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Assessing the Implementation of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems in the National Treasury

by

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in 50% fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Management in the field of Governance (Public Sector Monitoring and Evaluation).

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ABSTRACT

This research study was driven and motivated by the need for continuous public service reform while maintaining good governance and enhanced service delivery in public service institutions. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems are one of the important instruments used to assess progress made in public service reforms and good governance in the public service. A thorough study was conducted to assess the implementation of M&E in the National Treasury to establish challenges and lessons learned.

The literature review process conducted was focused on determining relevant theoretical and legislative frameworks as well as policy and frameworks relevant to public sector reforms, governance and M&E. A qualitative research design method was chosen for this study, using a case study to collect data. The unit of analysis was the National Treasury, and a non-probability sampling approach was used to target key informants from the Strategic Planning Monitoring & Evaluation Unit and other employees from different Divisions of the National Treasury. The primary research data was sourced through a series of semi-structured interviews. Content analysis of key M&E relevant government documents was conducted to understand the M&E.

There have been a number of outcomes derived from the National Treasury M&E system. The empirical evidence-based planning, budgeting and management of implementation, which provides for further improvements on transparency, accountability, learning and value for money is included. There are a number of recommendations that National Treasury M&E should consider. For example, the introduction of M&E champions in each Division to enhance visibility in the implementation of M&E. These champions will provide connection and support to Divisions on all matters of M&E. Divisions should also consider contract on M&E as part of their strategic and operational plans.

It should be noted that effective monitoring and evaluation arrangements provide opportunities for reliably tracking and assessing how the National Treasury is performing and which are the causes and effects. This therefore provides a basis as to why we need to examine National Treasury's monitoring and evaluation system. To conduct this

assessment, the study posed two important questions. The researcher reviewed literature relating to the established history and description of the National Treasury. The researcher further conducted research problem analysis to understand the history and description of monitoring and evaluation. The researcher has further reviewed the literature on the monitoring and evaluation systems of developed and developing countries in Africa and internationally. From the reviewed literature, the researcher developed a theoretical and conceptual framework to guide the research approach in collecting, processing, and analysis of the research results. The researcher developed an explanatory framework that assists in interpreting the findings.

Some of the findings pointed to the following issues. It was not clear from the reports whether the National Treasury lacked the capacity and skills for monitoring and evaluation on the repeated audit opinions as raised by Auditor General or whether it lacked defined structures, processes, that also include roles and responsibilities for monitoring and evaluation; or lacked support and buy-in from management and support staff. It is crucial that the National Treasury M&E system generates high quality performance information on quarterly and annual periods to provide decision makers with critical information. This information should also be provided to public, and other stakeholders with accurate and reliable performance information on reforms and good governance of the organisation. The research concluded that, given the establishment and institutional arrangement elements that were assessed and found to be in place and functional, the National Treasury M&E system has the potential to be sustainable if the recommendations provided in this study are considered and implemented. There were no clear indications of specific challenges that were encountered during implementation and there was a clear process followed in conducting the M&E within the organisation which can be used as lessons by other organisations. The Researcher concluded by providing some recommendations to strengthen the National Treasury’s monitoring and evaluation system.

DECLARATION

I Latani Nicolas Sithagathaga (student no.1829804) hereby declare that this report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in the field of Governance (Public Sector Monitoring and Evaluation) in University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

___signed_____ _____22/11/2021_____

L.N SITHAGATHAGA **DATE**

DEDICATIONS

This study is dedicated to the two most important people in my life. To my late Grandmother, Vho-Masindi Nekhumbe-Phaswana, mukololo wa ha Tshigovho, Mutanga, Sane. She has raised me with the greatest wisdom, guidance and motivation that I still honour. May her soul rest in peace.

To my mother, Rosinah Shonisani Nekhumbe; this one goes to you Khomba ya Vhakwevho, vhantsu milomo, vha ha Phaswana, Nekhumbe, Tshaphithi, I respect and admire you for raising me as a single parent to this far and I will forever be indebted to you.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	-	African National Congress
APR	-	Annual performance Report
AG		Auditor General
AGSA	-	Auditor General South Africa
APP	-	Annual Performance Plan
COGTA		Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
DPSA		Department of Public Service and Administration
DPME	-	Department of Monitoring and Evaluation
GWMEF	-	The Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
GWM&E	-	Government-wide monitoring and evaluation
KZN		Kwazulu-Natal
M&E	-	Monitoring and Evaluation
NT	-	National Treasury
NDP		National Development Plan
NSG		National School of Governance
NPM	-	The New Public Management
UNAIDS		Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
SPM&E	-	Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
SAMEA	-	South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association
SMART	-	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound
STATS		Statistics South Africa
SDG	-	Sustainable Development Goals
PFM	-	Public Finance Management
PSC	-	Public Service Commission
UN	-	United Nations

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

There is a widely accepted view across the world that results-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems, transparency and accountability should be entrenched in the modern government system. This has arisen due to the need for citizens to exercise their democratic rights by holding government accountable, transparent and to provide effective and efficient services to their citizens.

These pressures, amongst others, come from developmental institutions, donor organisations, non-governmental organisations, the media, citizens' groups and civil society. These pressures have caused some governments to adopt strategies that are geared towards measuring and improving their performance in service delivery. One of the strategies being employed by both developed and developing countries to realise this is to implement M&E systems in their governments (Gorgens & Kusek, 2009).

A preliminary literature review discovered that effective M&E systems contribute towards the accomplishment of the public service reforms agenda and achieving good governance in public service. This study assessed the implementation of M&E by observing the requirements of M&E system processes as well as the requirements to institutionalisation of the M&E system. This study adopted a qualitative research approach, using a case study method to assess National Treasury's implementation of M&E using Kusek, and Rists' ten step model as a good practice model of an M&E system (Kusek, and Rist , 2004). Study data was obtained through semi-structured interviews with targeted employees that work for the National Treasury. The methodologies and research design will be discussed in detail in the next chapters of this study. Qualitative data analysis was conducted to appreciate the current realities around the implementation of M&E systems and to propose recommendations for further improvement.

The research found that the participants interviewed could neither understand nor know whether a readiness assessment was done during the implementation of the M&E system within the National Treasury. The participants have, however, indicated that the National Treasury implemented the other nine steps that are undertaken in implementing the M&E system in the National Treasury. A detailed assessment was conducted to understand the implementation of the M&E system in the public service by using the National Treasury as a case study. The National Treasury was chosen as the case study due to its strategic nature as the department that funds all the key government priorities and having the role and implications for M&E across the South African public sector, given the centrality of the National Treasury in the planning and public finance management process across government.

1.2 National Treasury in context

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa mandates the National Treasury to ensure transparency, accountability, and sound financial controls in the management of public finance (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). The National Treasury plays a critical role in promoting the government's fiscal policy framework, coordination of macroeconomic policy and intergovernmental financial relations, management of the budget preparation process, facilitation of the division of revenue that provides for an equitable distribution of nationally raised revenue between national government, provincial government, local government and state-owned entities (Public Finance Management Act, 1999).

Due to the massive resources that the National Treasury manages and transfers in the budget planning process to national departments, provinces, public entities, and local government, as well as parliamentary oversight as the primary measure, M&E has become one of the most important means of ensuring that the intended outcomes through allocated resources are achieved, and value is derived from such resources. The National Treasury, through its guidelines and regulations, has introduced the use of output targets and performance reporting against these in departmental strategic plans, annual performance plans and annual reports. These regulations are supported by various

guidelines on the formulation of performance targets and reporting against these, such as the framework for managing programme performance information. These guidelines are results-based and require departments to identify activities leading to outputs, outcomes and, finally, impacts on its citizens. It is therefore important for this type of study to be conducted in the National Treasury as one of the most critical organisation that sit at strategic position to enable service delivery and value to it's the citizen, and this can be done through effectiveness implementation of the M&E system.

1.2.1 Monitoring and Evaluation in South Africa

In the context of this study, it is important to first look at the evolution of M&E practice in the South African public sector. This study will briefly discuss the M&E experiences of other countries, nationally and internationally, to gain more understanding into the history and development of monitoring and evaluation. Görgens and Kusek (2009) suggest that M&E is not new to African governments. It dates back to the ancient Egyptians who regularly monitored their livestock and grain production. At the present time, governments still monitor their expenditures and revenues, services rendered, and products produced by continuously comparing actuals with plans. In developed countries like the United States of America and Canada, M&E practice is more developed compared to African countries.

Globally, M&E started back in the late 1970s, when the government-wide Evaluation Policy and the Government Performance and Results Act was introduced in Canada and the United States of America, respectively (Lahey, 2010; Brass, 2012). Although many African countries are increasingly developing their M&E systems, some countries are still struggling with implementation while others have advanced M&E systems in place. Zimbabwe has not yet developed a monitoring and evaluation framework (United Nations Development Group, 2010), while countries like Uganda, South Africa, Mali, and Benin have more developed monitoring and evaluation systems in place (Porter and Goldman, 2013). The Malawian government has been working on the development of its inclusive M&E system since 2002 (Kumwenda and Latib, 2013).

Kusek and Rist (2004) acknowledge that there are different models for implementing M&E systems, but argued that, to design and implement an effective M&E system, it is important to consider their proposed ten steps. These ten steps have been endorsed by the World Bank and applied successfully to all World Bank-funded projects worldwide (Kusek & Rist, 2004). This is because the ten steps are an important guide for those who are involved in the designing, implementing, and maintaining of an M&E system for an organisation, government, programme or project. This study attempts to shed a light on the central question of this research which is to assess whether the ten steps for designing an M&E system were followed during implementation of M&E in the National Treasury, and what have been the lessons and barriers encountered.

A number of authors (Kusek and Rist, 2004; Mackay, 2006; World Bank, 2000) argue that the emphasis on result-based M&E systems is driven by the need to promote transparency and accountability, in that way improving financial and non-financial performance of governments. A number of developing countries, which include South Africa and the Organization for Economic Cooperation Development (OECD) countries have taken a political stance to measure outcomes to improve performance and accountability (Brushett, 1998; Kusek and Rist, 2004; Mackay, 2006; World Bank, 2000).

1.2.2 Brief summary of the ten steps of implementing effective M&E

1. **Conducting readiness assessment**. This is a critical key step to kickstart the implementation of an M&E system. Without this step being carried out comprehensively, it may lead to a number of complications that appear during implementation. This step will be critical in determining the capacity and readiness of the organisation. It will assist in the identification of possible barriers that might be encountered and stakeholders that may resist the introduction of this system. This step further involves institutional situational assessment and consideration of the following elements:

Clarity of roles and responsibilities,indicating who does what and to whom. These are all important to clarify the roles of the political champion(s), administrative leadership champion(s) and internal and external stakeholders as well as their motives (answering the why question). This needs to be clarified upfront. Also important are institutional capacity (beyond the organisation), financial, people, technological, and relationship level with the capacity to monitor and evaluate the functionality of the system itself.

Kusek and Rist (2004) highlighted that the method of designing, building and sustaining an M&E system is more political than technical in nature. It is important to acknowledge the importance of political support and leadership from start to finish in this process. Failure to acknowledge the political support will render the rest of the process in this endeavour futile. This step lays the foundation and basis for the M&E system.

2. **Agreeing on outcome to monitor and indicators**. This step will address key requirements of developing outcomes which will, in turn, drive the resource and activities allocations process. During the process of identification of the outcomes, it is important that this should be developed from the strategic objective or goals of the organisation. The following questions are key in this process: the question of the strategic priorities, the indication about the anticipated outcomes. These are critical questions that all organisations, governments, and interested parties are asking of themselves and others. Every country has fixed budgetary resources and must set priorities. It is equally important to have a consultative and participatory process involving all main stakeholders in developing the outcomes. The following process is key in developing the outcomes: identification of stakeholders: concerns of stakeholders, translating of major concerns of stakeholders, translating problems into statements of possible outcome improvements, disaggregation to capture key desired outcomes and developing a strategy that will be used to assess how a government or organisation will achieve these outcomes.

3. **Agreeing on indicators**. Because there is a need for outcomes to be monitored and assessed, there is a need to develop indicators that are key actions in building an

M&E system. This is the driver for data collection, analysis and reporting. It is equally important to consider methodological and political interests in creating the appropriate indicators.

Requirements that are key in this third step include: (a) noting that the agreed objectives and outcomes are a political process; (b) participation of the interested parties and (c) considering the impact on national goals. This step gives effect to outcomes.

Kusek and Rist (2004) have suggested that key characteristics of the indicators should, amongst others, be clear (precise and unambiguous), relevant and aligned to the outcomes, service with value for money (economic value), sufficiently comprehensive to be useful for the purpose). The indictors should also be measurable. It is important to create a reasonable confidence established at this level to proceed to the next step of collecting the baseline data. It is important to note that indicators are required for all levels of a results-based M&E system. It is important to consider the principle of "**CREAM**" for good performance indicators.

- **Clear** - precise and unambiguous.
- **Relevant** - appropriate to the subject at hand.
- **Economic** - available at a reasonable cost.
- **Adequate** - provides a sufficient basis to assess performance.
- **Monitorable** - amenable to independent validation.

It is equally important at this level to identify qualitative (extent of, a quality of and level of) and quantitative (numbers, mean, median) indicators.

4. **Gathering baseline data on indicators**. Establishing baseline dada on indicators is the third critical part of the M&E implementation. Baselines are derived from outcomes and indicators. This process includes describing and measuring the condition being addressed by the outcomes. This is performed at the beginning and it defines the starting point. Data is central to the design, building and sustaining of an M&E system.

The key consideration in selecting indicators is the indication of the availability of baseline data, which is critical in allowing performance to be tracked in relation to the baseline.

Validity factor is also one of the key considerations in data collection. Using the proper data collection method is critical in ensuring the planning and monitoring for results will be reliable and valid. There are eight key questions that are often asked during the development of baseline information. These include, but are not limited to, the following. What are the data sources? What would be the methods of data collection? Who ls going to collect the data? How often will data be collected? What are the costs and difficulties in collection of data? Who will conduct the process of data analysis? Who will be responsible for reporting on the analysed data? Who will be the ultimate user of the data?

5. **Planning for improvements and setting target**. After baseline data are collected, the next step requires the setting of realistic targets. It is equally important at this point to note that some of the targets are complex, long term and not quickly achievable. It is important to develop mid and long-term targets and decide on how much progress is required toward an output that is required every interval. The political nature of the process also comes into play. Setting realistic targets involves the recognition that most desired outcomes are longer term, complex, and not quickly achieved. Morra, Imas, and Rist (2009) posit that the baseline can be described as the situation conducted before a programme or activity begins. It is the starting point of results monitoring. The critical target is what the situation is expected to be at the end of a programme or activity. A thorough analysis of the key factors influencing a development problem complements the development of baseline data and target setting. Since planning for the setting of targets is the last step on the implementation of the monitoring for results framework. The next step becomes the most critical step as it the beginning of implementing the M&E for results.

6. **Monitoring for results**. At this point, after selection of the targets and completing the performance-based framework process, the next step will be to track the M&E information. This process can be defined as a process to track both the

implementation of M&E that includes inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impact. This process requires the critical administrative and institutional task of establishing data collection, data analysis and reporting. At this step, there is a need to decide who will be responsible for the following activities: establishing a quality control process, establishing timelines and costs, working through who will be responsible for what and who will disseminate the information and analysis of the key steps. The aim of this step is to clarify the challenge of ownership, management, maintenance and credibility.

It is important to note that there are two types of monitoring that happen at this point. The first is the tracking of the results at the input point, activity level and output point and the second one tracks the results at the outcome and impact levels. De Coning, 2015 posits that monitoring for results should be collected on a quarterly basis so that it can be useful in compiling the annual evaluations in a timely manner (De Coning, 2015).

7. **Evaluation information to support decision making**. This step focuses on the contribution provided by evaluative information and analysis towards the outcomes and impact evaluation. An M&E system that is entrenched in the policy decision-making process provides for governments to use the opportunities of learning, deciding and allocating of resources. As for this point of view, it can be suggested that having an M&E system is a critical necessity for strategic decision making. Evaluation information can, amongst other uses, be used as the basis for making resource allocations, for re-evaluation of the cause of problem, identification of emerging problems, supporting decision making on competing or best alternatives, supporting public service reforms and innovation, building consensus on the cause of a problem and responses to it, and using the evaluation information to answer frequently asked management questions. It is also important to address the timing of the evaluation information and the divergence between planned and actual performance.

   It is noted that different kinds of evaluations are suitable for answering different kinds of questions. There is no single template that fits all evaluation to put against the variety of questions. There are seven types of evaluation that can be considered,

depending of each case. These include performance logic chain assessment, pre-implementation assessment, process implementation evaluation, rapid appraisal, case study, impact evaluation and meta evaluation.

8. **Analyse and reporting findings**. This step focuses specifically on reporting findings and addressing a number of issues that include: (a) the process of uses of monitoring and evaluation findings; (b) understanding the audiences and targeting the appropriate information to those audiences; (c) the process of presentation of performance data in a clear and comprehensible format; and (d) what happens if performance is not as expected. An M&E report containing the findings of the relevant M&E findings is one of the key products of an M&E system. This step is critical in determining what findings are reported to whom, and what format and with what frequency and reporting period. There are three reports that can be produced. These are the overview report, which deals with qualitative reporting performance progress, exceptional reporting that deals with matters outside the expected scope and qualitative reporting

   Some of the uses of M&E can play different roles in different cases. This includes demonstrating accountability, using the evidence to educate as part of learning, to explore and investigate to answer ‘what’ and ‘why’ questions, documenting and creating institutional memory, involving stakeholders and promoting the understanding of projects, programmes and policies. It is equally important, at this level, to be able to identify the target audience for the findings (who, in what format, by when, who will prepare, who will deliver). It is important to report results data in comparison to earlier data and to the baseline.

9. **Using the M&E findings**. It has been emphasised that M&E information is ineffective if it cannot be used as the basis for decision making in any organisation. The M&E findings should not only be generated and filed in cabinets, but the M&E information should be made available to the users in an appropriate manner so that they can take the information into account in making decisions. There are several areas where this information can be useful that include, amongst others, enhancing accountability, preparation of budget, taking decisions, deciding of strategic and operational

improvements, improvement of service delivery, and enhancing the institutional image. The timing of the release of the findings is key and should be aligned to the decision-making process cycle.

10. **Sustaining M&E systems**. In the context of this study, sustainability is described as the continuation of value including the intended results derived from the established M&E system. It is important to recognise the long-term process involved in ensuring the longevity and benefit of an M&E system. The following are key criteria for sustaining an M&E system: demand, structure, trustworthy and credible information, incentives, capacity and accountability. An assessment of sustainability involves looking at social, economic, political, and institutional conditions required for the survival of the system.

    Kusek and Rist (2014) suggested that the method of sustaining an M&E system should be continuous and is a commitment for the long term. This requires particular attention to six keycomponents which are: (1) demand, which is created by ensuring that steps 1 to 9 have been methodically followed and that the system responds to real needs and is part of a long-term strategy; (2) clear definition of roles and responsibilities so that all stakeholders within the organisation recognise the value they need to carry to sustain the system in supporting of the institution; (3) provision of reliable and dependable information (4) the process of accountability in relation to the institution and all its parts to its stakeholders acknowledged to address any deviations; (5) the availability of capacity required to sustain the system, which should have been assessed in step 1, which will include human resources, financial, and political aspects. It is important to implement the system by starting small and scaling it up to ensure that there is comprehensive technical capacity to sustain the system; and (6) the inclusion of incentives and disincentives that are critical components to encourage desired performance towards sustaining the system. The process of disincentives would serve to deter people working against the agreed governance and values system (Kusek and Rist, 2004).

