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Naidoo, Indrakumaran Arumugam

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The role of monitoring and evaluation in promoting good governance in South Africa: A case study of the Department of Social Development

Indrakumaran Arumugam Naidoo

A Thesis submitted to the Graduate School of Public & Development Management in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
2011

DECLARATION

I, Indrakumaran (Indran) Arumugam Naidoo, declare that this thesis is my own unaided work, and that technical assistance which I have received is detailed in the acknowledgements; that all field work and data collection was undertaken by me; and that I am responsible for the text of this study and all conclusions reached. No part of this thesis has been submitted in the past, or is being submitted, or is to be submitted for a degree at any other university. The data used in this thesis was obtained between January 2005 and June 2010, while I was a full-time staff member of the Office of the Public Service Commission and a registered candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

I.A. NAIDOO **DATE**

Student No: 0420454N

ABSTRACT

This thesis set out to examine the role played by monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in promoting good governance in South Africa. It examined how M&E, in promoting democratic and good governance deliverables, such as transparency, accountability and learning, influences public administration practice. The reciprocity between democracy and M&E was demonstrated by assessing how the country managed democratic transition, the influence of globalisation on country practice, and specifically how the developmental State advances good governance. The thesis reviewed the evolution of M&E at the continental and country level, and also examined how the discipline has evolved over time, and its particular application in South Africa. A comprehensive overview of the oversight infrastructure was conducted, and tested against the performance of the Department of Social Development (DSD), the case study. Through an assessment of three distinct, but interrelated M&E perspectives, termed mandatory, persuasive and civic M&E, a differentiated picture of policy and actual performance was seen. It was found that mandatory M&E was strong, and the DSD generally performed well against this benchmark. Mandatory M&E also provided the legal basis and support for other forms of M&E. However, it was not always clear that compliance on its own leads to good governance. In examining persuasive M&E, the decision-making environment within the DSD was assessed, and the role of the DSD M&E function examined in terms of, amongst others, improving learning. Civic M&E revealed that the DSD has considered and acted upon the results of the non-government sector in revising its policies. However, there was no effective civic M&E at community level, largely due to uncoordinated or weak NGOs, many of whom were now contracted to the DSD. The research suggests that whilst information has been generated through different forms of M&E, without effective follow-through by decision-makers, it generated transparency, and not necessarily accountability. Furthermore, administrative compliance cannot on its own tantamount to good governance. The thesis argues for methodological pluralism, stronger civic M&E, and confirms the assertion that M&E promotes good governance.

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I was in a fortunate position to be supervised by Professor Richard Levin, who provided me with the intellectual direction and was always available to share his extensive experience on the subject. He helped to keep me focused and motivated, enabling me to complete the research. For this, I am deeply indebted.

The Public Service Commission (PSC) of South Africa, where I work, supported this research financially and made available an extensive body of expertise which I could draw upon. I am certain the skills acquired through the research will benefit the organisation, as it continues to advance good governance in the country and beyond.

I am also grateful to the Director-General of the Department of Social Development, Mr Vusi Madonsela, who willingly agreed that his department serve as a case study for the research. Similar levels of cooperation were obtained from a wide range of stakeholders, all of whom willingly shared their knowledge and time with me. This included M&E experts, practitioners, government officials, researchers and politicians, who added interesting perspectives on the subject of oversight.

I am grateful to my wife Renuka, and children Upendra and Prajna for making the sacrifices over the past few years, by allowing me the time to conduct this research. I remain indebted to my parents for the solid foundation they laid in my life, and my sisters and relatives for their on-going encouragement. My friends and colleagues have also been very supportive. It has been a long and tiring journey, but one which I hope has and will continue to advance the quality of governance and development.

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ACRONYMS

AEA	:	American Evaluation Association
AFrEA	:	African Evaluation Association
AG	:	Auditor-General
ANC	:	African National Congress
APRM	:	African Peer Review Mechanism
ASGISA	:	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa
BIG	:	Basic Income Grant
CAPAM	:	Commonwealth Association of Public Administration Management
CASE	:	Community Agency for Social Enquiry
CDA	:	Central Drug Agency
CME	:	Civic Monitoring and Evaluation
COGTA	:	Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
COSATU	:	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CSG	:	Child Support Grant
DDG	:	Deputy Director-General
DG	:	Director-General
DoJCD	:	Department of Justice and Constitutional Development
DoL	:	Department of Labour
DSD	:	Department of Social Development
DPSA	:	Department of Public Service and Administration
ESCAP	:	Economic and Social Committees for Asia and the Pacific
GEAR	:	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
GTZ	:	German Technical Agency
GWM&ES	:	Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation system
HIV/AIDS	:	Human Immunodeficiency virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HoD	:	Head of Department
IMF	:	International Monetary Fund
KRA	:	Key Results Area
M&E	:	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	:	Millennium Development Goals
MEC	:	Members of the Executive Committee
MME	:	Mandatory Monitoring and Evaluation
MP	:	Member of Parliament
MTEF	:	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
MTSF	:	Medium Term Strategic Framework

NACF	:	National Anti-Corruption Forum
NACH	:	National Anti-Corruption Hotline
NDSD	:	Non-Department of Social Development
NEPAD	:	New Partnership for Africa`s Development
NPM	:	New Public Management
NPO	:	Non-Profit Organization
NT	:	National Treasury
OECD	:	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PALAMA	:	Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy
PFMA	:	Public Finance Management Act
PMDS	:	Performance Management Development System
PME	:	Persuasive Monitoring and Evaluation
PoA	:	Programme of Action
PSC	:	Public Service Commission
PSM&ES		Public Service Transversal M&E System
PALAMA		Public Administration and Learning Management Institute
SAMEA		South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association
SANGOCO		South African Non-Government Organisation Coalition
SASSA		South African Social Security Agency
SCOPA		Standing Committee on Public Accounts
SDI		Spatial Development Initiatives
SMS		Short Message Service
UN		United Nations
UNICEF		United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP		United Nations Development Programme

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO TOPIC AND FIELD OF STUDY

The field of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) has gained ascendency over the past two decades, to its current status where there is an impressive body of literature, a community of practice and even a profession of persons called “evaluators”. A part of the prominence lies in the fact that over the same period there has been a heightened awareness of the importance of good governance in society, and more specifically a focus on the conduct and operations of government. The issues of transparency and accountability, which this thesis probes from various perspectives, is aligned to questions about the quality of public services, and the role played by various actors in ensuring that citizens benefit from an accountability architecture, which operates and articulates at various levels. This thesis sets out to trace how global forces that prevailed upon South Africa`s democratic transition have influenced country policy and practice, including the promotion of good governance.

1.2 RESEARCH TOPIC AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study explores the role of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in promoting good governance in South Africa. It is primarily informed by the theories of M&E and good governance. The following are the broad research questions that are addressed:

1. What is the nature of M&E in South Africa, and how does it compare to the practice of M&E internationally?
2. How effective is the South African developmental State in using M&E to support efforts at promoting good governance?
3. What are the lessons from practice to date, and how can this better inform the implementation strategy of M&E in South Africa?
4. What is the impact of M&E in promoting good governance in South Africa, as evident from the case study of the Department of Social Development (DSD)?

The research problem is to establish whether M&E contributes to good governance, and the research purpose is to examine why and how the different forms of M&E contribute to good governance.

The study is relevant to the M&E[1] and good governance[2] fields of study. It unpacks both concepts and establishes how elements of each reinforce each other. The common denominators that link both are transparency and accountability, with good governance being a normative concept of what is right and desirable, whilst M&E functions as a tool and strategy for the attainment of good governance. Central to the thesis is the question of whether "M&E in South Africa is structured and driven in a manner that optimally supports the transformation of the Public Service, thus promoting good governance?"

The assertion advanced is that M&E does play a role in supporting the transformation of the Public Service in South Africa, as it advances the ideals of good governance. This is because M&E, at both the strategic and operational level requires and amplifies concepts of transparency, accountability and improvement, which resonate with the tenets of good governance. M&E plays a critical role supporting performance management at various levels, in that it contributes to a thinking that is results oriented and also provides methodological options to support performance management. The various strategies and methods used in the pursuit of oversight emerge when there is an M&E discourse, which although varied in terms of purpose and level of operation, is threaded together by the issues important to good governance and M&E. The more critical question that is asked in light of the above is the extent or impact of M&E in supporting transformation and good governance, as evidenced from the case study[3].

This research methodology which is described in chapter 4 presents the rationale for the use of a case study methodology which is deemed appropriate for a study of this nature in that the unit of analysis of a government department is typical of other government departments in the country, as it operates within a defined policy framework. Furthermore, the selected department, the national Department of Social Development (DSD) which is described in detail in Chapter 5, also has a defined M&E function and a policy focus that is directly related to the transformation of the country. This study examines how different forms of M&E interact with the operations, and thus influence the performance of the DSD in relation to its attainment of the objectives of the developmental State. It thus provides an understanding

[1] M&E is defined more extensively in the next chapter. At this stage it will suffice to refer to it as a strategy and tool that supports more effective management.

[2] Good governance is defined as a concept that constitutes parts that are deemed appropriate for advancing service delivery and democracy. There are 9 Constitutional values and principles in South Africa, which may be advanced as the definition and indicators of good governance in South Africa.

[3] The case study of the Department of Social Development is used given its appropriateness to effecting socio-economic transformation, the significant size of its budget and the existence of a functional M&E. Assessing the DSD thus allows for broader comments to be made on M&E and the developmental State.

of the differentiated impact these M&E influences have had on the DSD, in relation to how it has been rated against various standards of good governance and more importantly, service delivery. As a typical government department, the DSD implements policies that are aligned to the mandate of the ruling party, and if departments are well governed and accountable, the political priorities are more likely to be achieved. M&E serves the purpose of keeping departments, as implementation units, on track and focused on the political priorities of government.

This thesis defines and assesses the concept of M&E influence, and begins on the premise that M&E is a dynamic and multi-dimensional activity, which is led from different quarters and for different purposes, each of which is informed by contextually appropriate methodologies. The perspectives are described in Chapter 4 (Methodology), with the constructed typology developed using the criteria of direction, with its associated location and authority, determining an M&E type. The most visible and authoritarian type of M&E is the accountability type, which operates from above, and has been termed mandatory M&E (MME). This is when Constitutional oversight institutions operate by stipulating performance standards and benchmarks for departments, and measuring and reporting their performance against these. The MME tends to be judgemental, produces data for comparative purposes, and its results lead to a higher level of transparency and accountability around government performance. Critically, it helps to entrench an M&E ethos and culture. The second M&E perspective examines M&E from the perspective of its own management, by examining how MME is perceived and valued and also looks at the functionality of the DSD`s own M&E function. As a less obligatory type of M&E, it focuses on organisational learning and the promotion of good practice, and assessing its effect requires a more perceptual based methodology. The third type of M&E is more an external, socially driven and political perspective, which is termed civic M&E and considers the influence and perceptions of citizens, the oversight role of Parliament, the Non Profit Organisations (NPOs), and the media. These three M&E influences on the DSD are considered in terms of the research purpose of the thesis, which is to examine the relationship between M&E and good governance.

The nature of public policy in South Africa means that public administration is prescribed and regulated[4], and this promotes a high level of compliance and similarity of operations across government departments. From a research perspective, it means that findings can be extrapolated to other government departments, and inferences made about cause and effect

[4] The Public Service Act, 1994 and Public Service Regulations

more generally. In selecting the DSD as a case study, broader debates around development can be seen, as the mandate of the DSD goes to the heart of questions about the amelioration of poverty, the reduction of inequality and the overall improvement in the quality of life of citizens. If the DSD executes its mandate well, and demonstrates good governance, it can be an exemplar for how government departments can be effective in fostering broader socio-economic transformation.

In terms of the good governance influencers, which this thesis sets out as M&E perspectives, the strongest influence, and hence most seriously taken M&E (MME) comes from the Constitutional bodies, the main being the National Treasury (NT), Auditor-General (AG) and Public Service Commission (PSC). The authority exercised stems from the role played by these bodies in influencing the budget and ability to publically censure departments. The persuasive M&E category is inward looking, albeit influenced by the results of the MME and CME. What is important to note in the third perspective, civic M&E (CME) is that a true test of public value of a department comes from citizens themselves, either through holding government accountable through political structures or assessing the value of services offered. Chapter 8 is important in supporting the thesis proposition in that it seeks to assess how the various results bring about tangible results.

The three perspectives are conceptual categories meant to delineate the issues and assist in analysis, but as this thesis will demonstrate they are not mutually exclusive in practice. The conceptual distinction is more cognitive than real, and is meant to advance the discussion and analysis. How the perspectives, as sub-sets of M&E in general, work in practice in promoting good governance as evidenced from the DSD remains the key research question. The overarching criteria of whether the DSD is an example of good governance, will depend on the extent to which M&E, from all sides, leads to transparency and accountability in the DSD.

The case study is situated within the context of an evolving Public Service within which M&E is also developing. The DSD reflects both evolutions, and provides a rich insight into how a government department responds to policy imperatives for good governance and how well its own systems help it to achieve this goal.

1.3 RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

1.3.1 Public Service transformation and accountability

This study is very topical and is being undertaken at a time when there is heightened interest in the assessment of government, both locally and internationally (Kusek and Rist, 2004:2). This interest stems from many sources, and there is an acknowledgement that globalisation improves governance, due to, amongst others, the accompanying openness it brings (Bonaglia*et al*, 2001). Within a context where information is readily shared, it also becomes the platform for debate and can help shape norms, as globalisation has done (Castells, 1999). The increased exercising of democratic rights by citizens also puts pressure on governments to self-asses in order to remain relevant, and the relationship between civic culture and government performance demonstrates that a strong civic culture positively influences government performance (Rice and Sumberg, 1997).

At the global and national level there has been an explosion of information from what is couched as the "measurement industry", and which is fed by an appetite for performance results in particular of government. These have taken the form of surveys, assessments, barometers, audits and scorecards, all of which reflect contemporary society demanding increased accountability and transparency from government (Vestman and Conner, 2006). The demand is more pronounced in a maturing democracy like South Africa, which is trying at various levels to break with its apartheid past where previously the performance of government was not considered to be a matter of public concern. In fact, performance information was deliberately kept away from the public.

Kalema (2009: 546) provides a critical review of the evolution of the South African Public Service, by demonstrating that prior to the elections in April 1994, and democracy, the apartheid bureaucracy was subject to several shortcomings, which critics have broadly typified the system as being "illegitimate, unaccountable, unrepresentative, secretive, abusive of human rights and responsive only to the white minority, and to a lesser extent coloured and Indians". He states that with the advent of liberal democracy, the bureaucracy needed to change, and whilst there has been progress; many of the problems from the apartheid era are proving difficult to resolve. He critically comments on critical areas of transformation, such as legitimacy, accountability, administrative neutrality, representativeness and courtesy and human rights. In each of the areas, whilst there has been progress, largely at a policy level, the reality is that serious problems prevail. There are several examples of a lack of action, and examples are cited, for example around the

AIDS programme, of a lack of accountability on ill-fated programmes, police action and poor service delivery. The reality has been more complex, with the notion of administrative neutrality, for example, not being practiced due to the system of appointments. The author contends that whilst the country has made good progress compared to its continental counterparts, the ideals have not reached adequate levels.

Cameron (2009) shows that during the apartheid era, the South African public service was isolated and out of touch with international developments. He shows that New Public Management (NPM) reforms were influential in South Africa, and this paralleled the reforms in other countries at the time. The evidence of this was the fact that there were, during the period, efforts at producing a lean State, decentralisation, agencification, contract appointments, performance management and service delivery. The key feature of NPM, he contends, is the decentralisation of authority and responsibility to managers. However, in the absence of delegations, power remains centralised. Overall, there has been a view that the State plays a strong role in redressing apartheid`s ills.

In today`s democracy, it would be difficult for government to deny the potential and power that performance results have over government, irrespective of where it stems from. There would always be political, economic and social implications emerging from any performance results of government. In the public domain there is awareness, stemming from political pronouncements, of what good governance means. The 9 Constitutional Values and Principles[5] for public administration may be viewed as the operational definition of good governance, and actual performance results can be tested against these ideals. At the political level, there is the political manifesto which highlights what it means by the overarching phrase of "A better Life for All" (ANC, 2004). Government, in having proactively and confidently conveyed to the populace its understanding and support for the normative framework of good governance, has positioned itself to be assessed. The sincerity of its intentions will be tested in practice, when it is in fact evaluated and subject to scrutiny.

1.3.2 The transformation of the DSD and its contribution to socio-economic development

This thesis asks how well government is performing in delivering good governance, and what is the role and impact of M&E in supporting the production[6] of good governance. In

[5] These relate to professional ethics, efficiency, effectiveness and economy, development orientation, fairness and impartiality, public participation, accountability, sound human resource management and representivity.

[6] The term production relates to the generation of conditions and effects that resonate with the ideals of good governance as already mentioned. These include transparency and accountability.

answering these questions the political and social context within which departments such as Social Development operate is considered. A comprehensive description of the department follows in Chapter 4 of this thesis, but it will suffice at this stage to identify the following characteristics of the case study department to demonstrate the relevance of this department to the transformation of the country. The main features of the DSD are that its work impacts on the lives of all South Africans, given its role in disbursing social grants, of which 25% of the population are beneficiaries. Transfer payments in the form of grants are the main sources of income for the rural population, and serve as a safety net against poverty. It also plays a critical role in supporting the transformation processes of the country, in that it is responsible for social services which in essence help to ameliorate the effects of social inequality, influenced by colonialism and apartheid. This forms part of the DSDs broader purpose of contributing to the socio-economic transformation of the country. The budget of the DSD is significant and the propensity for corruption is also high. This behoves the DSD to practice good governance in order to reduce the risk of corruption. The service delivery model of the DSD is to use an agency, the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) to disburse its funds in the form of social transfers.

In light of the above, the DSD must of necessity adopt a leadership and management orientation that is responsive and able to predict any transgressions of its policy. This would also apply to any threat to its good governance model, which is largely prescribed by legislation and regulation and for which the oversight institutions drive compliance. It will also ensure that the DSD is able to meet its broader purpose of contributing to the socio-economic transformation in the country.

1.3.3 Governance improvement in relation to international benchmarks

As a member of the global community, South Africa is obliged to promote policies that meet the international norms and standards of good governance (World Bank, 2006). M&E becomes important in helping an administration develop the predictive capacity necessary to better plan and implement its policies (Kusak and Rist, 2004). Ultimately economic and political sentiment, whether factually or perceptually based, tends to be pitched according to universal and objective-type measures that can be delivered through M&E systems. The inherent power of M&E is that it makes judgements that have far reaching implications which decision-makers cannot ignore. Access to M&E capacity is therefore an essential source of power for decision-makers. The measurement of the quality of governance is a global concern, as it is telling of the quality of public administration, which has a direct bearing on development (Farazmund and Pinkowski, 2006).

The overall international climate means that countries now operate in a more interdependent manner than before, with globalisation and its resultant information flows and expansion of democratic values, coercing participating countries to demonstrate certain minimum standards of good governance. Bonglia *et al* (2001) demonstrate in a multi-country study that globalisation does affect governance by making domestic institutions more open. There is a spread of common, good governance practice across society when there is globalisation, and this is brought about by the signing of multilateral treaties and agreements around trade and anti-corruption, to name but a few.

Organisations such as the United Nations (UN), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM)[7] direct government practice globally. The South African government, as a member of this community, is obliged to measure and improve its own performance. It has to concretely demonstrate that it is attaining standards of good governance. The importance accorded to these reviews can be seen in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)[8], which looks at elements of good governance, economic governance, corporate governance and socio-economic development. M&E can support these areas and help a country to build its own case when it is faced with Peer Review Assessments[9]. However, the implementation of the APRM in South Africa has not been without controversy, with some contestation existing as to how open the process of producing the peer review report for South Africa has been (City Press, 22 July 2007: 24).There has, however, been critique of it, with Boyle (2008) stating that many of the objectives have not been met. Irrespective, this is the first time that such a comprehensive and transparent approach has been made to improving governance in Africa.

South Africa is obliged to meet standards set out in mandatory developmental ideals, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (United Nations, 2000). Achieving the MDGs has complemented other efforts to develop M&E in the country, as it triggers an internal process within government to establish appropriate M&E frameworks so that the country can generate information to show progress against the MDGs. The attention to MDGs comes at a time when there is growing concern about what the real impact of development

[7] The Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAAPAM) is an umbrella body providing support to member countries on amongst others, advise to improve the quality of governance.

[8] Department of Public Service and Administration. 2005. Africa Peer Review Mechanism. Republic of South Africa. Pretoria.

[9] South Africa emerged in 2007 from a Peer Review, which was the subject of contestation due to issues of legitimacy about the process.

interventions have been and remain, given the deepening poverty in Africa (Gariba, 2005: 332). Given that poverty is a persistent issue in South Africa, M&E remains important for informing poverty reduction strategies.

The country has undertaken a Ten Year Review of progress[10], in which it assessed its progress in meeting what government set out to do. This report is an amalgamation of various reviews covering the themes of governance; social, economic, justice and international relations. The assessment charts government`s role in effecting transformation. Following on this broad, largely qualitative and narrative report, a quantitative assessment of progress over time, against critical performance criteria related to the MDGs has been produced by the Presidency for 2008[11] and 2009[12] These reports indicate that M&E is being used in the country to assess matters relating to governance.

There is a trigger effect when macro-assessment reports such as the Ten Year Review are produced. They could result in amplifying the M&E ethos into departments themselves which are now obliged in turn to set up their own frameworks to provide information required from institutions of oversight, such as the Presidency. The development indicators report is organised around ten themes, of which good governance is one. The attainment of all of the other areas is premised on whether good governance exists, as it is an enabling condition for socio-economic development. Good governance is thus a precondition for socio-economic development in the country, and by M&E supporting good governance, it also supports democracy and development[13].

