (2006) explain that qualitative research is an inquiry of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The advantage of using the qualitative method is that it will generate rich detailed data that will leave intact the participants' perspectives and provide a context for understanding behaviour. The researcher builds a complex holistic picture and analyses words or concepts. Qualitative data is usually in the form of words rather than numbers and has long been the staple of some fields in the social sciences, such as public administration and organisational studies. Words organised into incidents or stories have a concrete, vivid and significant flavour that often proves far more convincing to a reader than pages of summarised numbers (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Qualitative reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell, 1998). The research involves analysing and interpreting texts and interviews in order to discover meaningful patterns descriptive of a particular phenomenon (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). Various authors (vide Burns, 2000, Punch, 1998, and Weseem, 2006) argue that the qualitative researcher examines the patterns of meaning which emerge from the data, and these are often presented in the participants' own words, therefore the task is to find patterns within those words (and action) and to present those patterns for others to inspect while at the same time staying as close to the construction of the world as the participants originally experienced it.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

An outline of the reasons for coordination in the implementation of GWM&ES will be presented. The research method tries to be connected to the researcher's problem statement and goal of research. According to Creswell (1994:40), qualitative research is defined as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants and conducted in a natural setting. In expanding on Creswell's definition, Denzin and Lincoln (1994) define qualitative research as multi-method in focus, involving interpretive, naturalistic settings, and attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them. Qualitative research involves collection of a variety of

empirical case studies, personal experience and introspection. This chosen method is applicable for this study because the findings on DPME coordination and integration, information usability and evaluation results challenges will better explain the experienced challenges in the implementation of GWM&ES.

Research conducted by Erasmus in 2008, titled "The assessment of financial performance in the South African public service", utilised the qualitative research approach with interviews used to gather data. Cloete (2007) states that data analysis is a continuous comparison and assessment process that begins when the researcher collecting literature on the subject. Even when the write-up of the research report has begun the researcher may experience gaps in the analysis that call for more data collection, processing and assessment. In light of research conducted by Cloete (2007) it may happen that there are gaps in the analysis which would require further data collection.

3.2.1 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection involved primary and secondary sources in the form of document analysis and interviews. Document analysis was conducted to achieve a contextual understanding of the policy and practical environment within which the DPME coordinated and integrated the implementation of GWM&ES. Documentary evidence acts as a method to cross-validate data gathered from interviews and/or observation (Patton, 2000:49). This is especially important, given that in some cases participants' responses may differ from their actions (Noor 2008:164; Cresswell, 2003). Document analysis from public documents, such as minutes of meetings, reports and newspapers, is appropriate for cross validation. In order to answer some of the research questions it was necessary to refer to policy and government documents. For example, in order to find out whether approaches applied by the DPME to collect, handle and analyse data were conducted in a coordinated and integrated manner it was necessary to look at departmental quarterly progress reports and parliamentary briefing notes. Other documents that assisted in answering research questions included policy frameworks, legislative documents, strategic frameworks, conference papers, speeches, annual reports, quarterly reports, journal articles and the Internet, containing information pertaining to the past and current performance trends. This

assisted in demonstrating the metamorphosis that the DPME had undergone since the advent of the GWM&ES in the public space.

Researchers draw their data from many sources, for example, people, textual materials and audio-visual and electronic records, with the particular entities they select comprising their 'sample' in a process referred to as 'sampling' (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:144). The main aim is to get a representation as close as possible to that of the target population. Purposive sampling was used for this research, whereby people were chosen for a particular purpose, in the outcomes monitoring and evaluation unit within the DPME. They had extensive knowledge and experience of the field of information collated and its usability, evaluation processes and coordination and integration of GWM&ES implementation. Senior staff in the departments in the M&E unit were mostly programme-based, though a few have had a rolling M&E system that made sense to the entire GWM&ES.

3.2.2 INTERVIEWS

Fontana and Frey (2005) state that interviews are used as a tool to access people's experience and their inner perceptions, attitudes, and feelings of reality. The interview schedules are used as a research technique, with the researcher providing minimal guidance to interviewees and allowing considerable latitude when responding to questions. When the interviewee moves away from the researcher's designated area, the latter benefits by gathering data that is central to the interviewee's frame of reference. Participants for the interview were selected purposefully, for their particular in-depth knowledge and current information on the evaluation programmes, information usability and coordination and integration challenges for the implementation of GWM&ES. These research interviewees comprised senior staff and middle staff members, and as a middle staff member the researcher was also the main moderator. The operationalisation of the research is envisaged to be better coordinated from this perspective, the strategic intention being to understand not only challenges they are facing but also the manner in which they plan to deal with and solve these challenges for the proper coordination of the system.

In addition, it aims to study the manner in which they plan to resolve these challenges for better coordination of GWM&ES within the Department. Unstructured, face-to-face interviews were conducted with elicit personnel from the DPME. A tape recorder and a

laptop were used to record interviews in order to enhance the accuracy of data collected and to improve the efficiency of data analysis (Fife, 2005). Patton (2002) describes unstructured interviews as a natural extension of participant observation, because they so often occur as part of continuing participant observation fieldwork. He argued that they rely on the spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of an interaction. The research is conducted in the field in which the research is conducted.

3.2.3 DATA ANALYSIS

McNabb, (2001) defines data analysis in research as a continuing, emerging and iterative or non-linear process. Before one begins with analysis, data is transcribed, with texts from interviews, observational notes or memos being typed into word processing documents. These transcriptions are then analysed either with a computer programme or, as for this research, manually. Words, sentences and paragraphs are broken down, to make sense of, interpret and theorise the data. Neuman (2011) states that data collected by a qualitative researcher is analysed and organised into categories on the basis of themes, concepts or similar features. The analysis of data from interviews responses is compared against the findings of the documents, with the particular aim of identifying gaps, if any. Matrix analysis, an outline of generalised causation, a logical reasoning process (Miles & Huberman, 1994), is used. Where necessary, diagrams are inserted to present the results, especially the differences between GWM&ES coordination approaches and implementation.

Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) refer to coding as a procedure for organising the texts of the transcripts and discovering patterns within that organisational structure, before theory is developed from the patterns discovered from the data. Data handling is the first step in the analysis process, therefore, due to the amount of data collected for this study it was decided to organise it into different themes that focussed on answering the research questions. There were three phases of data coding, namely open, axial and selective (Neuman, 2011). Binder and Edwards (2009) utilised the coding system for their research on "Using grounded theory method for theory building in operations management research". The central idea of using the coding paradigm was to draw a connection between the raw text and the research objectives in a structured step-by-step manner.

3.2.3.1 OPEN CODING

Neuman (2011:463) refers to open coding as the ‘first pass’ through recently collected data. Themes are identified and codes assigned to condense data into categories. Data collected for this research by means of document analysis and interviews was categorised into relevant topics. The researcher was open to creating new themes and to changing initial codes in later analysis. Themes were at a low level of abstraction and came from the researcher’s initial research questions, concepts in the literature, terms used by members in the social setting or new thoughts stimulated by the researcher’s concentration on the data (Neuman, 2011:463). The themes used for this research were aligned with the different research questions.

3.2.3.2 AXIAL CODING

Neuman (2011) states that axial coding is the ‘second pass’ through the data, with focus on reviewing and examining initial codes that took place in the first phase. Additional codes or new ideas may emerge during this pass. Ideas or themes are organised and the axis of key concepts in analysis are identified. For this research, in the second pass of coding, categories or concepts were clustered together, which assisted in dropping some themes or examining others in more detail, to reinforce the connections between evidence and concepts. As codes were consolidated, evidence was found in many places for core themes that built a dense web of support in the qualitative data (Neuman, 2011).

3.2.3.3 SELECTIVE CODING

Neuman (2011) refers to ‘selective coding’ as the last pass through the data, by which time major themes have been identified. In this phase, previous codes are examined by the researcher to identify and select data that supports the conceptual coding categories that are developed.

3.2.3.4 DETERMINING VALIDITY OF DATA

Creswell and Miller (2000) explain that there are an array of terms for validity, including authenticity, goodness, adequacy, trustworthiness and credibility. Researchers need to demonstrate that their studies are credible. For the purpose of this research, triangulation of data sources was utilised, whereby the researcher searched for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories. Creswell and Miller (2000) state that researchers go through this process and rely on multiple forms of evidence rather than a single incident or data point in the study. Determining the validity of data for this research was approached in the same manner as that conducted by Lessing (2009). The information obtained was interpreted, explained and compared to the literature in order to construct meaningful answers to the research questions and to formulate a theory.

3.2.4 PRESENTATION OF DATA

Badenhorst (2008) describes data presentation as packaging the evidence collected for the research. Data is presented visually so that the evidence is made clear to the reader, to showcase it and to make the results visible. Presenting is about reducing and organising the data, this is where the data will be sorted by category, theme or concept, in the case of this research according to the topics of the research questions. Interpreting the data is another means of presenting whereby sense of the data is made for the reader. The last means of presenting is the visual form, which usually means graphic display.

A display is an organised, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action (Miles & Huberman, 1994:11). According to Cloete (2007), the usual mode of display for qualitative data is narrative text. For this research, data is displayed by means of extended text, quotations and phrases. These forms of display are designed to assemble organised information into an immediately accessible, compact form so that the analyst can see what is happening and either draw justified conclusions or move on to the next step of analysis the display suggests may be useful (Miles & Huberman, 1994:11).