The M&E system will have to respond and adapt to changes in legislative and organisational priorities. Despite these larger political and environmental changes, maintaining indicator stability over time is critically important.

1.3 Research statement

The pressure on the South African government to deliver services to the population started immediately post 1994 when the African National Congress (ANC) won the first democratic elections. Amongst others, the public sector reform initiatives introduced by the Public Service, and especially by the National Treasury, has emphasised efficiency in the economy and the effectiveness of its financial resources and systems. The M&E system in the public service has, however, remained fragmented because it was undertaken occasionally by line function departments only for the purposes of the annual departmental reports process. The indicators and targets are set to measure the attainment of those objectives.

While there have been a large range of public service reforms and governance initiatives that were instituted between 1994 and 2019, some progress has been made in the implementation of public service reforms and governance of M&E systems, There is, however, still a growing recognition by senior managers of departments that monitoring and evaluation still needs to be done to even begin to understand the causes of slow public service reforms.

National Treasury still faces many challenges. Amongst others, monitoring performance against public goods and services objectives in the public sector. The Minister of Finance is required to determine fiscal policy for the government and, as such, the National Treasury must continuously monitor a range of government economic indicators. It is also required to evaluate whether the public goods and services expenditure has achieved value for money. These became reasons that the National Treasury has been identified as the good proxy for M&E at the national government level (Public Service Commiison, 2008).

1.4 Research question

Some of the key challenges found on this research problem are weak institutional capacity, limited resources and budgetary allocations for monitoring & evaluation, weak linkage between planning, budgeting and monitoring & evaluation, weak demand for and utilisation of M&E results and, finally, poor data quality, data gaps and inconsistencies are among the significant contributing factors (Callistus and Clinton, 2016). The outsider from the public service should care about this research because the National Treasury M&E is the key organisation in facilitating the implementation of the National Development Plan's key objectives through the development of sector and outcome-specific medium-term plans and delivery agreements, and monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of these plans. This will greatly assist in eradicating poverty, unemployment and inequality, which are the key problems facing all South Africans. Social interest with no M&E knowledge can learn from the study that effective M&E implementation is critical for building a strong, global, evidence-based assessment of a diverse range of interventions. At the global level, regardless of whether or not you are in M&E, this is a tool for identifying and documenting programmes and approaches and tracking progress toward common indicators across related projects.

1.5 Research Questions

1. To what extent does the National Treasury's M&E system adhere to Kusek and Rist's (2004) ten steps for effective M&E system during its implementation?
2. What have been the barriers encountered during its implementation?

1.6 Significance of the study

The South African public sector is still experiencing challenges in implementing M&E effectively at all levels of government. The study will assess whether the National

Treasury has used all the ten steps as presented by Kusek and Rist (2004), and explore the barriers and lessons encountered during implementation of M&E in the National Treasury. This study presents an in-depth understanding of aspects of the National Treasury's M&E system and further highlights areas for improvement that require additional focus in terms of M&E capacities, skills, support and methodical assistance. It also provides some valuable recommendations on how to strengthen and support the National Treasury's M&E system and to improve the quality of its performance information. The study will further contribute to literature on M&E.

1.7 Research purpose

After two decades into the new democracy in South Africa, there are signs of citizens' despair regarding the inability of government to provide the social services that the majority of the people waited for. This has replaced the excitement that marked the dawn of the new democracy. While there has been some democratic improvement as compared with pre-1994 government, poverty, unemployment, inequality, poor health services, shortage of housing, and falling education standards, still face the current government (Nengwekhulu, 2009).

South Africa has a number of institutions with legal and constitutional mandates for M&E function. There has been a major shift of emphasis on M&E in South Africa since 2009, partially because of a political need to improve public service reforms and service delivery. It must be noted that, despite these encouraging developments, crucial challenges remain in place in ensuring coherent reform initiatives conducted by central government departments. M&E has played an important role in improving administrative data quality and the establishment of M&E as a core role of management. As a result, M&E has developed into a significant practice in guiding the public service transformation and good governance practice in the South African public service.

The purpose of this study builds on this scoping research exercise to investigate the reforms of the South Africa public service through the implementation of the M&E practices in guiding such reforms.

1.8 Research objective

The aim and objectives of this study are to identify barriers to the implementation of the M&E system in the National Treasury and harvest the lessons learned. The three objectives that have been identified below are consistent with the research question subsection. They are to:

- Assess the process of establishing an M&E system in National Treasury against the ten steps of implementing an effective M&E system;
- Assess the barriers encountered during implementation of the M&E system; and
- Present the results of the study and recommendations based on the findings of the study.

1.9 Structure of the research report

This research report consists of six chapters:

- **Chapter 1**. This chapter provides the introduction and background to the study on Assessing the Implementation of M&E Systems in the National Treasury. This chapter locates the research study within the context of the broader international and national M&E context. It further outlines the methodology that has been used to conduct the research. This chapter also contributes to the argument that, to have a successful implementation, it is important to consider the ten steps for effective implementation of the M&E.

- **Chapter 2**. This chapter provides a literature review on the M&E, public sector reforms, good governance and the theoretical/conceptual framework and knowledge settings that are relevant for this study. This chapter also includes a section that discusses the conceptual framework that guided the study. The purpose of this discussion is to locate the relevance of the theories and concepts used as departure points for the research.
- **Chapter 3**. This chapter describes the research methodology. Amongst others, this provides for research methods, techniques and procedures that have been used. The

research methods and techniques are the most appropriate methods for assessing the implementation of M&E in the public service. The chapter will cover data collection methods for primary data collection, secondary sources, content analysis and data validation methods embarked upon in the collection, analysis and validation of the study.

- **Chapter 4**. This chapter provides for the presentation, analysis and discussion of findings for the implementation of M&E in the National Treasury. The chapter will contribute to presenting the outcome of the research on assessing the implementation of M&E in the public service and also provide the discussions after analysis.
- **Chapter 5**. This chapter discusses research findings in similarity to the research question. This chapter links the findings of the research with the research question. This chapter will be a synthesis of the analysis to the findings raised in Chapter 4 and covers the impact and implications of the findings.
- **Chapter 6**. This chapter offers a summary, conclusions and recommendations revealed by the findings on the research study. The chapter will end with concluding remarks for the study focusing on the study's main findings.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an introduction, overview, and background to the research. It provides the context within the national and International setting as well as providing the problem statement, research purpose statement, research questions and the significance of this research on Assessing the Implementation of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems in the National Treasury. It has also offered a brief definition of the concepts used in the study and, lastly, provided the outline of the chapters in the report.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out to achieve four objectives: (1) to detail the evaluation intervention, (2) to identify the research gap, (3) to develop a theoretical framework for interpreting the research findings, and (4) to propose a conceptual framework for informing how the research will be undertaken.

This chapter reviews literature on monitoring and evaluation and further presents the surveyed literature focusing on the conceptual and theoretical framework in explaining the difference between the two concepts of monitoring and evaluation and their relationship to each other. These components provide better understanding of what an effective M&E system should be. The literature will also cover the benefits and what can be derived from the implementation of an effective M&E system.

The chapter further discusses the proposed successful M&E system, as suggested by Angela and Ajam (2010), as well as the contribution of M&E to public sector reforms and good Governance. The definition of M&E is discussed in this chapter in relation to the purposes of M&E types, processes, approaches and theoretical debates as well as considerations on the transformational use of monitoring and evaluation.

The literature sources that were consulted included books, research reports, academic journal articles and previous dissertations in this discourse. This section will further cover the M&E global context, the Africa Context, the South African context, the evolution of the government-wide monitoring and evaluation (GWM&E) system in South Africa, post and current M&E studies, and the conceptual framework.

2.2. The history and description of monitoring and evaluation

Wang and Spitze (2005) have argued that the development of monitoring and evaluation was initially based on the premise of better understanding the status, which is supported by worldwide consciousness of the need for monitoring and evaluation systems that emanate from the unhappiness and strikes by communities resulting from the non-delivery of government services to these communities. The process of monitoring and evaluation can assist with assessing the performance of government services and also determining their effectiveness and ensuring accountability in the use of public funds.

Görgens and Kusek (2009) posit that monitoring and evaluation is a powerful tool that can assist in improving performance and achieving results. Monitoring and evaluation should produce reliable and timely information that can be used to evaluate policies, set priorities, plan, and monitor the effectiveness and impacts of interventions.

TABLE 1: THE DEFINITIONS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring	Evaluation
✓ Monitoring is the systematic process of collecting, analysing and using information to track a programme's progress toward reaching its objectives and to guide management decisions.	✓ Evaluation is the systematic assessment of the design, implementation or results of an initiative for the purposes of learning or decision making
✓ A continuous process which has a start and end in a project or programme format	✓ It is done periodically and has specific milestones like the start, middle and end of the programme, or even after the project has closed off.
✓ Focus on keeping track, analysis, oversight and looking at the progress	✓ Focus on in depth analysis; comparison of the planned vs actual achievements.
✓ More focus in on activities, outcomes and implementation	✓ More focus is on the outputs level and considers the results against the planned impact.
✓ Answers the question about what results were achieved from the activities.	✓ Answers why and how results were achieved with greater focus on the

	development of theories and models for change.

2.2.1 Global Context

Developed countries, such as Canada, the United States of America (USA) and Chile are at an advanced stage of M&E implementation. Canada introduced its first government-wide Evaluation Policy in 1977 (Lahey, 2010), while the USA enacted the Government Performance and Results Act in 1993, which was later improved as the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010. The Canadian Evaluation Policy is a model upon which all public sector evaluations are still customised. In the USA, it is a statutory requirement that government and most agencies set goals, measure performance and submit plans and reports to Congress for potential use. Budgetary constraints forced the government of Australia to look for alternative ways to achieve value for money in their interventions.

For the Australian government to achieve measures for all elements of the results chain, they develop indicators for each element. By developing indicators for all the elements of the results chain, they do not focus only on input, activities and outputs, but also measure the outcomes and impacts of an intervention. Several developing countries around the world are facing the challenge to balance the needs of its citizens with the limited resources available. The system of results-based M&E systems assist governments to channel financial resources to where they are mostly needed and could achieve high impacts.

Mackay (2007) suggested that a better known success story concerning M&E in the public sector in Chile. Chile is seen as one of the best examples of an international country that has been practicing M&E, and is regarded as having the best performing M&E. The World Bank has suggested that the Chile M&E system is among the most impressive that has produced high quality M&E work and its intensive utilisation of the M&E findings and information produced by the system. The World Bank also found that the evaluation results for Chile are used by the finance ministry in decision making, especially in

resource allocation and for positive contribution to the management and efficiency improvement in the sector ministries and agencies. The research also found that the opportunity for using the information in strategic planning, policy development and management & control also remain underutilised .

The literature review has found key themes that are necessary in building an effective M&E system. These include the development of clear Indicators, the use of M&E findings for decision making and deriving value for money for implementing an M&E system.

2.2.2 African Context

In the case of Africa, many states are increasingly realising the importance of the implementation of M&E systems to monitor, track progress, and evaluate interventions implemented by them or by international development agencies. Although Odhiambo (2010) posits that evaluation approaches in Africa have been objectively oriented and are more appropriate to donor needs than meeting local demands, there are attempts to align monitoring systems to emerging local demands. African countries differ in the advancement of their M&E systems. On one hand, some countries are still struggling with the implementation of their M&E systems, On the other, others have advanced M&E systems. The M&E system for the Republic of Uganda has been structured differently from those of the Republic of Chile and Australia. Their system was advocated by three different organs of state: the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development; the Office of the President; and the Office of the Prime Minister. What was also critical in Uganda was the involvement of donors and partners in other elements of their M&E system.

The World Bank (2008) suggests that Mali is also an African country that has successfully implemented M&E. The planning process for the M&E system in Mali involves participants from different stakeholders (civil society, donors, regional departments) this vital research report reached a common agreement on the outcome to be achieved. The Government

of Mali puts more emphasis on evidence-based information in their regular monitoring of an evaluation.

Political commitment plays a significant role in institutionalising the M&E system in the public sector. This is to ensure sustainability. The key aspect of success of Mali's M&E system lies in its strength of partnerships and coordination.

It was clear from the resources reviewed that the development of M&E in Africa is still fragmented, with other countries already having implemented the system while others, like Zimbabwe, are still at an infant stage. What has been identified as key in all these countries is the fact that these African countries consider the partnerships for coordination and political commitment in developing an evidence-based M&E system.

The study outlined the implementation of the M&E systems of Australia, USA, Chile, Mali and Uganda. This has provided interesting viewpoints on practices of an M&E system in both developed and developing countries. The conclusion that can be drawn is that there is no single best approach to an M&E system. Each approach is highly diverse and depends on several factors within a country. There are similar suggestions both from Africa and globally for a need to use the M&E findings to inform decision making and inclusivity with partners like politicians in implementing the M&E system.

The next section will cover the progress made in development and implementation of an M&E system in the South African government.

2.3.3 The South African M&E context

The first two terms of the South African democratic government were concerned with the reforms of changing from an apartheid state to a democratic state. Government has further concentrated on the co-ordination of government systems and services, respectively. The third term of democratic government was more focused on the implementation of developmental goals (Presidency, 2005). Monitoring and evaluation was identified as one of the ways by which the South African government intends to measure the effectiveness of its development interventions. Section 195 of the South

African Constitution requires that public administration must be accountable by providing timely, accessible and accurate information to the public (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). In compliance to the Constitution, the National Treasury developed and published various frameworks for managing performance information in the public sector (National Treasury, 2007 and 2010). Until 2005, M&E in South Africa was not systematically implemented and was incoherent. Only individual staff performance evaluations were institutionalised (Cloete, 2009). The first attempt by the South African government to institutionalise monitoring and evaluation in the public sector was in 2009 when the former President MR Jacob Zuma showed his resolve to improve public sector perfomance and service delivery with the appointment of Mr Collins Chabane as the Ministewr of Perfomance , Monitoring and Evaluation. In doing so he generated a great deal of interest in evaluation communities around the world. It is a groundbreaking appointment because SA became one of few countries in the world to have a monitoring and evaluation Minister with a seat in the Cabinet.

In July 2005, the Cabinet of the Republic of South Africa adopted a strategy to establish a government-wide monitoring and evaluation System for a period of two years (Presidency, 2005). Although the introduction of a government-wide monitoring and evaluation system in South Africa and the subsequent establishment of the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association in 2006 were well received (Ijeoma, 2010), the delay in its implementation prompted the Cabinet to introduce the Policy Framework for the Government-wide Monitoring & Evaluation (GWM&E) (Cloete, 2009). The objective of the Policy Framework for the GWM&E system was to provide an integrated, encompassing framework of M&E principles, practices and standards to be used throughout government. The policy framework was planning to provide more clarity on implementation challenges and to accelerate the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system in the public sector. One of the weaknesses of the framework was that provincial and local governments had not yet implemented the system due to serious capacity constraints. There were communication gaps among different departments about the nature, goals, content, processes and timeframes of the GWM&E system.

In the 2009/2010 financial year, the national government began to focus on the strengthening of the governance process with respect to deliberate planning and rigorous performance monitoring, reporting and evaluation in all spheres of government. The resulting base framework of measuring performance using outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs was established as a result of these efforts. The national outcome approach is now currently used as the driver for the M&E agenda in South Africa and it forms the foundation against which the national treasury M&E framework is designed. In the State of the Nation Address in 2009, President Zuma stated that "the work of departments will be measured by outcomes developed through our performance M&E system" he also announced that the government is in the process of building a performance-oriented state, which will improve planning as well as performance monitoring and evaluation(President Zuma state of nation address, 2009,p.10)..

The South Africa M&E system broadly identified that the SA M&E has been built on measures that asses the results of outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs, and the fact that the government has adopted the Government-wide M&E framework to be applied to all levels of government: national, provincial and local.

2.3.4 Review of past and current studies on monitoring and evaluations

This section provides a review of past and current research on M&E systems to identify the research gap on this subject matter and only literature that is linked to the research questions was identified. The literature was linked to the challenges that are encountered in implementing the M&E system. This has included research from global and African literature sources.

Holvoet (2008) conducted a study to look at the politics of M&E under changing aid modalities: towards a conceptual framework and selected findings from Rwanda's health sector. The study used a case study of Rwanda to illustrate how 'politics' influence various M&E dimensions. It also argued that there are ways in which 'smart' M&E might be used

as an entry point for advancing public debate and the opening up of closed political environments. The study adopted a qualitative research methodology, a secondary literature study and primary data collection. Primary data has been collected during various field missions over the past months using semi-structured interviews with a wide range of individuals from the M&E Unit, the study found that politics are part and parcel of M&E and this has long been acknowledged in the context of projects and programme evaluation. With the move towards the sectoral and national level, stakeholders and interests are multiplied and politics thus becomes all the more present. Therefore, it is evident that the way in which politics influences M&E in the contemporary development paradigm should be high on the research agenda. While there have recently been some contributions that have pointed to the importance of taking a broader perspective on M&E, so far there has been no research that explicitly identifies and explores the linkages between politics and M&E under the changing aid modalities.

Naidoo (2012) wrote an article focusing on Evaluating Barriers to Effective Implementation of Project Monitoring and Evaluation in the Ghanaian Construction Industry. The purpose of the article was to reflect on some of the M&E challenges in the South African public sector, and drew on experience at the Department of Land Affairs. In conclusion the journal found that, prior to the process of improving governance, there must be sufficient readiness and receptiveness for M&E (Kusek & Rist, 2004; Rist, 2000), The M&E function is not easy to institutionalise and requires time and resources (Mackay, 2006). The issue of reporting protocols creates another tension for M&E units, which seek to disseminate information broadly. Some of the tension found was matters concerning to whom or what must M&E be loyal, how does the location of the M&E impact on its effectiveness. The donor funders provide technical support to the M&E. It is important for evaluators in these contexts to know what is possible, and recognise that providing findings into management systems takes time. It is important that evaluators be well prepared, capable, and recognise that M&E is a highly complex and challenging but worthwhile activity.

Toscano (2013) wrote a journal that explored the history and challenges of monitoring and evaluation in international nongovernmental organisations complemented by intern

experience at Save the Children United State of America. The purpose of the study was to examine the M&E system of a large international non-profit organisation, Save the Children. The research method that was used for data collection for this study was participant observation and key M&E system stakeholder interviews, primary document analysis including a mapping exercise of Save the Children's internal website, SaveNet, and its central M&E system files, plus independent secondary research into current state-of-the art M&E practices. The study adopted a case study research design of an international non-profit organisation, Save the Children. Some of the key findings include that the practice of development evaluation is still maturing and evolving. For more than 50 years, the OECD has been working with governments to "understand what drives economic, social and environmental change" and promote "policies that will improve the economic and social wellbeing of people around the world.