The political sphere of government has a vested interest in M&E results, as it informs it of the performance of the bureaucracy over which it has command (Christensen and Laegreid, 2001). Evaluative results, whether those sensationalised by the media or brought into the public domain through other channels, generally lead to questions being posed about the suitability and competence of specific political or administrative heads (Bratton, 1994). More importantly, it has been shown that organisations that have high levels of political support also have higher levels of organisational performance (Kusek and Rist, 2004). There is clear vested political interest in performance results, with the political sphere motivated to scrutinise the performance of the administrative sphere under its control. Therefore, it is in the interest of the political sphere of government to have access to M&E information to meet

[10] Presidency. 2003 Towards a Ten Year review. Republic of South Africa.
[11] Presidency. 2008. Development Indicators. Republic of South Africa.
[12] Presidency. 2009. Development Indicators. Republic of South Africa. .
[13] The 3rd African Evaluation Association Conference was organised around the theme: "Africa Matters, Evaluation matters – joining forces for Democracy, Governance and Development.

this pragmatic political purpose, a situation that applies to both the ruling and opposition parties who use it to justify success or otherwise.[14]

1.3.4 Governance in relation to local imperatives and supporting mechanisms

In South Africa there is a stated political commitment to good governance, which is contained in the election manifestoes of the African National Congress (ANC). This ideal has been translated by government into a series of policies and programmes that are meant to effect transformation and are contained in the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF)[15], which is the policy framework meant to realise this approach. The strategy for service delivery stems from a budget process which requires clear identification of needs, determination of resources, and deliverables in terms of outputs leading to specified outcomes and measurement and reporting instruments. The mechanism, which is part of the budget process, is meant to be transparent and accountable, and thus resonates with good governance principles. The bureaucracy or Public Service is expected to use these instruments to help deliver on political commitments. The Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) in essence translates the election manifesto into a Five Year Strategic Plan, which contains the deliverables and outputs, both of which are measurable and require M&E. M&E plays a key role in informing the political sphere of progress between the planned (committed) and actual (which would be experienced as service delivery in terms of quantity and quality). In this context, M&E has an important predictive and early-warning role to play.

Cloete (1998: 3) describes the configuration of the South African public service, and describes the public institutions. The term “State”, which this thesis refers to, includes the territory with its population, that is independent and with public institutions to maintain law and order and provide public services for the maintenance of the community and to promote the general welfare of the population. He provides a description, from a political, legal and administrative perspective of how such a State functions.

The administrative arm of government, the Public Service, in turn also requires M&E to inform it of whether it is meeting its targets. It details its deliverables in the MTSF and MTEF. It uses M&E to inform its principals of progress made when called to account by

[14] Reports such as the State of the Public Service Reports, produced since 2004, have been used to inform debates on the success and failure of the Public Service in Parliament. See www.psc.gov.za

[15] National Treasury. 2007. Medium-Term Expenditure Framework Treasury Guidelines. 2008 MTEF. June.

Parliamentary Portfolio Committees.[16] Departments are also put under pressure through national and public pronouncements made through the public posting of the Government Programme of Action (PoA)[17]. The PoA states what the targets are, and invites public scrutiny of government's actual performance. Departments require M&E information to address this oversight pressure and avoid censure for poor performance, which would grade their performance and impact upon their subsequent negotiations for budgets.

An important imperative of good governance comes from the citizens themselves, who are the ultimate beneficiaries of government policy (Chelimsky, 2006). In South Africa this shift has been pronounced following the transition to democracy in 1994. Pre-democratic South Africa was characterised by a hostile interface between government and the majority of citizens, with the Public Service bureaucracy ensuring the political alienation of the majority of citizens[18]. The democratic government through its orientation of the developmental State (ANC, 2005), to be defined later, professes to be citizen-centred and interventionist (Salojee, 2007). In terms of the developmental State, it requires that there be a productive interaction between State and citizens, and this requires a unified system of public administration (Levin, 2005a, 2005b). It encourages M&E by citizens of its operations, and supports this by adhering to constitutionally enshrined principles such as openness and transparency, an example being the PoA which comes under scrutiny. It is a sharp shift from an authoritarian order to a transparent one, brought about by a slew of Acts and regulations, all of which support the effective M&E of government (Friedman, 2004). If used fully, good governance can be promoted.

There is also the economic imperative for good governance which stems from the prosperity arguments; namely, how does government policy and practice promote economic prosperity for its citizens? Picciotto (1998: 3) argues that in an integrated global economy the quality of public expenditures is important, as are issues of economic governance, with evaluation capacity development becoming critical to address these. The related question is how can all this be measured? This is related directly to the developmental goals fostered by the developmental State, which are to reduce poverty and unemployment, so that the country can prosper. It is rooted in the very real economic question about how well incomes and expenditures are managed, and whether the performance of different sectors of government

[16] Portfolio Committees are multi-party structures set up to oversee the progress of departments. Deliberations within them are open to the public, and discussions are generally reported on in the media, thus providing the public access to the workings of departments.

[17] Presidency. 2007a. Government's Programme of Action. http://www.info.gov.za/aboutgovt/poa/index.html

[18] Public Service Commission.2006d. State of the Public Service report. Republic of South Africa.

enhances the growth and development prospects of a country[19]. The AG[20] plays a central role in assessing financial performance, and produces Annual Outcomes reports which point to areas of deficiency[21]. This, if not addressed, will undermine the realisation of the economic imperative. Sound M&E systems, of which auditing is one, help to ensure that the economic imperative is realised.

In South Africa intervention in the economic trajectory of the country has already taken place through policy options followed by the ruling party. The Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR)[22] strategy was used to stabilise the economy, reduce debt, enhance investment and then provide funds for social and infrastructural investment. The policy has been contested, but broadly achieved some of its objectives, which are being taken forward by other policies such as the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGISA)[23]. The use of the Public Service Act[24], the MTSF and MTEF, underpinned by the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA, 1999)[25] are the cornerstones for sound public administration. Whether this translates into delivering good governance depends upon how well policies are implemented and whether these result in an improvement in the quality of life of citizens. M&E measures this.

The above discussion illustrates at a macro-level the importance of M&E for the achievement of good governance, and utility of M&E to various stakeholders responsible for supporting good governance. The discussion will now focus on the specific contributions of the study.

1.4 SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

This study makes specific contributions to the domain of knowledge, policy and strategy as it relates to good governance. The contribution to knowledge is in respect of the field of public administration, specifically good governance and M&E. Based on the empirical assessment of how M&E operates in the DSD, proposals are made on how to improve policy and strategy for M&E in order to optimise the full potential of M&E in improving governance.

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[19] Public Service Commission.2007d. State of the Public Service Report .Republic of South Africa.

[20] The Auditor-General has constitutional powers to operate independently in exercising oversight over fiscal performance. It is thus a focused M&E entity.

[21] Auditor-General. 2006. General Report on Audit Outcomes for the Financial Year 2005-6. Republic of South Africa. Pretoria.

[22] Presidency. 2006b. Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy. Republic of South Africa. Pretoria.

[23] Presidency. 2006a. Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa. Republic of South Africa. Pretoria.

[24] See The Public Service Act, 1994 and Public Service Regulations

[25] Public Finance Management Act, No. 1 of 1999.

1.4.1 Knowledge generation in the field of good governance

The South African transition is multifaceted and complex (Kitchen and Kitchen, 1994). The political transition has been relatively smooth and resulted in an administrative transition, at least at the policy level, in a re-oriented Public Service (Khosa, 2001). This Public Service posits to operate within the model of a Developmental State which is activist and pro-poor. To be responsive and relevant it is dependent upon M&E. The Public Service needs to execute its policy through an administration that supports the transformation of society along political, social, economic, spatial and racial lines. This mammoth task has to be accomplished against high expectations and it requires government to be well-equipped to guide this process. This thesis assesses how successful government has been in achieving this.

The South African literature on good governance shows that some elements of New Public Management (NPM), with its bias towards outsourcing, privatisation and efficiency, may not be applied in the South African public sector as it has been elsewhere. Whilst it has been shown to devolve political control in some parts of the world (Christensen and Laegreid, 2001), in the South African developmental State, there has been an emphasis on driving development from the centre. Thus, the imperatives of the developmental State may clash with the ethos of NPM. The contribution of NPM, however, lies in its emphasis on efficiency which cannot be ignored by even a developing State. The manner in which both these seemingly contradictory thrusts contribute to good governance, is explored.

1.4.2 Knowledge generation in the field of M&E

The literature on M&E emerges largely from observations of the practice of M&E in countries outside Africa. M&E has been a relatively late entrant to Africa (Naidoo, 2010). It does have an accountability emphasis, and questions need to be asked about how effective this has been in improving performance (Naidoo, 2009). The entry of M&E into Africa has been largely through donor programmes, but this has been accompanied by an import of theories and methodologies that are largely northern in origin. This does pose a challenge to M&E in Africa, which has a significantly different context, and which may not be as receptive to northern exports as thought.

The concepts, theories and methodologies that embody M&E may not be applicable to the development experiences of Africa. In the written form, the discourse tends to be dominated

by the West, giving the impression that there is little M&E in Africa. This is not true, and can be attested to by the number and quality of contributions made at the various conferences, seminars and training sessions held under the aegis, for example, of the African Evaluation Association (AFrEA). The number of participants at the Third[26] and Fourth[27] AFrEA conferences, coupled with the breadth and depth of papers delivered on developmental issues by various countries, indicate that an M&E discourse is present on the continent, albeit uneven.

Perhaps the inability of AFrEA to systematically collate these papers and publish more broadly gives the impression that M&E in Africa is nascent. This domination by M&E literature/information in the north may be due to how it has evolved into a profession, attested to by the vibrancy of professional M&E associations in these countries. To date there is no African evaluation journal, and the number of Africans publishing in the mainstream evaluation journals is insignificant. In the north the M&E associations have more M&E consultants and professionals thus there is a strong private or consultancy sector bias[28]. In Africa the M&E expertise generally comes from within the government sector, which is the main player in M&E. This is evident from the participant lists of M&E conferences in Africa[29]. It was also shown at the inaugural (2007) and second Biennial (2009) Conferences of the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) Conference[30], both of which were co-hosted by the PSC.

There is now greater support on the continent from governments for M&E where it is recognised by many African countries that M&E is important for societal transformation which comes about when there is a greater transparency and accountability of its operations. M&E supports the deepening of democracy. There are, however, several challenges.

The main challenge for M&E in Africa is that the promotion of transparency and accountability goes to the heart of challenging political hegemonies. This means that M&E in Africa also takes on a transformative and social justice emphasis, as demonstrated by Whitmore *et al* (2006). In practice this means that the M&E practitioner in Africa needs to be politically astute, sometimes compromising, and working incrementally to achieve small gains. This would probably be different from the concept of absolute independence which

[26] Third African Evaluation Association Conference, Cape Town. December 2004.
[27] Fourth African Evaluation Association Conference. Niamey. April 2007.
[28] Deduced from an assessment of participant profiles at the AAE, EES and AFrEA.
[29] As reflected in the proceedings of the Third, Fourth and Fifth African Evaluation Association Conferences held on the continent.
[30] Reports are available on the website of the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) at www.samea.org.za

probably applies in the West. Another challenge is that the freedom to present findings in a public domain may not exist or be censored. All of these impact upon the relationship that M&E has to the political, administrative and civic elements of society.

In South Africa the thrust for M&E stems from several critical events at the political, administrative and civic level. At the highest political level pronouncements for strong M&E and performance management have been made by the President of the country in State of the Nation Addresses, 2004[31], 2005[32] and 2006[33]. The citing of the PSC in the 2008 address has underscored the importance of this M&E body. The implementation of the Government-wide M&E system (GWM&ES)[34], driven from the Presidency, has also been important. The profiling of M&E findings by the PSC has placed evaluation findings in the public domain, and is evidence of the PSC exercising its constitutional mandate.[35] Collectively, there now appears to be a critical mass of M&E supporters to keep performance issues on the public agenda. This has probably raised public consciousness about the importance and power of M&E to hold government accountable.

The growth of M&E in South Africa has taken on a particular emphasis as it is seen as critical to supporting transformation. This has meant that more emphasis has been on accountability (short term) than supporting organisational learning (long term).In the more mature democracies where administrative fundamentals have been established, there has been more space to focus on methodological rigour and emphasise organisational learning. This is not a problem *per se*, and should be where M&E eventually evolves to in South Africa. The current emphasis on using M&E to entrench accountability and transparency is needed to support public sector reforms and instil a performance culture.

The South African situation with its short association with M&E and its particular pragmatic challenges has not been explored adequately in the literature. The frameworks that are in place are not fully operationalised and the impact of the work of the PSC as a mandatory

[31] Mbeki. T.M., President of the Republic of South Africa. State of the Nation Address. Joint Sitting of Parliament. Cape Town. February 2004

[32] Mbeki. T.M., President of the Republic of South Africa. State of the Nation Address. Joint Sitting of Parliament. Cape Town. 3 February 2005.

[33] Mbeki. T.M., President of the Republic of South Africa. State of the Nation Address. Joint Sitting of Parliament. Cape Town. 3 February 2006.

[34] Presidency.2006c. Proposal and Implementation Plan for a Government-wide monitoring and evaluation System. A publication for Programme managers. Republic of South Africa.

[35] The Public Service Commission is a Chapter 10 body in the South African Constitution, responsible for investigating, monitoring and evaluation public administration. Its functions are stipulated in section 196 (4). .

body is yet to be fully assessed. There has been little assessment of M&E in practice, given the stage at which M&E is in at present.

This study will consider the case study of the DSD in the context of what is in place. The GWM&ES is an ambitious project being undertaken in a context of high expectations. For it to achieve its aims and objectives it needs to be guided by a thorough analysis of the context within which it will operate. An audit by the PSC of M&E and reporting requirements in government shows that progress in entrenching M&E is slow, with M&E viewed as the process of reporting to central departments, rather than a practice of critical reflection and learning within departments themselves.[36] This requires that the receptiveness of the departments (capacity) must be assessed to inform the implementation strategy. If not, the benefits may not be seen, resulting in poor support for the system through poor quality of information provided.

An assessment of how the South African M&E paradigm compares to other relevant international M&E paradigms for supporting good governance would provide lessons to bolster M&E in South Africa. It thus remains a fertile area for future investigation.

1.4.3 Knowledge generation for M&E systems development and implementation

The study contributes to the policy options for implementation. As such it will contribute pragmatically to improving the operations of these two key areas of M&E activity in the country.

The overarching model for M&E in South Africa is the GWM&ES which presents a framework that is comprehensive for addressing the political, constitutional, economic, service delivery, administrative and governance issues. It set out to provide an overarching framework that provides the norms and standards for M&E and was supposed to guide M&E practice in that the departments would be obliged to report on in the first instance core, critical information pertaining to financial performance, service delivery, public administration, governance issues and the PoA. This study assesses whether this happens in practice. There will be authority vested in the central departments for this to take place. Statistics South Africa will play a role in ensuring the integrity of the statistics and the Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA) will be responsible for

[36] Public Service Commission. 2007e. Report on the Audit of Reporting requirements and departmental monitoring and evaluation systems within National and Provincial government. Republic of South Africa.

training. Over and above meeting the central reporting obligations, departments will be encouraged to customise their M&E systems to their departmental requirements.

It must be noted that a comprehensive M&E training strategy is only now being launched, under the aegis of the PALAMA. There is influence of the SAMEA, which is expected to produce a community of practice. Of late, there have been publications to inform practitioners about M&E. These include elementary guides from the NT, the Presidency and the PSC[37] on M&E.

This study has set out to assess how M&E works, at different levels to bring about good governance, using the case study of the DSD. The theoretical framework that follows locates and assesses in more detail the issues around the dynamics of the different interfaces that are inevitable when new policies are implemented and when the operational reality is also subject to its own changes. This relates to how the policies of the democratic government have been influenced by international influences and pressures that come about when a country has to engage in a global context, and align many of these norms to be accepted. There is also the question of how M&E has been conceptualised and used at different levels to bring about greater scrutiny of performance, an aspect that forms the subject of the three empirical perspective chapters of this thesis. The essential research question answered through the perspective chapters is what has been the influence of specific types of M&E on the three traditional M&E outputs of learning, accountability and transparency, and the main good governance indicators of transparency and accountability and greater public participation. The theoretical framework is followed by a chapter on methodology, which details how the M&E perspective chapters have been constructed.

1.4.4 Knowledge gap addressed

This thesis generates knowledge in several areas. Firstly, it provides insight into how a global practice has been absorbed into the South African public service, modified and used in pursuit of achieving global standards of service delivery and good governance. The nature of the articulation between international bodies that promote good governance and M&E are explored, by examining the dynamic nature in which this manifests itself in management practice within a department. Secondly, the extent to which M&E in South Africa is perceived as enabling the developmental State to achieve its outcomes is assessed. Finally, through

[37] Public Service Commission.2008a. Basic Concepts in Monitoring and Evaluation. Republic of South Africa.

the research, insight is provided into the configuration of a public service department through a comprehensive overview of its policies and practices.

Chapter 2

Conceptual Framework

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The conceptual framework used for this study is informed by the literature and observations of the researcher, as it pertains to the field of M&E and the ethos of good governance. As indicated in Chapter 1, this study looks at the relationship between the thrust for good governance, which is driven at different levels and by different actors, and the practice of M&E, which is an adjunct to good governance. A permeating thread in the arguments presented is that there is a global sentiment that democratic governments, such as South Africa, need to adhere to certain democratic, international norms and standards which seek to improve government practice by ensuring higher levels of transparency and accountability. These levels are measurable by a range of oversight actors (institutions, management and citizens), who have either as their mandate or responsibility, the task of commenting on areas of performance.

The specific manner in which the M&E-good governance relationship plays out is described in the next chapter, which more specifically describes the configuration of the developmental State[1] in South Africa, as it relates to issues of performance. In each of the empirical chapters, further detail is provided on how a particular form of M&E works, and thus the literature review focuses on the overarching architecture for good governance and M&E in South Africa. The case study of the DSD is an appropriate unit of analysis for exploring how M&E and good governance work in a particular setting, for the reasons noted in Chapters 4 (Methodology) and 5 (Description of the DSD). M&E is thus viewed as an approach which may be differentiated in terms of its purpose and intent, but which ultimately helps practice align practice with ideal, in the pursuit of good governance[2].

Given that judgement is a key part of evaluation, and thus in turn requires criteria by which judgement can be made, norms and standards need to be presented upfront for the assessment of the M&E-good governance relationship. This chapter presents these by looking at what M&E seeks to achieve, and also examines the global literature on good

[1] The developmental State in South Africa is a particular construction emerging from the particular history of the country, and seeks to redress apartheid by advocating policies that are pro-poor and interventionist.

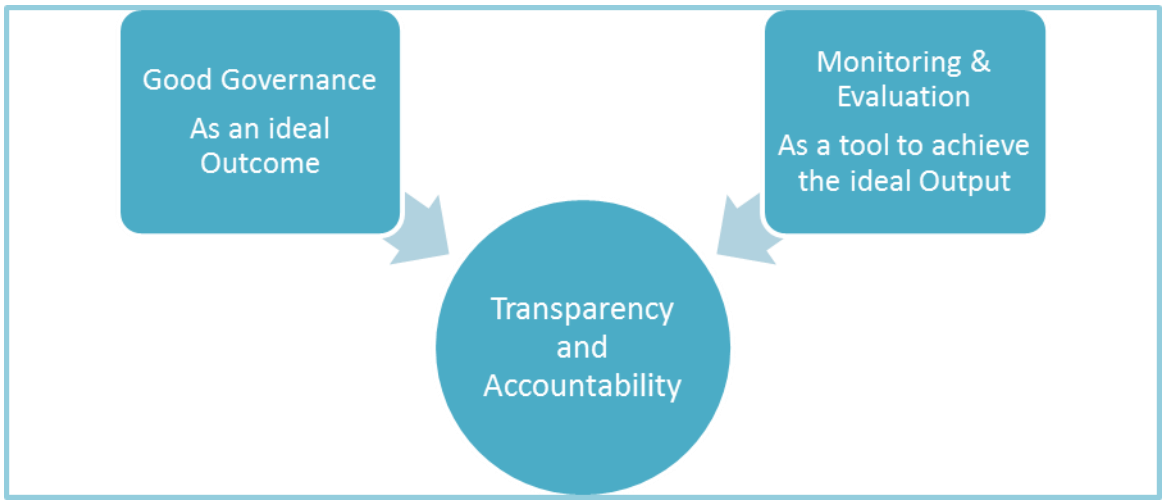
[2] A full definition of good governance follows. It broadly relates to the conduct of government, and relates to amongst others being transparent, accountable and efficient, and working by the rule of law.

governance to identify what the standards are that have been set by good governance seeking bodies. This allows for a comparison of the South African practice. Within this discussion, the field of M&E is explored in terms of its nature, purpose and intent. There is also an assessment of the transformative purpose of M&E, which is particularly important when it comes to South Africa and the case study of the DSD, where M&E needs to move beyond information production, to also addressing social and transformation issues.

At a broad level, M&E in pursuit of good governance should lead to discernable changes in the manner in which government is managed, and services experienced by citizens. It should yield the three pronged purpose of improving transparency, accountability and promoting learning. The main question or problem statement is "does M&E produce good governance?" The purpose statement of this thesis is to explore the relationships between international influence on country practice, and country policy on departmental practice, and such practice on service delivery. The research seeks to understand the dynamics that arise based on each of the M&E pressure points. The empirical chapters (6, 7 and 8) present a typology of three distinct but interrelated M&E relationships; that is good governance and compliance (MME), departmental M&E and good governance (termed PME), and citizen or civic involvement and good governance (CME).

M&E is thus presented in this study as a differentiated and dynamic activity, which influences and is influenced by particular contexts. The cumulative effect of M&E is to generate an ethos (transparency and accountability) that resonates with good governance, a higher level outcome. This is illustrated in Figure 2.1 below.