3.3 LIMITATIONS

The study was limited to the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) and some coordinating departments of the 12 outcomes, and excluded other national departments and spheres of government where GWM&ES was practiced. This exclusion might have hindered applicable findings that might have led to a reconsideration of the entire policy. The GWM&ES has been in practice since 2007, so it would have been very useful to examine how other organs of states were experiencing challenges in implementing or practicing the system.

3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Ethical issues in research fall under four categories, which are protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy, and honesty with professional colleagues (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; Neuman, 2011). This study tried to ensure that the interviewees were not subjected to discomfort or stress with the questions posed to them. In advance, the interviewees for this study were told the nature of the study to be conducted as well as the research questions, and were given the choice to contemplate participation in the study to try and avoid bias in the responses provided so as not to affect results of the study. The nature of this study required that specific answers from the interviewees be analysed to answer the research questions, therefore permission was requested from the interviewees to record their responses as provided by them, hence there was no need to further obtain informed consent. All findings obtained for this study were reported in an honest fashion, without misrepresenting any information or misleading anyone about the nature of the findings (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

3.5 CONCLUSION

A research study needs to be a clearly organised, concise document, so the researcher has used the relevant approaches. The selected research methodology was used to describe and analyse the DPME efforts to coordinate and integrate the GWM&ES processes with respect to implementing government programmes effectively and efficiently, whilst outlining the factors leading to challenges in the coordination of the system. The selected

methodology also created an understanding and explored the trends in the implementation of the GWM&ES as well as unpacking approaches applied by the DPME to collect, handle and analyse data that would lead to informed decision-making through bettering the implementation of the GWM&ES.

This research methodology has attempted to elaborate on all elements that are required to address the research problem and answer the primary research question as to how DPME ensures coordination and integration of systems, programmes and action plans of the reporting departments for the implementation of GWM&ES. It is envisaged that the literature generated from this paper will certainly add to the growing, yet limited, literature available on coordination and integration solutions in the implementation of GWMES by DPME.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

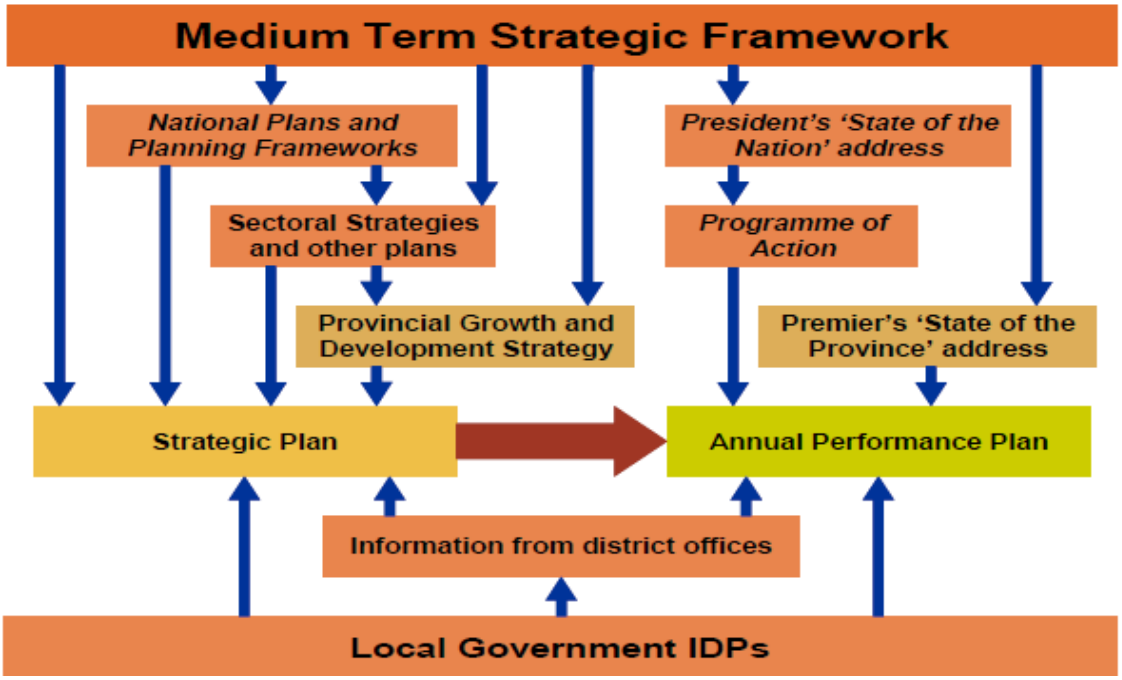
Though the M&E function should interlink systematically, defining the practices have been separated in this study as the literature notes that in the South African case since 2007 is that monitoring and evaluation as well as coordination have emerged as separate areas of practice wherein more efforts are concentrated more towards monitoring alone, with evaluation gradually gaining focus. Coordination attempts though structured and internalised by government, it remains haphazard and not integrated in a manner to yield the desired results of aligning and informing the use of government resources efficiently. This study has thus focussed more on unpacking the trends within monitoring practice and it enhanced or inhibited by the current coordination attempts in government.

The DPME has no specific legal mandate and currently is working with a general Constitutional mandate (Clause 85) for the Presidency to coordinate the functions of state departments and their administration (Presidency, 2012). For each new aspect or function to be implemented the Department has to obtain prior Cabinet approval before rolling out to the other departments. Over and above this high level recognition of the DPME by Cabinet, in 2011 its work gained momentum from conducting an international review of performance monitoring and evaluation by other countries that had successfully implemented performance monitoring and evaluation systems, such as Canada, U.K., Colombia, Mexico, the United State of America (U.S.A.), Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, Brazil, India and Chile (Presidency, 2012). However, most of these countries had legal frameworks for planning, monitoring and evaluation systems which they could operate (Davies, 2012). This chapter examines trends and strategies for consideration in the implementation of the GWM&ES, all of which influence its optimal and effective coordination, in particular how the various organs of state have responded since adoption. The findings relate to the research purpose, to be further interpreted and analysed in the next chapter.

4.1.2 CURRENT PLANS CONTRIBUTING TO THE COORDINATION OF THE GWM&ES

Notable progress has been made in improving government performance by putting in place M&E systems by various organs of state (Kraak, 20120. Since the establishment of the GWM&ES in 2007, followed by its adoption in 2009, many departments started developing mechanisms for improving monitoring and, over time, various systems evolved with differing degrees of complexity, for example, some for developed M&E that were programme-specific (Presidency, 2012). However, this progress has been coupled with weak co-ordination, as well as cumbersome and duplicate reporting systems, often undermining efforts to consolidate progress being achieved by government and burdening the limited public resources. The current plans by the South African government ensures that planning processes within the public sphere are aligned with high level strategic plans being operationalised at departmental, provincial as well as local levels, to ensure that programmes are being prioritised and implemented in a coordinated manner for government to operate more efficiently. In this regard the DPME's responsibility is to provide a framework through which the planning process of government can flow. Figure 4.1 below illustrates the planning process by government departments detailing from high level strategic plans to the operational plans at local government level – the approach is that all government work should be align and work towards achieving the overall objectives and priorities of government.

FIGURE 4.1: DEPARTMENTAL STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



(Source: Department of Transport, 2012)

4.1.1.2 CURRENT STRATEGIES CONTRIBUTING TO THE COORDINATION OF THE GWM&ES

Since the Cabinet approved the GWM&ES in 2005 most national departments have gradually been establishing M&E units at least at micro and policy level, though these units do not link to the overarching GWMES objectives. For example, the Department of Trade and Industry in South Africa, to pilot its incentive programme, has established an internal departmental M&E unit that is designed for only tracking progress of the incentive programme in the Department. It has minimal input to the overall outcomes or impact on government incentive programmes affecting trade and industry in the country, based on other departments or the economic sector in general (Trade and Industry, 2012). In order to implement the GWMES some national departments have been assigned as coordinating departments for the various sectors within government (DPME, 2010), for example, the environment sector has environmental functions resting in various departments, but the custodian of the country's environmental assets and thus the coordinating department for the sector is Environmental Affairs. The same would apply to the education sector, wherein several departments, such as Health, Public Works, and Social Development, are actively involved in ensuring that the education system functions. However, the

custodianship and thus the coordinating department for the education sector becomes the Department of Education, almost as a 'lead' agent.

The various sectors and relevant coordinating departments are accountable to certain 'oversight' departments, also loosely referred to as the 'centre of government' to ensure overall alignment of its work. Such departments include the Presidency, Offices of the Premier, National Treasury, the Auditor General, and Statistics South Africa. Government performance data and information is somewhat centralised in these departments so they assume an 'oversight' role in coordinating various aspects or areas of performance information. This strategy has been conducive to the implementation and coordination of the government's programme of action which, from 2010, incorporated the outcomes-based Approach.

According to the National Treasury the fundamental aim of the outcomes-based approach is to examine whether the government derives value for money from public expenditure and whether public services have the desired or maximum impact on intended beneficiaries and the country at large (National Treasury, 2011). However, there are other perspectives on outcomes-based approaches rendering the National Treasury (2011) view particularly narrow. For example, according to the Minister for Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (Presidency, 2011), the government also intends to measure various elements of the result chain, starting from inputs/output, budget, activities, service delivery outputs and ultimately the outcomes (Presidency, 2009). The approach could also be used to provide direction to the implementation of various policies and assessment of their relevance, or to integrate with other existing performance monitoring systems to assess performance at an individual and institutional level (Chabane 2011& Mackay, 2012).