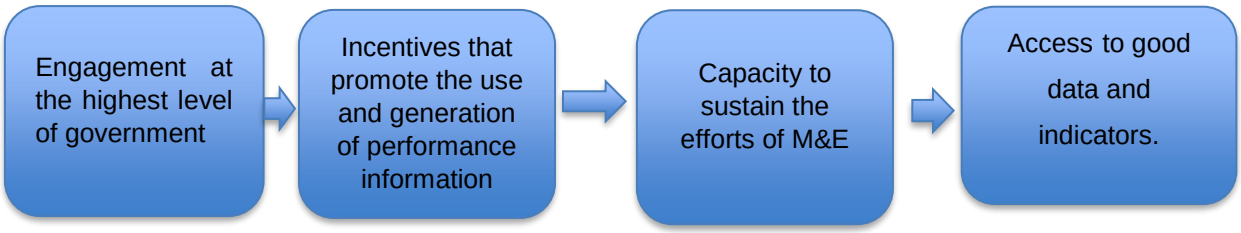
The analysis showed that Save the Children's evaluation policies and procedures were thoroughly documented and grounded in international standards. Research confirmed what M&E personnel believed to be the case: that there is a limited skill level for country level personnel to adequately follow the procedures. Furthermore, there was no uniform storage of evaluation reports. Evaluation plan summaries were catalogued as expected, but those products were of limited use. At the time, technical resources and tools were not well organised and were not generally accessible by country office level personnel who need them the most. Recommendations include adding administrative personnel and expanding the functionality of the central M&E unit to develop metrics to rate the M&E system, which would increase executive oversight of the M&E system. This could incorporate an audit of the M&E system using a peer review assessment method developed by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Monitoring takes place when a program is implemented, and evaluation at the end of a project. Impact evaluation is a method used at the results stage of projects to analyze differences in outcomes, with and without the programme. M&E results can be fed into budget decision making through careful planning and implementation during the policy

cycle. Some countries are more advanced than others in this process as it requires sustained engagement at the highest level of government.

In conclusion, the World Bank suggests the following as the challenges facing M&E implementation. It has been suggested that it depends on the country context and stage of development. However, in general, we can identify four main challenges or requirements that must be met for M&E programmes to be successful.

FIGURE 1: REQUIREMENTS THAT MUST BE MET FOR M&E TO BE SUCCESSFUL



Having good information is critical for evidence-based policy. It is necessary not just to collect general information, but also tailored information. An example could be school reports that allow parents to track the children's and schools' performance. This information could ultimately influence the allocation of resources to these schools.

South Africa, for example, has a strong mandate from the President and the Presidency Office to manage for results. There are some performance agreements between the president and the ministries to meet predefined targets in eight outcomes from the national development plan.

In conclusion, the information generated by M&E programmes and systems is critical for empowering citizens to hold their government accountable.

Valadez & Bamberger (2013) wrote a book about the monitoring and evaluation of social programmes in developing countries. The purpose of the book was to provide a comprehensive review of the available techniques for monitoring and evaluating social programmes. Specifically, the book discusses: (a) methods of evaluating social and economic projects; (b) methods for participatory and rapid assessment; (c) quasi-experimental designs; and (d) the relationship between qualitative and quantitative evaluation. The authors also cover new developments in: (a) qualitative evaluation; (b) stakeholder analysis; (c) sustainability analysis; and (c) the politics of evaluation.

While paying special attention to the organisation of monitoring and evaluation at the project, sectoral, and national levels, this book also reviews cost-effective methods of estimating a project's impact, identifies potential beneficiaries and their information needs, and discusses the role of nongovernmental organisations in evaluating social development. Some of the findings in relation to these challenges are as follows:

- **Problems with the current approaches to M&E**. Most M&E projects have been criticized for their inefficiency and limited utility. One of the reasons is that, in some cases, the M&E information arrives too late, does not answer the right questions, or is too costly to collect. Attention is narrowly focused on certain quantitative and financial aspects of the projects, and most of the information refers only to the period of physical implementation.
- **Organisational and political problems**. Some of the organisational and political problems arise when the M&E functions are located in an inappropriate agency; when functions are assigned to different agencies and are thus difficult to coordinate; or when coordination problems restrict the flow of information between the central agency and the intended users.
- **Managerial problems**. Some studies suggested that the M&E managerial problems include some of these not providing the information required or that information is produced too late or in a form that is not easily understood. However, the key managerial problems cover the four critical issues, accountability, lack of confidence, lack of reward associated with sponsoring evaluation and lack of time required to produce results.
- **Problems with focus (focus on inputs instead of outputs)**. M&E systems usually focus on the monitoring of project implementation, and few studies have been conducted to determine how programmes operate, how they are sustained, and whether they are able to deliver their intended impacts. Thus, although a great deal of information is collected on whether programmes are implemented on time and within budgets, little is known about whether the massive social and economic development programmes actually achieve their intended objectives and produce the benefits or changes for which they were designed.

- **Methodological problems**. Some of the methodological problems identified include the monophonic−method bias that arises from relying on a single or small number of data collection methods. Another methodological problem is the preference for quantitative methods and the tendency to ignore the many valuable qualitative methods as well as a preference for static comparisons between points in time rather than analyses of processes of change. Yet another is excessive reliance on computers and the lack of concern for the constraints that computerization imposes on the kinds of data collected, or on the quality and validity of the data.

Organisations face many challenges relating to the effective implementation of M&E systems that need to be recognised and revised. Literature has highlighted some of these (Mackay, 2007; Kusek & Rist, 2004). Interventions would produce better results with integrated systems and as well integration into a bigger system used by an organisation. Other system challenges in implementing effective M&E relate to:

TABLE 2: CHALLENGES FACED IN IMPLEMENTING AN EFFECTIVE M&E SYSTEM

Challenges in implementing an effective M&E system	
✓ organisations competing priorities	✓ outdated duplicative
✓ limited resources available for collection and use of data	✓ or irrelevant indicators
✓ inadequate training of data collection personnel	✓ lack of proper reporting
✓ lack of timely feedback of usefulness of data	✓ poor documentation of services and excessively tedious reporting requirements.

Mthethwa & Jili (2016) conducted a study to that looked at challenges in implementing M&E in the case of the Mfolozi Municipality. The purpose of the study was to look at the case of Mfolozi municipality to identify and analyse challenges that hamper successful M&E implementation. It also discusses the legal framework of local government and the state of local government in South Africa. The article concludes by recommending remedial actions to address the challenges identified. The study followed a qualitative

research design to explore, describe and interpret the perceptions of key role-players involved in M&E system implementation. It used desktop analyses, gathering data from different documents such as the Mfolozi municipality's IDP and annual reports.

The research was exploratory in nature, because the main aim of the study was to examine and to gain a better understanding of the challenges that arise in the implementation of M&E, particularly in the Mfolozi municipality. Furthermore, descriptive research was used to describe the challenges in implementing an M&E system.
The study found that the main challenge faced by the Mfolozi municipality is that the knowledge, skills and competence required for those aspiring and performing duties related to M&E of public projects is limited. The Mfolozi municipality needs to attract and retain highly skilled workers from an increasingly diverse and mobile labour market, but has, thus far, mostly focused on developing community halls, small playgrounds and crèches. It is moving from a housing-only approach to a more holistic development of human settlements, which includes the provision of social and economic infrastructure. Inadequate finance is a perennial challenge facing project management in local governments, including the Mfolozi municipality. Many projects are abandoned in local government due to inadequate funds. The study drew the following conclusions: To adhere to its statutory and regulatory obligations, the local sphere of government in South Africa must develop a comprehensive M&E system. M&E thus becomes a way of considering all projects undertaken by a municipality. To ensure continuous M&E, the development of such a comprehensive system is, however, not without challenges and municipalities should consider key elements to be incorporated in their particular system.

Nxumalo (2016) conducted a study that looks at the limits and possibilities of monitoring and evaluation: a case study of the KwaZulu-Natal department of co-operative governance and traditional affairs. The purpose of the study was to attempt to shed light on the limits and possibilities of M&E by means of exploring how M&E is conceptualised and used in the KwaZulu Natal Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs KZN (CoGTA). The study adopted the qualitative research methodology. The qualitative methodology is appropriate for this study because the study explores the

processes followed in conducting evaluations as well as the participants' understanding of M&E, its purposes and uses. The study also used the case study research design. Case study has been used to describe the processes, behaviour, activities and experiences of a practitioners or organisation.

The case study has revealed that the cooperation between the M&E cycle, which is made up of planning, monitoring and evaluation, is a key guarantor of enacting findings. Whilst recently improving the quality of its oversight, this cycle has generally not been effective in a practical manner in helping to support the large body of oversight work undertaken in the government departments and the country. None of these observations should undermine the research that proves that M&E has possibilities to lead to effective programme implementation and a level of good governance. The conceptual framework for this study was looking at relevant terms that inform the study, including public policy, monitoring and evaluation, implementation theory, theory of change as well as organisational theory. The chapter attempted to present a theoretical and conceptual link between the concepts that government or public organisations implementing public policy try to use to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of these organisations.

Iddi & Nuhu (2018) conducted a study that looked at challenges and opportunities for community participation in the monitoring and evaluation of government projects in case of TASAF II, Bagamoyo District, Tanzania. The purpose of the article was to examine the monitoring and evaluation of government projects in Tanzania. It discusses the challenges and opportunities emanating from community participation, drawing examples from the 15 sub-projects selected in TASAF II national project in Bagamoyo District, Tanzania. The study adopted a qualitative data approach and made use of primary data, using a questionnaire to collect data. The study was aimed at discovering whether there were any challenges of involving community in M&E of TASAF II project.

Community participation is the involvement of the community in a project to solve their own problems. Participation can involve processes such as information sharing, consultation, debate and empowerment. Local people can participate during needs assessment, planning, mobilisation, training and implementation of the programmes or

project monitoring and evaluation. Community participation is not for everyone in an identifiable community, since indigenous elites already have a strong voice in decision making. It is rather for the poor majority with little access to resources and power.

The study revealed that, despite the TASAF policy of empowering communities to demand, implement and monitor services, community participation in M&E still faced many challenges such as cost in terms of time and money, complexity of analysis and lack of analysis. It was also noted that, despite facing these challenges, the opportunities for community participation in the M&E of TASAF II sub-projects cannot be ignored. The study, therefore, recommends that the government, through TASAF, should have comprehensive monitoring and evaluation to ensure that local communities are more active in decision making. In addition, more funds should be injected to communities for empowering and capacity building through training and technical support pertaining to monitoring and evaluation.

The study concludes that, despite the benefits realised through community participation in M&E of TASAF project phase II, M&E was inadequately implemented. The communities had inadequate knowledge of M&E. There was inadequate sharing of information between TASAF and the communities and among sub-project beneficiaries themselves. Moreover, communities did not participate in designing the TASAF project phase II and inappropriate training was provided to communities. Time was a major challenge for communities to participate fully in M&E.

All the reviewed studies mentioned adopted a qualitative method and data collection was case study designs. Therefore, they cannot be generalisable to other similar situations. However, on the positive side, some of the studies explicitly mentioned that it is important that evaluators be well prepared, be capable, and recognise that M&E is a highly complex and challenging, but worthwhile, activity. The majority of these studies applied a conceptual framework to interpret the results of their findings. The majority of these studies are related specifically to the South African public sector monitoring and evaluation situation and they provide a wealth of information to examine the effectiveness

of the National Treasury's monitoring and evaluation system. These studies identify both factors that can limit the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems and factors that can improve the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems.

The table below, adopted from Kusek and Rist (2004), demonstrates the complementary roles that monitoring and evaluation play in effective M&E systems. Evaluation can be explained as a systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, programme, or policy, including its design, implementation, and result. Monitoring is described as routine, ongoing, internal activity, used to collect information on a programme's activities, outputs, and outcomes so as to track its performance (Morra, Imas & Rist, 2009). Implicit in the descriptions of monitoring and evaluation is the fact that the two, although mutually exclusive, can complement each other. Monitoring data are important for understanding and interpreting programmatic implications of impact evaluation. The process of evaluation can be defined as a systematic judgement or an assessment as to whether or not a programme has accomplished its goals.

The GWM&E is the main policy framework for monitoring and evaluation in the South Africa public sector. The Cabinet of the Republic of South Africa issued it in 2004. It was to promote good governance, enhancing the effectiveness of public institutions and to support the Framework. The GWMEF is an integrated and results-driven framework that explains M&E principles, practices and standards. It aims to respond to the requirements of government's programmes, policies and projects, that generate information to inform the decision-making processes and helps to promote accountability. This framework is further intended to assist managers that interact at different levels and in different occupations to undertake their monitoring and evaluation functions effectively.

A GWM&E system serves as a coordination framework for other sectors including national, and provincial systems. It is administered by key methods principles, values, and practices that integrate government information to inform the results-based programme development. Some of the key goals of this framework include the following: (a) enhanced institutional quality of performance analysis and information, (b) improved

institutional performance management information, and (c) improved institutional M&E capacity (The Presidency, 2007).

This framework consists of seven sets of M&E principles that are described as follows (Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation, (The Presidency, 2007):

- Improved governance, accountability, participation, transparency, and inclusion.
- Rights-based and the Bill of Rights
- Development oriented, institutionally and locally, which contribute towards orientation, performance, service delivery, learning, management, human resource and impact awareness
- Considers ethics, integrity, respect, confidentiality and fair reporting
- M&E should be user-orientated, defining and meeting expectations and supporting utilisation
- Methodologically comprehensive, consistent indicators, appropriateness, evidence-based, and triangulated
- Operationally effective, cost effective, and systemic

These principles are incorporated into the various sectors that include provincial M&E systems, which should be set up for each level of government.

In 2008, the Presidency suggested that, to institutionalise M&E, an institution would need to consider a range of intervention measures to build capacity. This should include the recruitment of appropriate specialist skills, not just generic M&E skills but also individuals with appropriate sector expertise Training of existing staff should include both line management and M&E specialists. Training modalities can include external formal qualifications from higher education institutions as well as in-house customised courses, on-the-job training and mentoring. There is also a need for structured skills transfer from academics, consultants and other external providers as well as the creation of internal M&E forums and participants in external learning networks.

The challenge of designing and building a results-based M&E system in a developing country is a difficult and complicated one and not to be underestimated. Organisations need good information systems so that they can monitor their own performance, and also the demand for and ownership of M&E systems (Jody & Ray, 2004). The failure to achieve M&E success in Africa is mostly due to the lack of recognition for its demand which, in turn, is rooted in the lack of an evaluation culture and poor performance orientation in the public sector. Weak political will, lack of both government cooperation and institutional capacity are also contributing factors (Worldbank, 2020). These are some of the challenges and barriers experienced in the effective implementation of M&E systems (Jody & Ray, 2004). Developing countries are still at the stage where they are struggling with establishing an effective institution that requires public service reforms. All these competing priorities, that include establishing an M&E system, pose many challenges. The importance of developing the required capacity in the workforce to drive M&E is also a challenge that needs to be addressed (Jody & Ray, 2004).

Gosling (2003) argued that an M&E system should be designed for the purpose of meeting specific needs, yet these will vary according to the nature and aims of the work. The system itself can then be monitored and evaluated to see whether or not it is meeting its objectives and could be adjusted if and when necessary. The most important requirement to be addressed is to answer the following key M&E questions: What is it? Why do we need it? Who will use it? The next important part of the M&E is the indicators that will help answer the questions as to what information should be gathered, how it should be collected and analysed and how the results should be presented and used. Also important are organisational issues such as who does what and how much it will cost (Gosling, 2003).

An important part of a successful M&E system strategy is the need for a dedicated government ministry that will be proficient in overseeing the M&E systems in terms of the system’s, design, development and management. This will give the institutional lead to the M&E system close to the centre of a government. There is a need for an M&E system to be continuously audited to ensure that reliable and credible updated information is

produced. This will require the system to be audited to ensure the quality of the data. The capacity building for officials to be able to use the system is also important from the beginning of the implementation process as the measure of its success.

Most successful M&E systems are due to purposeful strategic planning and the incubation of ideas, which should include various activities over a long period (Engela and Ajam, 2010). It is important to note that stability in the political environment is also a critical factor for a successful, results-based M&E system that is more likely to yield results slowly, although there can be quick wins as well. The countries from which these lessons have been drawn have built their systems over a long period. This includes countries like Australia and Chile that were able to create and consolidate M&E systems effectively in terms of the quality, quantity, and utilisation of evaluations within four to five years. In Colombia's case, noticeable progress has not been realised until after about a decade (Boyle, 2005).

It can be argued that M&E accountability has a positive influence in the good governance in the public service sector. The process of facilitating administration and tracing growth within the system demands advanced management tools that are supported through M&E (Mackay, 2007). The extensive information that is gathered through M&E is often used as basis for plans, laying the foundation for future policies and planned actions by programme managers for stakeholders. The process of decision making, corrections and revision of plans and resource allocations pertaining to the activities can be systematically organised based on the M&E of the decisions of management, thereby promoting good governance through improved efficiency, and effectiveness. Relevance throughout policy reforms is paramount (Agere, 2000).

M&E decisions regarding management promote good governance if they are both technically sound and politically relevant. This could be introduced via public arguments among policymakers and societal stakeholders throughout the process (Segone, 2008). For good governance to be sustained, it is argued that it is crucially important to lay a stable foundation built on achieving evidence-based policymaking, management, and accountability. This process assists in prioritising core concerns based on the demands

of citizens and other stakeholders while formulating policies, making budget decisions, and planning national strategies in a cost-effective manner. However, (Woodhill, 2000) argued that the implementation of M&E as a part of the decision-making process is more important than the formal requirements for M&E itself. He suggested that the real accomplishments of M&E are not the reporting or facts but are based on its high quality of decision making. This, in turn, is based on the quality of the information secured and its feasibility within existing managerial procedures. A contrasting view has been put forward by (Tuckerman, 2007). He argued that the propensity for M&E to be used in decision making is higher when administrators and policymakers hold M&E in high regard, and ultimately create a conducive atmosphere for good governance.

The contribution of M&E towards promoting good governance relies on the evidence-based decisions in the implementation of development interventions. These are generated through the rigorous and cost-effective approaches of collecting and using quality data on programme performance, results, and effects. This includes the proper management of budgets and personnel as well as legal and regulatory compliance with processes and procedures. Deviation from any of the standards invites criticism. The public sector, in general, is required to monitor and evaluate its activities. There is a general dissatisfaction from government on the way departments are implementing M&E systems. The questions of interest in this study are: how is the National Treasury's M&E system is being implemented and to assess whether the ten steps were used as the basis for its design and implementation. The development of M&E in South Africa is based on, amongst other things, the contribution towards public service reforms, improving good governance, human rights norms and service delivery. M&E is a powerful management tool that can assist government institutions to improve the tasks that are undertaken by government to achieve the country's vision and mission.

The evidence that the government needs to make decisions, use in implementing policy and hold officials accountable is derived from a results-based performance feedback system to ensure that it is possible to make more relevant strategic and operational decisions (Mackay, 2007).

The GWM&E system was predicted as a system in which each department would have its own autonomous functional monitoring system, from which the necessary information could be extracted. An important point is that existing M&E capacities and programmes in line function departments should, as far as possible, be retained, linked and co-ordinated within the M&E framework (Engela & Ajam, 2010). These developments of M&E highlight a robust process aimed at promoting and fostering good governance in the public service. The integrated M&E system will promote the process of evidence-based thinking, which aspires to improve the quality of government decision making and the quality of implementation, outcomes and impacts in South Africa. It is evident that the area of governance is where the most recent growth in M&E has occurred (Mouton, 2010). Although the international donor community introduced programme evaluation in South Africa, it was not until this practice was accepted by the public sector and institutionalised through policy mechanisms and legislative mandates that a culture of M&E has emerged.