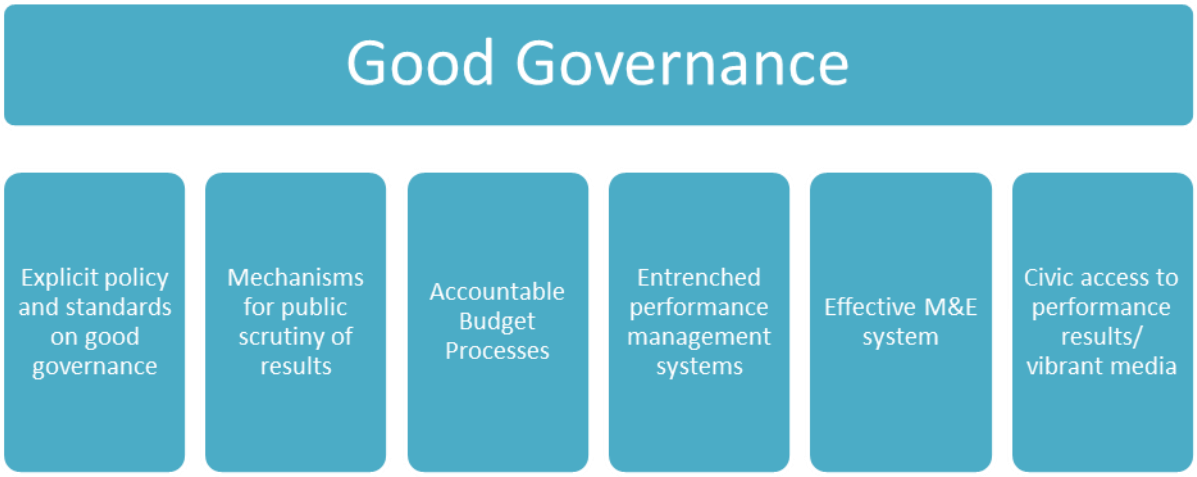
Figure 2.1: Relationship between good governance and M&E



Source: Constructed from the key assertions made in the thesis regarding the relationship between good governance and M&E

There are conditions for supporting and measuring good governance, as illustrated in Figure 2.2 below.

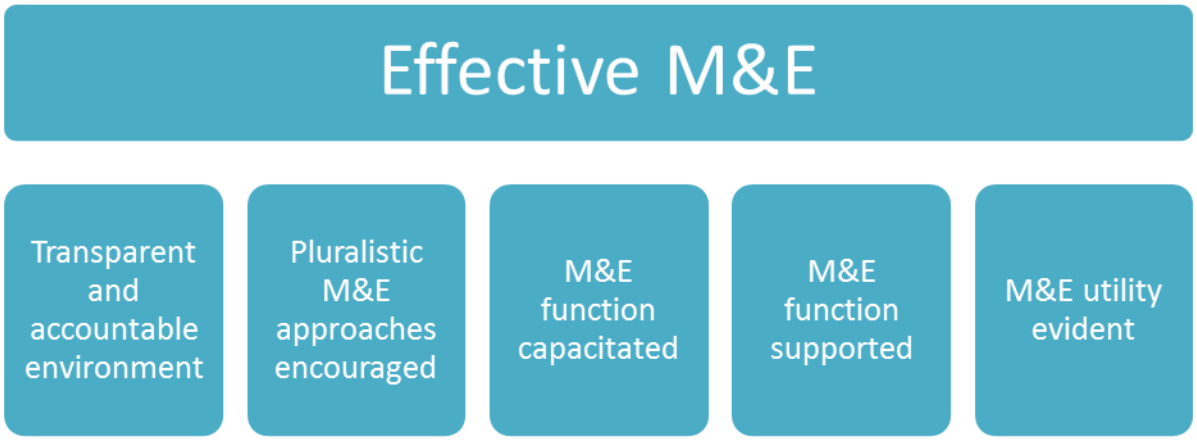
Figure 2.2: Support for Good governance



Source: Constructed from literature review of government performance management policies, imperative and processes

The literature on good governance and M&E is drawn on throughout the empirical chapters to assess how actual performance, viewed though the M&E perspectives, produces good governance in the DSD. Figure 2.3 below shows the basis for M&E effectiveness, which is also a set of criteria to test M&E in the DSD.

Figure 2.3: Basis for M&E effectiveness



Source: Constructed from literature review on M&E

The above Figures illustrate the mutually supportive relationship between elements related to good governance and effective M&E. The eventual "production" of good governance is an

outcome or effect, but tangible activities and outputs at the administrative levels are evidence that good governance has been achieved. The empirical/ M&E perspective chapters explore these relationships by assessing what occurs at these levels, in terms of their individual and collective contribution to good governance. The levels are those relating to law and obligation (mandatory M&E), managerial practice (persuasive) and citizen impact (civic M&E). The empirical chapters elaborate upon these areas, as it relates to the country and the DSD.

2.2 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This section appraises M&E, in terms of its classification and nature, which illustrates the dynamic nature of the discipline that has resulted in its broad scope with regards to approach and methodology. The second aspect looked at is the area of definitions, and the third returns to the question of purpose, by examining how evaluator perspectives influences practices. These set the basis for the assessment of M&E in South Africa.

2.2.1 The trans-disciplinary and transformative nature of M&E

This review begins with the field of M&E, and focuses on the elements that are relevant to the research question. It must be emphasised that the philosophical orientation and conceptualization of M&E has evolved over time. This has mirrored the paradigm shifts that have occurred in society and the social sciences, with M&E practice in the 1960s being dominated by a strong emphasis on quantitative data, reflecting the social scientific trend of the era. The emphasis on empowerment evaluation mirrored the period of social discontent around the social sciences in the 1970s. The focus on empowerment methodologies sought to focus on lived experiences, and give voice to many stakeholders as possible, which was a secondary goal of a consensus-shaping evaluation process (Schwandt and Burgon, 2006: 109). The M&E methodologies that followed began to focus on participatory approaches and empowerment techniques. Subsequent to this, there were less distinct trends, and what one finds today are several approaches to M&E, which in essence reflect the history of evaluation and its many purposes and roles, and which need to cater for different audiences (Mark *et al,* 2006: 23). A content analysis of key evaluation conferences indicates the diverse range of approaches to M&E[3], and the increasingly high number of topical interest

[3] The researcher set up a template to categorise the content of evaluation conferences, by specifically looking at criteria relating to accountability, learning and empowerment. This is discussed fully in chapter 4.

groups is a further indication of the broad ambit of M&E[4]. There is a rich diversity, which also illustrates regional and thematic priorities[5]. The growth in the evaluation field may also be attributed to greater accountability concerns, and the general increase in the discourse around measurement[6]. The absence of a common purpose for M&E has meant that M&E has gained popularity as it has catered for a diverse range of subjects, and the international recognition accorded to it as a profession, may be seen in the country and continental evaluation associations that have been established[7].

One needs to try to resolve the question often asked about whether M&E can be categorised as a field, an approach, or a discipline? It is the very particular manner in which M&E has evolved that has resulted in Scriven (2004: 185) choosing to refer to the field as "trans-disciplinary", a concept that is used more in recent times to describe M&E (as opposed to the term discipline or field). He contends that evaluation would constitute a discipline, albeit "trans", in that it meets the tenets of adhering to a discipline. This trans-disciplinary field does not mean that there is no overarching cogency to M&E. What it does illustrate is the drawing from other fields to advance the discipline, and what is clear that M&E has been influenced by the social sciences; at the same time it is distinct from the social sciences due to its applied orientation. This distinctiveness is important, and means that M&E must be considered in terms of how it supports decision-making and action, which given its overarching nature, and ability to pronounce makes it potentially transformative in a political and social sense.

Irrespective of how M&E is defined, a common thread and concern that transcends the philosophical orientation remains that of "independence", which evaluators feel strongly about. It links directly to questions of credibility and authority, and is dependent on factors such as capacity and organisational location.

2.2.2 An operational definition for M&E

An important conceptual problem, similar to how to classify M&E, is "what is M&E?" The

[4] A content analysis of the programmes of the American and Canadian Evaluation Association Conferences, the European and UK Evaluation Society, African Evaluation Association (AFrEA) and South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) was undertaken to arrive at this assertion.

[5] The AFrEA and SAMEA conferences indicate that themes drive the programme, and there is more coherence emerging from these conferences.

[6] The use of facts and figures remains persuasive, and benchmarks for all forms of governance or performance are taken seriously given the economic implications.

[7] Each continent has evaluation associations, which have helped to profile the field and give evaluators an identity by creating communities of practice.

literature review indicated that there is no single, uncontested answer as to what M&E is, which may in turn be attributed to the fact that there is no consensus around its purpose. The purpose question thus influences the "what is?" question. The purpose ranges from promoting accountability[8], to transparency[9], to organisational learning[10], and depending on the particular purpose, the approach would vary. There would also be different permutations to the above which in turn would depend on the context and subject matter. It is for this reason that M&E can at times come across as a nebulous[11] concept. This lack of a clear definition may be due to often serving contradictory and opposing purposes, as there is an argument that there could be tensions between accountability, transparency and learning. Proponents of different schools of thought use political, philosophical and methodological arguments to justify their particular approach, and this is reflected in the diversity that one sees in M&E today. The diversity can be seen in terms of methods used and the subject matter considered[12].

2.2.3 The use of the term M&E

This research deliberately uses the term M&E, as opposed to just evaluation or monitoring. This statement is about the unity between these elements, which whilst distinct at one level, are in fact necessary for a holistic understanding[13]. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2002: 27) definition of M&E are useful to also consider, given their widespread use.

> *Monitoring is seen as a continuous function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and main stakeholders of an on-going development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives...allocated funds.*

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8 In contexts which are considered in need of reform, accountability is a major thrust expected from M&E. This applies to transformational contexts like the South African public service.

9 Transparency is seen as a means to prevent abuse of power and corruption, and by insisting on certain levels of reporting, it is seen as a way to instil good governance.

10 Organisational learning has not been studied in depth within government contexts, as there are assumptions that information about performance translates into deeper understanding and subsequent skill enhancement. This may not necessarily be the case.

11 This does not mean that M&E is nebulous, rather that proponents of particular views tend to thrust their views as hegemonic, hence the positioning that emerges from different M&E practitioners.

12 In a relatively short period of time M&E has moved beyond assessing projects, to now producing evaluations of most subject areas.

13 Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Glossary of Terms in Evaluation and Results-based Management. 2002.

Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy...the aim is to determine relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability....it should involve incorporation of lessons learned into decision-making process...it also relates to the worth or significance of an activity, policy or programme.

The "M" is related to, hence the "and", the "E". Thus monitoring, whilst seen as an on-going management function, and evaluation as the post-event function, which feeds information back to management for the next event, is too simplistic a distinction. In doing monitoring one is evaluating, as one is making a judgement about progress and intervening on the basis of this judgement. Similarly, when one does an evaluation, one does so on the basis of monitoring data, and judgements can best be made with these insights. In practice, the sequencing is not as linear as one following the other, but more dynamic depending on the situation. The OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) [14] defines monitoring as a continuing function that uses systematic collection of data, on an on-going development and on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.

The OECD's Development Assistance Committee defines evaluation as a systematic, maximally objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy and of its design, implementation and results whose aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation must provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into decision-making by both recipients and donors. This study uses the terms M&E separately and together, depending on the discussion.

2.2.4 The purposes and types of M&E

There is a spectrum of views on what M&E means and what it should achieve. The most distinguishable views within this spectrum comes from those who see M&E as supporting a purely accountability function. This grouping aligns itself to the field of auditing, compliance and performance management (Cook, 2006). The forms of M&E for accountability would be oversight, exercised by external and internal players. The external players would be those actors that fulfil a regulatory function, such as the Auditor-General. It would also include

[14] OECD, Evaluation Quality Standards. Development Assistance Committee. http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/30/62/36596604.pdf

some form of civic oversight, which would come about when citizens hold government accountable for the use of funds and performance on programmes.

In accountability orientated M&E, high levels of scrutiny are expected, and judgement generally made against clear standards and norms that have been established for a range of performance areas. This would include the proper management of budgets, personnel, legal and regulatory compliance with process and procedures and as in the case of South Africa, transformational and ethical considerations. Deviation from any of the standards invites censure, and the ranking of departments across these indicators and making such findings public may take place. In this context M&E is seen as supporting a governance function, which Cook (1997:14) points out "encompasses the entire management, operating systems and culture of an institution". It also links to government if supported by a strong government auditing system. Improving governmental management is yet another reason evaluation is employed in government (Davies *et al*, 2006: 165). It is thus not surprising, as discussed under chapter 3, why evaluation has been explicitly employed to advance the goals of the developmental State. Furthermore, the importance given to it by governments in Africa, as part of their process of improving their efficiencies, indicates recognition that change cannot be driven without appropriate tools that generate strategic management information.

Apart from M&E serving the very necessary purpose of accountability, for reasons mentioned above, it also is meant to promote the "learning organisation". This would be at the level of M&E use, and comes about when results are presented. The assumption is that organisations would become more open and self-reflective when faced with evaluative information, but it is not necessarily the case as operationalising learning is not easy, given the complex array of protocols and management culture which must be negotiated (Preskill and Russ-Eft, 2005). It has been shown that whilst it is implicit that M&E should lead to learning and reflection, this may not be the case and the way in which organisations integrate information may be complex, and not as causal as suggested in classic M&E project or programme management terms.

Utilising evaluation in organisations is, however, not easy, and influenced by several factors: contextual (political), technical (methodological) and bureaucratic (psychological). These factors overlap, but what is clear is that unless "all the elements are lined up, organisational learning is difficult" (Mayne, 2000: 29). Tuckermann (2007) assesses this grouping in terms of how M&E contributes to learning and reflection, and notes that in this mode M&E is seen as but one tool that supports management by improving the quality of information provided for decision-making. Whilst most of the research has focused on NGOs, there is growing

interest in seeing how M&E helps to build learning organisations (Roper and Pettit, 2002). There is much potential for evaluation to lead to organisational learning, and not just accountability, which has been illustrated by Gray (2009). The point made is that M&E intent is very important, as it could lead to different outcomes. It should be remembered that M&E has assumed different identities, due to context, and depending on this it may be used for accountability, promoting a behaviour or practice, or learning, as demonstrated in a series on the subject (Bemelemans-Videc *et al*, 2007a). Within the context of asking the question, what is the purpose of M&E, there are dilemmas as it often shares an identity with auditing, especially when is assumes an accountability function (Bemelmans-Videc *et al*, 2007b). The multiple uses of M&E are demonstrated in these works.

The relation of information to action was assumed to be linear and straightforward, but is not so in practice, as little attention has been paid to the theoretical understanding of organisational learning processes or the manner in which organisations assimilate and use information (Leeuw and Sonnichsen, 2000). There are clear pre-conditions to learning, which include understanding the policy cycle and government decision-making processes. Rist (2000) states that many factors needs to be considered, and learning cannot be taken for granted.

This section has illustrated that M&E does serve different purposes, each of which is distinct but not mutually exclusive. In looking more specifically at some of the M&E types, it is important to consider the work of Patton (1997) who has become widely known for his utility-focus in M&E. He asks a critical question; "so what after M&E", and in so doing, challenges the school of thought that argues that M&E practitioners are only responsible for evaluation results till they hand this over to decision-makers[15]. According to Patton[16] the utility of results must be demonstrated, and can only come about if change emanating there from is seen. A utility-focused M&E requires M&E practitioners to ask questions about the whole process, and this goes to the heart of questions about roles and responsibilities. M&E practitioners need to think beyond the production of the report, and consider how they can influence decisions, and thus see the value of their work. In this context, it means that M&E practitioners should understand the organisational and political contexts within which they work, and customise their strategy for achieving influence according to this reality. This

[15] This approach absolves the M&E practitioner of any responsibility for M&E impact. It is discussed more fully in this section, but sees the M&E as a detached professional who need not enter the decision-making or political terrain.

[16] *Ibid.*

approach requires an appreciation of the decision-making context and the administrative-political interface, which is where decisions are made and carried through.

M&E functions and is used in a particular context, which Stern (2006: 293) shows is "mediated by geography, politics and subject matter, which in turn determines the adoption of particular philosophical, subject and methodological dimensions". This reinforces the point made about how M&E mutates in particular contexts, and cautions against the notion that a standardised M&E approach can be applied in any context and be expected to work. Thus, M&E in the developmental State context would be different from how M&E operates in other contexts, as the questions asked would pertain to the specific policies and content. Furthermore, if citizens are clients of M&E information, they need to be treated differently from the decision-making clients within the bureaucracy, and this means differentiated approach and products to ensure relevance.

Given the very important influence that positivism has had on M&E systems development, especially those used to drive compliance, it is important to critically appraise whether driving compliance should be an end in itself. Whilst statistics are important, it would be important to assess whether such outputs solve deeper policy and organisational problems, or whether they just alert when there is non-compliance to some parameter or measure. Compliance driven systems would privilege the measurable and visible, but a deeper concern is whether they produce the type of information that helps to solve problems. In other words, it may produce accountability and transparency, but does it lead to organisational learning, beyond information as to where one lies on the compliance graph? The logic of measurement may be associated with "the truth", but the question that must be asked is whether the exercise is simply a measure of compliance or effective and good governance.

The purely quantitative approach to M&E did not last long globally or entrench itself as a dominant approach, which was understandable given that purely scientifically based approaches to social problems is limited (Rossi *et al*, 2004). The more critical approach to social problems privileged context, interrogated socio-political and socio-economic relationships more deeply and was evident in the Marxian and post-Marxian approaches. This constructivist approach argued that since contexts produce the issues and problems it is only by returning and considering the same contexts that problems can be solved. Problem solving in this approach is more than getting accurate data and facts; it is about understanding the logic behind the data and facts and contextualising such facts in order to give it true meaning and value a more relevant question would be whether compliance *per*

se leads to good governance? This is in light of the fact that the targets may simply be measures of "tolerance"; in other words, what range of deviation is tolerated before a department is considered non-compliant. This returns one to the question of whether compliance on its own is an indicator of good governance.

The use of quantitative approaches in M&E globally is not a problem *per se*, rather it becomes a problem when there is no interpretation beyond the statistics, and figures become the irrefutable answers to questions (Black, 1999). A sensitive approach to M&E should endeavour to change, through engaging with users and providing a critical interpretation of data and employing plural methods that triangulate and thus provide more sensitive and context specific analysis and reports. M&E would then add value, and not just be another form of audit. The question that needs be asked is how does M&E distinguish itself and add value to public policy and the promotion of good governance, rather than just compliance? A sound M&E should not just improve compliance; it should also enhance the reflective capacity of organisations, whilst simultaneously increasing transparency, accountability and supporting a culture of learning (Engel and Carlesson, 2002). In measuring M&E effectiveness, all of these must be considered.

The above discussion is embedded in the issue of enlightenment and rationality, with M&E practitioners often presenting themselves as experts, whose sheer arguments in reports cannot be ignored, and who serve a greater good in making things work correctly. There would be a leap in faith if one were to assume that knowledge from M&E experts is the sole information used for decision-making, or that evaluation reports automatically translate into rational decisions. Marra (2000) demonstrates that the link between knowledge generation and utilisation is often not clear, and it is difficult to isolate which information is the basis for a particular decision. This is a salient point when assessing M&E functionality or effectiveness, as the assumed causality, and hence value is often not easy to distinguish, which may result in M&E practitioners not seeing their particular contribution or value. This can be disempowering and needs to be managed carefully.

2.2.5 Methodological debates and considerations

Another vexing question which should be highlighted, and which is also prevalent in M&E forums, is that of methodology. M&E practitioners are aware that their findings can be rejected based on the credibility of the methodological basis. The methodology question will

always be central to M&E, as it is the basis for the construction of the "truth"[17], from which important judgements and recommendations are made.

At a broad and generalised level the methodology question tends to bring up some of the old debates that still prevail in the social sciences and which relate to the old dualities in terms of how knowledge is best constructed and validated. It leads to the so-called dualities between the objective and the subjective, positivistic and interpretative approaches. Fortunately, the sharp dualities and positioning has faded away and given way to the use of pluralistic methods, more options than directives, with mixed-methods seen as acceptable (Greene and Caracelli, 1997).

In the terrain of citizens and the M&E of government performance, a caution needs to be sounded as there are obvious pitfalls when this sector (civil society) is evaluated by government alone. Issues of "legitimacy, transparency, independence and incompatible objectives" come to the fore (Rogers and Williams, 2006: 76). It is for this reason that civil society needs to be involved in monitoring, as it promotes transparency and accountability, as demonstrated in projects where there are many role players (Fox, 1997). A balance thus needs to be struck by incorporating the use of assessments generated by NGOs and CBOs, if these exist, into the results of government evaluations. This will be the only way in which to credibly assess the views of citizens of government performance. The issue of using M&E for purposes that address accountability, service standards, whether management changes work, and whether policies and programmes are effective, have been highlighted by Goldstein (2008).

Irrespective of which M&E perspective is taken, the implicit assumption is that the process and results are credible, irrefutable and valid and the overarching principle of validity remains. The validity argument is central to the discussion on credibility. Credibility of M&E comes about when users of M&E see it as valid, which they base on what utility the M&E information serves. This is also informed by how confident they are about the independence and capacity of the M&E function.

If M&E is not perceived as being capacitated, the credibility of M&E may not be entrenched and results will be questioned (Boyle and Lemaire, 1999). The M&E function should thus be capacitated to deal with both qualitative and quantitative information requirements, and

[17] There has been much written about M&E playing God, having the final answer. This goes back to questions of measurement, and fortunately there is now a more realistic approach to the facts, with a view that final recommendations must be constructed by role-players, rather than handed down by experts.

capacity building[18] and institutionalising[19] the M&E function is important. This will influence how seriously such a function is taken and influence its support. It has also been shown that for M&E to have utility and assist public sector management, it must be institutionalised (Mackay, 2006). These are important considerations for assessing M&E effectiveness.

2.2.6 Summary: M&E

This section has shown the evolution of M&E, and illustrated that given its ability to address overarching questions of governance, it has a wide application. Furthermore, it serves several purposes, and uses different methodologies for attaining its goal of improving transparency and accountability. It does, however, remain a strategy and tool for the promotion of good governance, and the results generated need to be applied through a management hierarchy. The approach to M&E can be varied, and is informed by context, which influences that nature of the practice. The next section discusses the second conceptual area that is relevant to this study, namely, good governance.