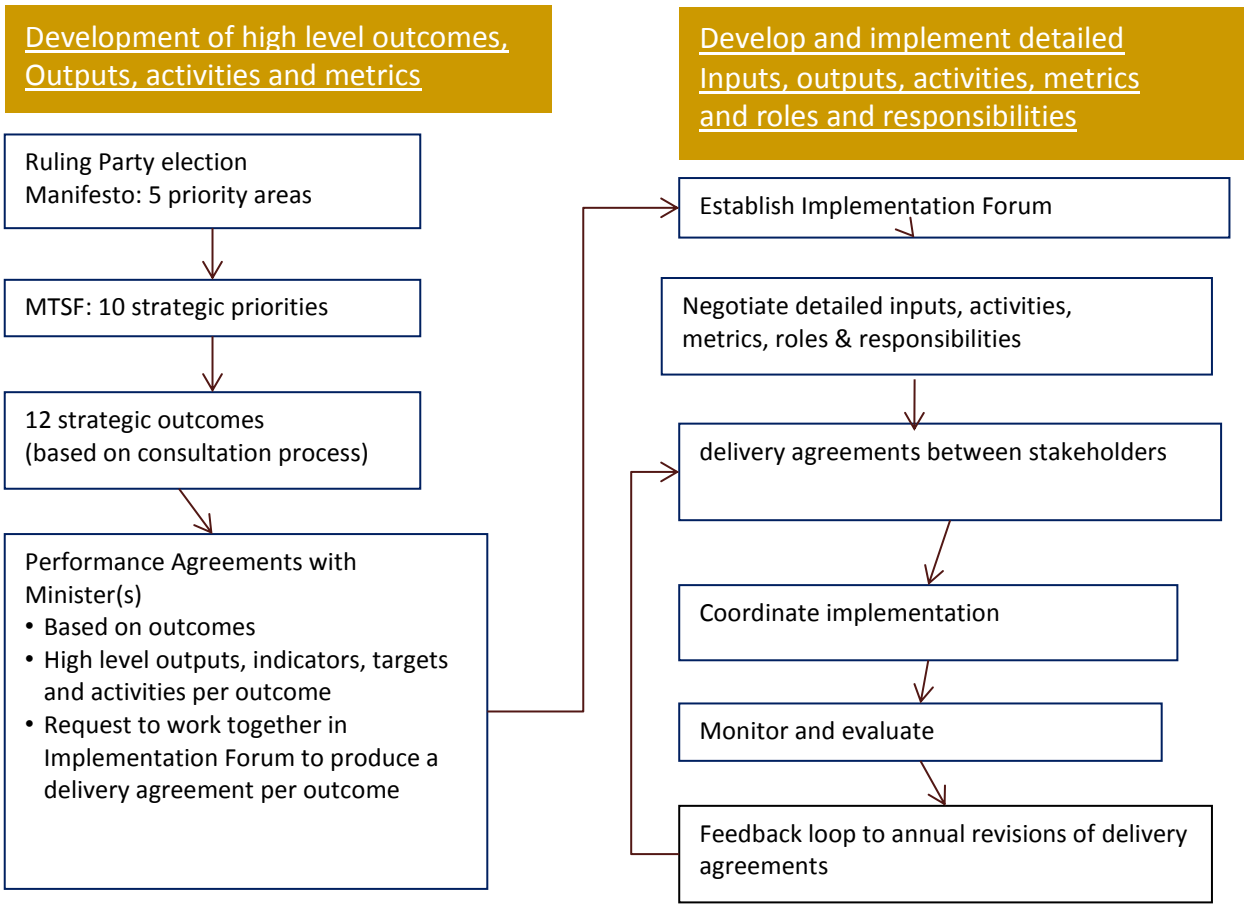
The outcome-based approach is underpinned by a number of non-negotiable principles (Presidency, 2011), including the intent to provide principled leadership; strengthen the government's ability to co-operate across the three spheres of government and work as a single mechanism; build on the partnership between government and civil society; become transparent to each other's process; acknowledge the limitation of funding and resources in the government system and the need to do more with less; as well as develop a skilled, motivated public service (Presidency, 2012). The emphasis is on coordination of M&E systems, and the GWM&ES aims to contribute to improved governance and to enhance the

effectiveness of public sector institutions and organisations (Tania, 2010). Specifically, it aims to collect, analyse and disseminate information on the progress and impact of government programmes in order to ensure transparency and accountability, promote improvements in service delivery, ensure compliance to statutory requirements, and promote a learning culture within the public sector (Presidency, 2011). The outcomes-based approach is adopted as a strategic tool to ensure this coordination and envisaged consequences.

An important shift in this approach is government's adoption of a more strategic focus that deliberately limits the number of outcomes. The aim is to sharpen the focus on critical issues requiring improvement while also seeking to encourage more efficient and effective use of limited resources. This will take place through the introduction of a more systematic monitoring and evaluation approach or mechanism, with clearly identified structures such as implementation forums and clusters (Mahesh, 2011). The outcome-based approach is currently premised on the Medium Term Strategic Framework of government, derived from the ruling party's election manifesto, which outlines ten key priorities of government, namely job creation; education; health; food security; infrastructure; crime; rural development; public service improvement; regional integration; sustainable resource management and communities (Presidency, 2010). Each priority area has been committed through delivery agreements and the DMPE has to facilitate the development of plans of government and monitor and evaluate their implementation. Essentially, the delivery agreements are entered into by the relevant organs of state within a sector; for example, Outcome 4 on jobs has a delivery agreement entered into by the departments in the economic sector, for example, the National Treasury, the Economic Development Department, and the Department of Trade and Industry. The implementation, monitoring and reporting on the delivery agreements becomes the responsibility of the coordinating departments, as discussed above.

Delivery agreements describe outputs, sub-outputs, measurable indicators, targets and key activities, whilst identifying required inputs and clarifying roles and responsibilities of each key body that contributes to the achievement of the outcome (as in Figure 4.2 below).

FIGURE 4.2: OUTCOMES APPROACH PROCESS



(Source: Presidency, 2012)

4.1.1.3 PUBLIC SECTOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE COORDINATION OF THE GWMES

The key role and responsibility of the national departments is thus to implement, monitor and report on outcomes, whilst the other departments, such as the DPME, have an oversight roles and to an extent influence how the GWM&ES is coordinated.

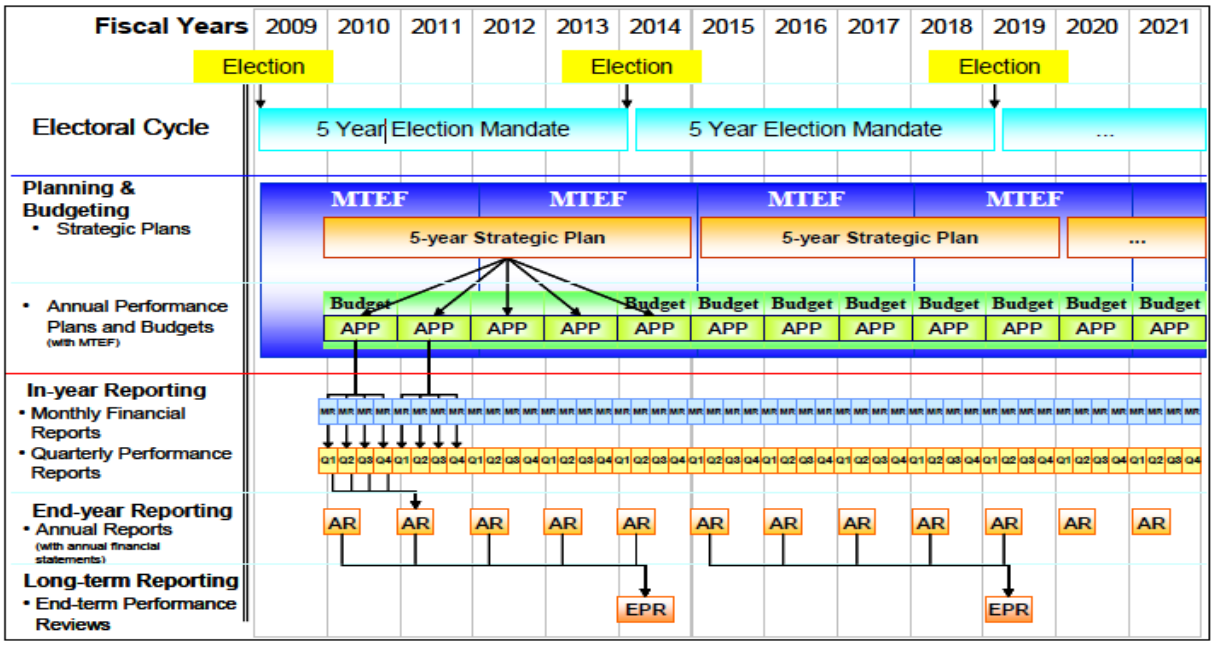
4.1.1.4 NATIONAL TREASURY

The work of the National Treasury is a cornerstone of the GWM&E system, and since the enactment of the Public Finance Management Act in 1999 it runs systems that serve as a central information collection mechanism and ensure that co-ordinating departments do

not impose duplicate or onerous requests or provision for performance information, for example, the Inter-Governmental Fiscal Review reports measuring amongst other components the efficiency and effectiveness of budgeting, reporting and expenditure (Treasury, 2011).