TABLE 3: THE INSTITUTIONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE M&E PROCESS

Whose role?	What responsibility?
✓ Legislators and councilors	✓ As representatives elected by South Africa's voters, Government and all its structures are accountable to legislatures and municipal councils. Legislators and councilors must exercise consistent and informed oversight of the bodies accountable to them, using insight gained from M&E systems.
✓ Executive authorities	✓ Should use M&E findings in the political oversight of institutional performance and for ensuring that desired outcomes and impacts are achieved. Also provide the bodies to whom they are accountable with detailed regular reports on the institutions under their control
✓ Accounting officers and accounting authorities	✓ Accountable for the frequency and quality of M&E information and the integrity of the systems responsible for its production and use. They need to ensure that prompt managerial action is taken in relation to M&E findings

✓ Programme managers, other line managers and officials	✓ Establishing and maintaining M&E systems, especially collecting, capturing, verifying and using data and information.
✓ Designated M&E units	✓ Ensuring the implementation of M&E strategies by providing expertise and support as well acting as a service hub for related initiatives.

The Department of monitoring and ealuation has further suggest that, to effectively implement the M&E in public service, the following road map should be considered:

- The implementation plan should be clearly linked with prior public sector reform initiatives.
- The GWM&E framework should incorporate and consolidate existing M&E initiatives in the three spheres, aligning them to the overall aims of government.
- The roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder should be clearly defined and related to their mandate.
- The implementation plan should adopt a differentiated approach across spheres and sectors,
- The administrative burden of compliance across government should be minimised. Implementation milestones must be linked to existing capacity and the ability to build capacity over the medium term.
- Where M&E systems are supported by IT solutions, the emphasis will be on systems integration and ease of data interchange.
- Monitoring and the development and enforcement of statistical standards are important pre-conditions for effective evaluation.

Another school of thoughts in the implementation of M&E is from Gorgens and Kusek (2009). They argue that an effective M&E system should consist of twelve components that are also grouped into three basic components. These include relating to people, partnerships and planning components; the component relating to the collection, collation and verification of data; and the component relating to the use of M&E information for decision making. The UNAIDS (2004) report also argues that an M&E system is composed of five basic components. These are the M&E unit, indicators, data collection, clear goals, analysis and data dissemination.

The researcher opted for Kusek and Rists' ten steps for implementing an effective results-based monitoring and evaluation system because of its design focus on the public sector management and the fact that it recognise the evolution of M&E and moves away from the traditional M&E implementation based approach and focus towards new result base approaches. (Kusek and Rist, 2004). They have further urgeued that in order to build the the M&E that respond to the results in an organisation's strategy, the 10 steps process would be more apropriate. This system is key in formulating outcomes and goals, selecting outcome indicators, baseline information on the current condition, setting targets to reach and deadlines, collecting data to assess whether the targets are being met as well as analysing and reporting the results. The ten steps are now described in detail.

The goal of the 10 steps is to help prepare you to plan, design, and implement a results-based M&E system within your organization.These steps typically involve setting targets at national, programme and project levels, and then tracking progress as activities are carried out, which is a new strategic approach to implementing effective M&E. The ten steps are not strictly sequential and some steps may be implemented simultaneously and cycle throughout the programme's life. What is paramount in this step is that to introduce an effective results-based M&E system requires the organisation to change its culture, enhancing accountability, transparency, performance and knowledge.

The key to an effective M&E system lies in its implementation strategies. It has been argued that it is important to follow the ten steps of implementing effective M&E systems which are listed as follows.

The first step is to make sure that readiness assessment is conducted to assess whether the organisation is ready to implement such a system. If it is found that the organisation is not ready for such a system, then it is not advisable until such barriers are removed. If the assessment finds that the organisation is ready for implementation, the second step will be to design an M&E system and agree on the outcome to monitor and evaluate. The third step will be to select the indicators where the outcomes would be monitored. The

fourth step will be to develop the baseline data on the identified indicators that will indicate where the organisation is at a particular time. The fifth step will be to plan for the targets that the organisation is to achieve. The sixth step will be to operationalise the monitoring of the results. The seventh step focuses on the intervention by evaluations for decision making. The eighth step concentrates on compiling the report on findings. Step nine will be the application and use of these findings. The tenth, and last, step is as important as the all other steps but its focus lies on sustaining the M&E system within the organisation.

2.3.5 Summary of ten steps

TABLE 4: SUMMARY OF THE TEN STEPS FOR BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM AS PROPOSED BY KUSEK & RIST (2004)

Steps	How will the step be used	How will we know whether the steps are adhered to	Summary
1. Conducting a readiness assessment.	A questionnaire will be developed to collect readiness information on the factor structure, reliability and validity of the M&E implementation.	The outcome of the readiness assessment will indicate whether or not this step has been adhered to, and this will provide valuable information as to the implementation should proceed.	This is the step that is performed to determine the capacity and willingness of the government and its development partners to construct a results-based M&E system. This assessment will address issues such as the presence or absence of M&E champions in the organisation, the barriers to building a system, who will own the system, and who will resist the implementation of the system. In summary, this process will provide understanding of the complexities of the country or sector context.
2. Agreeing on outcomes to monitor and evaluate.	This will be the basis where the Indictors are to be developed and linked.	There should be a visible evidence and an outcome that will be achieved, this is the long-term goal	The second step builds from the readiness assessment and concentrates on addressing the key requirements of developing and agreeing on key strategic outcomes that will focus and drive the resource

		to be attained by such intervention.	allocation and activities of the government. These outcomes should be directly derived and linked from the strategic priorities (goals) of the country.
3. Developing key indicators to monitor outcomes	These will be used to collect data for analysis	There should be clear, documented, measurable Indicators that meet the **SMART** principle (*Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound*)	The third step after agreeing on outcomes will be to assess the degree to which the outcomes are being achieved. This will require the development of key indicators. Indicator development is a core activity in building an M&E system and drives all subsequent data collection, analysis, and reporting.
4. Gathering baseline data on indicators.	The data collected before implementation on the targets will be used as the base upon which targets are to be developed.	Without baseline data collected before targets are set, it will be almost impossible to set realistic and achievable targets.	The baseline data will provide the measurement of progress towards outcomes. This fourth step of developing baseline data begins with the description and measurement of initial conditions being addressed by the outcomes. The process of collecting baseline data will essentially include taking the first measurements of the indicators to be used as a baseline.

5. Planning for improvements: setting realistic targets.	These long and short-term targets will be used for the purpose of monitoring the targets set.	The availability of documented, planned, realistic short and long-term targets will be the basis for monitoring the results.	The fifth step recognises that most outcomes are long term, complex, and cannot be quickly achieved. Thus, there is a need to establish interim targets that specify how much progress towards an outcome is to be achieved, in what period, and what level of resource allocation will be required. Measuring results against these targets can involve both direct and proxy indicators as well as the use of both quantitative and qualitative data. It is thus important that, at this stage, realistic targets are identified and committed to.
6. Monitoring for results	The sixth step involves the administrative and institutional task of establishing data collection, the analysis of collected data and reporting on the results	The successful administrative activities of collection and analysis of data will be an indication that this step has been developed effectively.	This step involves the administrative and institutional task of establishing data collection, the analysis of collected data and reporting of the results. It is equally important to identify who will be responsible for which activities; establishing means of quality control and establishing guidelines on the transparency and dissemination of the information and analysis.
7. Evaluation of information to support decision making.	The information and data analysis should be considered when strategic decisions are taken. This is the only way we can claim the contribution and value derived from such intervention.	If we can directly link the outcome of the intervention and the decisions that are taken, then we can be sure of the contribution of the intervention.	The seventh step focuses on the contributions that evaluation studies and analyses will make to assessing results and movement towards outcomes throughout this process.

8. Analysing and reporting findings.	This information is used for various reasons and at different intervals. It is equally important to be prepared and that the required formats are made available as and when required.	The use of this step is to ensure that there is a direct beneficiary and consumer of the information collected.	The analysis and reporting of findings are crucial steps in this process, as they determine what findings are reported to whom, in what format, and at what intervals. This step addresses the existing capacity for producing such information as it focuses on the methodological dimensions of accumulating, assessing, and preparing analyses and reports.
9. Using the findings.	This ninth step seeks to ensure that the findings that are generated are valued and useful in decision making.	This step is useful to make sure that information is not generated without use. All the information generated should be for the consumer. That is the only stage we can account for its usefulness**.**	This step emphasises that the main aim of the system is not simply generating results-based information, but lies in getting that information to the appropriate users in a timely manner.
10. The process of sustaining the M&E system within government	This step is as important as the first step and it is important to note that, when resources are invested in such a system, it should be maintained and sustained to provide the required data. Its sustainability will depend on its accountability & the credibility of the information, amongst others.	This step is to ensure that the system should not be a once-off intervention, but an ongoing process that provides information as and when required to influence decisions.	The tenth, and last, step recognises the long-term process involved in ensuring the longevity and utility of an M&E system. There are six key criteria that are seen to be crucial to the construction of a sustainable system. These include demand, structure, trustworthy and credible information, accountability, incentives, and capacity.

Kusek & Rist (2004) posit that the ten steps suggested here are to ensure that key strategies and activities are recognised and clustered together in a logical manner and carried out in an appropriate sequence. This cannot be implemented without challenges and barriers. There are a number of barriers that organisations face in the process of implementing these suggested steps effectively. The typical barriers towards the effective implementation of M&E are:

- Lack of financial and staff resources as well as gaps in technical knowledge with regards to defining performance indicators. These are defined as measurable values that show how effectively an intervention is achieving key objectives.
- Data retrieval, which means obtaining data from the source and data collection, which is the process of data gathering for processing.
- Data preparation that includes making data lodging, checking for accuracy, entry into the computer and documenting data structures that integrate various measures.
- Data understanding, including the knowledge acquired about data and the identified needs that the data have satisfied as well as its content and location.

While global reporting formats such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and other reporting frameworks have emerged, most organisations do not have the capacity to align their internal theory of change or measurement goals with global standards and structure (United Nations, 2016). When there is a lack of stakeholder voice in measuring social impact, the intervention cannot claim to be addressing the needs of its beneficiaries. It is important to confirm whether the organisation has a system that communicates stakeholders' user experience or satisfaction. Lastly, when there is a challenge with customisation and configuration, most organisations believe that customisation is expensive, non-flexible, time consuming, and complex. In such cases, they abandon the implementation. These are some of the key barriers facing organisations during the implementation of an effective M&E system.

This research has built from other published research in public service reforms and has focused on the use of ten steps in the implementation of monitoring and evaluation as

well as barriers encountered using the National Treasury as the case study. The public financial management functions are key in public sector reforms and they include the process of budgeting, expenditure management, accountability, and financial reporting. These are required to maximise the efficient use of financial resources, create the highest level of transparency and accountability in public finances and to ensure the long-term economic success of the country. Literature has highlighted the importance of sound public finance management systems in effective service delivery and poverty reduction. In recent years, a significant amount of literature has been written on the topic of public service reform. Few works have been carried out recently to research the contribution of M&E on public sector reforms.

Despite the high level of investment in public sector reform and public finance management in the developed and developing countries, M&E appears to have been comparatively neglected. Most of the literature now agrees that public service reform is a long-term endeavour and a continuing process of improvement. Most reforms fail because of the way in which they are implemented rather than because of the complexities or technical aspects of the reform programmes

The literature review exposed that the public sector financial management, which involves government budgeting, financing, expenditure management, accountability, financial reporting and auditing, has been undergoing considerable reforms over recent decades. Public sector financial management reforms have been embraced by most countries, with Europe and America taking the lead, followed strongly by Asia and Africa (Micah, Nirmala & Hari, 2015). The challenge of any reform is not the failures, but the ability to learn from the mistakes. It is important to research further the lessons learned and the success factors; whether the public finance management reforms contributed to improved service delivery. By using improved flow and predictability of funds at central government level, the question remains as to what outcomes have been achieved through these interventions? How has this been used in practice, both in the design and implementation of reforms, and what effect has it had on success rates (Pretorius & Pretorius, 2008)?

Finally, it is important to think through the (potential) consequences of monitoring and evaluations; to continuously strive for social betterment or transformational development. The bigger question is how the work of M&E can contribute to change processes. There are many factors to consider, like the quality of the M&E process, how and where M&E sits in the organisational structure, how feedback loops are organised formally and informally, and the political wisdom to manoeuvre with important information at all levels inside and outside the organisation (Iren, Cecil, Iren, Marlen & Nicky, 2014).

South Africa has grown considerably concerning M&E implementation with abundant opportunities for learning that are available within local and national institutions. Local M&E journals, books and research are being written and more local knowledge is being constructed. There is an established M&E structure that facilitates the coming together of ideas and information, while allowing synergy with the field of M&E research. There is a space for creative thinking in M&E amongst civil society actors, academics, professionals and government. What is still identified as lacking both in South Africa and across the world, are examples of successfully implemented M&E over a long period. It must be noted that, as complex as these systems are believed to be, they are further influenced by political and ideological cycles created by the democratic processes through government elections that happen every five to seven years, depending on the country and or levels of government.

The present South African government faces the same dilemma. This also presents the country with opportunities to nurture, maintain and grow a national evaluation system that will be successful over time. South Africa has joined the global international debate regarding M&E. Whatever the outcome of this debate, it will provide the country with different perspectives to create space for new and creative engagements to deal with the challenges facing M&E implementation. It is clear that a successful M&E system implementation will result in better and more relevant policies, a responsive and reformed public service, and better quality service delivery and improved quality of life for its citizens.

The South African public service officially initiated a process of implementing a government-wide M&E system in 2005, when the then-President of the Republic, Thabo Mbeki, announced in his State of the Nation Address, that government would pay more attention to M&E, to measure its performance in service delivery (State of the Nation Address, 2005).

This role was to be carried out by a number of organisations including:

- The Office of the President as the leader of Government in GWM&E Principles and practices.
- The National Treasury to coordinate the non-financial information,
- Statistics South Africa to coordinate the performance data,
- The Department of Public Service to assist in assessing human resource practices.
- The Auditor General for auditing of performance data.
- The Public Service Commission for assessing adherence to public administration as per the constitution.
- The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs as an oversight body for local government performance oversight and support.

The National Treasury, The Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit is located in the Corporate Services Division. The Unit is headed by the Chief Director and is tasked with the responsibility of embedding and integrating planning into the processes of the National Treasury. This includes facilitating the department and its division's short, medium and long-term strategic and operational planning processes and ensuring that plans are aligned to legislative mandates and broader government imperatives. Its key operational plans include optimising the management of the National Treasury's strategic and operational planning; strengthening, expanding and embedding National Treasury's monitoring and evaluation system; inculcating a culture of strategic integrated planning monitoring and evaluation; and optimising the Chief Directorate SPM&E for enhanced service. There are clear M&E systems and processes supported by the dedicated staff members and availability of budget.

2.3.6 Knowledge Gap

There are a number of challenges relating to the effective implementation of M&E systems that needs to be recognised and revised. The literature review that consist of recent and five years ago has highlighted some of these. Interventions would produce better results with integrated systems and as well as integration into a bigger system used by an organisation. Other system challenges in implementing effective M&E relate to organisations' competing priorities, limited resources available for collection and use of data, inadequate training of data collection personnel, lack of timely feedback of usefulness of data to those in a position to improve the programme's performance; outdated, duplicate or irrelevant indicators, lack of proper reporting tools, poor documentation of services, and excessively tedious reporting requirements.

Past and current studies researched and reviewed looked at the effective implementation of M&E systems. Not all of them used the ten steps as proposed by Kusek and Rist (2004) as the basis for a conceptual framework. Much of this research included international, African and South African research, but most of them did not attempt to also study main government departments like Presidency or the National Treasury using the ten steps for implementing an effective M&E system. This information was not available. Various research looking at the challenges facing the public service departments in implementing M&E effectively have found different challenges in various organisations. There have been a number of different approaches used in implementing M&E in various organisations. It will be interesting to explore the approach that the National Treasury has used in implementing their M&E and what have been the lessons and challenged experienced in the process. If can we generalise those challenges and possibly replicate the lessons to other public service organisations, this research notes the importance of obtaining empirical information on the current status of the M&E system, which will focus on key success factors, and potential barriers encountered within National Treasury.
This study followed a qualitative approach using a case study method to assess the National Treasury against the Kusek and Rist model as a good practice model of M&E system processes and institutionalisation. This model was formulated from best practice

studies extracted from the literature review, legislative guidelines and other academic sources.

2.3.7 Conceptual Framework

There are four fundamental performance areas of M&E and they are policy development, evidence-based policy making and budgeting, managing performance and accountability (Macky, 2010).