2.3 GOOD GOVERNANCE

In this part of the conceptual framework, the concept of good governance is analysed. A deeper analysis of this concept is necessary, so as to understand its rationale, which emerges from a historic context which saw many governments facing legitimacy and development crisis due to poor governance. The thrust for good governance since the 1980s, largely led by multinational organisations, was an attempt to address these problems. Globalisation has resulted in increasing information flows and interaction between counties and has helped to raise consciousness about issues of corruption and accountability, and many bodies now exist, which measure and report on different aspects of governance. These ratings are influential, and by virtue of country performance being measured externally, there has been the development of country-specific policies and systems which address the elements of good governance through their own M&E systems. Good governance is thus not an abstract notion, it is a way of conducting affairs that are in the public interest and should be democratically enriching.

[18] Most evaluation conferences now have capacity building workshops to maximise the opportunity to expose practitioners to both debates and build skills.

[19] Institutionalising M&E is important to give it authority, and hence support its influence with key decision-makers.

2.3.1 Locating the concept of good governance

There terms governance and good governance are being increasingly used within development literature. Governance refers to the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented. It can be used in several contexts; corporate governance, international governance, national and local governance. Governance may be defined as a set of values and principles which promote elements of transparency and accountability, although there are permutations to this definition as demonstrated by Rhodes (2000) who defines good governance as marrying NPM to liberal democracy.

Weiss (2000) shows that many academics and practitioners use the term governance synonymously with government, which he regards as incorrect. Government is the institution, the administrative machinery for effecting policy, but the quality of that which is produced is governance. It is a higher level outcome and goes beyond the traditional services of government and needs to also align to ethical and democratic standards. Governance implies going beyond the legal authority, and implicitly implies that there will be some form of validation or judgement of activities[20], to see whether these do align to the values of good governance. Given the need for validation, it requires sound M&E to indicate whether or not this ideal is achieved.

Santiso (2001) mentions that governance as a concept is relatively new, and emerged in 1989 in the World Bank`s report on the crisis of governance in sub-Saharan Africa, where the capacity, ability and willingness of political authorities to govern effectively in the common interest was highlighted. The governance question has been illustrated as important for Africa by Amuwo (2000) who describes the relationship between globalisation and the New Partnership for Africa`s Development (NEPAD) and argues that with globalisation African countries, previously on the margins of the good governance networks, were brought in through African driven initiatives like NEPAD, to align these countries with international good governance values.

A good governance system also requires that the process of decision-making and public policy formulation is transparent and accountable. It extends beyond the capacity of public sector to the rules that create a legitimate, effective and efficient framework for the conduct of public policy. It implies managing public affairs in a transparent, accountable, participatory

[20] Good governance can be measured and is validated when practice is assessed through some form of M&E. Examining the performance against constitutional values and other principles indicates the extent to which this goal is realised.

and equitable manner. It entails effective participation in public policy-making, the prevalence of the rule of law and an independent judiciary, institutional checks and balances through horizontal and vertical separation of powers, and effective oversight agencies.

There is the argument that the nature of the bureaucracy of government themselves, tends to dilute policy intent, which may include good governance imperatives, and has been blamed for slowing down government. This has led to the drive that private-sector solutions be introduced to improve government efficiency, which is generally referred to as the Washington consensus, but which does not have support today, particularly in developing countries (Williamson, 2005). The current global crisis which has resulted in the call for more government monitoring of all sectors of the economy, and the bail out of the private sector, shows that leaving the private sector without regulation or only using the private sector to deliver government services, or uncritically importing private sector solution into the public sector is not desirable. The South African developmental State professes to be interventionist and pro-poor, for reasons that are discussed later, and which reflects a particular history and experience.

In the global discourse on good governance, there has been a proliferation of international bodies which support good governance, and do this by measuring and reflecting on a country`s performance in different areas related to governance, such as corruption and transparency. Assessments made by bodies such as the World Bank, Transparency International, and in the African context, the African Union, have been prominent, are taken seriously and tend to influence foreign direct investment and a country`s development. Good governance measures serve as confidence indicators (both domestically and internationally) in the political and administrative management of a country. The recent global economic crisis has been a crisis in the systems of governance, both private and public sector. This period has seen government intervention to help the private sector, and to an extent has indicated that the private and public sector are not so separate, with them impacting on each other. The hegemony enjoyed by capitalist, free-market thought, has also come under the spotlight. In light of this, it is not surprising that corporate governance has also come under the spotlight.

The question of what is good governance has also been interrogated by influential international bodies, like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which whilst generally judging countries they engage with, have now begun to interrogate the manner in which they govern themselves. In a compendium of studies of IMF governance, the question of transparency and accountability, and the manner in which boards conduct themselves is

scrutinised (Lamdany and Martinez-Diaz, 2009). This shift is positive and probably reflects the current economic climate which has negated many of the assumptions about how growth and development should take place, by institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank.

The concept of good governance[21] is broad (Weiss, 2000); however, what is clear is that it relates to a way of doing things, or conducting activities that are proper[22], transparent and accountable[23]. This discussion will show that different institutions list different elements in their definition of good governance, but common to all is the question of transparency and accountability. When looking at the definitions of agencies such as the Asian Development Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Economic and Social Committees for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the World Bank on governance, this variation is demonstrated. This is thus an important discussion as it presents concepts that will be assessed in the perspective chapters of this thesis. The ESCAP[24], definition lists 8 major characteristics, namely consensus orientated, accountable, transparent, responsive, equitable and inclusive, effective and efficient, follows the rule of law, and participatory.

The above definition, if applied to South Africa would be favourable, given the divisive impact that apartheid had on the population. The drive for consensus, being responsive, promoting equitable and inclusive measures, and engaging in participatory practices is very relevant. The element of responsiveness is one of the eight *Batho Pele* principles in South Africa, and measuring it at the service delivery level provides an indication of the quality of governance. Similarly, if public participation practices seek to build consensus, programmes are likely to be more sustainable and owned. The question of equity is particularly important to South Africa which needs to engage in redress mechanisms. The ESCAP model thus has application to the South African situation.

The African Development Bank (2010) clarifies its concept of governance by identifying four elements, these being accountability, participation, predictability and transparency. This definition would also be applicable to the developmental State in South Africa, especially in terms of participation. The African Development Bank definition addresses issues of participation of project beneficiaries and affected groups, addresses the importance of

[21] The indices of good governance may vary, but generally relate to a better way of doing things, of value-adding. In South Africa the 9 constitutional values and principles are considered as indices of good governance.

[22] Proper would relate to normative ways of doing things, of following standards and measures.

[23] Transparency and accountability are stipulated as two of the 9 Constitutional values and principles. These elements are also common to definitions of democracy and M&E.

[24] See http://www://www.unescap.org/pdd/prs/Project activities/Ongoing/gg/governance.asp

improving the interface between the public and private sector, and views NGOs as important. The issue of predictability is important, as this is necessary for investment and growth, as too frequently political changes tends to prevent development from gaining momentum. The issue of policy continuity and stability are measures of good governance and means that policies have sufficient time to be implemented, provided off course that they are appropriate and meet the tenets of good governance.

The UNDP (1997: 2) views governance as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country`s affairs at all levels. It states that good governance is achieved when the following 9 characteristics are displayed; participation, strategic vision, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity building, effectiveness and efficiency, and accountability.

The rule of law, apart from accountability and transparency, are common features across all good governance definitions. The UNDP prioritises those aspects relating to participation, consensus orientation (implying democratic processes of engagement to achieve this outcome), equity building and responsiveness. The UNDP definition would, as in the case of the ADP and ESCAP offer some relevance to the South African context where there is a need for improving civil society participation. There is also the need to shift from a central government approach to one that involves all stakeholders and brings in marginalised voices, thus ensuring accountability, with bad governance meaning a lack of accountability, and which comes about when citizens are not involved in the matters of government (Gurung, 2000).

Researchers at the World Bank, Kaufmann *et al* (1999) have distinguished six main dimensions of good governance:

- Voice and accountability, which includes civil liberties and political stability;
- Government effectiveness, which includes the quality of policy-making and public service delivery;
- The lack of regulatory burden;
- The rule of law, which includes protection of property rights;
- Independence of the judiciary; and
- Control of corruption.

The World Bank definition which tends to focus more on the formal aspects of governance is biased towards the market (lack of regulatory burden) and the protection of property rights – presumed individual. It correctly emphasises the question of corruption and sees an independent judiciary as important, presumably to curb the abuse of political power. It appears to be rooted in a very particular history of engagement with developing countries, and this assertion is made in light of how it has engaged with countries when advising and funding development. It appears to focus more on individual rights (civil liberties, property rights), which need to be served by an independent judiciary, and accords a full dimension to the corruption question. Having clarified what constitutes good governance, the discussion proceeds to assessing what the implications are for the South African developmental State, which is a particular model that seeks to drive governance and development in a particular direction.

In actualising governance, the question that arises is what specific use M&E has; in other words how can one achieve greater management accountability and promote good governance through M&E (Mackay, 2007). Opponents of good governance may suggest that there is a major difference between the private and public sector, and may argue that the nebulous nature of public goods means that it is not measurable, as there is no bottom line. However, public goods can and must be measured, which Smith and Bratton (2001: 453) show when they say that the public sector is "not special, as it uses resources and must account for it". It should therefore demonstrate its value-add and also be subject to the same levels of scrutiny that the corporate sector experiences. Also, with increasing private-public partnerships, the sharp divide between the private and public sector has become more blurred and interchangeable, resulting in a more demanding expectations from citizens of the governments they elect, and the governance they expect. This implies the need for M&E to demonstrate at one level the value added by government. It marks a shift from an unaccountable government, operating within an opaque and unaccountable bureaucracy.

The above relates to what the intention of good governance is. The more fundamental question is what happens when the quality of governance is indeed measured, as would be the case in countries that accept the need for good governance (World Bank, 2006). It is incorrect to assume that measurement on its own naturally leads to change and improvement, as performance information on its own will not deliver the changes envisaged. Schick (2001: 43) argues that it is "a myth that an organisation can be transformed simply by measuring its performance and that performance information can only affect incentives to do so". This raises the question of transparency and accountability, measurement and improvement. One could have M&E, but if results are not acted on it is a futile exercise. This

is where the issue of conversion comes in, which refers to the mechanisms or institutions that convert findings into action by using authority to effect change, which would be management and political committees, to name a few, that can use results to improve performance. This has implications for M&E, and means that the bodies termed convertors or enactors must be engaged with actively to promote use, or the classic problem of M&E disuse will prevail.

The discussion on promoting good governance indicates that organisational change should precede, not follow performance management. There must be a receptiveness to measure, reflect on and integrate learning and findings. Thus in looking at how good governance is promoted, it is clear that the enactors, or authority structures, must be examined in terms of how they deal with results in pursuit of good governance.

2.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented the key arguments related to M&E and good governance, by describing each area, in order to show the commonalities and how they are mutually reinforcing. The conceptual framework indicates that M&E is a tool, which is only effective if used in a manner which increases transparency by putting credible results in the public domain. In such a case, it serves an accountability function. To achieve the accountability purpose requires that information is acted upon, and M&E in this instance becomes dependent upon decision-making structures in order for its findings to be applied and utilised to improve performance. The issue of context, evaluator perspective and methodologies is also to be taken seriously. This is the basis of the arguments in this thesis, and therefore each empirical chapter looks not just at M&E production, but also its use. The concept of good governance was shown in the review of the international good governance promoting institutions as having much commonality in addressing common issues. The manner in which this has been embraced in South Africa is addressed in the literature review.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to critically appraise the literature relating to M&E and good governance as it applies to South Africa. Whereas the conceptual framework provided a broad overview of the international trends in governance, public administration and M&E, this chapter specifically focuses on the manner in which the concepts of good governance and practice of M&E have been have assimilated into the democratic State. The post-apartheid State, with its emphasis on transforming historic developmental imbalances operates within an overarching Constitutional democracy that obliges the public sector to operate in a manner wherein transparency, accountability, performance and citizen-focus are evident.

The chapter focuses on the following areas, which expands upon the conceptual framework provided in Chapter 2. Firstly, it sketches the evolution of the accountability framework in South Africa in relation to how good governance and M&E principles have been incorporated. This is followed by a discussion on the South African developmental State and its role in bringing about bureaucratic change. The various challenges in improving State performance, through measures related to the ethos of New Public Management (NPM) and M&E, are discussed, as these seek to bring about the necessary administrative change. The critical area of good governance and the democratic mandate is addressed, by focusing on specific imperatives for M&E in South Africa. The chapter serves the purpose of contextualising M&E and good governance in South Africa, which builds upon the conceptual framework that is used for this assessment.

3.2 EVOLUTION OF THE ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK IN SOUTH AFRICA

The South African Public Service has been shaped by its colonial and apartheid history. Key characteristics include it being regulation and rule bound, inward looking and noted for its deference to authority. It was also risk averse, highly compartmentalised and fragmented, and slow to respond to changes. This character has prevailed since the Union and even after the Republic of South Africa in 1961 and democracy in 1994 (Naidoo, 2004). Changing the nature of the Public service required a strong, developmentally oriented State, which

could intervene to redress the development anomalies caused by the colonial and apartheid rule.

South Africa`s accountability and governance system has only now, after 16 years of democracy, begun to seriously mirror the good practice of its international counterparts. This is understandable given that reversing a fractured governance system that was based on racial identities, and replicated unevenly in the form of systems of public administration takes time. The current situation of having nine provincial governments, each with a high degree of administrative autonomy, but expected to adhere to national guidelines in terms of governance, is indicative of a situation where there are different levels of accountability across the different tiers of government. There are clearly challenges in managing such a transition, and being able to manage the performance of the public service is such a context becomes critical (Van der Waldt, 2004). In order to improve the performance of government, a Ministry for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation was established in 2009, to amongst others, guide the transformation process and ensure optimal performance of the State (Chabane, 2009). As can be seen, this emphasis on performance emphasises the importance placed on, and reflects an important political commitment to the principles of good governance, as it promises greater transparency and accountability around government performance.

Many of the changes that took place in South Africa are similar to the changes that occurred in the United States of America, which Forsythe (2001) shows have been linked to budgets and planning. This continues to be the trend globally and can be seen in South Africa today. There has been an evolution in how budgets have been considered, but the issue of budgets remains a driving force and finds expression in how the South African government deals with its budget, especially when dealing with the question of promoting efficiencies in its assessment. A large part of the current M&E framework is about tracking expenditure, and a significant part of the focal area of mandatory M&E is assessing the quality of spending. This element is driven by the National Treasury (NT) and the Auditor-General (AG)[1], the former of which disburses budget and the latter which assess the quality of spending.

All of these changes were motivated by a desire to improve government efficiency. The economic bias of these shifts reflects the power that Treasuries yield all over the world and how performance improvement plans that originate in Treasuries tend to rapidly become used in government. This is also evident in South Africa where many reform initiatives

[1] Full explanations of the mandate and work of these institutions is provided in chapter 6.

emanate from the Treasury[2]. Its influence is pronounced in how budgeting is practiced, and the call for sound consideration of objectives and resources to deliver outputs and outcomes can be seen the MTSF[3] and the MTEF[4] processes. The M&E of departmental performance against these, undertaken through Annual Reports and other measures, is a form of economic and management oversight. The AG plays a role in exercising further oversight of budgets. The proper planning and management of budgets is an element that meets one of the criteria of good governance, that of government effectiveness.

Central to the thrust for good governance is the South African Constitution, which regulates the relationship between the tiers of government. The Constitution, in relation to issues of good governance, prescribes what the accountability architecture is, in the form of stating where the different competencies reside, and describing how the Institutions Supporting Democracy (ISD), also referred to chapter 9 and 10 bodies, should operate. These ISD include the Auditor-General, the Public Protector and the Public Service Commission. All of these bodies are expected to ensure effective oversight, operate independently, report directly to Parliament, and in general ensure that performance information on government is placed within the public domain. This is an essential element for good governance, as all the definitions make reference to issues of transparency and accountability, which ISD advance.

South Africa only embraced M&E, as it is internationally known, since the democratic era, as the preconditions for M&E (transparency and accountability), were largely not in place during the apartheid era. Addressing the preconditions in part were the passing of legislation such as the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) and the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (PAJA)[5]. The setting up of the ISDs, which report to Parliament and not to the Executive, ensures that at a policy level the various oversight institutions can exercise their mandate without political interference. A key issue for any M&E is the protection of independence.

The institution which has the most explicit mandate in terms of promoting good governance in the Public Service is the Public Service Commission (PSC), which is required to

[2] The Public finance Management Act, 1999 clearly stipulates how budgets are to managed, and has an efficiency and effectiveness bias.

[3] The MTSF requires that all sections of government translate political priorities into programmes of action, taking into account resources, and produce 3 year schedules of deliverables or outputs.

[4] Predictability in expenditure underlies the MTEF, which requires sound financial planning and monitoring. There is a clear accountability framework for the management of funds.

[5] The emphasis of these acts has been to legally entrench the right to secure information held by the government and the right to reasons for any administrative decisions. They are pivotal to democratic practice.

"investigate, monitor and evaluate" the Public Service "without fear, favour or prejudice". Its work over a decade has helped to introduce the practice of M&E into government, and its reports have become the basis for public and political engagement on the performance of the State. The Ministry for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation has raised the profile of M&E even more, due to amongst others, the introduction of political accountability systems, wherein the President holds Ministers accountable in the form of publically accessible service delivery agreements. The public profile given to this practice has resulted in a greater emphasis on the need for M&E, and has helped to strengthen the accountability framework further, due to the potential consequences for non-performance at all levels.

In South Africa there is a high expectation that government shall play a key role in the delivery of services. The consequence of such a situation where government is dominant is that there must be adequate accountability mechanisms to prevent the abuse of State power. M&E can play a key role to ensure that democratic gains are not lost through corruption and other acts which undermine democratic and governance advancements.

3.3 THE DEVELOPMENTAL STATE AND BUREAUCRATIC CHANGE

3.3.1 Defining and explaining the developmental State

The developmental State needs to be discussed it terms of its origins and features and relationship to international imperatives for greater State efficiency, one of which is the influence of New Public Management (NPM). The key feature of a developmental State is its activism and interventionism. Saloojee (2007) points out that there are many examples of developmental States, and that no one form should be privileged. He argues that the South African developmental State is unique, and in this particular context government leads a concerted drive for economic growth and sustainable development through forging partnerships[6] with key stakeholders[7]. It is pro-poor, has particular institutional and administrative configurations, and focuses on the vulnerable and marginalised[8] groups.

In addressing how the developmental State brings about good governance, it is important to reflect on the historic context that has shaped the current Public Service, and embedded

[6] The partnership is linked to the policy intent of forming social compacts in order to improve capacity for service delivery

[7] Most of the government policies talk about the need to consult and engage with stakeholders, which tend to be diverse. In doing so, this shows democratic maturity and points to an intent to produce inclusive solutions.

[8] The majority of the voting population may be classified as poor, and thus remain a key constituency which must be attended to.

different areas of performance emphasis. The developmental State professes to take its mandate from the political mandate of the ruling party, which is explicit about its support for the poor and marginalised (ANC, 2004). To alter the status quo, institutions are expected to configure themselves to meet this mandate. This would include changing existing racial asymmetries and inequality, which remain pronounced after apartheid (Van der Berg, 2006). Given that the developmental State is not seen as an ideology by government, but rather a pragmatic focus on addressing developmental objectives, government feels that it is proper to apply certain interventions at certain times in its history. Examples are interventions that have been achieved through policies such as GEAR were largely macro-economic[9] in nature and seek to stabilise the economy, reduce the deficit and introduce fiscal prudence to a point where there would be surpluses for social and infrastructural spending, as the last few budgets have shown. In an attempt by government to bring in partners for development there has been the ASGISA initiative, which seeks a stronger private sector role in supporting government in its development initiatives.

The envisaged developmental State is expected to the flexible and supportive of the transformational agenda. It also has an interventionist bias, and should improve service delivery and integrate government (Levin, 2004a). It is expected to mobilise support from non-public sector stakeholders and form partnerships to improve its propensity to deliver services. Naidoo (2006) has argued that whilst there was the intent by the State to capably intervene and shepherd societal resources to achieve national developmental objectives, this has not been achieved. The reports of the AG indicate serious concerns about the quality of financial management, which indicates that resources are not optimally utilised.

The good governance thrust also needs to be situated in the context of what is expected specifically of the developmental State of South Africa[10] about how it is meant to promote transformation and development. The developmental State must be well-informed about its progress, and relies of different forms of M&E to inform it, both politically and administratively. M&E in such a context would be largely focused on the accountability use of such information, but would more broadly contribute to transparency about the operations of government which would enrich democracy. South Africa should therefore address the traditional elements of transparency, accountability, privilege participation, seek consensus (as a part of national building) and emphasise responsiveness. On the issue of democracy,

[9] The macroeconomic policy, whilst criticised as being too socially prudent, did help the country improve its international economic and competitiveness rating.

[10] A key assumption is that the State needs to intervene, given the mandate given to it politically. The intervention is justified on the grounds that most of the population are vulnerable, and a strong State is necessary to protect and advance citizen interests and development.

with its rights-based focus, this is very relevant to the South African situation which has prioritised issues of rights in the Constitution, and which has been followed through in policy. Adopting this definition thus implies that the basis for good governance exists.

3.3.2 Challenges in incorporating New Public Management into the South African developmental State

The NPM emphasis seeks to bring about greater efficiency, which is linked to the accountability question, and whilst there may be questions about how appropriate this import is in the South African Public Service, the efficiency question remains important. The introduction of NPM, which was a way to address government inefficiencies, and rooted in private sector or corporate logic, argues that managers can bring about changes if they have the authority over decision-making and resources. Given its bias towards efficiency and measurement, it is amenable to M&E due to it persuasive logic. In developmental States like South Africa, effectiveness considerations may be prioritised over efficiency ones, which means that the question of budget efficiencies becomes more complex. Thus, whilst elements of NPM may not be applicable in South Africa, the importance of ensuring greater efficiency, largely through M&E, remains.