Ministers and MECs have to table strategic plans and/or annual performance plans that link output measures to the resource allocation in budget programmes and sub-programmes to the National Treasury for analysis, and which are tabled for annual budgets in Parliament and the provincial Legislatures (Presidency, 2010). These plans include clear service delivery targets and indicators, and spending against plans and progress of actual service delivery achievement. They are being reported on a quarterly basis by departments and provinces then monitored and analysed by the National Treasury together with the monthly financial expenditure reports to ensure alignment and coordination of how government resources are being used. The DPME, on the other hand, using the same sources of data, covers the quality assurance and analyses the plans for performance information in the outcomes-based approach to check for alignment and monitor implementation of the delivery agreements.

FIGURE 4.3: DEPARTMENTAL PLANNING, BUDGETING AND REPORTING CYCLE



Source: (National Treasury, 2010 and Transport, 2012)

4.1.1.5 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

As part of the M&E system the Department of Public Service Administration (DPSA) developed a tool known as 'public management watch', based on categories of personnel data drawn from PERSAL, a government system managing public service personnel data, such as turnover rates, replacement rates, vacancy rates, and leave trends, that are augmented by two categories of in-year expenditure data, on compensation of employees and expenditure on goods and services, as well as the audit outcomes of national and provincial departments (DPSA, 2010). The various categories of data are weighted and a composite index on all national and provincial departments' HR status is obtained. However, the accuracy of this information continues to be negatively impacted by the low quality of PERSAL data on which it depends.

4.1.1.6 STATISTICS SOUTH AFRICA

The department, Statistics South Africa, is responsible for the implementation of a National Statistical System (NSS) that serves as the conceptual and technical backbone for

assessing government's progress. The NSS ensures that South Africa can report on major policy objectives, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and include the forging of agreements with government entities around the provision of accurate and reliable statistical information. It also includes the adoption of statistical standards and definitions (StatsSA, 2012).

4.1.1.7 PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Constitution, 1996), as the highest law of the land, empowers the office of the Public Service Commission (PSC) to oversee and evaluate the functioning of public service. The commission carries out a number of evaluation exercises, such as citizen satisfaction surveys, miscellaneous programme reviews, and the state of public service report which assesses adherence to core principles of public administration by national and provincial departments (Public Service Commission, 2011). The Commission also monitors whether public funds are spent economically, payments for suppliers are made on time, and annual performance plans are submitted on time, as well as the time it takes to fill vacancies. This role of the Commission requires departments to constantly monitor their performance and thus contribute to coordination of the implementation of the GWM&ES.

4.1.1.8 AUDITOR GENERAL

In particular, the Auditor-General monitors the variance between planned and actual performance, as well as logical linkages and consistency between allocated resources, objectives, plans, delivery targets and annual performance reports (Presidency, 2009). In essence the Office of the Auditor General performs an audit of performance information (AoPI) and can be regarded as the end tail of the M&E chain. It assesses reported information by departments against compliance with reporting requirements, usefulness and reliability to improve government performance for improved service delivery. Government departments and entities are required to submit annual performance information for audit purposes with their annual financial statements by the end of May each year. The Auditor-General also carries out sector-specific performance audits which,

for instance, focus on economy, effectiveness and efficiency (Auditor-General, 2011), all of which assist with the coordination of the GWM&ES.

4.1.2 CHALLENGES AFFECTING THE COORDINATION OF GWM&ES IN SA

It has been proven impossible to achieve optimal coordination and prevent duplication of activities between other core M&E stakeholders. This not only results in duplication of resources but also creates very confusing and contradictory messages. In principle the conceptualization of the GWM&ES system is consistent with international practice, however, enough attention that has been given to the modalities of the roll-out of the system and the complex nature of the intergovernmental system is still not well incorporated in the design. Theoretically, there is contextual understating of M&E, however the departmental functioning structures and organisations are not conforming and planning is not integrated into the M&E system. There are no formal strategies for communication within DPME it is purely based on reporting by the coordinating departments.

The enforcement of M&E units coordinating reports is not fulfilling the role of M&E. The DPME is still seen as the 'big brother' and watchdog by departments and other spheres of government, rather than part of the puzzle, as it is another arm of government. The advantage is that the DPME make a great effort in reviewing work and conducting analysis based on reports provided by the departments. The disadvantage is that sometimes the DPME is far-fetched and undermines the M&E. Generally, there is a reporting fatigue whereby departments have much to report in different formats. Current initiatives with the National Treasury are rigid timeframes and are too cumbersome. There are various plans dependent on the merit of plans or work being implemented and indicators of where the budget has been exhausted and work discontinued. Usually there are disagreements on what should be sectoral objectives and not necessarily the key issue for the sector. Ultimately resources are not aligned to the sector planning. In certain instances where there are agreements on the task and ratings there are disagreements as to which are part of the M&E system, and more effort has been made while the entire sector disagrees.

Evaluation focus is still at an early stage, and as a result people will have separate planning processes. The DPME does not have sufficient capacity to carry out evaluation as it is still

relying wholly on the service provider. The Evaluation Research Unit (ERU) within the DPME, in following the objectives of evaluation, conducts training and capacity building for evaluation practitioners. This has positive results, especially amongst those departments that conduct evaluation exercise. However, there is a lack of management buy-in as the training is delegated to officials while evaluation is a management tool. There is no M&E integrated in focus areas of the department and it is not coordinated in one unit. There is no M&E strategy or framework for the department.

There is a lack of contextual understanding of the GWM&ES and each individual relies on the M&E expertise that the person possesses. There has been establishment of the dedicated M&E units to coordinate the work of the delivery agreement. As such, systems have been put in place to support the implementation and reporting on the delivery agreement. However, there is a lack of participation and under-reporting on the structure that has been put in place to report outcomes-related work. Budget constraint in the implementing departments is a persistent issue, with capacity being aligned to performance measures and budget structure to lobby for more resource allocation.

4.1.4 COORDINATION OF DELIVERY AGREEMENTS THROUGH OUTCOMES

Since the approval and adoption of GWM&ES, the DPME is faced with pressures of facilitating the implementation in the various sectors prioritised by government as well as monitoring the performance of the public sector. Despite the government of South Africa being able to clearly identify priorities, an increasing number of cross-cutting issues, for example, job creation, capacitation programmes and skills development, require structural adjustments and cause pressure on the coordination and integration of the implementation of GWM&ES within the DPME. It frequently faces challenges to implementation, including coordination and integration of the administrative system (Kraak, 2011).

Firstly, integration of monitoring and evaluation information into the planning and budget decision-making process is hampered by lack of appropriate plans and lack of alignment to budget processes. The implementation of GWM&ES is held up by lack of integration in DPME systems. Other factors include the following:

- It is difficult to keep delivery agreements short and strategic. They tend to be long and detailed with too many indicators that are not strategic, and most are difficult to manage at a macro level. The signatories of the delivery agreements would like their work to be included in the priority focus areas (Presidency, 2013), but this is not feasible. In certain instances there are disagreements as to which tasks and ratings form part of the M&E system.
- There is a lack of culture of coordination plans, and they are usually changed in order to cater for other plans and focus on activities rather than achieving outcomes.
- There is tendency to produce process indicators rather than those which measure actual improvements at output or outcome level (Kraak, 2011).
- The existing legal frameworks tend to favour the silo approach, which focuses on the accountability of individual ministers and accounting officers to Parliament rather than reflecting an integrated approach and joint responsibility, as is demanded by more complex policy problems that government faces.
- The information management system to produce the required data is not yet fully in place in many departments. Ijoema (2011) states that usually the information collected from departments do not provide prominence on actual progress and performance in order to be able to assess deviations from targets and for analysis purposes.
- There are challenges to the translation of the Delivery Agreements into implementation programmes in individual departments that is links between collective planning and departmental planning. Goebel (2012) points out that the reporting template provided by the DPME which is not yet currently prescribed on the M&E guideline interferes negatively with the department's plans.
- It is difficult to find a balance between coordination and leadership by the centre and ensuring ownership by line function departments. Angela and Tania (2012) found that the reports tend to focus on the work of the coordinating departments whilst other participating departments were usually not well represented. Without real ownership there is a tendency to carry out M&E for compliance purposes only, losing out on the developmental and learning opportunities offered by monitoring and evaluation. Draai and Raga (2012) state that there is no comprehensive mainstreaming of the process through government departments.

- There is a setting of low targets, reporting on processes rather than results, with production of the reports being delegated being low levels in the organisation (Presidency, 2011). There is also a lack of top management focus on implementation, monitoring and reporting and varying levels of ownership of process (Kraak, 2011).

4.1.5 DATA COLLECTION AND ITS USEFULNESS TOWARDS DECISION MAKING

One of the challenges currently faced by public services to deliver effectively and efficiently is to get better information about performance and then use it to make better decisions and hold people accountable (Manala, 2010). Using good performance information underpins many of the initiatives under way to raise public sector performance. It is important that service performance information is useful and used, but there are insignificancies for agencies, ministers, and Parliament in making this a reality. As the public sector look for ways to improve service delivery through better performance it is more important that they have the information necessary to inform those decisions (Angela & Ajam, 2010).