FIGURE 2: MAIN USE OF M&E FINDINGS

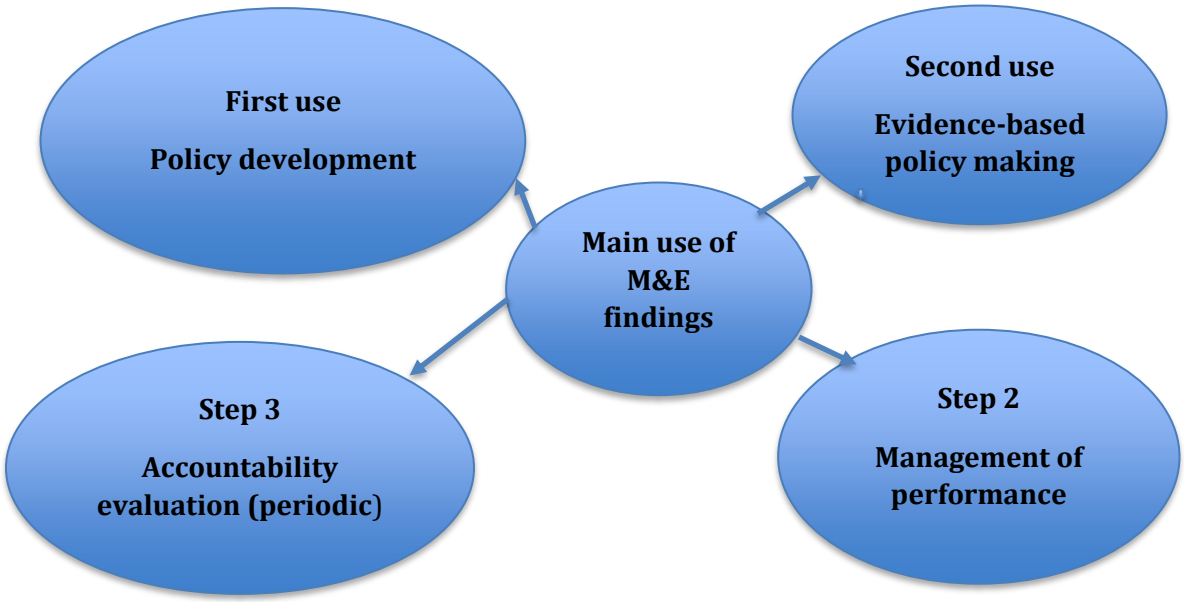


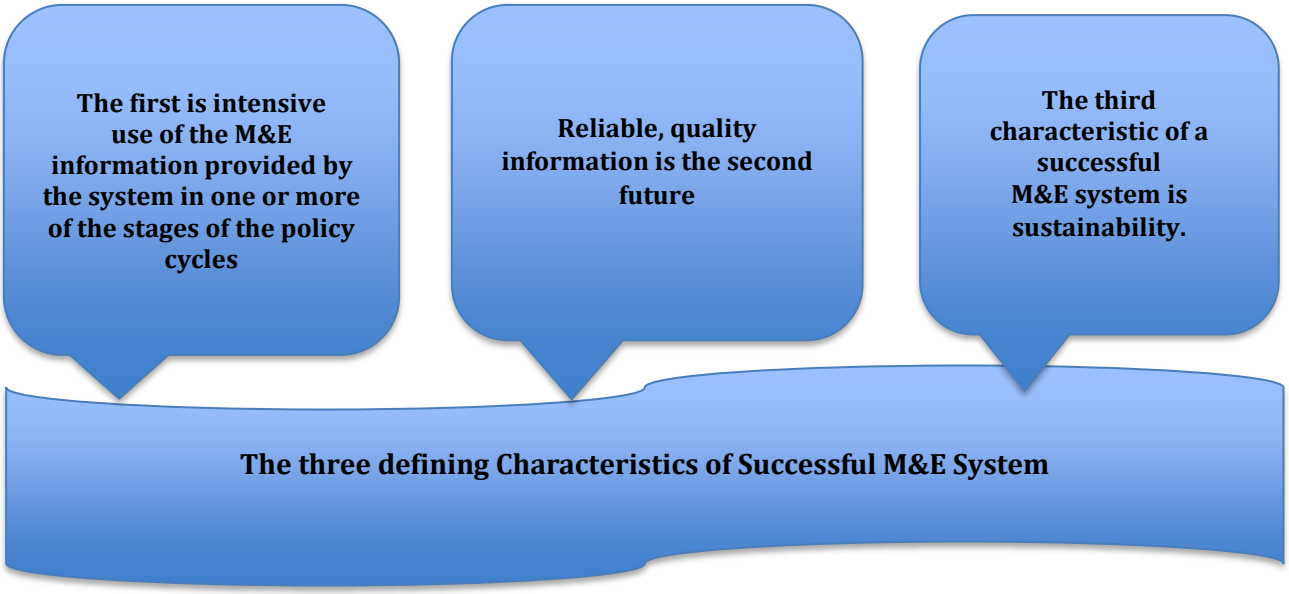
Figure 2 presents the reason that the M&E system can be used to improve government performance, especially from the policy development stage, to improve government decision making and government services and programmes. This includes the use of M&E for evidence-based policy making, budgeting, management and accountability.

There are many different types of M&E tools and approaches, with each having different advantages and shortcomings. They all converge on the point that M&E exists to measure results, outputs, outcomes and impacts. There are three defining characteristics of a successful M&E system (World Bank, 2010). These are:

- The intensive use of the M&E information in the stages of policy development cycle.
- The generation of the information that meets the standard for data quality and evaluation & reliability.

The sustainability through which the system will survive a change in administration.

FIGURE 3: THE SIMPLIFICATION OF THE LINKAGE OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL M&E



There are many and varied approaches to M&E as revealed by theoretical review. The evaluation question is seen as a critical point as it determines the purpose of evaluations. There are various M&E purposes and the choice depends on the required organisational results. The organisational framework that includes organisational politics, management culture, people, clarity of roles and responsibility, leadership, and organisational structure and governance, were quoted as important elements of assessments for effective M&E implementation. A successful results-based M&E system relies primarily on four important facets, which are:

(a) Demand or ownership and utility to keep the momentum of the system, while political champions are key in leading the systems practices that will include quality of inputs and outputs.

(b) The facet of management that guides planning, leading, organising, controlling and quality processes.
(c) To sustain the system, maintenance is vital.
(d) The process and trust of all stakeholders.

2.3.8 Conclusion

Chapter 1 provided the basis and groundwork for Chapter 2 and it outlined the background, which also provides the rationale and objectives of the study. The purpose of this chapter was to review literature on monitoring and evaluation in the global and the South African national contexts. The literature review has provided lessons on the key development and implementation of effective M&E systems. There is a need for governments to conduct continuous reviews on their existing results-based M&E systems as a measure to determine their effectiveness.

This approach has the potential of identifying the prevalence of strengths and/or weaknesses in their systems. An M&E system is not a one-glove-fits-all method but differs from one country to another as it considers the uniqueness of each country or organisation. This process of literature review has proved that, despite the differences between organisations or countries, there are some common basic steps that are appropriate for the implementation of an effective M&E system.
Experience from international and African countries has shown that, by recognising M&E demand, culture of evaluation and the linkage between M&E and planning, the institutionalisation of M&E requires time, location and readiness for M&E and these are critical for effective implementation of M&E. The proposed study will fill the knowledge gap regarding the lessons and barriers of the National Treasury in implementing an effective M&E system and will respond to the current South African policy environment of moving towards results-based M&E. The findings of this study in determining the lessons and barriers in implementing M&E in the NT will make an important contribution in generating information and will contribute to the practical application of the M&E system.

These issues have been considered in the study methods described in the next chapter, which deals with research methodology.

Some of the key issues from the literature review were The governance requirements that provide for participation by stakeholders and clear roles and responsibilities. A value system that provides for accountability, transparency and integrity. Structural arrangements that provide for location positions for success of the M&E system. The importance of capacity, including training and development, human resources and professional support to implement and sustain M&E system.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the research methodology used in the study. This includes research methods and procedures that are used in the implementation of research, and assists as a research framework as to how the researcher systematically collected, managed, analysed, interpreted and presented the data in a consistent way. The methodology used in this research is explained below.

3.2 Research Approach

The research approach adopted for this research is qualitative because it presents a justifiable and objective research process, which is pivotal to answering the research questions. The qualitative methodology seeks to explore the study to identify and capture meaning, or qualities that inform the understanding of the subject (Silverman, 2004). It aims to understand a small group or setting in depth by using data findings to present meaning rather than generalised explanations about the subject (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The qualitative methodology is appropriate for this study because the study explored and interviewed participants on the implementation of M&E and the barriers they encountered.

This study has used the qualitative approach because it will draw e data in qualitative approach that includes interviews and document reviewsThis is applied in this thesis to investigate the implementation and barriers encountered in M&E systems in the National Treasury. The approach is appropriate in terms of addressing both the primary and secondary research questions of this thesis. The thesis describes, interprets, verifies and evaluates decisions or actions that were taken by a particular targeted population pertaining to matters that are related to results-based M&E systems in the National treasury. Qualitative research methodology is applied because the main emphasis of the

research is based on the quality and depth of information as opposed to the scope or breadth of information provided. The methodology necessitated the researcher interacting physically with the relevant interviewees during the data collection process, and such exercise is beneficial to the researcher considering that it enabled him to probe more relevant information during the process by posing follow up questions.

3.3 Research Design

3.3.1 Case Study

The researcher has chosen the National Treasury as the case study for this research because M&E in the National Treasury has implications for M&E across the South African public sector, given the centrality of the National Treasury in the planning and public finance management process. A case study is described as an activity, process, event or institution that is carried out through a detailed and comprehensive data collection exercise that involves multiple sources that are contextually rich. These sources are not limited to documents, observation and analysis of archival records. This research has adopted the six steps of conducting research in a case study because they provide a comprehensive process that allowed the researcher to investigate in a methodical and organised manner (Yin,1994).

- Step 1: Defining the research question.
- Sep 2: Selecting case and determining data gathering & analysis strategy.
- Step 3: Preparing to collect the data.
- Step 4: Collecting data in the field.
- Step 5: Evaluation & analysing data.
- Step 6: Preparing research report.

The case study approach is useful for describing what the implementation looks like on the ground and why things happen as they do. It focuses on the effects of an implementation (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). In this case, the unit of analysis is the National Treasury, a government department that has serves the function of M&E to other government departments' financial spending. National Treasury is used as the case study

to describe the processes, activities and experiences of a practitioner or organisation implementing M&E (Neuman & Kreuger, 2003).

3.3.2 Data Collection Methods

This research has used semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis as methods for data collection and analysis. The researcher chose documentary analysis and interviews as data collection techniques because they could supplement and verify data that has been omitted. For instance, data that is missed through documentary analysis is collected through interviews and vice versa. These methods provided the researcher with the opportunity to harvest critical information and understanding of some parts of the National Treasury's M&E system. These methods are discussed below. The researcher ensured that qualitative interviews became objective thereby developing an interview schedule that is geared to promoting credibility and transparency respectively.

3.3.3 The Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are conducted around broad questions, allowing the interviewer freedom to determine what further questions to ask to obtain the required information.

A semi-structured interview guide is used to collect primary data. Interviews were conducted with role-players within the SPM&E unit and other officials outside the SPM&E unit to gather information about their experiences and understanding of M&E systems. Documents and reports were also analysed to investigate the nature of the M&E systems, their purposes and uses and the implementation successes and challenges.

The researcher interviewed 13 officials within the National Treasury. The interview system was applied to allow officials to express themselves on their perceptions, experiences and opinions regarding the M&E system in the National Treasury. This has also provided

an opportunity for follow-up discussions to interrogate new ideas that may emerge during the interviews.

The permission from the National treasury to conduct the research was requested and granted before the interviews were conducted. The selected officials were requested to participate in the interview verbally and in writing during March 2021. Due to time constraints on the part of the researcher, the interviews were conducted during March and April 2021. The researcher formally introduced himself at the beginning of each interview and informed the participants about the aim and purpose of the research and the planned duration of the interview. Interviewees were reassured that their names would be kept anonymous and would not be linked to any particular part of the research. The role of the interview in the research was explained and they were asked to answer questions as truthfully and honestly as possible. Both parties agreed that interviews will be recorded and that the research is undertaken for academic purposes only. Interviewees were told that the researcher would verify the data provided during interviews and follow up if needs be. The interviews were conducted online using MS Teams due to the risk of the Covid-19 pandemic in South Africa.

TABLE 5: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARTICIPANTS

Date	Duration of the interview	Participant
26 March 2021	50 minutes 40 minutes	Participant 1 Participant 2
27 March 2021	80 minutes	Participant 3 and 4
30 March 2021	35 minutes	Participant 5
2 April 2021	38 minutes	Participant 6
12 April 2012	30 minutes	Participant 7
12 April 2021	35 minutes	Participant 8
14.April 2021	30 minutes	Participant 9
14.April 2021	30 minutes	Participant 10
16 April 2021	40 minutes	Participant 11
19 April 2021	40 minutes 43 minutes	Participant 12 Participant 13

3.3.4 Data collection tools and their application

The study used semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions led by an interview schedule to strategically guide the interview process. This guide provides a set of questions that are used to engage with the participant.

Semi-structured interviews refer to asking the respondent to explain and elaborate on their understanding of the subject matter based on their engagement with it (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Semi-structured interviews allowed the participants to give their views about a subject. This is appropriate in providing participants with an opportunity to give their interpretations and experiences in relation to the subject of M&E. The study used secondary data that included the National Treasury annual strategic plans, annual reports, M&E reports, Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluations reports, and the Auditor-General's reports.

The Researcher has developed ten key themes based on the ten steps as proposed by (Kusek & Rist, 2004). The interview guide is attached as **Annexure 1**. The ten themes are identified below:

- Theme 1: Readiness Assessment. Determine whether the prerequisites for a results-based M&E system are in place. It should review incentives and capacity for an M&E system and the roles, responsibilities and structures for assessing government performance.
- Theme 2: Outcome to monitor. Outcomes to monitor and evaluate should be agreed through a participatory process, identifying stakeholders' concerns and formulating them as outcome statements. Outcomes should be disaggregated and a plan developed to assess how they will be achieved.
- Theme 3: Indicators for monitoring. Key performance indicators to monitor outcomes should be selected through a participatory process that considers stakeholders'

interests and specific needs. Indicators should be clear, relevant, economic, adequate and monitorable)

- Theme 4: Baseline Data. Baseline data on indicators should be established as a guide by which to monitor future performance. Important issues when setting baselines and gathering data on indicators include the sources, collection, analysis, reporting and use of data.
- Theme 5: Setting of performance targets. Performance targets should be selected to identify expected and desired project, programme or policy results. Factors to consider include baselines, available resources, time frames and political concerns. A participatory process with stakeholders and partners is key.

- Theme 6: Monitoring of results. Monitoring of results includes both implementation and results monitoring as well as forming partnerships to attain shared outcomes. Monitoring systems need ownership, management, maintenance and credibility. Data collection needs reliability, validity and timeliness.

- Theme 7: Using evaluation information for decision making. Evaluation provides information on strategy, operations and learning. Different types of evaluation answer different questions. Features of quality evaluations include impartiality, usefulness, technical adequacy, stakeholder involvement, value for money and feedback.

- Theme 8: Analysing and reporting. Reports on the findings of M&E systems can be used to gain support and explore and investigate. Reports should consider the requirements of the target audience and present data clearly.

- Theme 9: Using the findings. Findings of results-based M&E systems can also be used to improve performance and demonstrate accountability and transparency. Benefits of using findings include continuous feedback and organisational and institutional knowledge and learning.

- Theme 10: Sustaining the M&E. Good results-based M&E systems must be useful to be sustainable. Critical components of sustaining M&E systems include demand, clear

roles and responsibilities, trustworthy and credible information, accountability, capacity and incentives.

3.3.5 Sampling

The sampling method that was used for this research is a non-probability sampling method. This is a method that does not give all participants in the sample population an equal chance of being selected (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Non-probability sampling does not involve random selection. Purposive sampling is the strategy that is used for the study in the selection or sampling of participants. This sampling involves the selection of elements for a specific purpose that includes their unique position and capabilities to provide information on practical and expert knowledge.

The non-probability sampling technique is used for this research because only those individuals who could assist with interview questions and working within the M&E unit that have the knowledge of implementation of M&E and barriers that are encountered during implementation are selected. Thirteen people were identified and interviewed for this research. These people have more than three years' experience in working with the national treasury M&E implementation and include the management, middle management and lower level team members within the M&E Unit.

TABLE 6: INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS DEMOGRAPHICS

Age groups	21-36	37-52	53 and above
Participants	4	7	2

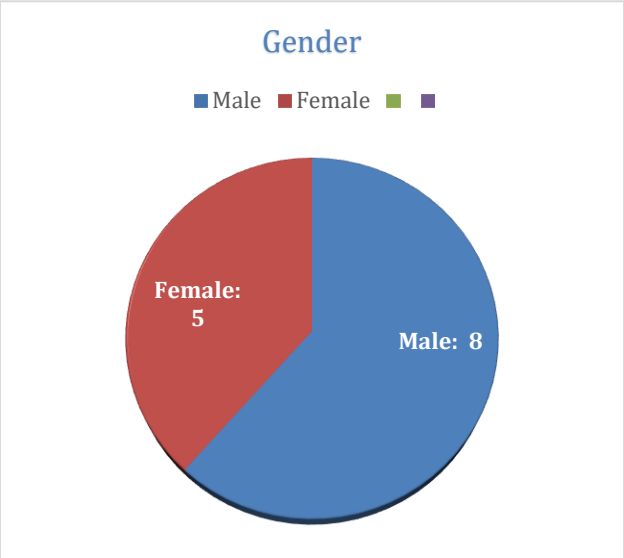
Employment level	Entry level	Middle Management	Top Management
Participants	4	8	1

These are key people because they are involved with the complete end-to-end process of M&E implementation within the National Treasury.

Going to this study, the researcher has conducted a substantial research the chosen participantd, what they do, and what areas they operate and what tey are focusing on in their careers. These peoples consist of three categories, first were people that know and have worked with in the past, the second category were consisted of people that are known by someone that I know. These were people who either know of me or have never heard of me before. Included people that I know personally, work with and see often, All this grous understand research, and respect the process.

Figure 4: Participants by Gender

FIGURE 4: PARTICIPANTS BY GENDER



The participants' gender was distributed as follows, 8 males and 5 females. A total of thirteen participants responded and participated in the research.

FIGURE 5: DISTRIBUTION BY FUNCTIONAL AREA

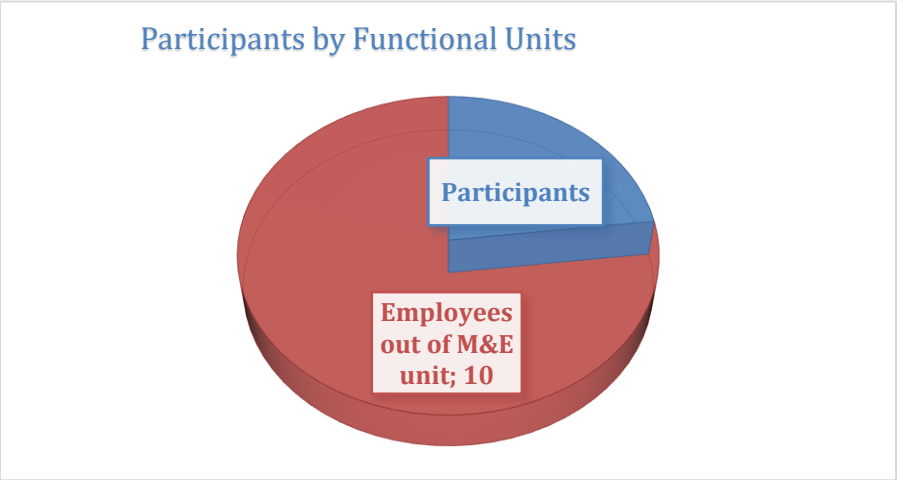


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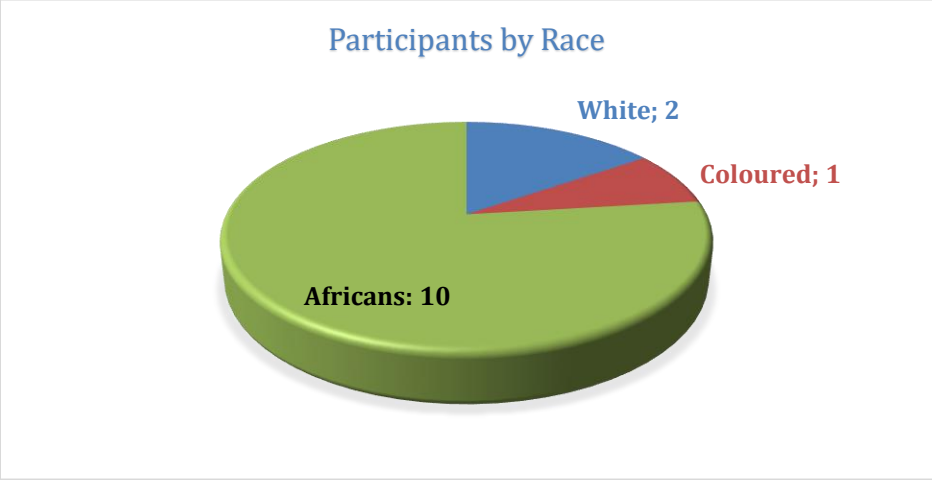
Figure 5 shows the total number of participants invited to participate in research interviews and their distribution per functional areas.

FIGURE 6: PARTICIPANTS BY RACE



Outside M&E observers were also considered because they may have important things to say about the implementation of M&E in the National Treasury. However, the identified individual was not available to be interviewed within the proposed time frame.