However, NPM may not work so well in transformative contexts such as South Africa, where many of the management decisions are of a political nature, and may in fact be seen as wasteful when measured from a NPM perspective. Furthermore, management does not work in a vacuum, as there is a strong link between management and the political structures. The argument therefore, that government inefficiency is simply a management problem, solvable through transplanting remedies from the private sector in order to creativity into the bureaucracy, did not work so well in practice (Marschke, 2001). This approach has been largely discredited, despite its strong assertions about the reasons and solutions for government inefficiency. Its solutions of outsourcing and downsizing, have largely not worked in contexts such as South Africa, where a developmental State operates. This has been pointed out by Levin (2005b: 81) who states that whilst appealing, as it puts citizens at the centre and emphasises the good governance ethos by focusing on results, outcomes and accountability, it does in fact have limitations. It should thus be viewed with circumspection. In other words, it may not produce the type of good governance it promises. Examples of failure have been cited by James (2001) who points out that in the United Kingdom it has had perverse effects, with the wrong things being measured. The initial enthusiasm has been replaced by serious questions about its real impact and sustainability. Despite this, variants of NPM are used in developing countries (Labi, 1999). For South

Africa, as Levin (2004a; 2004b) points out, one should not embrace the measurement aspect of NPM uncritically, to the point where the solutions it offers are also embraced uncritically. This comes about by the fact that it is not so easy to superimpose NPM on an inherited context which is fragmented spatially and socially, and expect problems to be solved.

A further challenge faced by the developmental State is that of globalisation, which meant that challenges relating to corruption had to be addressed Levin (2002). He further states that in order to address the challenges of the developmental State, one of which is to integrate the two economies, the developmental State needs to be "people centred and capable of meeting the socio-economic needs of the entire population, especially the poor, marginalised and historically oppressed" (Levin, 2005b:14). He notes that whilst "NPM advocates a free market and a weak state, the developmental State is premised on a strong interventionist 'activist' State", and he goes on to argue that "whilst the goal of both NPM and the developmental State is the same, being people-centred and oriented, the route to get there differs, as it is important to negotiate between addressing local needs and imperatives, largely people-oriented and redistributive, and the neo-liberal market ideology that argues for the primacy of the market over the State" (Levin, 2005a: 82). Thus whilst this approach has been in part fulfilled by the GEAR policy framework which has brought about macro-economic stability, it has meant that there were trade-offs in terms of job security and the policy has been contested by organised labour.

There is the need to bridge the gap between the first and second economy, and reduce inequality, which has been shown not to be so easy, despite the removal of unequal laws (Bhorat and Van der Westhuizen, 2008). Poverty has been difficult to measure and inequality has persisted (May and Klasen, 2000). In this context the developmental State comes in, which may have to intervene to reduce inequality, but in so-doing be effective rather than efficient. This means that interventions may seem wasteful when measured in classic efficiency terms, but could be socially effective in that they bring about social stability, an example being the various social grants that have been introduced. This means that whilst NPM tends to prioritise efficiency ideals (easily measured through M&E), in the South African context this may be difficult when addressing developmental ones (which may not conform to such ideals). It is not possible to simply superimpose a system of efficiency on a historical context that is spatially and socially fragmented, and where redistribution and redress are required first. There will thus always be a tension between meeting these elements, although it should be noted that the positions are not diametrically opposed or contradictory.

The discussion on the interplay between democracy and M&E needs to be linked to the increased interest in the country in the measurement of the performance of the State (Fox 2002: 1). This is because the public sector plays a central role in society and affects the lives of the citizens in direct and indirect ways. It plays a pivotal role in the management of expenditure, revenue, wealth, allocation issues, regulation and the quality of services. The quality of the management of the resource base by the State, from which both the private and public sector draws, is important to all parties, as demonstrated in the era of New Public Management (NPM) (Ferlie and Ashburner, 1996). South Africa, especially in the post-democracy era has entered the global environment and been exposed to these experiences and influences, and what is now occurring is an alignment of the country`s governance systems with that of other democracies. This is particularly so in relation to M&E, which in other democracies is also used by governments to improve their effectiveness[11]. M&E also plays a role in improving service delivery, and has been given priority in the country, as it is seen as a strategy and tool for improving accountability. The centrality of M&E in helping advance service delivery has been demonstrated by Amin and Goldstein (2008), who through a series of essays show how this approach is realised in practice.

3.3.3 Reorienting the bureaucracy

There are many measures that have been put in place to improve the efficiency of the bureaucracy, and the Public Service in general. Sangweni (2003: 20) looks at the individual level, and argues that "better performance management is critical to public sector transformation". He states that an effective state must be able to manage and monitor the performance of managers, before public sector capability and leadership can be improved. In trying to improve governance, there has been the argument that the problems are managerial in nature, and improving management will bring about the desired changes. However, this private sector import must also be considered in light of some of the other reform efforts (Sinclair, 2008).

It is necessary to understand the bureaucracy in order to appreciate what is required to effect change. Cloete (1981: 21) shows that the terms bureaucracy is generally used in three contexts; to refer to large scale institutions which have a hierarchical nature, or in a derogatory manner for real or imagined procrastination, and thirdly the exercise of political

[11] Governments are obliged to exercise fiscal discipline, in light of international guidance on finances. The credit rating of governments, which influences investor confidence, is dependent on how effective resources are managed.

power, in other words government by officials. It is widely recognised that it is not easy to change the bureaucracy which is generally considered “impervious and resistant to change” (Bozeman, 2000: 8). Solutions to change this may not be as simple as often advocated by proponents of the reengineering or reform movement, such as privatisation and outsourcing. The transformation of the Public Service is a long term and complex process. A key issue in the change process is the role played by the human factor; the public servant who implements government policy. Unless this ethos changes, and there is a link between the imperative for change (politicians) and the change agents (public servants), commitments can be rendered ineffective when it comes to the interface of service delivery. It has been argued that the application of effective leadership by the senior management service is critical for the transformation of the public service (Fraser-Moleketi, 2005).

If one were to look at the administrative arm of government, and the bureaucracy, which plays a central in effecting transformation, one can appreciate why M&E must be used to support an effective political-administrative interface. There is an important reciprocity that must be addressed for more effective government, which is well-illustrated by Holden (1997: 125) who states:

> *Administration is a necessary form of action without which political power does not exist…and the centrality of administration to power is fundamental, and no leader can deliver without resources... administration is power in practice.*

In discussing the reciprocity between vision-maker and vision-translator, the question that emerges is “how close” should the public servant be to the politician? This leads to the often contentious debate on professionalism; where bureaucrats see themselves as specialists, responding to some higher order, rather than politicians. Politicians, on the other hand prefer that evaluators be directly accountable to them. Public servants prefer a more predictable situation, within which there are rules and protocols for translating political request into administrative action. The reality is, however, often different and the clear demarcation of roles and responsibilities may not exist. These questions go to the very essential question of politics, as Rourke (1992) pragmatically states when he says that when one serves government, one is expected to comply with policies that are essentially political in origin.

It is not enough to look at the bureaucracy as faceless, and the point about the value-added by individuals is evident from Gawthrop (1998: 67), who correctly states that “effecting changes depends on the values of the individuals within a democratic system”. Thus, any reinventing government mission must be cognisant that this does not take place in an ethical

vacuum as administration has a soul. The United Nations (2006) in its World Public Sector Report argues that the human factor[12] in terms of the quality of public sector personnel is critical for success. The report cautions against the reinventing government mission being reduced to a technical exercise of redesign. This has been recognised in South Africa through the introduction of the *Batho Pele* (People First) strategy, which attempts to motivate public servants so that their behaviour contributes to delivering measurable results. In other words, to align the values and ethics professed with actual performance by public servants directly involved in delivery (Raga and Taylor, 2005).

The reorientation of the Public Service in South Africa has been supported by many forces, several of which are extraneous to and beyond the control of government itself. This is a positive development that came about with democracy and mention must be made of an informed citizenry, who due to increased information flows, largely from a vigilant media, has sensitised the public to government performance. Whereas in the early days of democracy patience was exercised by the citizenry around government's ability to perform, as this initial period was largely celebratory, but with time the issues of importance to citizens could change (Khosa, 2001).

The bureaucracy is characterised by what is known as "red tape", which is seen as frustrating. However, in a context of public accountability, this is not necessarily anti-delivery and may be beneficial in that it ensures that the state remains accountable to its citizens Pandey and Scott (2002). The discussion on bureaucracy has tended to become associated with perceptions of State inefficiency, which in turn have revolved around the negative stereotypes that characterise the public sector. Cohen and Eimicke`s (1995) analysis of these perceptions found that they largely stem from the issues of finance; that government consumes, rather than produces and is self-perpetuating. However, whilst accepting the accountability, it is possible to increase levels of efficiencies and make the bureaucracy more responsive. In the South African Public Service there are many mechanisms to ensure accountability, which pose problems within the context of a new democracy and public sector reform, where faster service delivery is expected (Muthien, *et al,* 2000). The problem has been recognised and a Centre for Public Service Innovation is operational, the key task of which is to come up with solutions for more effective service delivery, without compromising accountability considerations[13]. It has seeks to ease the administrative burden of the Public Service (Future Watch, 2004).

[12] There is recognition that the capacity of public officials and servants is a key factor influencing how successful government eventually is in executing its mandate.

[13] This is an entity under the DPSA which seeks to produce innovations to service delivery.

The proposed solution seen in shifting government towards private sector ethos and efficiency is "underpinned by relevant and broader questions of how to entrench integrity and accountability in government" (Thomas, 2001: 113). Evidence of success may be seen in what the Clinton administration did in 1993, when it introduced the notion of empowerment zones which included strong private-public partnership synergies aimed at holding government accountable and promoting civic involvement. There is also a clear relationship between democracy and public administration, with the link between citizens and public policy illustrated by Krane (2006). This involves forms of engagement which actively permit citizens and stakeholders to participate in the work of government, and may include measures such as public conversations, citizens' juries, and collaborative policy-making, to name but a few. Liebenberg (2000) explores perceptions about democracy, and finds that people experience it positively when governance is evident.

Managerialism calls for a change in the manner in which the public sector is managed, but has also been challenged in that it often does not yield any benefits to the citizens due to its inward focus. This is illustrated by Paine (1998) in his appropriately entitled article entitled "Dark side of a hot idea!"(illustrative of the fad nature of managerialism), who shows that the unplanned consequence of managerialism has been an increase in the costs of services, decisions being taken without thoroughly looking at the implications, and most often, the erosion of team work due to the "what gets measured gets done" syndrome. This comes about given the scrutiny managerialism places on the three Es (economy, efficiency and effectiveness), which in practice could mean that there is often a suppression of negative information, and at times even manipulation, to ensure that the desired outcomes are achieved. However, Pollitt (1998) argues that managerialism cannot be rejected outright, as it has its benefits which can be seen today.

This discussion cautions about the dangers of introducing M&E into a context where there is poor ethics and any environment that is not ready to receive and act on reflective or performance information, and where the achievement of outputs and outcomes is an end in itself. This is an important point that must be remembered in implementing any M&E system in the country as managerialism easily causes perversion on the ground, as a desire to achieve measurable results overshadows other considerations. It is important to consider what initiatives can transform this institution, which will include policy, strategies to subject the Public Service to scrutiny, measures that borrow from the private sector, and in general introduce a higher level of scrutiny, transparency and accountability. Fraser-Moleketi (2000) has argued that M&E needs to be developed and supported in order to improve the

performance of the public service, and has consistently supported M&E initiatives during her term as Minister for Public Service and Administration. These pressures would come from different sources, some government itself which has a responsibility for M&E, others from civil society, and others from citizens. Thus the public participation processes generally led by Parliament and the use of Hotlines would be measures to change practice and behaviour, as they introduce greater pressure on government to be responsive. The ability of government to meet its own policy standards, especially around being responsive to citizens, will indicate whether the shift towards better governance has taken place. If this happens, one can argue that the bureaucracy has become refocused. The next section examines how M&E is used to promote good governance.

The above discussion has highlighted some of the measures that have been used to refocus the bureaucracy. In critically examining them, it has been shown that managerialism and performance management on its own will not bring about the desired effect. The human factor is critical, and the ethos of the public servants must be aligned to the political intentions in order that the Public Service is able to produce good governance. The discussion on intervention versus efficiency is very much at the heart of the developmental State debate. At the heart of these "either or" decisions is the economy and thus the comments by the Minister for Finance, Trevor Manuel (2004: 15) are pertinent as he states that "the two main thrusts of a developmental State must be how much the State spends fighting poverty and deprivation and how much of the country's resources go towards expanding the economic opportunities of all its citizens".

In considering that M&E should assume a particular approach in South Africa, and support the developmental State which is meant to be activist, developmental and pro-poor[14], the type of M&E performed becomes important. It can also be used to empower (Nabris, 2002). It means that M&E should still drive good governance ideals and engage in activities which promote transparent, accountable and reflective public sector organisations. At the content level, it needs to evaluate the pro-poor and developmental programmes advocated by the developmental State, whilst at the process level ensures that the methodologies used do empower and privilege individual and organisational learning. Utility should be demonstrated at different levels, from improving management competence, to empowering citizens, to deepening democracy and driving transformation. The next section on M&E in South Africa draws the links between this section and M&E, by examining how M&E as a tool for the developmental State seeks to promote good governance.

[14] The developmental State in South Africa is seen as pro-poor, serving a deliberate transformation agenda meant to redress apartheid and reduce inequality

3.4 GOOD GOVERNANCE AND THE DEMOCRATIC MANDATE

South Africa exists within a global context that is characterised by competition and a drive towards governance excellence. Governments today are expected to measure performance to meet these standards and deliver a quality of governance that is viewed favourably within and outside the country. This has necessitated that governments focus on "performance" across a range of issues that touch on political, social and economic dimensions of society. The ability to meet the standards of performance, as prescribed in the South African Constitution for public administration, or externally through good governance promoting institutions, depends upon sound M&E systems. This requirement for governance excellence comes at a time when the South African Public Service has had to change, from its traditional bureaucracy to one that supports a dynamic developmental State. Building such a developmental State has been a political priority, and the policies advanced by the former Minister for Public Service and Administration have sought to do this (Fraser-Moleketi, 2005). A key element for an effective developmental State, would therefore be the capacity to generate, consider and act upon evidence, thus showing what Bamberger (2008) refers to M&E utility.

Good governance gets promoted through the administrative arm of government. This involves the public servants who ought to understand what is required of them when it comes to implementing services. It cannot be taken for granted that they will naturally and voluntarily display the attributes which are desirable from a citizen perspective. It is for this reason that the *Batho Pele* principles have been developed in South Africa, to provide the normative benchmark which public servants are expected to adhere to, and which also provides citizens with a measure of what to expect from government. In an administrative use of good governance, one is referring to an "efficient, open, accountable and *audited public service* (own emphasis)". The audit element implies that there must be an M&E element to ensure that practice is aligned to this norm. The political use refers to a State enjoying legitimacy and authority, derived from a democratic mandate (Rhodes, 2000). In the various good governance definitions the issue of an independent judiciary is mentioned, which is about legitimacy and authority.

Furthermore, the country is now confronted with critical practical questions, such as what progress the country is making against the MDGs; how well the country fares across various governance indicators relating to questions about the state of the economy, the productivity

of the workforce, the impact of interventions on poverty alleviation and life expectancy[15]. However, whilst the MDGs have been a bold set of promises to poor people around the world, "development effectiveness is difficult to measure as there are many actors, and it is difficult to work out individual contributions and attributions" (White, 2005: 33). The question of using M&E to ensure sustainable development has been advanced by Cloete (2005), and government needs M&E to meet obligations such as the MDGs.

A governance-orientated Public Service should focus on delivering public goods and services according to the values and methods mentioned (Rhodes, 2000). Whilst rules and regulations are important, and compliance or accountability will always be a key part of governance, the focus needs to extend beyond the outputs, and focus on the outcomes, which would be the experiences that citizens have of the full ambit of government. In many instances governments are able to describe their activities and outputs, but unless assessments extend into the realm of outcomes and impacts, public sector institutions can remain managerially efficient, but not be that effective. The caution is that all aspects must be considered. It is possible to spend budgets efficiently, which is a performance indicator, but to what end is more important. In South Africa there has been a doubling of social spending and spending on education, but educational standards has been dropping[16]. This is perhaps because the governance focus has been on important measures, but which may not have been relevant to what eventually counts. The Presidency approach to measuring 12 outcomes areas thus helps to sharpen the M&E effort, and introduces a discourse that citizens can relate to, as these outcomes are largely quality of life indicators, rather than technical indicators which often do not align with the quality of life indicators.

M&E would thus have a particular profile in South Africa as it could be used to drive the transformation agenda of the developmental State through focusing attention on performance deficits[17], which would require management to take action. Its political power can also be seen in how M&E concepts such as transparency and accountability get operationalised in real managerial contexts, which helps to shed the legacy of secrecy and non-accountability that prevailed in apartheid public administration.

Whereas government recognises the need to effect change, and bring about the desired service delivery standards, it is not easy even though there may be political commitment to

[15] The Presidency is responsible for reporting on progress against the Millennium Development Goals, and has produced publications in 2007 and 2008 on progress attained.
[16] Public Service Commission. 2010. State of the Public Service Report. Republic of South Africa.
[17] The Programme of Action (PoA) of government is a publically accessible document which states what was promised and actually achieved.

good governance. At the heart of effecting change is the nature of the public servants who are expected to translate the political power of their principals into administrative power and which produces felt benefits for citizens. The discussion on the professionalism of the bureaucracy has revealed that there are strong views in South Africa that public servants are expected to display political commitment in order to deliver on policies.

The researcher has conducted a review of the work of good governance seeking umbrella bodies such as the CAPAM and examined the mission statements of the various continental M&E bodies and associations. It was found that irrespective of the emphasis each year on some aspect of public administration, the common aspect was ensuring accountability and delivering quality services to citizens. In the case of M&E, the issue of transparency and accountability have remained pivotal, with the emphasis of late being on evaluation use and impact or outcomes[18]. The AFrEA event in 2004, for example, was held under the theme "Africa Matters, Evaluation Matters, Joining forces for Democracy, Governance and Development". The link between M&E, development and governance was explored at this watershed event, with the discourse on the subject being raised to new levels on the continent[19]. The South African M&E Conferences focused on evaluation use in 2007 (Evaluation in Action) and in 2009 on values (eVALUation). The latter focused directly on issues related to the concept of good governance.

The Association of African Public Service Commissions also has as its motto "promoting good governance through PSCs in Africa"[20]. These examples suggest that the question of why there must be good governance is not contested, and the matter is now being engaged with by African countries themselves, although this historically was not the case. The production of good governance is not the preserve of government, although government is expected to put in laws and measures to promote and measure it. Other elements are also crucial for good governance, and this includes civil society, the media and an independent judiciary. These need to act in concert so that there are the necessary checks and balances to prevent the abuse of power by government, which is a central player. Given that government also acts on behalf of citizens by managing public funds, there is a strong accountability element expected, which must be exercised from different quarters.

[18] The researcher has reviewed the conferences programmes and meetings of the CAPAAM since 2001, and all indicate the dominant concern with government efficiency, corruption, service delivery and transparency.
[19] The researcher was the conference co-chair. An assessment was made of the conference proceedings.
[20] Public Service Commission, 2009a. Report on the launch of the Association of African Public Service Commission held on 16 February 2009. Cape Town, South Africa.

3.5 M&E IN SOUTH AFRICA

3.5.1 The political nature of M&E

It is important to recognise that political support is essential for M&E, as it not likely to be a spontaneous uptake by individuals or institutions simply because it has a rational and persuasive appeal. The need for political support for M&E in government is a global issue, and has been documented by Khan (1998), Kusek and Rist (2004) and White (2005), all of whom demonstrate the necessity for political support for M&E. In South Africa, there have been several high level political pronouncements supporting M&E[21], and internationally the relationship between M&E and development has helped to put M&E in the forefront, as being more than a tool but also helping to concretely address development issues[22]. The impact of such pronouncements and influences is that M&E gets reinforced at different levels and becomes accepted as a politically, administratively and socially acceptable approach to promote good governance, development and democracy.

M&E has a strong political bias[23], and the manner in which evaluation takes place will always attract attention from several quarters, as a range of players use evaluation results to make political and economic decisions (Kusek and Rist, 2004). The citizenry[24] uses results to review their political support whilst government tends to use results to affirm its performance[25], especially as it seeks external support for it policies and strategies (Mackay, 2007).Evaluation of government, in particular, shall always remain a highly political issue (Taylor and Balloch, 2005). When there is public M&E of government, which may occur in democracies as a normal activity, decision-makers are pressurised to operate within good governance norms, meaning that they will be accountable for their action. The pronounced nature of M&E in South Africa results from its use not only to assist management, but also to support the transformation agenda of the developmental State. Given the history of

[21] In the 2007 Annual State of the Nation Address, the President of the Republic of South Africa stated that M&E needed to be strengthened to guide service delivery. This translated in policy thrusts that supported the development of M&E across government, making it a priority.

[22] Mbeki, T.M. (2007) ANC Online, Weekly Newsletter of the African National Congress, 18 May 2007.

[23] The political nature of evaluation means that it tends to be contested, as its results generally have far-reaching consequences and implications. In view of this, questions of independence, location and bias are very prominent.

[24] The concept will be fully elaborated upon. The term here relates to the spectrum of players outside of government who have an interest in the performance of government, such as media, advocacy groups and political parties.

[25] Given the political nature of M&E, government M&E tends to be viewed with scepticism from role-players, who doubt the ability of government to M&E itself objectively and report negative findings.

apartheid with its norm of secrecy, M&E could also bolster democracy by promoting activities that lead to greater transparency and accountability[26] of government and its operations.