Through an outcome-based approach by the DPME, with national departments clustered, there has not been a success in the use of performance information to assess and enquire into effectiveness and efficiency. The DPME, through the Programme of Action (POA), is liaising with government departments and local authorities to help them improve their performance information and to use this information, alongside their financial information, to consider effectiveness and efficiency, and to better understand and manage their key financial and performance drivers (Presidency, 2010). Despite reforms by the DPME there has not been much success in taking informed decision based on the usability and credibility of the available information. The DPME has created data forums which aim to give special attention to needs of M&E frameworks for each sector and custodianship of information. However, they are still finding it difficult to share information because it is bought and presented in different versions of similar data sets. This results in inaccurate data being released to the public and ultimately it is difficult to influence decision-making. The DPME does not have a tracking system to validate the information provided by the

departments, and so plays an agent role or mediator between parliament and line departments when reporting to parliament.

The information management system required to produce data is not in place in many departments. Ijoema (2011) states that usually the information collected from departments do not provide prominence on actual progress and performance in order to assess deviations from targets and for analysis. There is also the question of information overload that the departments need to report on (Draai, 2011), however, departments can only make effective use of a certain amount of feedback information at one time. Ministers and senior officials often have to make decisions quickly against an already complex political and managerial background. Deluging them with information does not necessarily make the process any easier or more effective, and governments still have to decide on which information it will base its decision. The information that could be collected about public sector performance is practically unlimited, based on the parallel processes that are in place in government (Kotze &Taylor, 2012), however, its usefulness is still questionable.

It is important to remember that performance targets and information are not ends in themselves: "they are only useful insofar as they bring about better performance by public servants" (Goebel, 2011). The DPME does not have tracking and relies purely on the departments to provide data sources, ultimately informing reports to the Cabinet with no system to validate them. The capacity is a challenge, returning to what the principal agent literature suggests, so the DPME becomes the agent by reporting on what has been provided without knowing what is happening in terms of verification.

4.1.6 THE VALUE FOR EVALUATION SYSTEM

The DPME has an evaluation process, through which programmes and projects of government are being evaluated. The challenges that face the DPME in order to coordinate and conduct evaluation for government work include lack of overall contextual understanding of the evaluation system, and currently departments are unfamiliar with the DPME's systems of evaluation, which is quite understandable as the system is still in the early stage.

In 2012 the DPME commissioned and produced a number of impact and implementation evaluations aimed to improving the potential use and value of these studies (Presidency, 2012), however, at this stage it is difficult to achieve these objectives and or to determine the extent to which evidence from evaluations can really help effective implementation of the GWM&ES. One of the underlying objectives in introducing GWM&ES is to improve the way government conducts business and ultimately impacts on the citizenry it serves (Presidency, 2012). However, the factors and forces that perpetuate poor performance and determine the impact of evaluation result in lack of uptake in the policymaking process programmes and projects that were being evaluated. The evaluation results are lost in the system and there is no further tracking or follow up on the implementation of what has been detected as in need of correction in the programme (Davies, 2012).

The DPME does not have authority to enforce the implementation of those results, but it is the department's responsibility to see whether the evaluation findings are being corrected. Since there have been multiple M&E systems prior to the GWM&ES it is still difficult at this time to declare it as the most suited to helping government achieve the desired result or improving performance (Davies, 2012). Formal systems of management and control are only useful if they help motivate public servants to behave in the desired way. Evaluation aims at maximising performance and improving the current programmes (Manala, 2012). However, the system becomes counterproductive because it reduces confidence in the department's ability to declare all wrongs of the programmes, and perceived results would lead to the end of the programme rather than enhance it. Many problems related to programmes were not evaluated or well structured, but rather were service delivery-oriented.

4.1.7 CONCLUSION

The coordination of the GWM&ES currently is based on certain plans that fit into the departmental planning processes. Strategies such as the outcomes-based approach and the associated delivery agreements assist with coordinating implementation and various departments in the public sector are responsible for key aspects in the coordination of the GWM&ES. Since its adoption by Cabinet the policy platform has been created and various M&E products have been developed. However, persistent challenges to implementation

are structural, and mainly centred on departmental M&E systems, coordination and alignment of monitoring and evaluation initiatives among national departments. This makes it difficult to have an effective and efficient public sector performance.

Despite the government of South Africa having been able to clearly identify priorities there are an increasing number of crosscutting issues and structural adjustments that put pressure on the coordination and integration of the implementation of GWM&ES within the DPME. It has been found impossible to achieve optimal coordination and prevent duplication of activities between other core M&E stakeholders (Ijoema, 2011).

The information management system required to produce data is not in place in many departments. Usually the information collected from departments does not give prominence to actual progress and performance, required to assess deviations from targets for analysis. The DPME, in response to such challenges, has brought in the evaluation system in order to maximise and improve performance of the public services. However, the system becomes counter-productive because departments are unfamiliar with the DPMEs systems of evaluation.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

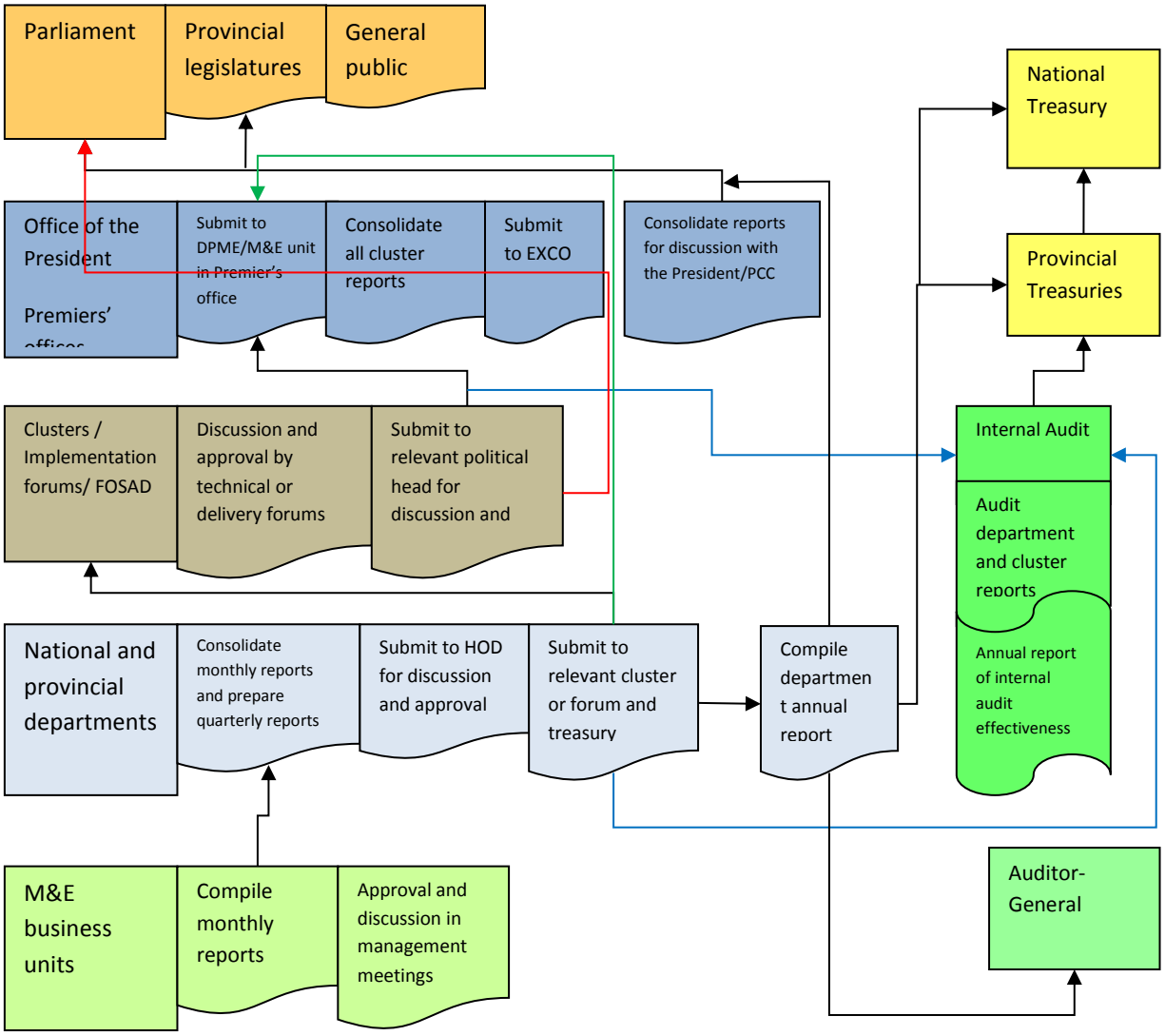
5.1. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NEW APPROACH

The establishment of the DPME in 2010 was a clear demonstration of the government's commitment to making performance impact on the lives of people (Presidency, 2011). The President holds minister's accountable through Delivery Agreements, an approach that has the support of the Cabinet. Progress of the outcomes and performance of minister's at individual level should send a clear message regarding the importance of M&E to government. South Africa is the first country to have a dedicated Ministry of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, and introduction of the outcomes-based approach has been a start of a process in introducing much more systematic and comprehensive M&E to the public service (World Bank, 2011).