Document Analysis

The United Nations and World Bank are international institutions that have been involved in and written extensively about M&E systems in both developed and developing countries. They have assisted a number of countries in establishing and strengthening their M&E systems. The literature from this institution provided benchmarks on how to effectively implement an M&E system. The National Treasury documents and documents from the South African government provided a government perspective on guidelines for an M&E system. The documents from the National Treasury provided a department's position on an M&E system, and served as points of reference amongst what is happening and what is supposed to occur regarding an M&E system in the National Treasury.

3.3.5 Criteria for selecting documents for analysis

The first stage of the data collection method was a review of secondary documents in the form of monitoring evaluation reports of previously completed M&E. The researcher used documents from the United Nations (UN), the south African government and the National treasury. The UN is a credible international body that have written widely about M&E systems in both developed and developing countries. They have assisted a number of countries to establish and strengthen their M&E systems.

The documents from these institutions provided benchmarks on how to implement an effective M&E system in the South African government. The documents from the South African government provided a government perspective, guidelines and expectations of an M&E system in terms of a government-wide monitoring and evaluation system. The

documents from the National Treasury provided a department's standpoint on an M&E system, and served as points of reference between what is happening and what is supposed to happen regarding an M&E system in the Department.

The selection of documents for this research was based on the criteria that require documents that deal with M&E or some aspects of M&E. They should be dependable and written by credible organisations, institutions and individuals. They should be easily accessible. This selection criteria's main purpose was to ensure that only documents that were regarded as relevant, credible, and accessible were considered for analysis.

Selection of secondary documents study included all planning, monitoring and evaluation reports of previous completed palnning, monitoring and evaluation. This includes documents from Natiuonal Treasruty, Department of planning monitoring and eevaluation, and United Nations M&E documents. Reports were used primarily as a means to prepare for the interviews, to verify the information and triangulate data with other information sources. Reading and assessing the report in advance was a critical step because the reports contained important information such as the unit of analysis for the evaluation, the role of the participant being interviewed, where the evaluation was in terms of completion. Understanding information in advance was helpful because it drove the discussion and allowed the interview to be more structured and tailored for each context.

Because some monitoring and evaluations reports dated as far back as three years, it was important for me to know as much as possible about the monitoring and evaluation so that there could be an opportunity to probe. this preparatory work allowed the interviews to be more focused and the discussions to be richer. It saved time that would have otherwise been spent asking the participants to provide a summary of the M&E and then having to remove other relevant questions due to time constraints. The participants were therefore at ease and could see that the researcher was prepared and that the research process was credible.

3.3.6 Process of analysis

The responses from the participants were analysed using the ten steps of implementation of an effective M&E system. This study used thematic analysis, which is a method of analysing qualitative data and was applied to a set of texts and the interview transcripts. In the process, the researcher examined the data to identify common themes/topics. Thematic analysis comprises of six phases, as explained by Braun and Clarke (2006).

F**irst phase**: The researcher has familiarised himself with the collected data. This was done by re-reading and transcribing the data to gain in-depth understanding and to identify emerging patterns and meanings. In the context of this study, all recorded interviews were transcribed by the researcher, as well as reviewing all documentation provided by participants.

S**econd phase**: The initial generated codes were produced and data was organised into meaningful groups. The researcher made use of different colour reference cards to identify as many repeated patterns as possible, with as much context. That also includes data which seemed to be contrary to the researcher's thinking.

T**hird phase**: After all the data has been coded, the researcher pulled together similar codes into overarching themes. This was done in a visual way, with sub-themes in groups and also in a miscellaneous group. Nothing was discarded at this stage.

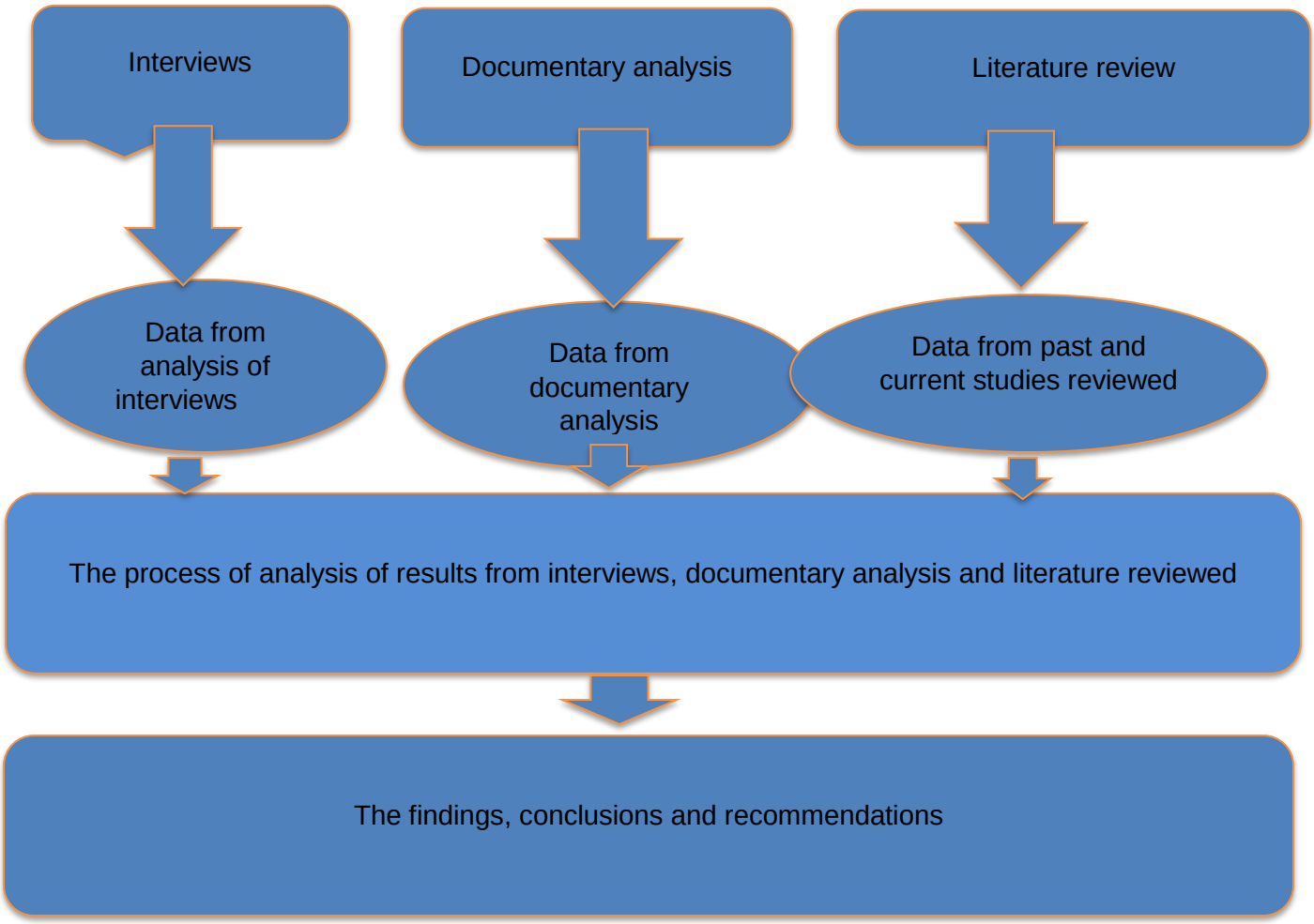
F**ourth phase**: This phase includes the process of reviewing and refining the themes where some themes may fall away or join with other groups. It is important that there be clear and identifiable distinctions between the groups made. All data was re-read to ensure that nothing was missed.

F**ifth phase**: This phase is focused on refining and defining the dominant themes and sub-themes. In these research contexts, the researcher was able to concisely describe each theme in a few sentences.

S**ixth phase**: This final phase is about producing the research report in a compelling way which shows the validity and the merit of the research.

The results from the interview responses were analysed and compared to the results from the analysis of documents and the literature reviewed. This allowed the researcher to understand and define the critical aspects of the National Treasury's M&E system. The data analysis process is outlined in Figure 7.

FIGURE 7: ANALYSIS PROCESS OF COLLECTED DATA



The researcher adopted the following procedures to ensure data reliability:

- Used more than one question to measure the same facet.
- Used unambiguous questions.
- Described and explained all the concepts.

- Made follow-ups on matters that had been raised during interviews if necessary for clarity.

To analyse data, thematic content analysis was applied. Some of the findings and the recommendations are, firstly, that the study contributes to the understanding of the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation in the public sector. Secondly, that monitoring and evaluation in the National Treasury is effective. Thirdly, that all employees at all levels should participate in the monitoring and evaluation of their projects.

The participants recommended that the department should conduct M&E in such a way that it takes into consideration both the benefits and potential unintended consequences (risks), especially in relation to over-use of targets. They need to ensure that organisations are judged, not only on M&E results, but also on whether they address the findings of M&E.

3.3.7 Research Limitations

Unavaliability of some key identified Participants was also a limitation, It is also worth noting that the researcher was unable to interview the Director, SPM&E as planned due to time constraints from the Director's diary, this means that the voice of executives in the department is not present resulting in a gap in the collection of valuable information. Most of the participants are at the level of Deputy Director and have provided most of issues at management level. Furthermore.

3.3.8 Limitation of using qualitative research

The main limitation of qualitative research is that it is more difficult to analyse and verify the results. Data collection is usually time consuming. However, the strength of qualitative research lies in the detailed information to explain complex issues, multiple methods for data gathering on sensitive subjects and cost effectiveness for its data collection.

a) Research Instrument

The use of semi-structured interviews also has some limitations as it takes time to administer. Also noting that some participants may not always provide credible or correct information to assist the research and adequately answer questions. These limitations were addressed through document analysis to increase the credibility of the data collected.

The Covid-19 epidemic lockdown posed some challenges in conducting face-to-face interviews with participants. As a mitigating factor, the researcher used the virtual software MS Teams to conduct online interviews. The third challenge in relation to time availability for conducting this research is the challenge of working full-time and studying part-time. This was mitigated by taking leave as provided for by the leave policy of the employer to focus on the research without any conflicting priorities and also using after hours' time to work of the research.

Another limitation is that the researcher may not be able to access certain people that are important to the research during this pandemic period. This would be adjusted when the research is in progress. The research would be conducted in the same department that the researcher is employed. However, the researcher does not work directly in the same unit (SPM&E) and does not have relationships with the team. The researcher tried by all means necessary to remain as objective as possible so as not to compromise the outcome of the study. The Researcher also considered the ethics within the research process to avoid taking sides and being prejudiced in any way or having any preconceived notions.

3.4 Ethics

The objective of this research was to discover new information and further verify existing knowledge. Therefore, it is important that, when doing research that involves people, knowledge does not come at the expense of participants' welfare or rights. This research

has stick to ethics guidelines and set principles that require research to be conducted with respect and without harming anyone.

Ethical clearance to conduct the study was acquired from Wits University and permission was also granted by the National Treasury to conduct this research. The researcher has adhered to all ethical considerations during the research process. Participants agreeing to take part in the study were asked to give their consent by signing the relevant informed consent form. The researcher ensured confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. The researcher committed not to misrepresent the data or findings for personal or other reasons or to cause any harm during the process of research. No information about the National Treasury or participants was fabricated as the reasons for undertaking this study were for academic purposes only.

The researcher spelled out the purpose of the research and its implications in simple language, which the participants understood. Participants were provided with as much information as they needed to enable them to decide whether or not they wished to participate in the study. This research study took into account the beliefs, rights and welfare of the potential participants ahead of the researcher's academic objectives. All primary data collected during the research was used only for academic purposes and the information will be stored in a computer with a safe password and can be accessed by the researcher and by Wits University. The right to use this material can be granted by the Wits University authorities. All soft copies of the transcribed data will also be stored on password-protected files on Dropbox and can only be accessed using the access password.

The researcher has adhered to the ethical requirements in the entire research process:

- Permission from the National Treasury to undertake the study was obtained.
- Permission to interview participants was obtained. The researcher has ensured confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.
- The researcher did not manipulate the data and findings for any personal or ultra-motive reasons; and did not deceive the participants about the reason for the study.

- Participants were informed that the research was for academic purposes only.

3.5 Validity, reliability, dependability

Although the relevance of reliability and validity of qualitative research has always been questioned, the researcher has tried to attain internal validity and validated whether or not there is a good match between the researcher's observations and the theoretical ideas developed or the extent to which the available sources make it possible to rule out alternative explanations (Bryman, 2016; Welman, 2012).

This research has incorporated methodological strategies to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings. This has included strategies to account for personal biases that may have influenced findings:

- Acknowledging biases in sampling and ongoing critical reflection of methods to ensure sufficient depth and relevance of data collection and analysis
- Thorough record keeping, demonstrating a clear decision trail and ensuring interpretations of data are consistent and transparent
- Establishing a comparison case, seeking out similarities and differences across accounts to ensure different perspectives are represented
- Including rich and thick verbatim descriptions of participants' accounts to support findings
- Demonstrating clarity in terms of thought and processes during data analysis and subsequent interpretations.

3.5.1 Data validity

The study analysed all the data collected from multiple sources. The data that was not appropriate to the themes was analysed and interpreted as emergent themes.

3.5.2 Data reliability

Data reliability provides for the same measurement that will produce the same results if applied repetitively under the same conditions anywhere else (Neuman**,** 2010). Even though there is no perfect consistency and reliability, some procedures can be conducted to ensure some level of reliability. This study used more than one question to measure the same facet of questions to avoid ambiguity and to ensure data reliability.

3.5.3 Data Dependability

The researcher ensured data dependability by verifying that the findings were consistent with the raw data collected. The researcher made sure that, if other researchers were to look over the data collected, they would arrive at similar findings, interpretations, and conclusions about the data. This was done by ensuring that the research process was logical, traceable, and clearly documented. This was confirmed by the accuracy of the findings and to ensure that the findings are supported by the data collected.

3.5.4 Positionality

The relationship I have with the organisation is based on my employed within the organisation as the Human Resource Business partner, at no point did ihold any position s that were senior to my participantd, there are no power dynamics from my own personal position that may have compromised this research project.

The research is aware of his own positionality and that of the organisation that I work for, my organisation holf power of funding state projects .My position or the position of my organisation did not pose any serious ethical risk, It is a profesional environment where the respondnace have a vested interest to improve and strengthen the M&E in the National Treasury.

3.6 CONCLUSIONS

In this study, the researcher selected a qualitative research methodology and opted to use a case study of the National Treasury. This methodology was preferred because it was suitable for this particular study. It allows and provides the interview participants an opportunity to express their views, experiences and perceptions regarding the National Treasury's M&E system in an open manner. The process of documentary review, analysis and literature review were considered and used to complement the interview responses where it was possible. This provided detailed and critical information about the key aspects of the National Treasury's M&E system. This methodology further provided an opportunity for a comprehensive framework on the process of data collection, data management, analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of Chapter 4 is to present the analysis of findings and discussions of the research. The research data that was collected through interviews is presented and analysed against the data from document analysis and the literature reviewed. The presentation and analysis of data is done using the pre-determined themes and sub-themes. The data collected from interview responses that could not be categorised under any of the pre-determined themes was also analysed and presented as emergent themes. The main themes were:

1. The documented M&E organisational structure, capacities, and culture.
2. Establishement arrangements.

The Researcher formulated the appropriate questions for each of the themes and sub-themes which are attached as Annexure for Research Interview guide

The interview questions consisted of questions, which provided a great uniformity of responses and made referencing and processing easy. Open-ended questions enabled the participants to express their views and opinions regarding specific issues of the National Treasury M&E system as raised by the researcher and allowed them to provide in-depth and rich data for the investigation.

The researcher used both types of questions so that the advantages of one type can complement the disadvantages of another. The interview schedule is attached as Annexure A. The findings are discussed in the following paragraph.

4.2 Documented M&E organisational structure and functions of National Treasury M&E

On this theme, the research constructed six questions:

a), Is there a documented M&E organisational structure in the National Treasury?

To check whether or not the National Treasury has a documented M&E organisational structure, all the interviewed participants (participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 13) indicated that the National Treasury has a visible, documented M&E structure within the office of the Corporate Service Division. This was further confirmed by a review of the documents submitted to the researcher.

> [The National Treasury M&E unit have a structure in the Corporate Services Division that is very small and fully filled, it is headed by the Chief Director; the unit is mainly responsible for: ensuring alignement of department al planning documents and governement priorities, development of departmental performance indicators and targets, compilation of comprehensive feedback reports outlining discrepancies that must be addressed and integrated in future Strategic and Annual Performance Plans, providing inputs to systems and tools for the utilisation in the monitoring and evaluation of the Department's performance and operations management framework, Monitoring the reporting framework and measure the Department's performance in compliance with the relevant regulatory requirements, monitoring progress against strategic and annual performance plans of business units and performance assessment action plans, development and implementation of best practices planning, monitoring and reporting systems and mechanisms]

There was a concern raised by participants 2, 6, 9 and 12 about the location of the M&E unit in the administrative division, which may pose a challenge on visibility and the powers vested in it. According to the literature reviewed (Gorgens and Kusek, 2004) there is no 'correct' location for an M&E Unit in an organisational structure in terms of where it should be located and at what level it should be placed. What is important is that all factors that can influence M&E in a positive way need to be taken into account when deciding on the location and level of an M&E organisational structure. This should include factors such as the objectives of M&E, the resources available for M&E, who is the champion for M&E and where will M&E be most prominent and accepted by stakeholders of an organisation.

> [There is curentely a process that has been taking for ever to move the Chief Directorate from corporate services to the office of Director General, which we think will provide us with more visibility and power that we think is not provided for within the curent Division]

b) Are the functions of M&E staff in the M&E organisational structure clearly indicated?
All the interviewed participants from (participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6-13) indicated that all employees within the National Treasury are required to sign a job description when

appointed. This includes all the employees appointed in the M&E unit. A copy of this was presented to the researcher.

> [Within the National Treasury every employee is required to complete a perfomance agreement every new finacial year alighned to the strategic objectives for the Division, and this process is driven from the Human Resources unit of the organisation,maybe there is a need to alighn this to the work of M&E unit]

c) Does National Treasury have a dedicated budget for M&E?

On the question of the availability of a dedicated budget for monitoring and evaluation, particularly for evaluations, most participants (1, 2, 3, 6, 9 and 11) agreed that there is a dedicated budget for monitoring and evaluation. This budget is mostly for operational costs such as payment of staff, procurement of goods and services including stationery, computers, printers, hiring of facilities and venues. Some of the budget is for monitoring functions. They indicated that the allocated budget is inadequate to cover evaluations and data quality, yet these two processes form an important component of M&E. They have further indicated that there is a need to put together a budget for conducting the awareness of the M&E functions and its benefits on planning, monitoring and evaluation within the organisation.

> [Literature review analysis suggests that the key factor when allocating a budget for M&E is not the amount, but whether the allocated amount is able to support the functions of M&E so that the M&E system can generate credible data].

4.2.1 Are all positions in the M&E organisational structure filled?

On the question of the filling of the positions in the M&E structure, all the participants confirmed that, to their knowledge, there are no vacant positions in the unit as they have not seen any M&E job advertisement in the last 12 months. This was confirmed by document review that all the positions in the structure has been filled. Participants 3, 7, 9, 11 and 13 raised the issue of the capacity of the unit, pointing to a very small number of positions available to cover work from planning, monitoring and evaluation.