The nature of M&E in South Africa stems from the imperative of the developmental State, which in South Africa is expected to be responsive, relevant, transformative and pro-poor, all of which can only be achieved if policy-makers and implementers have M&E systems that provide quality information for decision-making. Therefore the design of M&E systems is important to support the developmental State to meet its developmental goals.

In South Africa the potential of M&E to be the tool for transformation rests on the extent to which the political and administrative structures are amenable to promoting the conducive environment referred to earlier in this chapter. However, it should be remembered that political pronouncements on their own, will not deliver an M&E culture across society or in government. M&E can easily remain at the level of rhetoric unless the pronouncements on accountability and transparency are carried through by genuine action that considers performance information and uses it to correct deficits. M&E should not be seen as an end in itself, it should serve a broader transformative[27] agenda. In practice, there may be resistance to M&E, because as Patton (2004) points out, M&E goes to the heart of organisational culture and tends to cause ripples and waves as it focuses attention on performance, and by implication individuals. It should thus be remembered that there may not be a spontaneous uptake of M&E, unless it is championed politically.

It is also evident that M&E needs to be utility focused, and serve a clear political agenda of supporting transformation. This means that M&E practitioners need to be conversant with the political imperatives of government, and design their approaches in a manner that, whilst meeting the exacting standards of research, does in fact point results in a direction that effects transformation. It implies that M&E practitioners are versed in the requirements of the developmental State, and are conversant with the M&E of government. They also need to be conversant with organisational culture, so that results promote organisational learning. It would not be adequate in this context of high expectation for M&E practitioners to take a largely detached stance.

[26] A key concern with the new government and citizens is making government accountable, which is a shift from the apartheid era where this was not the case.

[27] There are many dimensions to transformation, political, administrative, social and economic. All of these are based on performance information being produced and used.

3.5.2 The transformative nature of M&E

The philosophical orientations or school of thought must be considered in relation to the South African context, given the types of M&E that exist. In such a context, those perspectives which privilege the poor and broadly resonate with the South African developmental State and its transformation bias would be important. In such a context issues of transparency, accountability, learning, empowerment, and a transformational bias that serves agendas that privilege the voiceless and poor are prioritised. This thrust would be in line with House (1993) who in his focus on M&E purpose, is biased towards the political and views the generation of knowledge as being important for social purposes. This view supports the general consensus that M&E is expected to achieve in South Africa. This gives substance to the argument that M&E takes form within a context[28]. The context within which M&E operates is important. These result in M&E taking the form dictated to by context (House, 2004: 219). It means that M&E can be pitched philosophically and methodologically to meet the imperatives of such a context. There are thus many imperatives for M&E which may be considered[29]collectively as the building blocks of good governance in South Africa.

In the South African and DSD context, M&E needs to support transformation and could be biased towards focusing on assessing those areas that are important for social change. In the DSD measuring the impact of the social interventions becomes important, as all levels would need constant feedback on progress to management, given the enormity of the budget and the social and political pressures that accompany this.

If evaluation is about bringing the silent voices to the fore, then in transformative contexts such as South Africa, evaluative methodologies should exist for empowerment evaluation (Fetterman, 1996). Participatory evaluation, which privileges marginal voices and perspectives is important and would promote governance models that are developmental. In South Africa, development is constitutionally obliged to be participatory, transparent, accountable and empowering. Classic quantitative, a-contextual and judgmental evaluation will serve a limited purpose in a developmental State, which is by its very definition obliged to promote democratic ideals.

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[28] Context is emphasised as M&E cannot be viewed as a neutral, objective science transposable without modification to any context. African evaluators have resisted the toolbox of methods approach, fostered largely through donors wishing to assess their impact, which has been suggested as a way for doing M&E. There is a strong political underpinning to any M&E, given its eventual judgement outcomes and resultant reactions to this.

[29] Government, civil society and international bodies (mentioned earlier) generally agree on the necessity for these values and attributes for sound democracy and governance.

Considering South Africa's history around popular participation and engagement, evaluation would need to follow such an engaged approach. It implies that the toolbox of evaluation should include participatory, constructivist approaches. In the South African context these contributions are particularly important as its political history necessitates engagement. It shows that one cannot proffer value judgments in a historical or political vacuum, as it is these contexts that inform phenomena, and solutions must come from there. Evaluative judgments without context are vacuous and could be sensational but not very useful. In terms of policy recommendations in South Africa, given the inherited inequalities, any judgement of programme effectiveness or recommendations would have to be contextualised and located within specific socio-economic and political settings. A simplistic approach to policy formulation may not work; it should flow from evidence based research, grounded in reality.

The vision conveyed is that evaluation should play a more constructive role within an organisation, privileging an approach that is reflexive, engaging and didactically oriented while recognising the complexity of organisational infrastructure. In light of the history of the South African context, it behoves evaluators to work with departments and organisations to help them integrate learning, and to seek real change and solutions . In practice this is not easy, as demonstrated by Radebe (2003) who reviews some of the critical and challenging factors in inculcating this ethos of learning.

M&E in South Africa, drawing from the discussion above needs to be oriented towards empowering individuals and communities, by providing them with results to advocate and hold government to account. M&E must also be demystified, and in a simple way be a service to the marginalised.

Evaluation needs to also serve an agenda that changes relations of power, which can be achieved if transparency and accountability is entrenched in the Public Service. When findings are made, evaluators should help with their applicability in organisational contexts. It would also have to contribute to the generation and reconstruction of knowledge about the country, as much of the previous knowledge was limited or Eurocentric in its orientation. The transformative power of evaluation must be recognised. Finally, the notion of engagement over detachment should help to guide the practice, and M&E must be recognised for its political and transformative potential.

3.5.3 Evaluator perceptions of what M&E is and the implications for M&E practice in South Africa

The discussion has thus far focused on types of M&E and the purposes of M&E, linking it to how it is relevant to the South African context and foreshadowing how the concepts will be empirically assessed in the various chapters (perspectives) of this study. The focus is now on the evaluators themselves, and this discussion explores how different perceptions held by evaluators can influence the type of M&E practiced. It is as relevant a discussion as the differences in the definitions and purpose of M&E.

This discussion is particularly important in South Africa where M&E is a relatively new activity, and where a community of practice has not as yet been fully established[30]. There is no consensual understanding about what M&E is amongst the evaluator community and the question remains a subject of debate as evidenced from the programme of most international evaluation conferences[31]. The debate is necessary to allow for divergent contributions to the M&E discourse. It could even lead to contestation of centrally driven M&E strategies such as the previous GWM&ES, which has now been placed under an M&E ministry. The contestation is to be appreciated, as it shows that there is divergence and vibrancy amongst the South African M&E community. What is not clear at this stage is which perspectives get privileged by government, and which do not. It is also not clear whether in the overarching government architecture that is being designed; there will be place for strong CME, and whether the results thereof will be taken seriously by policy-makers. Much of the current and future contestation relates to the question of independence and credibility, especially when it comes to government M&E which could be viewed as politically expedient and not strong enough in carrying through threat to sanction poor performers[32].

The issue of corporate governance, and the interconnectivity between the corporate and government in South Africa began in 1994, when the King Report on Corporate Governance (King I) was published by the King Committee on Corporate Governance, headed by former High Court judge, Mervyn King S.C. King I, incorporating a Code of Corporate Practices and Conduct, was the first of its kind in the country and was aimed at promoting the highest

[30] M&E was first introduced through a donor programme in the National Department of Land Affairs in 1995, and is currently uneven in its capacity and application across government departments.

[31] Noted from the programmes of the European and United Kingdom Evaluation Society Conference, London, October 2006 and the Canadian/American Evaluation Association Conference, Toronto, October 2005.

[32] Minister of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation has issued media statements in May 2009 that poor performers will be sanctioned.

standards of corporate governance in South Africa. Over and above the financial and regulatory aspects of corporate governance, King I advocated an integrated approach to good governance in the interests of a wide range of stakeholders. Although ground-breaking at the time, the evolving global economic environment together with recent legislative developments necessitated that King I be updated. These reports move away from the single bottom line (that is, profit for shareholders) to a triple bottom line, which embraces the economic, environmental and social aspects (previously not addressed) of a company's activities (King, 2009).

> *...successful governance in the world in the 21st century requires companies to adopt an inclusive and not exclusive approach. The company must be open to institutional activism and there must be greater emphasis on the sustainable or non-financial aspects of its performance. Boards must apply the test of fairness, accountability, responsibility and transparency to all acts or omissions and be accountable to the company but also responsive and responsible towards the company's identified stakeholders. The correct balance between conformance with governance principles and performance in an entrepreneurial market economy must be found, but this will be specific to each company.*

Of importance is the interconnectivity between private, public and civil society sectors, which indicates that governance is an overarching concern.

This was the first time that public sector institutions were brought into its jurisdiction, and the King report is consistent with government`s commitment to improving service delivery, and mentions as positive the setting up of a Ministry for Performance Management, M&E, which it sees as evidence that the public sector is moving in the right direction as far as governance is concerned. It mentions the significance of the *Batho Pele* principles as being essential for driving good governance, and affirms the mention of accountability, transparency and service standards in the country`s policy on local government[33]. This report recognises the important role played by government in service delivery and development. This report supports the assertion made about the interconnectivity between the public and private sector (Flare, 2009).

Having located the concept of good governance, the discussion now turns to the criteria question, which is pertinent to the measurement aspect. It can be noted that indicators of

[33] Department of Provincial and Local Government. 1998. While paper on Local Government. 9 March. Republic of South Africa. Pretoria.

good governance vary, indicating that aid agencies are not neutral, and by choosing particular indicators these agencies are making political choices. In a critical review of this question (*The Broker,* June 2007: 2) the point made is that governance criteria is essentially about making political choices, with donors tending to move funds between countries based on the definitions they choose. The elements that are privileged in normative definitions of good governance tend to frame the performance agenda and theoretically could drive performance in such a direction. Aid, for example, tends to be conditional upon recipient countries demonstrating certain standards of good governance. Definitions of what constitutes governance in a country, whilst subscribing to certain overarching commonalities, like transparency and accountability, is political, as these get prioritised in actual policy and practice of a country. There is thus a contextual element of governance, which informs the attention accorded to aspects contained within it. The evidence base for making such decisions is informed in part by the integrity of a country`s statistical system, which Kahimbaara (2004: 46) demonstrates in South Africa provides a credible statistical basis for making decisions about service delivery. Such a system not only promotes transparency; it also provides credible data which can be used by many role-players to interpret service delivery progress. It is one of the systems that support the discussion on governance.

3.5.4 M&E approaches in South Africa

In the current M&E environment, which moves away from the expert or sole judge, to drawing in expertise from participants themselves to identify and solve problems, participatory approaches are increasingly promoted particularly when assessing how citizens experience government. It is here that the use of empowerment evaluation, which helps citizens to come to grips with their own problems, and increase their individual and collective power over their destinies, is important (Fetterman, 1996). The use of participatory techniques would be relevant in South Africa and generate benefits beyond the traditional performance use that comes from M&E. If used well, they can act as an emancipator[34].

There is also now an acceptance that context and research questions drive methods, and there is no need for the previously entrenched dualisms, such as positivism and constructivism, M&E[35]. It has been shown that the approaches are compatible (Reichardt and Rallis, 1994). The many uses of M&E in South Africa, for enhancing performance,

[34] The PSC follows participatory approaches to its citizen's surveys, and whilst costly, these have yielded real benefits.

[35] Keynote address of Eliot Stern made at the Joint United Kingdom/European Evaluation Society Conference, Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre, U.K. in October 2006.

transparency and re-reinforcing democracy has also been illustrated by Naidoo (2004), who argues that M&E goes beyond producing organisational benefits, but also accrues benefits to society as well.

M&E in South Africa must proceed from this historic contextual basis, so that change is understood in a context where there are realistic expectations. M&E results should strive to foster an understanding which empowers, rather than sensationalises. In considering the work of MME institutions one should ask what impact these have had on producing good governance and advancing the developmental State by producing more effective administrations.

Apart from M&E purpose, there is a need to also consider what the M&E approach is. In the engaged approach, M&E is seen as tool for empowerment, and is more people-oriented, and privileges the sharing of and engagement with results. It has elements of transparency and accountability, but these are not as pronounced as when M&E serves a purely accountability function. In this M&E application, the focus is largely to improve practice and improve organisational learning, but whether it happens is dependent upon the extent to which the organisational structures and culture values learning from results. Engagement is not necessarily an approach on its own; it could very well be used by those that promote accountability to enrich their engagement and support learning. It should be pointed out that engagement is more time-consuming, and would be used as part of a methodology when focusing, for instance on citizen-forums, citizen-satisfaction surveys and other forms of engagement that genuinely seek to solicit and consider the views of citizens on government performance.

The discussion looks at how particular M&E systems in South Africa construct and act upon knowledge. In terms of the formal, MME bodies, namely the NT and PSC, a systems approach[36] to M&E has been taken. There is a strong compliance element. The types of reports produced are a matter of public knowledge. There is an emphasis on quantitative data, and the benchmarks for performance are explicit and documented. It is underpinned by rationality, with the implicit assumption that pointing out non-compliance will promote compliance and lead to better administration, and by extension good governance. There is a strong positivistic bias with these reports strong in presenting facts and figures. These reports show trends, draw comparisons and reveal good and poor performance. Whilst the

[36] The systems for measuring compliance are clearly described against mandates and procedures. There is a regularity and predictability to how these systems work, and they are generally perceived as scientific and credible.

reports have qualitative narratives, these are confined largely to describing the trends and statistics. The systems are characterised by regular outputs and assume a clear line of sight between the production of data and presentation of results.

The two other types of M&E considered in this thesis must also be reflected on philosophically. The internal, departmental M&E, termed PME in this study, exists only because a management decision allows it to. This implies that its independence is circumscribed by the relevant authority, which accords resources and determines priorities. Such units may not be at liberty to report on their internal findings to outside bodies, as they exist at the behest of the management of the department. It is for this reason that this M&E focus is termed persuasive; it does not have the power to compel, and has to use persuasion to conduct and report on evaluations.

The third type of M&E assessed is CME. This is not a homogenous grouping, and includes individual citizens, groupings, the media and political groupings, who draw on and produce their own assessments of government performance which they may use to advocate change. The grouping may not even have a common understanding of M&E, or use the term, as it is informal and operates on a needs basis, and not necessarily in a coherent manner. The methods for engagement with departments and government are non-traditional, but may include advocacy and even protest. The basis for action would be streams of information, some validated others not, to build arguments.

In summary, the type of M&E that is advocated for the South African context, when measuring or fostering good governance, should be oriented towards empowering, promoting learning, employing mixed-methods, and serving a transformational purpose. It should also promote transparency and accountability around performance, and help to foster linkages between the State and citizens, in supporting the quest for good governance.

The independence question is deemed important in the evaluation community, with it being enshrined in the guiding principles for evaluators of the American Evaluation Association (AEA), which has five principles to guide its members. These are systematic inquiry, competence, integrity/honesty, respect for people, and responsibilities for general and public welfare[37] . In South Africa, the PSC portrays itself as being independent, working without fear, favour or prejudice, whilst the Republic`s constitution emphasises that the

[37] See American Evaluation Association. Guiding Principles http://www.eval.org/Publications/GuidingPrinciples.asp

independence of oversight bodies must be protected. In reality, these bodies are independent with the parameters afforded to them politically.

A separation between the evaluator and decision-maker is implied. In the South African context this approach is may be seen as supported if one were to look at how the independent PSC, expected to "act without fear, favour or prejudice" operates (Constitution, Chapter 10). Whilst it reports on its findings without prepublication censorship from the executive[38], it does not have the power to enforce its recommendations and operates within a particular political configuration. Rossi's (2004) approach is one of political pragmatism.

O`Sulivan (2004: 33) states that context is particularly important in evaluation: "If the purpose of the evaluation is politically motivated, then the evaluation context will influence how the evaluation unfolds. Evaluation can be psychologically threatening, as it implies judgement, and people are often uncomfortable with others judging their world". This will be important in South Africa, especially given the political sensitivities, which can produce difficult dynamics for evaluators who will find it difficult to negotiate entry and present results. Issues that come to the fore would be those relating to location (from where the evaluation is directed), who undertakes the evaluation (the credibility question) and what the extent of participation is, in terms of formulating the terms of reference and deciding on the evaluation questions. Within this, the issue of" values are critical, as inappropriate personal or cultural preferences or biases may lead to faulty conclusions and therefore misguided judgements" (Davidson, 2005: 90). It is doubtful whether evaluators in South Africa have been adequately sensitised to this factor, or whether they assume possessing certain skills makes them credible and irreproachable. In the absence of a certifying agency for evaluators in the country, the profession can easily be undermined as training tends to focus on the technical, without due consideration of the contextual and personal.

Returning to the debate on objectivity versus subjectivity, one notes that at a broad level of generalisation M&E ranges from a largely positivistic perspective on the one hand where quantitative, scientific approaches are used to generate information, to the more interpretative and constructivist approach on the other hand which privileges the generation of local knowledge, learning and use. In the context of the South African developmental State, it is expected that M&E will be required to generate both statistical information and provide assessments according to targets and goals. However, M&E needs to probe deeper and explain phenomenon, rather than simply describe data, and this means using qualitative

[38] As an independent body, the PSC presents its findings directly to parliament or the media, without pre-publications censorship.

approaches and methodologies. The latter is particularly important given that post-apartheid South Africa also requires the construction of new knowledge and understanding[39].

The foregoing has argued that in South Africa, M&E plays a critical role in not only improving the effectiveness of service delivery, by supporting management, but also by supporting democratic principles through improving transparency and accountability. In the discussion on definitions of M&E, it has been made clear that a more expanded view of M&E be taken, and in the discussion on purpose, it has been argued that the political thrust of M&E must not be forgotten. There has also been an assessment of the importance of M&E to fulfil the purposes of accountability, transparency and learning, and it has been emphasised that having a well-capacitated M&E is critically important to ensure that the function is taken seriously and there is confidence and credibility in the M&E functionality. The assessment of M&E has been briefly related to what will be done analytically.

The considerations for M&E were shown to range from accountability to civic considerations, and in terms of the credibility of M&E, the issue of independence has been raised in the context that there must be some M&E conducted outside of government. If the State is serious about measuring its own performance it should actively draw in social partners to augment its own M&E processes. This goes to the heart of accountability, and through the reporting of performance by itself to the citizens, it would practically show a willingness to share and engage with performance data about itself. The process is currently largely limited to national initiatives, such as reporting against the Government PoA, posted on the Government Website. There are also the Budget Vote processes of the different Ministries, whereby plans and budgets need to be reported on allowing for debate. The PSC through its own M&E programme also places performance data in the public domain. Thus M&E has a role to play in terms of promoting a dialogue on the performance of the developmental State by encouraging discussion between politicians, administrators and citizens. This serves both an accountability and transparency purpose.

3.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated how good governance and M&E are considered in the South African government, by looking at the developmental State uses M&E to advance its policies and strategies. It has looked at the form of M&E, given issues of context and politics, and introduced the three empirical perspectives that follow.

[39] Knowledge construction is one of the outputs of M&E, and in the South African context important as it would produce the basis for public administration assessments.

Chapter 4

Research Methods

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the methodology used for the study, and justifies the research methods and choices by presenting a justifiable and objective research process which is pivotal to answering the research questions (Babbie and Mouton, 75: 2006). The comprehensive nature of the study necessitated the use of a mixed-methods approach, which is based on the philosophical orientation of pragmatism, wherein the research questions, not the methods, dictates the orientation of the study (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Creswell, 2009). Triangulation is generally considered to be one of the best ways to enhance validity and reliability in qualitative research, and can partly overcome the deficiencies that flow from using one type of method (Merriam, 2002; Neuman, 2006). In this study, as the latter part of this chapter shows where the research framework is outlined, data is considered from both qualitative and quantitative sources, to assess whether the performance of the DSD meets the norms and standards for good governance.

As a qualitative case study it goes beyond descriptive questions to answer the “how and why” questions (Yin, 1993). The study thus is exploratory in nature, and seeks explanations for questions related to the M&E-good governance relationship. It also allows for researcher insights to be fed into the analysis. It allows for analytic generalisations, and has the potential for theory building (Babbie and Mouton, 2006). This study is not a theoretical exercise, but exploratory in nature as it assesses the influence of several forms of oversight on the case study of the DSD, to understand internal processes. The mixed-methods approach allows for a range of insights to be brought to bear on the assessment.

Underpinning the research questions are the testing, either explicitly or implicitly of issues that relate to accountability, transparency and efficiency, which resonate with the notion of good governance. The conceptual framework and literature review has formed the basis for the definitions and concepts that have been used to forge more detailed research questions, and was the basis against which actual, empirical performance is measured. These are outlined at the end of this chapter.

4.2 RESEARCH METHODS

4.2.1 Research design

The research adopted a design to assess whether broadly M&E plays a role in producing good governance, by examining how three forms of M&E act individually and in concert to produce the outcome of good governance. The research has thus been designed to include overarching frameworks within which norms and standards are contained for testing the research assertion in actual practice. This chapter outlines why a mixed-methods approach is appropriate, and provides the road-map used to set up the perspectives, clarify the propositions contained within each, and explain the forms of data sought and used. Each of the three perspectives has resulted in a particular M&E perspective designed based on the conceptual framework and literature review, a rationale for the use of particular forms of data, specific research questions and an analytical framework that returns to the key concepts of good governance and M&E. The data has been drawn from the personal perspectives of respondents, documentation (reports and evaluations) and observations. The study ensured that the research design was explicit, objective and replicable, to ensure that the roadmap for collecting, measuring and analysing the data was appropriate (Cooper and Schindler, 2001: 134). The more specific steps of the research design are outlined below.