Most government departments have adapted to this paradigm shift of result-based management, although it is still mostly at sector level. As a result, departmental sub-systems are still not mature enough to allow for a ready extraction of data that could be developed into a reporting system (Presidency, 2012). The existence of the POA system is limited to what the departments have agreed can be publicised. Although this has been envisaged as the extractive system, currently it entails the development of a parallel centralised system. The South African information system is also based on international experience, as centralised systems are not integrated into departmental information systems, but rather they create duplicate processes and produce information that lacks integrity and cannot be verified or audited (Presidency, 2012).

Figure 5.1 (below) shows that there are multiple points of reporting, but with some degree of duplication. The additional set up of the M&E institutional mechanism, such as implementation forums and M&E business units with departments, almost always increase the frequency of reporting and compliance costs. It is clear that from the new approach M&E will take up an excessive amount of time, given that reports are generated on a quarterly basis by all departments. The implication of this process is that there will be more time required to monitor resources by government.

FIGURE 5.1: OUTCOMES REPORTING FRAMEWORK



(Source: The Presidency, 2011)

5.1.3 CHALLENGES TO AND SUCCESSES IN THE COORDINATION OF THE GWM&ES

It has been found that challenges to optimal coordination and duplication of activities between M&E stakeholders are inevitable (Presidency, 2012). This not only results in duplication of resources allocated to the various activities but also creates very confusing and contradictory messaging of government's performance. This in turn impacts on the services and extent to which government is able to deliver them. Similarly, it would seem that in principle the conceptualisation of the GWMES system in South Africa is consistent with international practice (Presidency, 2010), however, the modalities of the roll-out and

the complex nature of the intergovernmental system have still not been incorporated into the design.

Theoretically, there is contextual understanding of M&E but practice is lagging behind, as several departmental structures and organisations are still not conforming to set objectives and targets (DPME, 2012). In most instances in South Africa, planning is not integrated into the M&E system, to the extent that one could argue it is far more formalised and internalised and is causing a disjuncture in performance information for strategic decision-making that could meaningfully improve service delivery. The disjuncture is coupled with the challenge of limited formal strategies for communication within units, both in departments and between various departments generally, but the implementation forums responsible for coordinating the sector performance information are gradually improving this status and will hopefully strengthen the GWMES in the future (Presidency, 2013).

In order to introduce a practice to M&E wherein the systems is legislated, the proposals have to be accepted by the Government and Administration Cluster corridor and acquire Cabinet approval (Presidency, 2012). This would enable DPME to lead other ministers to set norms and standards for planning and M&E, and would provide for a line of sight between plans, from long-term national plans to municipal plans, following the framework shown in Figure 4.1.

Currently, the enforcement of the M&E units' coordinating reports are not fulfilling the role of M&E. Structurally, in government, the DPME is still seen as the 'big brother' and watchdog by sister departments and other spheres of government, and is not part of the puzzle. It is viewed as another arm of government and as being integral to the M&E systems of departments and government as a whole (Kraak, 2013). The advantage is that to some extent the DPME has made an effort to review work and conduct an analysis based on the reports provided by the departments that assures quality and challenges departments to respond appropriately, in a way reinforcing DPME's custodianship of implementing the GWMES (Presidency, 2013). The disadvantage is that sometimes the DPME has a far-fetched view of the status of whether government priorities are having the desired outcome or impact, due to over-reliance of information provided by departments as opposed to being hands-on. This undermines the coordination of implementing the GWMES.

Generally, there is a reporting fatigue whereby departments have many obligations to report to the various departments in the centre of government, and these are in a different format, sometimes requiring similar if not the same information Department of Environmental Affairs, 2013). Current initiatives within the National Treasury are still experienced as being too rigid, with inflexible timeframes. They are also cumbersome, which becomes a challenge for coordination of government priorities to respond to the implementation of the GWMES. There are various plans dependent on the merit of work being implemented and indicators of where budgets have been exhausted and work discontinued. Usually there are disagreements on what should be sectoral objectives, and these are not necessarily the key issues, so ultimately, resources are not aligned to the sector planning. In certain instances where there are agreements on the task and ratings, there are disagreements which are part of the M&E system (Education, 2013).

Another challenge to coordination is the difference in approach to monitoring and evaluation in South Africa, whereby it is gradually being internalised by departments, but is still not common practice in most departments (Goebel, 2012). Currently, the focus on evaluation in M&E Systems is still at an early stage (World Bank, 2012), and as a result progressive government planning is negatively affected. This in turn affects communication and liaison within and between departments, posing a challenge to service delivery. The DPME does not have enough capacity to carry out evaluation as the department is still wholly reliant on the service provider. The ERU within the DPME has however improved the conceptualisation and theoretical understanding of evaluations in the country, with various tools, methods and approaches already in place to give effect to the National Evaluation Policy Framework approved by Cabinet in November 2011 (DPME, 2012).

One of the strategies of the unit has been to develop intensive training material for government official in an effort to accelerate capacity building for evaluations skills within government and so reduce the communication gap between monitoring and the evaluation interventions needed to improve government performance and efficiency (DPME, 2012). There have been pockets of positive results from these training sessions, especially amongst those departments that have conducted evaluations (Presidency, 2012), however, there is still a lack of management buy-in to participate in training. The management task is being delegated to junior officials who are delegated authority to implement findings

from these evaluations. This renders the evaluation exercise futile because, like monitoring, it is a management tool. The management review, which is supposed to encourage and strengthen coordination of government priorities, thus lacks the authority to affect the political will to allocate the right resources to the appropriate services. There is no M&E that is integrated into focus areas of the department and it is not coordinated in one unit. Furthermore, there is no overall M&E strategy or framework for the Department.

There is a lack of contextual understanding of the GWM&ES, with each individual relying on his or her M&E expertise, not the entire GWM&ES. There has been an establishment of dedicated M&E units to coordinate the work of the delivery agreement and to support the implementation and reporting on the delivery agreement. However, there is a lack of participation and underreporting on the structures that have been put in place to report on outcomes-related work. Budget constraints in the implementing departments are a persistent issue, with capacity being aligned to performance measures and budget structures used to lobby for more resource allocation (National Treasury, 2013).

Despite the various challenges there has been notable progress in the few years South Africa has formally adopted the GWMES. One of the achievements has been the development of the Programme of Action (PoA) system, a tool that serves as an information management system for Cabinet and the general public, and functions as a central repository for updated information on the implementation of the various government priorities and programmes (DPME, 2010). The creation of the PoA system and the subsequent emphasis of its role parallel to the outcomes-based approach has been an important tool in establishing a culture of reporting quarterly progress in government. However, since the creation of the system and its use, it is clear that there has been only slight improvement in the level of reporting on strategic aspects, such as the outcome or impact of implementation of priorities as envisaged. Though gradually moving towards this desired state, reporting in the 2009-2012 has largely been process- and operation-based. There are still no verification measures for the information provided in the PoA system by the departments, and the current control is only a requirement for the sector specialists through executive management authority within the DPME. It must sign off on input to the system, based on progress trends provided by departments whose outcome the specialists oversee (Presidency, 2012). At this stage it is a judgement call based on information at hand.

Another achievement is the management performance assessment tool (MPAT), a self-assessment tool for addressing a range of governance and management practices carried out annually by individual departments and overseen by the DPME. This tool is used to promote the management of performance monitoring in government, and is a promising 'self-regulatory' instrument for departments to track their own progress in the identified areas. It goes a long way to internalising the culture of M&E frameworks and systems within departments (DPME, 2012). By implication, it tends to assist with the overall coordination of the GWM&ES by engaging management to put in place enabling conditions and systems through which M&E implementation can occur.

Another achievement has been the publication of the annual Development Indicators report that shows early signs of outcomes-based performance orientation. The report groups available government performance information into broad themes for which the impact of government interventions is tracked over time (Engela & Ajam, 2010). The report indicates a trend analysis of what and how government has moved towards human development and improving the lives of South Africans with its resources.

5.1.4 THE SOUTH AFRICAN M&E SYSTEM IN ITS CURRENT FORMAT

There is no strong interface of the M&E value chain between planning, budget and outcomes in the current outcomes-based approach. Underlying problems inherent in coordination and process issues explain much of the weakness. The newly introduced outcomes approach in the South African M&E process, which overlays the existing performance management and budgeting framework, has a history of unilateralism (Kraak, 2013), and as a result the interface has largely been carried out retrospectively. Delivery partners or departments are requested to link their APPs to a relevant outcome, and the DPME assesses whether such linkage takes place, as opposed to the proactive approach wherein delivery partners will indicate what goes into the agreements (DPME, 2013). As indicated above, for the most part this linkage exercise is theoretical, since individual APPs do not subsequently inform the contents of service delivery agreements. However, there is a strong shift where service delivery agreements inform APPs.

The Medium Term Expenditure Committee (MTEC) budgeting process still follows a sectorial approach, where individual departments bid for additional resources, separate

from the other delivery partners responsible for the same outcome (National Treasury, 2013). Despite there being a responsibility for funding different activities within the single outcome, each delivery partner therefore should benefit from such extra allocation. Departments are expected to allocate sufficient resources to meet their respective activity within an outcome; however, preliminary evidence suggests that delivery partners use the situation as a cushioning factor for additional funding. In other words, delivery partners do not internalise their contributory activities to an outcome or make allocations to activities other than those they consider to be their core responsibility (National Treasury, 2012).