> [Our M&E Unit structure is very small and all the positions are curentely filled, due to capacity needs, the Unit also have two Interns who are on a two years contracts]

4.2.2 Did the M&E staff members receive training in M&E in the past 2 to 3 years?

On the question of M&E capacity building, all participants (1, 2, 5, 10 and 11) said that there is no documented plan for M&E capacity building and training, but they have all attended M&E training, workshops and conferences. Some of the training and workshops were from the Human Resources Development Unit.

> [All employees within the M&E unit have an annual development plan and this includes behavioural and technical training identified, all employees are required to attend all the identified training and all of us do most of our unit training was done externally]

4.2.3 Does the Unit have a training plan for all staff members responsible for M&E?

During the assessment of the training database for the M&E unit, it was clear that some M&E staff members have attended the training courses on M&E more than once. This may be an indication that there is no proper planning on the training and development in the unit.

> [Participant no 6 and 7 has also confirmed that the unit employees like any other employee of the organisation sign a development plann which form the basis and inform the Unit training plan]

Literature reviewed (Kusek & Rist, 2004; Gorgens & Kusek, 2009) suggests that capacity and capacity building need to focus on three levels in an organisation. These are:

- Systems capacity: the ability of a system to deliver the goal and objectives of a process and thereby contribute toward fulfilling the organisation's objectives. In a systems context, capacity is defined as a set of entities that operate to achieve a common purpose according to certain rules and processes.
- Organisational capacity: the capacity of the organisation and its processes to deliver the organisation's goals and development objectives.
- Individual (human) capacity: the ability of individuals to perform functions effectively, efficiently and sustainably.

All Participants were asked to explain their understanding of results-based monitoring and evaluation within the context of the National Treasury. All participants indicated a common understanding of monitoring and evaluation. Participants (2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 12)

mentioned that it had to do with monitoring and reporting against a set strategic objectives and targets set by the department.

> [Result base monitoring and evaluation comprises of ddevelopment and implementation of best practices, planning, monitoring and reporting systems and mechanisms]

When explaining their understanding of M&E, 7 of the participants provided comprehensive summaries of the accepted definition of M&E and related concepts. The other 3 of the participants provided some general basic understanding of M&E in their operational areas.1 employee indicated that:

> [My role as M&E practitioner and includes ensuring alignement between departmental planning and governement priorities, development of departmental perfomance indicators and targets, providing inputs to the system and tools for utilisation in the monitoring and evaluation]

Most of the participants (7) indicated that there have been great benefits from a number of outcomes derived from the M&E implementation in the National Treasury. Participant 3 indicated that:

> [Some of these benefits which as the organisation which we had derived from implementation of M&E were the empirical evidence-based planning, budgeting and management of implementation, including improvements in transparency, accountability, learning, value for money and impact]

5 Participants also suggested that the M&E should be conducted in such a way that it takes into consideration both the benefits and potential unintended consequences (risks), especially in relation to over-use of targets. Participant 1 indicated that

> [There is a need to ensure that organisations are not only judged on M&E results, but also on whether they address the findings of M&E]

5.2 Conducting readiness assessment

Responding to the question of conducting the readiness assessment for National Treasury, 7 of the participants perceived that the National Treasury is ready and capable of ongoing implementation of M&E. However, 3 of the participants were not aware as to whether the readiness assessment was conducted prior to the implementation. They do not seem to understand as to what is involved. On the question about conducting readiness assessment for National Treasury, participant 3 stated that:

> "I have had about conducting readiness assessment but I have very limited knowledge on this, you will have to explain as to what is in readiness assesment".

Results from the documents review and research interviews show that there are clear roles and responsibilities indicating who does what, how, and by when. Most of the participants (9) believe that the National Treasury has the institutional capacity and skills, financial resources and technological resources to execute the implementation of M&E. All participants agreed that there is participation by internal stakeholders in the process, but that this can be improved by including external stakeholders in the process.

> [when I was appointed here, the M&E was already been active and I am not sure if readyness assesmsnt was done or not, but I have not seen any documents regarding this]

From the participants' interviews and the documents reviewed, there was no clear evidence to confirm whether readiness assessment was conducted before M&E was implemented. However, there is clear evidence of institutional capacity, financial resources and skills to execute the effective implementation of M&E. There is also clear evidence of stakeholders participating in the M&E process. The current employees interviewed may have been employed by National Treasury after that period of readiness assessment and it may have not been effectively documented.

5.3 Agreeing on outcome to measure and indicators

Responding to the question of agreement on the outcomes to measure, all participants agreed that the National Treasury should embark on a process of agreeing on outcomes to measure its performance and this should be done at the same time as the setting of Indicators. This is developed by the divisions themselves to encourage self-monitoring and they are aware of division's strategic plans and the National Treasury's strategic plan. On the question about agreeing to the outcomes to measure, participant 1 stated that:

> [Performance indicators and targets are set targets in consultation with divisions/officials that whose duty is to meet them. This encourages self-monitoring for the purpose of performance improvement].

The monitoring of this outcome is done by the divisions themselves and reported to the SPM&E unit. Five of the participants (4, 5. 7, 8 and 13) indicated that, when outcomes

are developed, they are always considered to be relevant and only those indicators that can be measured are considered. The correct minimum number and capacity available are also taken into consideration. They have indicated that the SPM&E unit advises the divisions to note that, at the stage of developing outcomes, it is important to avoid committing to something that cannot be achieved. That would affect the effectiveness of M&E in general within the NT. Most of the participants who are managers (8), have indicated that the process of agreeing on the outcomes to monitor, the evaluation of the selection of key indicators to monitor outcomes as well as target setting is guided by the NT's strategic objectives. Participant 6 indicated that:

> [The starting point is looking at the legislative mandate of the National Treasury which is derived both from the Constitution and the PFMA, look at the manifesto of the ruling party, look at the MTSF (medium term strategic framework.]

The interview question about the development of indicators was to establish the process of development of such indicators and whether stakeholders or participatory process are considered. The sub-question was looking at the measure of indicators and whether they are guided by any principles like (SMART or CREAM). Participants 13, 4, 10, 5, 7, 8, 5, and 1) indicated that, when outcomes and indicators are developed, they are always considered to be relevant and aligned to the outcomes, service with value for money, sufficiently comprehensive to be useful for the purpose. Only those indicators that can be measured are considered. The correct minimum number and capacity available are also taken into consideration.

Each division conducts the strategic planning session as guided by the above. Once each division has agreed on the indicators that will measure performance to advance the agenda, this is submitted to the SPM&E unit for consolidation. The consolidated document gets discussed by the Executive Committee and, if in agreement, the Director-General finally approves it. Participant 2 indicated that:

> [Performance indicators and targets are set targets in consultation with divisions/officials that whose duty is to meet them. This encourages self-monitoring for the purpose of performance improvement]

In summary, the NT has evidence of embarking on a process of strategic planning to develop the indicators that meet the SMART and CREAM principles and are clearly linked to the key objectives and the outcomes of each division. This was substantiated by 8 of the participants.

5.4 Gathering baseline data on indicators and setting targets

On the question of the gathering the baseline data, 8 of the participants indicated that the previous year's consistent level of performance is used to come up with baseline data for the financial year strategic plan. On the question about gathering the baseline data, participant 2 stated that:

> [The baseline is determined through looking at the consistent level of performance recorded in the years prior to the planning period].

Participants (6, 8, 12, 7 and 13) indicated that this process is important for planning and monitoring for results which should be valid and reliable. Participants 6 and 9 were not sure on how these processes of baseline gathering are approached conceptually but have indicated that they are involved in its implementation. Participant 3 indicated that the baseline is determined through looking at the consistent level of performance recorded in the years prior to the planning period. While participant 10 indicated that baseline data is derived from the historical trend or performance data/past.

In summary, evidence from the documents reviewed and interviews suggests that NT has comprehensive process for developing the baseline data, which is derived from historic data. This has been substantiated by most of the interview participants.

On the question of setting realistic targets during planning, when asked about setting targets, participant 1 stated that:

> [The department looks at a specific level of performance that the institution, programme aims to achieve in a planning period. The targets have to be SMART, The targets and outcomes are developed in consultation with all the stakeholders involved. This is done through engagement meetings with the relevant stakeholders and partners].

Most participants (about 7) indicated that there is a collaboration in setting targets within divisions. These are developed in consideration of the organisation's programmes. The

identified targets are made to be measurable and meet the SMART principle (Specific, Measurable, Achievable Realistic Time bound). Most participants have indicated that these targets are derived in consultation and engagement with relevant stakeholders. The majority of the participants (8), most of them the managers, indicated that the process of agreeing on targets is guided by the NT strategic plan objectives.

> [Targets are set based on affordability (budget) and capacity (human resources). In addition, they are set based on legislative requirements. For example, the Money Bill Amendment Procedure and Related Matters Act (2009) requires NT to submit a quarterly expenditure report.]

In summary, there is clear evidence that the NT has a comprehensive process of planning and setting realistic targets and a SMART principle as the basis for coming up with such targets.

5.5 Monitoring for results

The document review showed that all divisions are required to conduct monitoring and evaluation quarterly and annually within the National Treasury to assess programme implementation. All participants confirm that monitoring for results is a continuing process on a quarterly basis. The monitoring data is collected through the reporting templates developed by the M&E team and they provide comprehensive reporting by divisions against the quarterly and annual commitments that are set out in the planning documents. When asked about monitoring for results, participant 2 stated that:

> [The data is collected through the reporting templates developed by the M&E team. These templates provide for comprehensive reporting by Division against the quarterly and annual commitments that are set out in the planning documents].

> [Quarterly reports are signed off by the following:
> Recommended for approval - Chief Director: strategic planning, monitoring
> Approved -Deputy director general: Corporate services
> Signed off- Director General].

It was furtherfound in the SPM&E documents that the quarterly reports are recommended for approval by the head of the SPM&E unit, the Deputy Director-general: Corporate Services and signed off by the Director-General. Participants also regard the internal use

of findings as essential to improve their processes and practices of M&E so that they are more open and accountable to the stakeholders. Participant9 indicated that

> [Monitoring results are used in the department for empirical evidence-based planning, budgeting and management of implementation include improvements in transparency, accountability, learning, value for money and impact]

The data is collected from the spending centers (units/divisions) and this gets supplied to the SPME unit. There is a template developed for the collection of this data. Its outcomes get evaluated against what has been set in the strategic plan, annual performance plan and the operational plan. Most importantly, changes in the standard of life is the outcome indicator.

In summary, it was evident from the documents reviewed and interviews with participants that the National Treasury has a clear calendar of conducting monitoring and evaluation for results. This was confirmed as being done quarterly and annually. These are all put in the process of approval by the head of SPM&E and the Director General.

Most of the participants interviewed indicated that the National Treasury produces evaluation information that is used for improvement of performance, accountability, learning and decision making. This information is said to be used by the department and divisions as empirical evidence during planning, budgeting and management. This is also made public to promote transparency, accountability, learning and working towards value for money and impact. Participants 8 and 10 indicated that"

> [Yes, this gets done and it is more apparent during the performance evaluation stage and are used in order for various business units to account and improve on performance by implementing the remedial actions. Most importantly, this also helps in tweaking out planning document]

Participant 13 has stated that:

> [Yes, they are used in improving performance, accountability, learning and decision-making. Monitoring results are used in the department for empirical evidence-based planning, budgeting and management of implementation include improvements in transparency, accountability, learning, value for money and impact]

There was clear evidence that the NT understands the use of the generated M&E information for decision making, especially for the purpose of performance accountability and learning. What was key was the indication that this information is further used for the purpose of planning and budgeting within the NT.

5.6 Analysing and reporting findings

Participants 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12 and 13 indicated that the National Treasury prepares quarterly reports that are reviewed by management and approved by Director General and also shared with the office of Minister for noting. In particular, Participant 5 indicated that:

> [Through the preparation of quarterly reports are signed as reviewed and evaluated by the Chief Director: Strategic Planning, Monitoring, Deputy Director General: Corporate services and approved by the Director General. The reports are also shared with the Minister for noting]

This report is shared and discussed further on the National treasury EXCO as well for feedback purposes. Feedback sessions are further carried out by the divisions. This was confirmed by Participants 5, 12, 13, 7, 8, 9, and 10) that do not come from the SPM&E unit. The SPM&E unit has various sessions with each division wherein it communicates the performance of that particular division. In addition, departmental performance gets presented at EXCO as well as during the performance evaluation stage. This gets published in the annual report of the department. The quarterly performance report gets submitted to the DPME.

The participants have indicated that NT embarked on a process of analysing the M&E information and compilation of the reports. It was also confirmed that such a report is then submitted to the Director-General for consideration and approval, and for noting by the Minister. What has been impressive was the fact that this M&E report is used to compile the annual organisational performance report that is presented to parliament and published for public information. This allows the public to hold the NT accountable for all the projects on which they are expected to deliver.

5.7 Using the findings and sustaining M&E system

Most of the participants indicated that the National Treasury produces performance and evaluation reports that are credible, reliable and accurate. Participants 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 13 indicated:

> "Yes, they are used in improving performance, accountability, learning and decision-making".

Participant 9, in particular, when asked about the sustainability of M&E and use of the M&E system stated that:

> [The performance reports are credible, reliable and accurate. They are also used to inform performance reviews and evaluations of senior managers]
>
> [the department has documented detailed business processes to ensure the sustainability of the M&E system]

It was further indicated that this information is used to inform the performance reviews and evaluation of senior managers. The information produced is reliable but there is room for improvement to enhance its reliability and accuracy. The information produced plays a major role in senior management meetings as explained in some previous responses above.

Participant 13 also stated that:

> [Empirical evidence-based planning, budgeting and management of implementation include improvements in transparency, accountability, learning, value for money and impact].

In summary, this showed that the NT has comprehensive reports that are credible, reliable and accurate. These reports have been used by the NT in conducting performance reviews and the evaluation of senior management. This provides for accountability in the public service.

Concerning the question of sustainability of the M&E system, participants pointed out that the SPM&E unit has developed a detailed business process to ensure the sustainability of the M&E system. The DPME also made a number of proposals to address some challenges encountered by departments when conducting effective evaluations. This includes the following:

- Technical capacity to be established to support departments with their evaluation methodology and quality.
- The outsourcing of evaluation to external evaluators using an accredited panel.
- Using donor funds to build evaluation capacity and expand the cadre of experienced evaluators beyond a narrow pool.
- Government, academic and private consultants are to be used to facilitate short and long-term courses. Funds will be sourced to assist.
- International partnerships are to be established with similar countries like Mexico, Columbia and international organisations like the Worldbank.

All these efforts are developed to enhance the capacity of monitoring and evaluation in the country as well as to achieve effectiveness in its implementation.

4.10 CONCLUSION

Chapter 4 has presented a summary of the results from the information-gathering, documents analysis and literature reviewed. The findings were evaluated against the objectives of the research described in Chapter 1. The assessment of the implementation of M&E in the National Treasury showed the following overall results:
The researcher notes that the National Treasury M&E system meets most of the process requirements for building an effective M&E system using the steps suggested by Kusek and Rist (2004). In relation to the readiness assessment, because it was not clear whether or not this was done at the inception of the system, there may be value in conducting the functional assessment on the elements of the M&E system that are in place. The benefits of such an assessment will determine the extent to which the M&E system processes are enabling the institutionalisation of National Treasury systems. There is also a suggestion that the system is still manual in nature and it can be improved to become an online system. The system is still a manual system full of templates to be completed.

Most of the participants were able to explain in detail the purpose of monitoring and evaluation in the public service. The participants perceive the current Director-General to be the champion of the M&E system. The participants understood and were clear on their roles and responsibilities around the M&E linked to the role of M&E unit.

All the participants displayed some level of awareness of how M&E interfaces with strategies and plans like National Treasury strategic goals and annual performance plans as well as national planning & reporting requirements.

It was clear that most participants perceived that Kusek and Rist's process steps for building effective M&E systems as having been met for the National Treasury. Some participants could not confirm whether readiness assessment had been conducted. However, all of them perceived the current M&E system worked well. Chapter 5 will deal with findings and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research study was to assess if the National treasury have used the ten steps of implementingn the M&E system.. In order to answer this research question, this study looked at , Kusek and Rist's (2004) ten-step model which was used to interpret the results. The study reviewed completed monitoring and evaluation reports & ten steps as proposed by Kusek & Rist, and then used this information as the basis for the interviews with participants. The purpose of the interviews was to understand what the participants know by the role of monitoring and evaluation and its elements; what they believe is their responsibility towards ensuring use as well as what processes they have put in place to implement the M&E effectively.

This chapter includes a discussion of major findings as related to the literature on monitoring and evaluation use and its key implementation steps, a discussion on connections to this study and monitoring and evaluation use theories as discussed in the literature review, and lastly the chapter concludes with a summary and proposed areas for future research,. The analysis chapter detailed the findings that were drawn heavily from the interviews, with triangulation of other data sources including the sampled evaluation reports, the literature review and observations made during the data collection process. The analysis chapter introduced the themes that came out of the research process. This chapter begins with a recap of the themes that were introduced in chapter 4 and the evaluation questions that each theme responded to. It then proceeds with a more detailed discussion on the findings of each theme as well as their implications. The chapter ends with conclusions and recommendations.

The study sampled three different interviewee groups in order to investigate the effectiveness of the M&E activities at National Treasury thoroughly. The first group is the

M&E unit employees, the second group is made up of other employees that do not work in the M&E unit in the department, and the third group are any other external employee who work outside of the National Treasury. The purpose was to understand their perspectives on the department's M&E activities. The M&E unit is directly responsible for the implementation of M&E in the department; therefore, their input is crucial in the study.

5.1.1 Recapping the the themes from chapter four

After the process of conducting the entire research process, it became clear that the themes that were coming out of the interviews were aligned to the themes that were identified during the literature review. This came as no surprise because the study and the research questions were designed to explore the themes that were coming out of the literature.

This study was done at a time when the South African public service is expected to implement the outcomes-based legislative mandate and to demonstrate measurable results to its citizens. The document analysis found that there is enabling national legislation and policy for the implementation of the results-based M&E system. This legislation enforces good governance in accountability and transparency. Although the participants acknowledged that the M&E approach is a good innovation, they did not have knowledge of a specific NT M&E framework to facilitate the implementation process.

In the 2019/20 NT Annual Report, it was reported that strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation was strengthened with the full rollout of standardised operational planning for all National Treasury Chief Directorates. This has added to the existing organisational planning of strategic outcomes, annual performance and project planning. Operational objectives for each Chief Directorate have been aligned with each Chief Director's key performance areas, creating a direct link between organisational and individual performance.

This level of planning is a further contribution to aligning the planning practices of risk analysis, performance planning, budgeting, human resources, performance management, responding to internal audit findings, intelligent reporting and evidence-based decision making.

The Auditor General has identified weakness of processes in monitoring performance that still needs to be strengthened and closely monitored in the areas of compliance. This is reported by the AGSA's Annual Performance Report (APR) (NT Auditor-General Report, 2018/20). Some of issues raised were irregular expenditure, fruitless and wasteful expenditure, restatement of corresponding figures, achievement of planned targets, adjustment of material misstatements, procurement and contract management as well as expenditure management. (National Treasury annual report, 2017/18; National Treasury annual report, 2018/2019; National Treasury annual report, 2020/2021).