4.2.2 Securing co-operation and ensuring confidentiality

The researcher is a professional evaluator employed by the PSC and responsible for the M&E of government. It was important that this position not be abused in the securing of co-operation for this personal academic research. Prior to conducting the research, the letter of permission was sent in advance, and staff was ensured confidentiality. It was made clear in all communication that this was not research being done for the PSC, but for personal academic purposes. In this regard, a letter was prepared and signed by the Director-General of the DSD, giving permission for the research **(Annexure 1).** There were instances where staff chose not to participate, and this was respected. No names of any respondents were used in the data, and all responses were numerically classified, in the case where interviews were undertaken. The researcher will present the key findings of this research to the DG.

4.2.3 Data storage, organisation, retrieval and analysis

As a qualitative case study, the research required that the extensive qualitative data be properly organised for analysis, and the guidelines which have been established for documenting the process to ensure completeness and accuracy of data and its classification has been followed (IDRC, 2008). The researcher organised the data according to three sets of data files for each of the empirical chapters. The design for each of the three empirical chapters has been informed by the research problem and questions, in accordance with the steps prescribed on research design by Babbie and Mouton (2006).

The manner in which the data was managed for the empirical chapters is as follows. For Chapter 6 (Mandatory M&E), the data was classified into the following areas; policy and regulation documentation, wherein laws and prescripts relating to the mandatory oversight institutions was analysed and external assessment of the DSD undertaken and expert views and observations on compliance M&E, which included the researchers notes. Methods for undertaking content analysis were followed throughout the study (Weber, 1990). This included scanning data, the creation and classification of code categories, through grid tables for the purpose. In all instances where content analysis has been done, the data was organised into two operational areas, the National Department of Social Development (DSD) and the Provincial Departments of Social Development (PDSD) and according to the financial years for the period under study[1]. The more specific headings used for each piece of policy or law have been sequential allocation of code for articles, audience (who uses it), a researcher subjective evaluation based on a 5-point or three point scale depending on what is being assessed or valued, and application. In relation to application this relates to obligation or advice.

In Chapter 7 (Persuasive M&E), the researcher immersed himself into the organisation and also relied on expert views and data from interviews and questionnaires. The researcher attempted to be unobtrusive, so as not to disrupt functions and/or generate an unnatural or contrived response (Lee, 2000). The field notes on observations were classified according to date, nature of engagement, level of participation and subject matter and as assessment of meeting. In addition the minutes of management meetings for the research period were assessed, to see whether the subject of oversight was taken seriously. During the research period the researcher presented findings on the DSD in his professional role, and was able to observe how these results were received. In terms of the qualitative data derived from the

[1] The financial year for government is 1 April of each year, to the 31 March of the following year. The results thus compared the appropriate cycles with each other.

questionnaires that were sent to managers, the researcher undertook content analysis using the Statistical Programme for Social Sciences (SPSS) to code and summarise responses. The data from this chapter was heavily reliant on the perspectives of individual respondents, which were viewed as valuable as these were lived experiences, and thus constitute valuable insights. This part of the research, being qualitative in nature, is phenomenological, as it sought to understand how the management cohort perceived the areas identified from a lived experience. These perceptions as those based on a real world setting, and has allowed for greater explanation and more in-depth study (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005). It is the first time that such a comprehensive study has been undertaken on how M&E is perceived and experienced by a cohort of managers in the country.

In Chapter 8 (Civic M&E), the researcher focused on all the departments commitments to engaging citizens, and assessed the function within the DSD, by looking at its communication and engagement strategy, as well as views of persons and groups who engage with the DSD. The next part examined key reports on the effectiveness of the policies of the DSD. The researcher focused on a selection of critical studies which assessed key policies and deliverables such as the child support grant. The researcher also looked at the Parliamentary questions, and classified these in terms of year and theme. This allowed for an assessment to be made of the type of questions posed by civic and political parties on the performance of the DSD. The proceedings of the Portfolio Committee responsive for the DSD was assessed and classified, to do an analysis of the quality of these engagements.

4.2.4 Research strategies

As described above, several research strategies have been used. Given the comprehensive nature of the research, process worked simultaneously, with data gathering and analysis for the empirical chapters taking place alongside each other. This helped to keep the research within reasonable time-frames, and prevent research fatigue as the researcher would not have to return to the same respondents and experts repeatedly as matters emerged from the research. The idea was to keep the research participants informed, but not be obtrusive.

The use of the case study for this qualitative assessment allowed for an assessment of the phenomena as it unfolded within the complexity of a real situation (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). The researcher was engaged with the DSD over a period of 4 years, and was able to build a relationship with it, and observe trends in its performance over the period. This

assisted with the in-depth qualitative analysis which was made possible through this approach.

4.2.4.1 The case study approach and its application to the DSD

This case study approach was used, which is deemed appropriate given that the unit of analysis has similarities with other units (Stake, 1995). In this case, the similarities are between public service departments which operate within a common legislative and regulatory framework. The case study of the DSD is thus an appropriate unit of analysis for testing the assertion of the thesis that M&E does contribute to good governance, and for making extrapolations from this unit of analysis. The guiding principles for conducting such a case study have been met, in that the need and relevance have been identified (in Chapter 1) and concepts relating to the study defined in chapters 2, 3 and 4. The research framework has been constructed based on a combination of the literature review, and the researcher`s own observations and experience in the field, and the broad proposition is that M&E does lead to good governance. These have been the guiding principles, and assisted in structuring the data-collection process (Babbie and Mouton, 2006).

As a non-experimental design, it does not use random selection or control and comparison groups, and is used when the researchers wants to gain an in-depth understanding of a process, event, or situation and explain why results occurred. Case studies are frequently used in development interventions, and are useful for describing what the intervention looks like on the ground and why things happen as they do, and focuses on the effects of an intervention (Imas and Rist, 2009: 271). The use of M&E to promote good governance in South Africa, through the case study of the DSD, is an example of an intervention by government, based on the Constitutional imperatives for good governance, and the case study, which is an intensive investigation of a single unit, in this case an organisation, allows for many focal areas to be assessed (Tellis, 1997). Thus, the forms taken by the intervention of M&E of government practice, analysed herein through three lenses, would support the approach of a case study that informs a particular development intervention. Babbie and Mouton (2006) show that case studies can inform best practice, when it comes to issues relating to policy implementation and evaluation, human resource practices, management, organisational issues, organisational culture, processes of change and re-engineering. This research will cover most of these areas, making this methodology appropriate. In addition, the DSD is a relevant case study in that:

- It has a mandate directly relevant to the transformation of society and the Public Service, and addresses key priorities of the developmental State such as poverty alleviation, which are conducted under the aegis of the DSD[2]. The developmental State in action can be seen through this department.
- The DSD has a sizeable budget, which needs to be managed in an accountable, transparent and efficient manner. This clearly requires M&E. The spending on social assistance grants has increased from R57,7 billion in 2006/07, to R62 billion in 2007/08 to R69,4 billion in 2008/09 financial years[3]. Over 12 million citizens received social grants, which is approximately 25% of the country's population receiving some form of social payment[4]. The policy intervention of the DSD impacts directly upon the lives of most South Africans, especially those amongst the poorer segments.
- The re-configuration of the Public Service post-1994, is also pertinent in that the service delivery model used by the DSD to effect its mission, that is, provision of, amongst others, grants and welfare services, hinges on an outsourcing model. This relates to the use of an administrative agency, the SASSA to implement delivery at previously un-serviced areas, in order to improve livelihoods, reduce poverty and bring about socio-economic transformation. The SASSA delivers services according to uniform norms and standards, which implies an acceptance of good governance prescripts in that there are established standards for service delivery. An assessment of the DSD and by implication its service delivery agency, SASSA, is an assessment of the extent to which good governance has been achieved[5].
- Although a central department, the DSD due to it concurrent nature and function, has a provincial presence across the country and a geographically wide impact. Using the DSD as a case study, this allows for deductions to be made about government across the entire country.
- The DSD has a functional M&E. The researcher drew on an audit of reporting requirements and departmental M&E systems within national and provincial government departments study which indicated that this was one of the few government departments that had a formally established and functional M&E system in place[6].
- The achievement of good governance in the DSD, given its importance, would be an exemplar for good governance across government departments, and also illustrative

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2 Public Service Commission. 2007b. Report on an audit of Government`s Poverty reduction Programmes and Projects. Republic of South Africa.
3 Presidency. 2009. Development Indicators. Republic of South Africa.
4 Public Service Commission.2008b. State of the Public Service Report. Republic of South Africa.
5 South African Social Security Agency. 2007. Annual Report 2006/2007. Republic of South Africa.
6 *Ibid.*

of the quality of democracy and rate of transformation achieved to date.

4.2.4.2 Expert views

The researcher followed the guidelines of Daite and Lightfoot (2004) in terms of how the views of interviewees were considered. Given that M&E is a relatively new field in South Africa, the researcher drew on an extensive network of international and local experts to solicit views of matters relating to the interface between parliament and departments, civil society and government and also obtain a more general view on other successes achieved in the implementation of M&E in government. Thus several interviews, to solicit different information, were undertaken. and in each instance the details have been recorded, either in the text or footnote. The researcher interviewed research experts, parliamentarians, evaluators at the PSC and elsewhere, to name a few.

Views on the subject were obtained through engagement during the research period with delegates at four international M&E conferences[7], where the researcher made professional presentations, as well as his professional role as instructor at the International Programme for Development Programme (IPDET)[8], since 2008. The content of the interviews varied, depending on the information sought. The results have informed the analysis, and confirm that these issues, as reflected in the literature, are indeed critical for achieving successful governance. The names have been excluded, to ensure anonymity. All of the interview data was classified and captured onto EXCEL

4.2.4.3 Observations

The researcher was able to make observations, which he recorded according to different categories, on a variety of performance areas. In most instances he used unobtrusive research methods (Lee, 2000), whereas in other areas he observed and recorded, and followed up thereafter asking more specific questions to probe reasons for behaviour or seek explanations. In all instances the attempt was to triangulate data in order to produce in-depth understanding of phenomena.

[7] The 3rd African Evaluation Association Conference, Cape Town, 2004; the American and Canadian Evaluation Association Conference, Toronto, 2005; the UK/European Evaluation Society Conference, London, 2006 and the Global Assembly of IDEAS, Johannesburg, 2009.

[8] See www.ipdet.org

Firstly, the manner in which the M&E functioned at the DSD was observed, in relation to how it receives results of oversight structures, such as the PSC and also engages with the DSD management. The observation included the manner in which management receives M&E findings, and the perspective has been augmented through management questionnaires and interviews. A second area where observation techniques have been used relates to the committees of parliament, which receive reports from oversight bodies. This is a critical area of observation as it is these committees which have the power to use performance information for accountability purposes, and such observations were valuable in that they served to provide insight into the receptiveness of political and management structures to oversight, which a key factor influencing the authority is given to M&E, and thus oversight. The researcher also drew on his professional membership of the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) and the American Evaluation Association (AEA), the International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS) and the IPDET, where he participated in topical interest groups where a range of M&E matters, including methodology, strategy and use of M&E, are discussed. In such professional forums as either a presenter or participant he was able to test ideas and receive critical feedback to assertions made. Throughout the research process the researcher presented paper relating to some aspect of M&E and its relation to good governance, and was able to obtain further information sources which were used for the literature review.

4.2.4.4 Literature review and content analysis

The literature was reviewed according to the methods presented in Hart (2005) and the body of literature was reviewed systematically, by collecting information on the subject, in this case M&E and good governance, and then identifying and appraising the debates in the field. The latter was done through internet searches and participation in evaluation conferences and forums. The literature was classified in terms of general concepts and ideas, South African specific application, and DSD literature.

This process assisted with the systematic and critical review of the literature in terms of its quality. The quality, especially in terms of the evaluations of the DSD, was established based on whether the studies were peer reviewed, and the extent of the citations within the reports. In all instances original studies were obtained. In terms of the literature on mandatory M&E, this largely took the form of examining government policy, strategy and reports, and as such thus was used for benchmark purposes, against which actual performance was assessed. The other area where there was a comprehensive review of the literature was in relation to In terms of the information on the performance of the policy of the

DSD. This involved reviewing the content of the assessments on policy, as well as the questions posed, through the parliamentary process of questions to the Minister.

The content of the questionnaires obtained for informing the management perceptions of the DSD was assessed thematically. Based on the guidance provided by Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006: 1), a hybrid approach was employed which involved reading and reading the data to establish patterns. The researcher also used colour to code the data. The coding of data was done using SPSS and EXCEL, and helped to classify the large amount of narrative data obtained (Richard, 2005: 85). The codes helped to identify features as well as patterns (Wolcott, 2001). The process of arriving at generalisations was iterative. The following phases were used to understand the qualitative data from the open-ended questions; data familiarisation, generation of codes (colour and numbers were used), establishing commonality (trends and themes), confirming the themes and quantifying the trends. It should be noted that given the small sample size, the results are indicative, but provide an understanding of how a relevant management cohort perceives matters relating to oversight.

4.2.4.5 Documentary analysis

The various documents used for this study were systematically classified and organised into the following categories; government policies, proceedings of conferences, minutes of meetings and parliamentary question and answer sessions, documents on government policies, programmes and performance were organised into the three M&E perspective areas, and thereafter analysed in terms of its status, whether it was a policy, guidance or direction document or assessment. This was then used in the respective sections to demonstrate or illustrate a point. Most of the documents from government were assessed for the mandatory M&E section, as these were of a policy and direction nature, and have been footnoted and referenced accordingly. Similarly, when it came to the results produced of government departments by the mandatory M&E bodies, they were referenced in terms of the financial year under consideration.

The proceedings of conferences were used to establish the major themes and issues by counting the number of sessions dedicated to a topic. the various meetings of the DSD were assessed in terms of the type (level) and frequency, content (agenda and actual minutes), and follow-up, by tracing the actions based on different meetings so as to establish whether the minutes were in fact an accountability tool. The researcher obtained all the parliamentary questions posed to the minister for social development, and then recorded the

responses. This helped to establish what the thrust of the questions were, and based on the responses, whether there was sufficient seriousness regarding how the questions were answered.

4.2.4.6 Thematic analysis

The questionnaire used for assessing the management perspective of M&E was designed around themes, which was based on the research questions. This allowed for the responses to be quantified in relation to the categories offered (Holiday, 2007). The narratives from the various interviews (experts) and questionnaires were done according to the guidelines for qualitative analysis (Black, 1999).

4.2.4.7 Descriptive and inferential statistics

The use of SPSS allowed for descriptive and inferential statistics. A series of visual presentations were generated allowing for the comparison of cohorts of respondents according to the thematic areas. The data was also organised to show trends and variations, and the use of weighted averages helped to show where views were on the thematic areas. Despite the small sample size, trends are discernable and explanations are possible, given that there is a consistent comparison of views for the three cohorts set up, namely the DSD, the non-DSD (or other departments) and the PSC (which is viewed as having the greatest M&E expertise).

4.2.4.8 Sampling size and procedures

The research used a purposive sample in that the potential respondents were known in advance, and the selection is based on the fact that the group has the relevant knowledge and experience with which to contribute to the study (Flick, 2009; Imas and Rist, 2009). In this case, it was the entire management cohort of the DSD. The respondents within this cohort could choose to exercise their right to participate or not. The respondents were from levels 12 to 15, which is the entire management cohort, excluding the Director-General, who is at level 16. This means that the respondents were sufficiently senior to offer credible insights into their perceptions of various aspects of oversight.

4.2.4.9 Research instrument and questionnaire administration

For purposes of the interviews, which were part of the study, a questionnaire was used **(Annexure 2).** The questionnaire was semi-structured and open-ended, and based on the conceptual framework and literature review. The questions were planned and worded to ensure that there was no ambiguity, and clearly laid out (Babbie and Mouton, 2006). The initial questionnaire was tested in small pilot study with 5 respondents not participating in the study, and based on their feedback the language and layout was improved.

The respondents were assured in the purpose statement that there were no right and wrong answers, and emphasised that the views of them as managers were valued. This was achieved through emphasising the personal aspect, and hence the use of the word "you". The questionnaire also sought to be brief, hence the use of the Lickert scale. It also offered them the opportunity to respond in various ways (fax, email or solicit a telephonic interview). The confidentiality was assured. This was customised for the three cohorts of respondents, the DSD (case study), the Non-DSD (other departments) and the PSC. The data was assessed at an aggregated and disaggregated level.

In three instances face-to-face interviews were conducted, and the questionnaires filled in by the researcher. In these instances, it allowed for greater probing. There were two instances where telephonic interviews were conducted. In all instances, the questionnaires were filled and used for purposes of analysis using SPSS.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections, which became the basis for analysis, and gathered biographical data, such as level within the organisation and management participation, as well as years in the position. This helped to construct a profile of the experience within the DSD. It asked questions relating to the thematic areas on the role played by oversight institutions, the effectiveness of M&E within the department the managerial role in promoting good governance, their training and experience and challenges in M&E.

4.2.4.10 Interviews

The researcher conducted personal interviews with experts in the field to validate observations, and this took place throughout the research process. These interviews were conducted both personally and over the telephone. In both instances the interviews were manually recorded, in the form of notes, which the researcher used in the analysis. In all

instances interviewees were assured confidentiality, and the research purpose clearly outlined to them. The researcher was able to obtain interviews with high level persons, who possessed both the experience and knowledge of the area under consideration. The purposeful sample included former Chairpersons and members of Portfolio Committees of Parliament, members of parliament, members of parliament who served on special committees and advisory groups, and staff of parliament. Interviews were also conducted with former senior managers at the DSD as well as persons from the Non-Profit Organisations (NPO), who had some contractual relationship with the DSD.

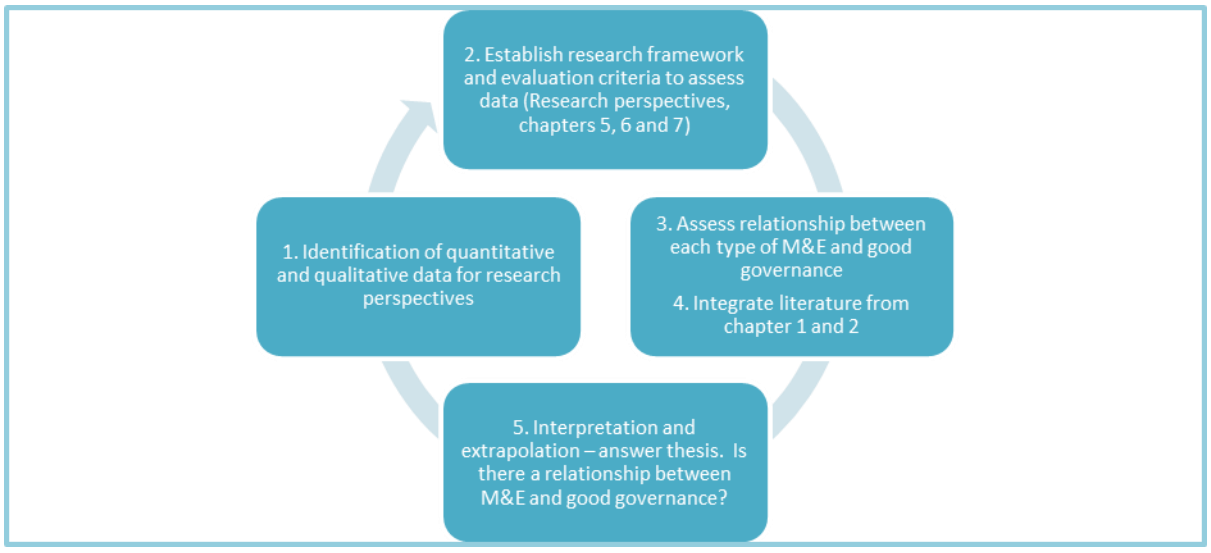
4.2.4.11 Data analysis

The data was analysed using SPSS, which helped to generate the tables and frequencies for analysis. The qualitative data was managed in a manner which ensured that the data was broken into discernable units to show patterns and trends (Bogden and Biklen, 1982) and the use of SPSS allowed for this data to be quantified, in terms of comparing cohorts.

4.2.4.12 Ensuring validity

Given that this study falls within the qualitative approach, the question of validity is important. The use of multiple sources of information to assess a particular area is thus important, and increases the validity of the findings. All of the data is treated with due circumspection, and the relevant qualifiers have been applied in terms of these data streams. The Figure below depicts the triangulation process:

Figure 4.1: Triangulation as used in the study



Source: Construction based on thesis approach and key questions

4.3 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND CONJECTURES MADE

The elements relevant to using a case study have been considered, with the conceptualisation of the study having dealt with the reasoning, hypothesis as well as the literature and researcher's experience around the core questions. Within this, various propositions have been presented for testing the assertion, the main one being that there is a relationship between good governance and M&E. Propositions made, are that the following leads to good governance:

- Compliance to reporting requirements brings about greater transparency and accountability, through the exercise of power by oversight institutions and bodies.
- Better management practice and organisational learning brought about by persuasive, or internal M&E, is an outcome of effective M&E, which should also contribute to higher levels of transparency and accountability around performance.
- Greater accountability comes about through civic involvement or engagement around the performance of the department.