Through Delivery Agreements the new outcomes approach envisions that executive implementation forums will promote the linkage between planning and budgeting. The success and effectiveness of these forums relies mostly on budget reforms that will necessitate the institutionalise participation and alignment of activities in the budget process. The centres of government Presidency, National Treasury, DPSA and the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) will align their strategic planning and individual performance management guidelines to the 12 outcomes the as prescribed in the Outcomes Approach M&E Guide (The Presidency, 2012). Delivery partners must include commitments made in delivery agreements in their strategic plans, which the National Treasury uses as inputs into the budget process. The underlying assumption is that the treasuries will persuade delivery partners to allocate funding to agreed outcomes. However, programme budgets are determined independently within respective departments and spheres of government. Most importantly, when delivery agreements do not clearly assign activities among delivery partners, treasuries will experience difficulty ensuring or monitoring budgetary allocations (DPME, 2013). Operational and organisational structures do not always map budget programme structures, thus concealing the alleged linkage between inputs, outputs and outcomes. The realisation is that there is disjuncture between operational structures and budget programmes in the absence of identifiable expenditure programmes (i.e., conditional grants) associated with a particular outcome. Currently, a conditional grant is formed such that it follows a line-item approach, with a multi-level classification scheme that focuses primarily on inputs and spending at the macro level (National Treasury, 2012).

5.1.5 LESSONS FROM SA GWM&ES

South Africa's experience since the implementation of Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System holds important lessons for other countries undergoing the same transition. Formulating progressive policies, establishing forums and creating different institutions are not enough to harness the potential for effective, efficient government, or to ensure good coordination of the system and ultimately improve performance of public services. Government priorities, related policy aspirations and sectoral programmes need to be translated into focused strategies that deliberately align planning with budgeting in order to influence decisions within a long-term vision of a better performing state. Strategies and traditional M&E at sector level by government departments also need to be properly aligned with the broader objectives of government, in order to channel their energies into common and constructive directions of a performing government and improve the lives of the citizens. A broader lesson from South Africa's historic experience is that the processes of M&E systems which have now gained political support may not alone automatically improve the livelihoods of people. However, sufficient government resources are required to meet basic needs.

Implementation and coordination of the system may have to be organised such that the planning cycle accommodates this paradigm shift from all organs of state and so produce a performing state. Equally important is to determine local specific needs in order to plan and coordinate a GWMM&E system with a clear understanding of what is required at the ground level, while international practice has been adopted for more effective and performing government. This is in order to deal with the problem of persistently poor outcomes in education and a high level of joblessness which seem to be among the key drivers of poor public performance.

5.1.6 CONCLUSION

The introduction of the outcomes-based approach aims to contribute towards improved governance and to enhance the effectiveness of public sector institutions and organisations. Specifically, it aims to collect, analyse and disseminate information on the progress and impact of government programmes and so ensure transparency and accountability, promote improvements in service delivery, ensure compliance to statutory requirements,

and promote a learning culture within the public sector (Presidency, 2012). Although, government departments have adapted to this paradigm shift of result-based management, the concurrent function of some departments, for example, environment, health, education, and transport, is still unclear on how national departments report on sectoral performance. Reporting makes is difficult to achieve the objectives of the system, and it has been proven impossible to achieve optimal coordination and prevent duplication of activities between other core M&E stakeholders. There is too much parallel reporting which is not synergised, and a lack of common understanding of planning framework with various planning processes from different stakeholders that do not necessarily align with each other.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

This study has discussed the implications of coordination of the GWM&ES; the implication of a well-coordinated GWM&ES could strengthen interaction within and between various sectors of the public sector, thereby improving government performance that will ultimately result in enhanced service delivery through efficient use of government resources.

Monitoring and evaluation systems in the public sector as a performance framework generated interest in most countries around the world as one of the tools to improve public sector performance. Despite the variety of initiatives available to the public sector and good practices that have been experienced in various countries, little has been achieved in the field of implementation due to coordination challenges. Governments continue to experience pressure to improve their performance in order to gain public confidence. The focus on approaches for effectiveness and efficiency in the public sector to achieve value for money have been instrumental in organisational change, wherein the public sector work is no longer business as usual. The fundamental focus has been on the impact of the objectives in the public sector that contribute towards service delivery for citizens, and this has necessitated a fundamental shift in the way in which governments conducts business.

The purpose of the study is to contribute towards improved public service performance through the coordination of the GWM&ES. It has unpacked the complexity, whilst providing insight into what could be improved to make coordination of the systems yield better results for the public sector.

Despite massively increased public expenditure since 1994, significant levels of poverty, joblessness and inequality persist in South Africa (Goebel, 2012). This has partly been attributed to a number of weaknesses in the sector, such as the inadequate attention paid to the achievement of outcomes and impacts in the key priority areas identified by government (Davies, 2012). The key performance indicators in areas such as education and health have generally not been improved in line with increases in expenditure (Kraak, 2011). In 2009, the GWM&E policy framework was approved by Cabinet and tabled in Parliament, providing a basis for the outcomes approach to address these weaknesses

(Cloete, 2009). The subsequent establishment of the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in 2010 was a clear demonstration of the government's commitment to ensure that performance would have an impact on the lives of the people (Presidency, 2011).

As the public sector continues to look for ways to improve service delivery through improved performance, it is more important that they have the information necessary to inform those decisions (Angela & Ajam, 2010). One of the challenges currently faced by the public sector to deliver service effectively and efficiently is the lack of performance information to support implementation of the GWM&ES, i.e., lack of data to generate M&E information and reporting. The PoA system of the DPME attempts to respond to this issue, however the general lack of data and the credibility of available data to make informed decisions remains a challenge (Manala, 2010).

The DPME has a legislated evaluation process, through which programmes and projects of government are being evaluated for effectiveness, efficiency and impact on people's lives. However, in South Africa, in particular, theory for the evaluations precede practice in the sense that there are approved policies, framework work documents for implementation as well as guideline documents in place that do not tally with practice. Evaluations are conducted but few are actually completed, for example, the policy on evaluations, which were approved by Cabinet in November 2011. To date the DPME has commissioned a few impact and implementation evaluations which are aimed at improving the potential use and value of these evaluations (Presidency, 2012). Of the few evaluations completed to date the follow up on findings is minimal, which further undermines practice as well as the very premise and overall objectives of the GWM&ES.

Since the implementation of GWM&ES, the DPME has been faced with facilitation pressures in monitoring the performance of the public sector. Despite the government of South Africa having been able to clearly identify priorities, an increasing number of crosscutting issues (e.g., job creation, integration of administrative systems, capacity building programs and skills development) require structural adjustments as they are the cause of pressure on the facilitation as well as the coordination and integration of the implementation of GWM&ES within the public sector (Kraak, 2011). The integration of monitoring and evaluation information into the planning and budget decision-making process is also another factor contributing to challenges in coordinating the GWM&ES.

The literature review conducted for this study indicated various theories that are used to implement M&E Systems, namely coordination theory; systems theory; principal agent theory and implementation theory through 5C protocol. In the systems theory, the processes in the system converts inputs into outputs, wherein these outputs are related to objectives of the system and the outputs are actions taken by public institutions in solving the policy problems faced and meeting the needs and demands of the public (Wissink, 2004). The final part of the system is the feedback, which is needed for the system to adapt conversion processes and outputs to the needs of the environment as it evolves. Onre of the disadvantages with the systems model as identified by Cloete and Wissink (2004) are that when applied to the policymaking process it is similar to a production system, i.e., it fails to describe how the actual transformation of inputs into outputs takes place, therefore the systems approach tells very little about political change or why certain policies evolve as a response to it.

The coordination theory is the body of principles about how activities can be coordinated by actors working together harmoniously as well as cooperating with one another. It attempts to look at how an organisation coordinates the interests of different stakeholders and their interactions to achieve a particular common outcome. However, it could not answer all study questions. Systems theory (Niekerk, 2002) has benefited from the parallel emergence and rise to eminence of information theory, and their widespread application to originally branched into most of the humanities. The emergence of a performance information system in government to monitor progress was a clear indication of the government's commitment to ensure that it had an impact on the lives of the people. The theory will provide direction in order to understand approaches applied by the DPME to collect, handle and analyse data in an integrated and co-ordinated manner.

A further observation by Wissink (2004) is that various conceptual frameworks of systems approach and related areas have much to offer for the construction of a holistic methodology of perceptual inquiry. Through the outcomes-based approach, the DPME intends to measure various elements of the result chain, starting from inputs, budgets, activities, service delivery outputs and ultimately the outcomes (Presidency, 2009). In addition to measuring the impact, the outcomes-based approach will be used to provide direction in the implementation of various policies and assessment of their validity. The literature on the principal agent theory states that even if all the problems of principal-

agent relationship (where the DPME is the agent and cabinet is principal) could be solved by the performance contract between the two parties, however there is still a chain of difficulties with information asymmetry and the potential contrary selection, moral hazard and opportunism that arise from either party (Mackay, 2011). The principal agent theory problems include an inevitable conflict of interests and moral hazard that arises when a principal hires an agent to perform specific duties. The literature predicts that agents will find ways to act in their own interests, regardless of written contracts and whatever monitoring is put in place, posing a challenge for the coordination of the GWM&ES.