It was not clear from the reports whether the National Treasury lacked capacity for M&E on repeated opinions as raised by the AG. It was also unclear whether there is a lack of defined roles and responsibilities, structures, processes for monitoring and evaluation or lack of support and buy-in from Management and support staff. It is critically important that the National Treasury M&E system provides high quality performance information on quarterly and bi-annual periods to provide decision makers with correct and dependable performance information on reforms and good governance in the organisation.

The research found that the participants neither understand nor know whether a readiness assessment was conducted during M&E implementation within the National Treasury. They have, however, indicated that the National Treasury consider the other nine steps that are undertaken in implementing M&E in the National Treasury. There have been a number of outcomes derived from the National Treasury M&E system. Among these are the empirical evidence-based planning, budgeting and management of implementation, which provides for further improvements in transparency, accountability, learning and value for money.

5.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.2.1 This section of the study seek to provides the key findings of the study in terms of the documents that were reviewed, and the findigs discovered through the analysis of the empirical evidence from the interviews in relation to the M&E activities and processes of the National Treasury. The research has made the following findings regarding the processes of M&E activities at national Treasury.

5.2.2 M&E in the National Treasury

The National Treasury has a sound monitoring and evaluation foundation that was specifically developed to promote and guide the implementation of M&E in the department (Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information, 2007).

(a) M&E Implementation

The Interviwed participants have indicated that although there is an M&E organisational Structure in the National Treasury,The participants has further indicated that the capacity and resources avaliable within the Unit is insuficient compared to the magnitude of the work that needs to be done. There have further indicated that M&E was only formalised during 2007 and has been located in the Corporate services Division.

(b) M&E Training and capacity development

In terms of the training and development in M&E skills, the study discovered through the interview with the candidates that the department pay attention to the aspects of employee development, participants from the M&E unit indicated that they have attended a number of training amongst others the M&E trainings and workshops extenally during the last three years, they have further ackonwledged that M&E is a complex process and practise which is continously evolving, therefore it is atmost important that the M&E officials should constatly go for re training and attend workshpops so that they can leep abreast with the new development (Gorgens and Kusek, 2009).

(c) Management involvement on M&E

The participants from the M&E unit has indicated that the management involvement in the department M&E activities is mostly during the quartely and annual perfomance reviews. Gorgens and Kusek (2009) urgues that, the involvement of senior management in M&E is of paramount importance as it leads to change and promotes the culture of engagement, M&E Internal participants highlighted the fact that the Divisional heads are not held accountable for non-performance on their strategic objective through M&E reports.

(d) Challenges facing M&E in the National Treasury

The participants indicated that although the National Treasury is effectively implementing the M&E within the Organisation, there are areas of further improvement that needs attention, this includes lack of sufficient human resource capacity to implement M&E in the Department, lack of enoegh budget to suppoer implemention of M&E sucsessfully and lack of M&E research activities in the Department.

(e) M&E strategic goals

The M&E process is more concered with weather goals have been achieved or not and it is important for Units to identify goals and objectives in order for M&E to be able to work and reliably inform decision making in an organisation effectively. The participants from the ME unit and outside of the M&E unit have all confirmes that the Units are on an annual basis conduct strategic planning and review sesions and all this are documented and submited to M&E of the department for processing.

(i) Group 1: M&E officals

All of the M&E officials indicated that, M&E contribute directly to the achievement of the National Treasury's strategic goals. However, there Is a oportuity to improve this if the capacity and relocation of the unit to the strategic location can be addressed. Furthermore, the M&E officials seems to suggest that, majority of the

M&E activities are carried out only for compliances purposes and for the process of ticking the complience boxes, which does not provides the true reflection of M&E, and its purposes in project and policy management.

(ii) Groups 2: Official outside M&E unit who are implementing the M&E

Out of the six official that were interviewed from outside the M&E Unit, four were of the view that M&E assists in their programmes to achieve strategic goals, however, there are massive improvements that are required in order for M&E to be fully functional and beneficial at Natioal Treasury. The other 2 indicated that M&E does not contribute to the achievement of their strategic goals. The contribution of M&E is seen differently by the Implementers outside the M&E Unit. This suggests the lack of common understanding regarding the role of M&E in the department.

(iii) Group 3'

The researcherr did not manager to confirm interview with any official outside the Natioanl Treasury or in other Departments (Externally).

(f) **There were tthree themes that findings were analysed**.

Theme 1:The establishment of an M&E system,

Theme 2: The process arrangements in establishing M&E system,and

Theme 3: The institutional arrangemets of M&E system.

5.2.1.1 The establishment arrangements

All the participants were aware of the existing M&E system within the National Treasury. The majority of the respondents could reasonably explain the concept and purpose of M&E albeit from their respective perspectives. This is a positive awareness that shows that there is continuous marketing of M&E and more and more people will know about it. Most of the participants could reasonably explain the concepts and purpose of M&E from their different perspectives. The participants working with the

M&E system could explain the M&E process and terms in detail and at length. Those working in generic and other line divisions did not use the M&E jargon, but described concepts and purposes through a generic understanding.

It was apparent that, initiative for M&E awareness project will guarantee that everybody is at the same level of understanding in relation to M&E at the National Treasury. All the participants perceived the current Director-General to have advocated the M&E system. This is a positive indication as he seems to have demonstrated backing & support and this may motivate staff. The participants could expressively define their roles and responsibilities around M&E and mentioned which unit was responsible for the role of M&E. The fact that all of the participants were clear about the M&E contribution to the National Treasury strategies objectives and plans is good. This points to a high level of collaborative efforts to achieve departmental goals whist strengthening the M&E system. It is clear that the critical elements of an effective M&E system are already established and gaining benefits within NT.

The study concludes that, the process method of monitoring and evaluating and its performance is already in existence in the National Treasury. This is being achieved through regular annual reporting, quarterly and management meetings on programme performance, the provision of information to various oversight bodies including Parliament and the Auditor General. There was a strong evidenced of robust leadership and support for M&E in addition to the satisfactory understanding, Tthe M&E concept, meaning and purpose Information found through document review also disclosed that M&E is not only stated to in the policy, strategy and planning documents, but it is also utilised to track programme an dproject implementation.

5.2.1.2 The process of M&E Arrangement

The question around M&E arrangements had to be rephrased to state to the present state of readiness for M&E implementation. This was because most participants were not there to witness the readiness assessment conducted at the beginning of the system. However, the document analysis indicate that some level of readiness

assessment was conducted within the public service by the Department of Planning Monitoring & Evaluation (DPME). These elements include (i) policy frameworks that require the department to participate in various regular assessments at public service organisations, nationally, provincially and at local government, (ii) the strategic and operational requirements that serve as incentives for the department to monitor programme performance and report to various bodies, including the DPME, the Department of Public Service and Administration, the Auditor General, and other stakeholders.

The study found that the process of establishment of the National Treasury M&E system was clear even though no evidence was presented of readiness assessment done that focused on roles, capacity, responsibility and incentives being conducted before M&E system was implementation. However, this does not mean the lack of readiness assesmenr of M&E system as there are various elements of M&E systems in place. Readiness assesment was recommended because it provides the basis to determine the required ownership arrangements, responsibility, capacity, incentives, roles, and structural arrangements for the M&E system.

People not being cognisant of the strength and challenges of the M&E system in the National Treasury means that they may not be aware of elements of the process that need to be strengthened. There is an opportunity to start the process of an assessment of the functionality of the current system. This process will provide the National Treasury with relevant and updated information on the current and future performance of the National Treasury M&E system.

Participants believe that the Director-General is a respectable champion for the system. The National Treasury needs to sustain this positive awareness by reiterating and improving whatever that Director General is doing. This initiative is important to show the rest of the department that they still enjoy the support of the central M&E system champion. Participants clearly recognising their roles and responsibilities

within the M&E system is a very encouraging collaboration as this can assist with the lack of capacity that was identified.

The majority of participants (7) consider themselves to be well informed on the process of developing and agreeing on the outcomes to monitor and evaluate. This included the selection of key indicators to monitor outcomes and target setting. This is realistic, given that most of these participants are, to a certain extent, also part of some activities of M&E. The overall results of the M&E process assessment showed that most participants perceived the required process steps for the building of the National Treasury M&E system as having been achieved effectively.

The overall results of the M&E process assesment indicated that most participants perceived that the the required process stepps for building National Treasury M&E system as having been met. All the participants were not sure if the readiness assesment was conducted or not but perceive the curent M&E system working very well.

5.2.1.3 Institutional arrangements of M&E system

The key emerging elements of institutionalisation of the National Treasury M&E system are also presented in this findings. The findings showed that most (12) of the participants believed most of the necessary arrangements to be in place within the National Treasury. These comprise of governance, professional support, value principles and intergovernmental relations. All this are confirmed to be in place. The institutional arrangements that were perceived to still require attention were the structural arrangements, human resourcesa and location of the M&E in the organisation.

Moving from the institutional point of understanding, the researcher noted that various stakeholders have a particular role in facilitating implementation of M&E systems within the public service. These include the Office of the Presidency, Department of Planning, Monitoring and evaluation , Statistics South Africa, the Department of Public

Service and Administration, the Public Service Commission, the National School of Government and the Auditor General.

Governance and partnerships were discussed at as part of the how of M&E can contribute to transparency and good governance. Evidence found in the National Treasury and M&E documents suggests that there is a culture of planning, managing, regulating and practicing M&E within the National Treasury. Participants also indicated that the M&E management leads with a values-based approach concerning policies and the process of ensuring participation of and accounting to stakeholders on the quality and transparency of M&E information.

The findings of this study on structural arrangements are that the positioning of an overall M&E function is not visibly arranged within the National Treasury structure. It was noted that elements of M&E functions exist within some National Treasury directorates, however. It was also found that the existing M&E system focuses more on the core financial processes than on other organisational support elements in the National Treasury. The fact that M&E, as a function, does not appear on the current Divisional organogram may undermine the institutionalisation of M&E systems as the function needs to be visible for greater awareness to assist increased utilisation. The observed variation of perception around the M&E system of the National Treasury can be ascribed to the fact that the M&E system appears incoherent and not located within a common unit at this stage. It was found that the plans are in place to migrate the M&E function to the Office of Director-General branch of the National Treasury. The future repositioning and redefinition of M&E within the Office of Director-General Branch may assist in addressing this situation.

5.2.1.4 Conclusion

The conclusion from Chapter 5 has found that there is evidence of the suggested elements of M&E establishment and institutional arrangements. There is also clear adaptation of the ten steps suggested by Kusek and Rist, (2004) for effective

implementation of M&E system. This includeds: Readiness assessment, Agreeing on outcome, Selecting key performance indicators, Setting baseline data, Gathering the data on indicators, Monitoring for results, Using the evaluation information to support the results-based management system, Reporting on findings, Using the M&E findings, Sustaining the M&E system within the organisation.

Chapter 6 will present conclusions and recommendations based on the results presented in this chapter and the previous chapter.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the summary and conclusions based on the findings of the study. The findings of the study result from the qualitative methods discussed in Chapter 4. The findings were derived from an analysis of the data that was sourced from key staff members from the National Treasury by means of semi-structured in-depth interviews and content analysis of various departmental publications. The participants were purposively selected based on their knowledge of the M&E processes and the case study environment of the National Treasury. The documents used in the analysis were chosen according to relevant content. The key objectives of the study informed the type of literature that was used to inform the positioning of this study. The key issues that emerged from the literature review and document analysis outlined the questions to get the results reported in Chapter 5. The conclusions and recommendations of the study are discussed below.

The study was based on thirteen participants from the National treasury. The age breakdown of the participants ranged from twenty one to fifty three years. The average experience in the area of public service performance assessment varies from five to ten years. All participants were familiar with the implementation of monitoring and evaluation system.

(e) Summary and recomendations:

The previous section identified key findings of the study linked to research question and objectives, the finding will unable the reseacher to provide recommendations. These recommendations may improve the standard of M&E programme management and for better informed decision making in the National Treasury

(i) M&E Implementation: (M&E should be institutionalised and base all the programme and policies on the findings of M&E reports. M&E should be fully utilised and not only be used for compliance purposes).

(ii) M&E Training and capacity development: (National Treasury should continue to prioritise providing training and capacity development opportunities which will keep the employees abreast with all the new developments in the field of M&E. The capacity development opportunities should take place annually and should also form of yearly performance management process.)

(iii) Management involvement on M&E: (The top executives need to be involved in M&E activities in order for the practice to be seen as part of the culture endorsed by the executive. With the involvement of the top executives, M&E is likely to be taken seriously by both the M&E unit and the programme implementers).

(iv) Challenges facing M&E in the National Treasury

The participants indicated that although the National Treasury is effectively implementing the M&E within the Organisation, there are areas of further improvement that needs attention, this includes;

- ✓ lack of sufucuent human resource capacity to implement M&E in the Department, (department should consider review of the M&E structure and alighn it to the mandate of the Unit) and the organisation)
- ✓ lack of suficient budget to to implement M&E sucsessfully The Department should review the budget allocation to M&E function and to be alighned to the M&E strategic objectives) and
- ✓ lack of M&E research activities in the Department (National Treasury should be part of M&E research community and encourage M&E employee to undertake research projects in M&E topics).

(v) M&E strategic goals

It is suggested that M&E should be fully institutionalised in order to assist National Treasury to achieve its strategic objectives. In this regard, the M&E unit should be revitalised and every report should be verified by the M&E unit before it is presented to any of the oversight bodies. Organisational M&E culture should be promoted in order to ensure that all the activities are carried out in the presence of M&E representatives. The Divisional Managers should be encouraged to base all their programmes decisions on M&E findings and guidelines, any information that is not verified by M&E office should be discouraged..

6.2.3 Conclusion

M&E has a potential to play a very critical aspect of project management, it has the potential to improve policy management and ensure enhanced project performance and success. When implemented accordingly M&E can contribute towards capacity development, promotion of learning culture, good governance and public sector reforms. The purpose of this study was to assess if the National Treasury has used the ten steps in effectively implementing the M&E system.

The study has shown that, National Treasury has all the necessary tools to successfully implement M&E and has used all the ten steps as suggested by Kusek and Rist for effective implementation of M&E system. National Treasury have have sound and realistic performance targets and indicators. The department also have a sound Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and all the data collection tools which is an indication that the department is trying to institutionalise M&E.

Inconclusion , it is important to note that there are further areas of improvement of the M&E in the National Treasury that includes, location of the unit, the human resources capacity, visibility and intergration of M&E in all planing programmes. An effective M&E system will play a important role in improving the objective of

good governance and transparency in the organisation by ensuring promtion of critical set of values and principles which supprt elements of trasparency and accountability in an organisation.

This chapter focuses on the summary of the entire study and summarizes the findings made in Chapter 1, 2, 3,4 and 5 on the research objectives. Based on the findings, conclusions were drawn, and recommendations were made relating to the implementation challenges. This dissertation was completed in the hope that the findings and recommendations made, will be useful to improve and ensure effective implementation of M&E in the National Treasury.

6.2.4 Future Research:

It will be interesting to conduct further research on the other organisation like the Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation and Department of Public Service and Admiunistration to establish the challanges experienced in implementing the results-based M&E system in public service and its relationship with the public service reform Agenda using quantitative reseearch methods or using both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

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ANNEXURE:

INTERVIEW FORM

Topic: Assessing the Implementation of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems in the National Treasury

PART A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFO

Name and Surname:_____

Position:_____

Date:_____

Race:_____

Gender:_____

Division:_____

- What is your role in M&E of the National Treasury?

  _____
  _____
  _____

- How long have you worked in the National Treasury?

  _____
  _____
  _____

- What are your key responsibilities?
  _____
  _____
  _____

- Is there a documented M&E organisational structure in the National Treasury?
  _____

- Are the functions of M&E staff in the M&E organisational structure clearly indicated?
  _____

- Is there a dedicated budget for M&E?
  _____

- Are all positions in the M&E organisational structure filled?
  _____

- Have all staff responsible for M&E received training in M&E in the past 2 years?
  _____

- Is there a training plan for all staff members responsible for M&E?
  _____

- How has the National Treasury implemented the M&E?
  _____

- If the Executive and management involved in the M&E within Nationa Treasury?
  _____

- What has been the challenges facing National Treasury M&E implementation?
  _____

PART B: ESTABLISHMENT ARRANGEMENT OF NT M&E

- Name and describe in detail the steps that were used in the process of monitoring and evaluation implementation.

_____
_____
_____

1. Readiness Assessment

1.1 Was any readiness assessment conducted as part of the National Treasury M&E

_____
_____
_____

1.2 Who champions M&E in your department and what role do they play

_____
_____
_____

1.2 What policies and frameworks are in place in your organisation?

_____
_____
_____

2. Indicators and Outcomes

2.1 How does the National Treasury come up with and agree on the outcomes and the development of indicators?

_____
_____
_____

2.2 To what extent are collaborations and partnerships considered in determining monitoring arrangement like outcome, indicators, baseline data and targets for M&E?

_____
_____
_____

3. **Gathering Baseline Data**

How does National Treasury determine the M&E baseline data?

_____
_____
_____
_____

4. **Setting Realistic Targets**

4.1 How does the National Treasury set its targets?

_____
_____
_____

4.2 To what extent are collaborations and partnerships involved in determining targets such as outcomes and targets for results monitoring?

_____
_____
_____

5. **Monitoring for results**

5.1 How does the National Treasury collect M&E data, and evaluate its outcomes

_____
_____
_____

5.2 Who is responsible for what in the M&E process?

_____
_____
_____

6. **Evaluation information to support decision making**

6.1 Does the National Treasury produce performance evaluation studies? If yes, what role do they play and what is the use of their findings?

_____
_____
_____

7. **To what extent are monitoring results used within the Department?**

_____
_____
_____

8. **Analysing and Reporting Findings**

8.1 How does the National Treasury report and communicate its findings?

_____
_____
_____

8.2 What is the process and platform(s) used to communicate M&E findings?

_____
_____
_____

9. Using the M&E findings

9.1 What kinds of M&E information are produced by the National Treasury M&E Unit?

_____
_____
_____
_____

9.2 What is the level of its reliability and accuracy? What role does it play in senior management meetings?

_____
_____
_____

9.3 To what an extent are the monitoring results are used in your department?

_____
_____
_____

9.4 How are stakeholders involved in the M&E process?

_____
_____
_____

10. Sustaining the M&E System

What system has the National Treasury put together to sustain the M&E?

_____
_____
_____

11. M&E Outcome

10.1 Have there been any outcomes derived from National Treasury.

_____
_____
_____

Part B M&E INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

12. What is your understanding of M&E?

_____
_____
_____

13. For what purpose is M&E used in your department?

_____
_____
_____

14. Does your department have M&E? If so, what does it entail?

_____
_____
_____

15. Are M&E roles clear?

_____
_____
_____

16. Does M&E contribute to departmental goals?

_____
_____
_____

17. Do you know the values that underpin the department's M&E?

_____
_____
_____

18. To what an extent are staff trained and developed in M&E system effectiveness in the Department?

_____
_____
_____

19. Who heads the M&E and who does that person report to?

_____
_____
_____

20. Are there intergovernmental structures in place as part of M&E?

_____
_____
_____

21. What support is provided to your department on M&E?

_____
_____
_____