For the purpose of this study the implementation theory through the 5C protocol (*content, context, commitment, coalition and capacity*) was selected to form the basis for the discussion and the theoretical framework. In its principles and the outlined strength the implementation theory seems to be the mostly closely aligned to the South African scenario to date, whilst the M&E System is still maturing, illustrating most characteristics of it. For example, in *content*, when the DPME tries coordinating and integrating the implementation of GWM&ES the reports that the department produces should provide evidence as to whether the content of the system itself is being followed and pre-empted results are being achieved, following a particular framework or guideline. In *context*, the literature emphasised how GWM&ES impacts on the coordination process, primarily via the institutional corridor through which coordination must pass. It explored the support of clients and *coalitions* formed, with a general eagerness to improve and enhance systems and practices, essential for long-term *capacity* and capability development. In the long run this willingness will improve the coordination of the system and ultimately government performance. The implementation theory thus provided a more appropriate theoretical framework for the study.

The research approach used in this study is qualitative, the advantage in this instance being that that it generated rich detailed data that illustrated the participants' perspectives vividly, and provided a context for understanding the behaviour of different stakeholders. Qualitative data is usually in the form of words rather than numbers and has long been the staple of some fields in the social sciences, such as public administration and organisational studies. Words are organised into incidents or stories and have a concrete, vivid and meaningful flavour that often proves far more convincing and personal to a reader than pages of summarised numbers (Webb & Auriacombe, 2006). Various research

methods were used in this study, connected to the problem statement and goal of research, i.e., in-depth interviews and document analysis, and data presentation through diagrams. These were applicable for the study as they indicated how the role of the DPME coordination and integration, information usability and evaluation of results better explained the experienced challenges to the overall coordination of the GWM&ES.

The findings have identified that theoretically there is contextual understanding of M&E in South Africa but practice is lagging behind (Presidency, 2012), even though several departmental structures and other organisations are still not conforming to set objectives and targets, as outlined in the GWM&ES. In most instances, planning is not integrated into the M&E system to the extent that one could argue planning in South Africa is far more formalised and internalised than M&E. This is causing a disjuncture in performance information for strategic decision making that could otherwise improve service delivery. The disjuncture is further coupled with the challenge of limited formal strategies for communication within units in the same department or between various departments, but the implementation forums responsible for coordinating the sector performance information are gradually improving this status and will hopefully strengthen the GWMES in the future.

Generally, it will seem that M&E systems in South Africa have developed in a haphazard manner while trying to adhere to the objectives of what is supposed to be a 'coordinated and integration' GWM&ES. The M&E system needs to be aligned to existing country-specific circumstances, because when new reforms are superimposed on existing processes without making adjustments, the result is often confusion, duplication and a low take-up rate (World Bank, 2012). There are building blocks that seek to align government strategic planning and budgeting systems, the deepened theoretical understanding of the GWM&E and what it intends to achieve, but the lagging practice leads to inadequacies of the M&E system. Despite these trends, monitoring and evaluation is increasingly seen as an important area of management that is generally acknowledged as strategically important and useful for tracking performance (Robinson, 2012).

Despite reforms by the DPME there has not been much success in taking informed decisions based on the usability and credibility of the available information, hence the DPME has created data forums which aim to give special attention to data needs of M&E frameworks for each sector and custodianship of information (Ijoema, 2011). However,

data forums are not without their own challenges as they still find it difficult to share information, because it is bought and presented in different versions of similar data sets from various stakeholders. Integration of data for information management is therefore a challenge, with inaccurate data released to the public and ultimately making it difficult to influence decision-making. This translates into inappropriate delivery of services and/or government performance. The DPME does not have a tracking system to validate the information provided by the departments, instead playing an agent role and mediating between parliament and line departments when reporting to parliament, still with an over-reliance on secondary data as provided by the former. Ijoema, (2011) states that usually the information collected from departments does not provide prominence on actual progress and performance in order to be able to assess deviations from targets and for analysis purposes. There is also the question of information overload that the departments need to report on (Draai, 2011), however, departments can only make effective use of a certain amount of feedback information at one time. Ministers and senior officials often have to make decisions quickly, and against an already complex political and managerial background.

In principle the conceptualisation of the GWM&ES system is consistent with international practice. A number of government departments have progressed in the development of their M&E systems in the sector specific clusters, though the difference that the GWM&E system has brought to the entire M&E system in South Africa is unclear. The GWM&ES has an advantage since there has been an extensive review of the existing M&E system. The system has been structured around the existing planning framework; however it has not been well integrated by the implementing spheres of government, because the lack of contextual understanding makes it impossible for DPME and coordinating departments to coordinate the work of government. The GWM&ES will be sustainable if there is continuous capacity building and recognition of the importance of positioning M&E within a broader context of government planning.

It has been proven that challenges that hinder optimal coordination and duplication of activities between M&E stakeholders are inevitable (Draai, 2012), not only resulting in duplication of resources allocated to the various activities but also creating very confusing and contradictory messaging of government's performance. It this distorts the servives and extent to which the government is able to deliver them. While M&E should not be

considered as an afterthought it must be part of the initial conception of policies, programmes, projects and other interventions if duplication of activities between core M&E stakeholders is to be prevented.

Finally, the introduction of outcomes-oriented M&E, as led by the DPME, in a decentralised government system requires numerous practical considerations relating to rules, leadership, and accountability and most importantly design (Goebel, 2012). Strong political commitment is required to drive culture of performance across government spheres and produce an effective and efficient state.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS TO RE-STRENGTHEN THE COORDINATION OF THE GWM&ES

In order to obtain well-coordinated GWM&ES departments need to adopt the M&E guideline provided by centres of government that stipulates the alignment of planning process i.e.:

- programmes and projects for delivery agreement partners needs to be evaluated on the basis of their contributions in the overall implementation of the delivery agreements and outcomes and ensure that improvement plans are constantly monitored.

- prior the signing of the delivery agreement by ministers, the delivery agreement partners have to comply with the requirements of the M&E guideline in order to ensure that there is full achievement of the delivery agreements targets.

- the centres of government that are in the forefront in the M&E practice National Treasury and the DPME need to introduce budget process reforms necessary for reconciling the collective responsibility for delivery agreement outcomes In order to ensure that there is a budget allocation and resources for departments to carry out delivery agreement commitments.

- There has to be a process of realigning the budget process along service delivery agreements such that MTEC hearings are conducted at an outcome level, where applicable, rather than the current sectoral, individual institutional approach this will ensure that overall allocation of government resources are effective and efficient

across all programmes depending on what is prioritised. It also makes for manageable coordination as realignment would be holistic based on the needs for key services.

- Since there is no direct linkage of resource allocation to realistic, measurable and limited performance targets per outcome. There is a need to conduct programme expenditure reviews at the end of each delivery target term, to evaluate efficiency and impact of programmes, as well as the need to incentivise collaboration between delivery agreements partners to reward successful achievement of delivery outcomes rather than specific, individual, department-specific programme objectives.

In this instance the DPME needs to develop legislative tools that will give it a legislative mandate and clarify roles amongst centres of government institutions. Prior to the implementation there will be a need to conduct a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA), as there are already acts, regulations and policies that require government departments to account for their use of resources and performance. The clarity on this legislation should be to enforce monitoring and evaluation practices that will ensure an improved consideration of the M&E in the entire planning processes. This will result in better coordination and management of the entire government work and anticipated outcome results. There is a need to refine the delivery agreements in order to set the measurable indicators defined for outputs, with targets.

Since there is a problem of data validation and management of information there have to be data sources specified and availability clarified. Key activities need to be logically connected to outputs and indicators that describe the best-known way to achieve outputs. Usually, milestones for key activities are defined, enabling proper programming and project planning. There have to be implications for aligning departmental Strategic and Annual Performance Plans understood and reflected. There has to be an improved functionality of Implementation Forums and quality of reporting without creating a burden. Furthermore, focus should be on a limited set of strategic indicators and reporting on both activities and any changes to strategic indicators.

There is a need to have a central information collection mechanism that ensures co-ordinating centres of government do not impose duplicates and burdensome requests for information. This will bring a clear message on what is required from line departments and this dialogue needs to be concluded with centres of government. There will be certainty of

the results and it will provide common understanding of what is expected. There is a need to put M&E systems in place as a structured and organised system. As indicated the Cabinet should continue to have an oversight of protocols to be adhered to. There is need for Cabinet briefing notes and comments to be taken seriously, and there has to be strategic agenda of Cabinet. Structured and strategic partnership with civil society will serve as the platform for exercising accountability.

There has to be greater community engagement and awareness of the existence of the DPME and other national departments and their contribution towards improved government performance. Monitoring the implementation of the NDP, delivery agreements will be aligned and ultimately improvements are seen in service delivery. Further discussion with Accountant General on the rationale of what is being audited is required to eliminate the actions to be taken by departments, so avoiding negative audit reports. Policy areas need to focus on by DPME and/or NT prior the joint conversation with other departments. The broader aim is to improve quality of performance information that will result in improved performance of government.

There has to be a performance dialogue with line departments to avoid different messages from reporting centres of government. Programme evaluation should be looked at for cutting budget purposes and economic conditions. There has to be discussion with the National Treasury on what budget analysis needs to be carried out with the outcomes manager of the DPME (e.g., training). Discussion on whether there needs to be a tight link between budget allocation and planning should focus on service delivery outcomes, the various performance of departments and anticipated spin-offs. There needs to be an improvement in the departmental sub-systems by promoting and supporting M&E in existing situations. There is a need to improve the culture of M&E practices in departments where there are none and streamline and align existing reporting structures. It may also be necessary to review organisational structures and responsibilities, bureaucratic rules and controls, how various administrative tasks are carried out, current management practices, the delivery of public services, and modes of accountability.

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