4.4 RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

The DSD was examined through 3 perspectives or lenses, each of which interrogates the relationship between good governance and that type of M&E. Although each perspective is treated as distinct, they are in fact interrelated and complement each other. Each of the perspectives meets the following criteria. Firstly, the rationale for the perspective is conceptually sound, based on literature and the context of the study. The perspective is illustrated through the use of multiple streams of information, and includes both quantitative and qualitative data. Where possible, criteria and standards have been presented as norms to test specific areas of performance within the DSD. Secondly, each perspective leads to a broader theoretical discussion, which helps to address the following areas and questions:

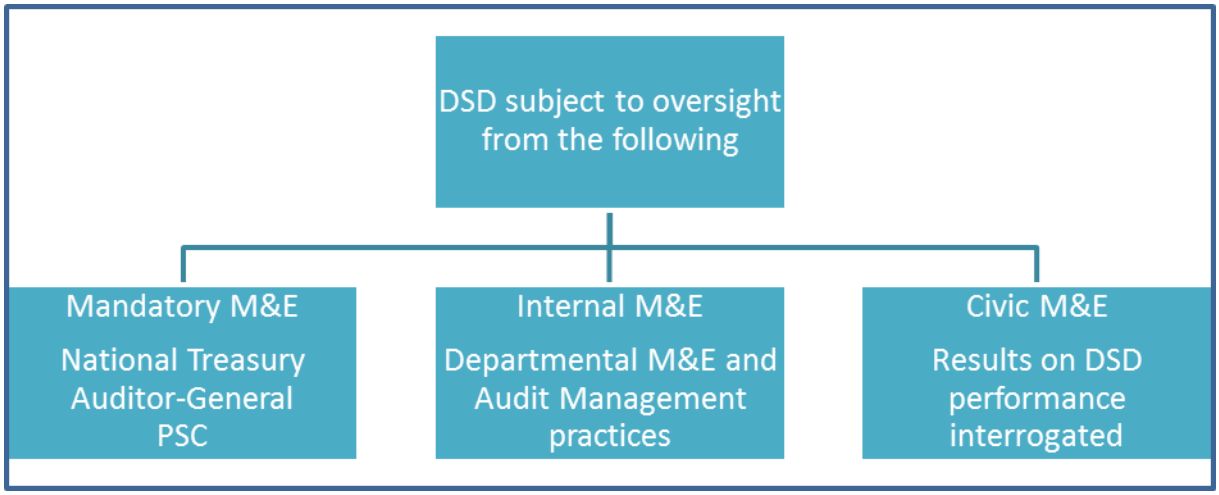
a) What is the relative value of the M&E type, or perspective, in driving governance?
b) What is the relationship between an M&E perspective, and other perspectives?

c) What is the relationship between a particular M&E perspective, and democracy, public administration, learning, and support for the developmental State?

d) How does the DSD performance in an area comply with best practice?

e) What policy considerations emerge from each perspective?

Figure 4.2: Outline of M&E perspectives in relation to good governance in the DSD



Source: Constructed from thesis outline and research questions

The figure below explains the logic used in the construction of the empirical chapters, and is followed by a synopsis of the M&E perspectives. It is important that there are standards for evaluation, as noted by Stake (2004), and these are indicated for this study.

Figure 4.3: Logic of chapters and relationship to good governance

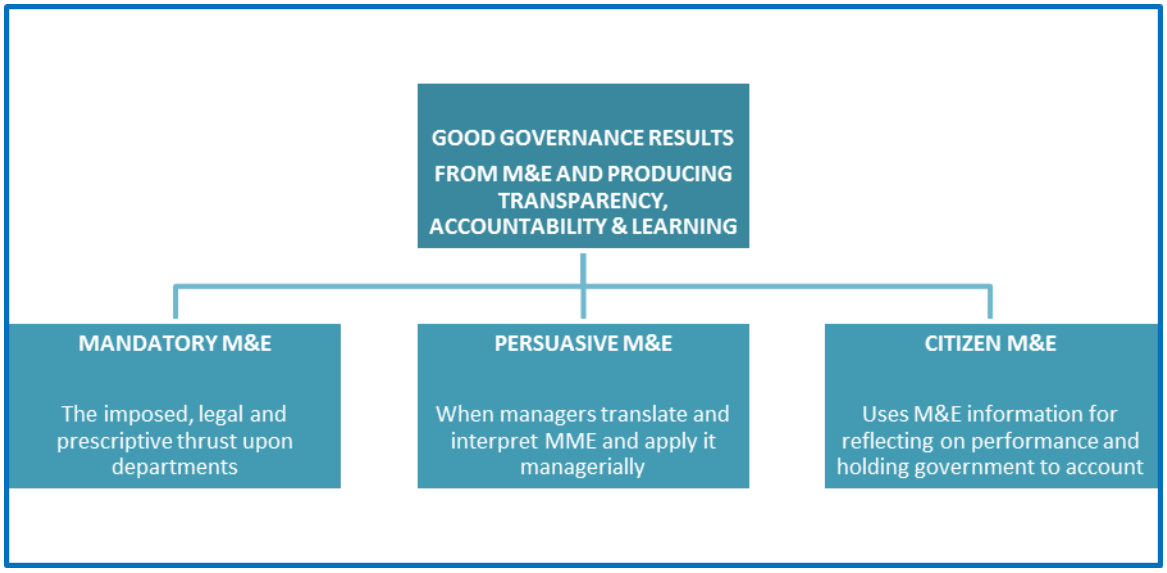


Table 4.1: Synopsis of M&E perspectives

PERSPECTIVE TYPE	MANDATORY M&E *External* **Imposed, standardised and compliance driven**	PERSUASIVE M&E *Internal (may be configured due to a response to external)* **Support to departmental management**	CIVICM&E *External* **Public test of good governance**
Description and function	NT, AG, PSC, Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA)	M&E produces information to inform management of progress	Uses results to hold department to account
Direction	External	Internal and external	External
Emphasis	Accountability, transparency, organisational learning	Organisational learning, transparency, accountability	Accountability and transparency
Promoting	Promotion of accountability to mandate[9]	Promotion of better management and decision-making	Promotion of democracy and popular participation
Indicators	Compliance to Treasury regulations, judgement against the AG criteria, judgements according to M&E systems (PSM&ES) on values and principles Compliance to Annual Report stipulations and other policy and regulatory frameworks	Improved compliance to oversight institutions, favourable audits from same, perceived value added from managers within department	Perception that department is transparent and accountable, production of Annual Reports on how citizens value services
Key questions	Does this department achieve what it set out to in terms of its policy and mandate? How well does it perform along governance indictors (financial, ethical, other)?	Is there an improvement in management practices in the department? Are units within the DSD using M&E more to improve management practice? Is M&E being used for organisational learning?	Does the DSD translate its political statements into experiences that citizens can identify with?
Data sources	AG reports, PSC reports, reports to NT	Internally generated reports,	Media and other

[9] This concept has been discussed in chapter 2, where the differences are illustrated by Perrin (2000: 44), and the purposes shown as incompatible. Various dangers of misusing accountability are also show.

PERSPECTIVE TYPE	MANDATORY M&E *External* **Imposed, standardised and compliance driven**	PERSUASIVE M&E *Internal (may be configured due to a response to external)* **Support to departmental management**	CIVICM&E *External* **Public test of good governance**
Outputs	Statements on performance	Alert to management	Pressure to comply, also brought about due to political and civic pressures
Outcomes	Improved compliance	Improved internal reflection and organisational learning	Transparency and accountability pressures on DSD sustained
Value to good governance	Essential	Important, actual value dependent on M&E effectiveness	Critical element of good governance

4.5 CONCEPTS GLEANED FROM THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND WHICH ARE USED FOR FRAMING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

There have been several concepts and ideas presented in the conceptual framework to inform the discussion on the relationship between good governance and M&E. These are now tabulated in a brief synopsis, in order to help frame the more detailed research questions posed by the study.

Table 4.2: Key concepts drawn from conceptual framework that will be tested

Concept/Idea/issue	Applicability to M&E in DSD and government	Applicability to good governance
Transparency	Prerequisite for M&E Result of M&E	Attribute and indicator of good governance Indicator of democracy
Accountability	Result of M&E	Outcome of good governance and M&E Indicator of good governance
Policy and standards on M&E and GG	Helps direct and inform M&E	Helps managers to assess attainment of good governance
Public scrutiny of operations and results	Gives M&E integrity and supports validity	Necessary to ensure good governance
Accountable HR processes	Key focus area of M&E, indicator of managerial competence	Sound human resource necessary for good governance

Concept/Idea/issue	Applicability to M&E in DSD and government	Applicability to good governance
Accountable budget processes	Central element assessed by M&E	Key indicator of good governance
Promotion of ethical compliance	M&E of ethical standards promotes transparency and accountability, and supports good governance	Ethical standards and adherence thereof important element of good governance
Learning and reflection	Should be generated by M&E and result in a more reflective organisation that is more transparent, accountable and amenable to organisational learning	Indicator of good governance and if sustained can entrench sound managerial practices
Contextual importance	Should result in customised M&E	Must be considered in the production of systems to produce good governance
Objectivity	Necessary to produce valid and credible M&E	Should be an attribute of managerial competence
Participation and engagement	The use of methodological pluralism is important, aim to have M&E empower, but both accountability and learning are important	DSD needs to engage with citizens to ensure good governance, linked to principles and values of public administration (public participation)
Citizen rights	M&E must include participatory M&E to solicit views and opinions of key beneficiaries or citizens	Views should be incorporated as an indicator of performance, and is yet another element of good governance
MDGs	M&E (internal and country level) must test progress towards these	Contribution of DSD in the meeting of MDG targets
APRM processes	Should support M&E ethos and lead to M&E capacity building	DSD is a contributor to the overall result
Public service ethos	Must be measured by M&E	Critical in the effectiveness of DSD, which is front-line, and citizen centred in approach
Developmental State	Requires a responsive and flexible M&E, that can measure intervention processes, outputs, outcomes and impacts	Orientation of the DSD should mirror this most directly.
Reducing bureaucracy	M&E should be innovative to produce interventions that retain accountability but accelerate service delivery	Critical if the DSD were to be efficient and become an exemplar of good governance
Measuring performance translates into better performance	M&E should help create the link between results and actions	Good governance will happen if M&E can help the DSD to achieve this

From the above Table is it evident that there is a dynamic relationship between M&E and good governance. At a conceptual level there is a link between conducting sound M&E and

the outcome of good governance. Good governance in the DSD would thus relate to an improvement over time in the ability of management to achieve the following:

a) Satisfy the requirements of MME players, which is mainly to report according to stipulated criteria and time-frames;
b) Demonstrate an ability to improve its performance in terms of transversal M&E systems, such as those implemented by the PSC like the PSM&ES which looks at adherence to the good governance values and principles;
c) Show support and use of its own internal M&E capacity;
d) Make use of M&E information for decision-making;
e) Entrench accountability and transparency mechanisms;
f) Develop a culture and practice which improves organisational learning; and
g) Engage critically with external stakeholders to support and integrate opinions and views held about the performance of the DSD.

These would be the broad areas that are assessed through the empirical chapters of the study.

4.6 KEY RELATIONSHIPS TESTED

The study assesses the impact of the following relationships on good governance. Key to each of these is the purpose of the evaluation, which in terms of the Key Evaluation Checklist (KEC), and cited in Davidson (2004: 13) is:

a) Who asked for the evaluation and why?
b) What are the main evaluation questions?
c) Who are the main audiences?

Defining the purpose of evaluation is critical, and whilst it has already been mentioned that it could serve the purpose of accountability, transparency and learning, there are other important questions. These are:

a) What is the overall quality or value of something?
b) To find areas for improvement.
c) Both of the above.

In this area, evaluation serves the purpose of determining overall quality or value. The question that this study asks is whether the types of M&E conducted, do go beyond the

traditional purposes of transparency, accountability and learning, and determine value, in order to improve.

4.6.1 Articulation of M&E at the DSD with other M&E Initiatives

It is important to establish how M&E in the DSD articulates with M&E players across the country, which points to the quality of relationships in terms of building capacity and being effective. The M&E of the DSD would have to interact with the M&E of the Presidency and the PSC. It would also continue to engage with the NT, which exercises key financial oversight. In terms of building its own capacity, it would have to engage with the PALAMA, as one of the providers of training. Furthermore, the National DSD M&E unit would be expected to provide some overarching framework to M&E functionality that may be set up in provincial departments, and the SASSA. These vertical and horizontal communication lines would demonstrate how well M&E is evolving in South Africa.

4.6.1.1 M&E and the DSD

The manner in which the DSD`s own M&E unit operates is an indicator of how enabling the DSD is for M&E, and also how capacitated this M&E is to produce valid and credible results. The capacity of the M&E in the DSD would be dependent upon factors such as:

a) Its organisational location and capacity.
b) Its track record of success.
c) Its perception by managers within the department.
d) Its ability to articulate with the SASSA M&E and other overarching M&E institutions. This will include the Presidency M&E, the PSC M&E and SAMEA, to name but a few.

The assessment of the DSD M&E unit is a valuable indicator of how effective M&E is across the country, and indicative of its power to influence good governance in the DSD.

4.6.1.2 Good governance indicators and the performance of the DSD

Good governance indicators exist at the international and South African level, and these have been presented in chapter 2 of the study. In South Africa they are drawn from different policies, with the Constitution having the most explicit and comprehensive definition of what good governance means for public administration, as contained in the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles. These have become the M&E framework for the PSC, which

conducts all of its assessments along these indicators. The study reflects on the extent to which the DSD adheres to good governance definitions, such as I*nternational good governance dimensions* from the World Bank (2006), which include voice and accountability, government effectiveness, including the quality of policy-making and public service delivery, the lack of regulatory burden; the rule of law and the protection of property rights; the independence of the judiciary and the control of corruption. The World Bank defines governance as “the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country`s economic and social resources for development”.

In addition the country is assessed in terms of *internal agreements and accords* which would include:

a) The APRM of the NEPAD
b) The MDGs, as per the development indicators
c) Transparency International ratings
d) Credit and investment ratings of international rating agencies which assess creditworthiness and investor levels
e) Adherence to CAPAM

The *South African public administration good governance indicators,* from the Constitution are:

a) High standard of professional ethics must be maintained
b) Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted
c) Public administration must be development oriented
d) Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias
e) People`s needs must be responded to and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making
f) Public administration must be accountable
g) Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information
h) Good human resource management and career development practices to maximise human potential, must be cultivated
i) Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation

The specific *good governance indicators for the NT* are:

a) Quarterly reports are submitted and deviations explained
b) Expenditure is within a 2% range of allocated funds
c) The MTSF and MTEF is produced according to guidelines
d) The Annual Report of departments reflect performance against planned outputs, with 66% of objectives being realised and deviations explained

The quality of planning and financial performance is assessed by the AG, who provides audit opinions on performance. The favoured opinions are the clean audit, the unqualified audit and the unqualified audit with matters of emphasis. Specific good governance indicators for service delivery are the *8 Batho Pele principles*[10] which are:

a) Consultation
b) Service Standards
c) Access
d) Courtesy
e) Information
f) Redress
g) Value for money
h) Openness and transparency

Political good governance indicators include meeting the goals of the **PoA** of government, and more recently meeting the requirements of the 12 Outcomes of government. The assessment will be done taking into account purpose. It should be noted that there could be different evaluation purposes, which may or may not contribute to good governance.

The above list may thus be considered the direction for M&E for producing good governance in the DSD. This study takes an expanded view of M&E, and sees it not as just a formal unit that operates within an organisational or institutional context. It defines it as individuals, bodies, actors, players and institutions which through various strategies and methods exert influence that leads to transparency and accountability generally. This may then also contribute towards deepening democracy, by empowering citizens to use results to hold government to account.

[10] These are values and behavioural attributes expected of public servants and which citizens can expect when they interact with government.

4.7 LOGIC USED IN CONSTRUCTING THE EMPIRICAL CHAPTERS

The M&E and good governance relationship explored in this thesis has been demarcated into three distinct but interrelated areas. For each of the three areas an analytical framework containing operational definitions and concepts, drawn from the conceptual framework and literature review in chapters 2 and 3, was constructed. Information and data relevant to each area of focus are analysed against the broader good governance criteria. This is followed by an assessment of how well the DSD compares to these normative benchmarks, and where applicable other departments which have been assessed against these criteria. Finally, a qualitative assessment is made of how a particular M&E focus or attribute has been responded to by the DSD, and by extension government generally. The cumulative assessment of each area allows for an assessment to be made of how a particular M&E perspective contributes to promoting good governance.

The value of schematically depicting the areas and their concomitant parts is that it delineates the constituent parts and shows how they work individually and in concert to produce the outcome of good governance. Good governance must thus be viewed as a dynamic, multi-dimensional concept that results from many inputs, factors and influences. In classic M&E terms, good governance is an outcome or impact, brought about by inputs (laws and regulations) that produce intermediary outputs. The outputs themselves are not “good governance”, but rather the building blocks for the outcome or effect of good governance. These outputs could include levels of compliance, behaviours and effects, all of which culminate in producing the overarching value of good governance. Whereas the outputs, such as audit reports and other products that produce transparency and accountability, are tangible, the outcome of good governance is less tangible, and can be discerned through proxy measures. These are measures which demonstrate that transparency and accountability are indeed practiced.

For purposes of this thesis, the *inputs* (the body of policy and regulation employed by the developmental State to effect transformation) are identified and assessed in terms of what it seeks to achieve. The inputs are the investments (policy, M&E systems, etc.) made to shape behaviour and influence the trajectory of government. The *outputs* are realised depending on how well these inputs work. In the case of this thesis the various M&E systems used by the actors and role players is assessed in terms of what it produces and what effects the deliverables produced thereof have. In other words, the in-year financial M&E system of NT produces deviation reports. The question is whether the production of these reports

produces the type of transparency and resultant scrutiny and accountability that reduces these deviations? The same logic applies for the other systems that are assessed.

Since M&E, as conceptualised herein, is a post democratic intervention, and given that there is knowledge of how the Public Service was prior to the advent of democracy with regards to its aversion for transparency and accountability, it *is* possible to discern fundamental change since democracy. The period of transition, which was 1994 may be viewed as the baseline, and the changes that happened after this period were at both the level of new, more democratic public policies accompanied by a culture of M&E, driven by democracy itself and for government in the work of the PSC. The situation now, evident from this study, should show how far the Public Service has progressed, and indicate whether the input of new policies, coupled with M&E, has created the outcome of good governance.

The three perspectives examined here need to be looked at in terms of the *before* and *after* scenario; for MME it would relate to the old regulation bound service compared to the new compliance and performance driven Public Service. In terms of looking within departments, one would consider the old decision-making modalities in relation to the new; the old assumed to be lesser informed about performance whilst in the new M&E information is central. Finally, in terms of CME, one would be comparing an old Public Service with almost non-existent government-public interface to one where interaction is encouraged. Underlying all three perspectives would be how well the production and use of M&E information has helped to improve the discourse on measurement and drive accountability.

With regards to the compliance reports, which is the largest type of M&E done in the country, it is relatively easy to measure progress made at an individual and aggregate level, as the indicators for compliance are often explicit in terms of which norms and standards must be adhered to. It is also easy to quantify progress and make comparisons with the normative ideals and to other departments within a universe (in this case other government departments). What is *not easy* to assess is whether compliance on its own translates into better behaviour and effects; in other words, does the transparency brought about by this type of M&E actually improve accountability, and does this accountability in turn produce organisational learning, and thus behavioural change?

There will always be a discrepancy between the ideal envisaged in the input and reality realised through the output. One would expect, however, that through M&E the above translation of vision into practice takes place, and behaviour changes to reflect the value of good governance.

4.8 THE INTERRELATEDNESS OF THE M&E PERSPECTIVES

Each of the three empirical chapters is considered as a perspective (or typology) of M&E. Although these are treated as if they are conceptually cohesive, they are in fact interrelated and mutually reinforcing. The "interdependency" may be seen as follows. Through the implementation of MME the support, parameters and norms for other types of M&E are established. MME is the product of an overarching political and administrative environment that supports M&E through word and deed. The commitment to M&E in South Africa has been shown by its emphasis at the highest political level in, for example, the State of the Nation Addresses. This has followed by it being given a priority the Cabinet[11] as a priority of government. Practical examples of this follow through from word to deed can be seen in the creation of the Government-wide M&E Framework[12], which has been encompassed in 2009 by a Ministry for Performance Management and Evaluation. The express purpose of this Ministry is to develop a framework for measuring government outcomes, and operationalise an effective accountability system. The Ministry has been given authority as it resides in the Presidency, and will work closely with the Ministry for Planning, which also seeks to exercise oversight. An announcement was made in the latest State of the Nation Address that performance contracting will take place between the President and Ministers, and the public can expect reports on progress in various areas[13]. South Africa is fortunate in that M&E is a constitutional imperative, which means that it is mandatory and obligatory nature is uncontested. Clearly this helps M&E practitioners as there is a clear case for M&E, from both law and government.

This political and legal support for M&E is conducive for other forms of M&E to take place, which whilst not obligatory are also important. These perspectives are called the PME and CME. PME is defined as what happens managerially within departments, which is influenced by the pressures placed upon departments by MME. In other words, the act of complying with the pressures placed upon it by external agents, the MME category, leads to internal managerial processes being initiated which are aligned to an M&E culture that supports a more effective managerial practice. This perspective is analysed by examining how management *works* in a department, and involves an assessment of knowledge management. It involves tracking decision-making processes against available knowledge

[11] The Cabinet comprises Ministers, and is the highest decision-making body of government.
[12] Presidency. 2007b. Policy Framework for the Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation System. Republic of South Africa.
[13] As stated by the president of the republic of South Africa. Honourable, J. Zuma, 11 February 2010. State of the Nation Address. Joint Sitting of Parliament.

repositories. The assessment looks at the managerial behavioural terrain, including decision-making, and seeks to produce fresh insights into decision-making processes in departments. Although this is a more subjective analysis, and less easy to discern issues of causality (between information availability and information use), it is a critical perspective and helps answer the question of whether management has responded to the M&E thrust of government. PME is important, as management is an important intermediary between policy intent (MME) and policy outcome (CME). PME is thus a look into the internal managerial processes and a consideration of how management perceives and responds to M&E, both in terms of MME and PME.

CME examines the impact of government intervention, from the perspective of citizens as primary beneficiaries and tax-payers. This is probably the most valuable of the three perspectives, as it is proof of good governance from the perspective of citizens. It answers the question of whether M&E does produce good governance at the most critical levels. It tells whether the guardians (MME) and implementers (PME) have been successful in delivering public value. The other perspectives are irrelevant if government departments are unable to produce tangible benefits to citizens, the so-called "better life for all". The assessment will be based on citizen perspective reports. In relation to the DSD, the question asked is whether social development, as one of a family of departments responsible for effecting social transformation, has managed to contribute to meeting the goals of the developmental State.

The interrelatedness and mutually reinforcing nature of these three perspectives may be seen in that PME is helped by an overarching MME environment in the same way as CME. MME provides the legal direction for PME, and influences managerial practice. MME also sets the rules for engagement between departments and citizens, as it entrenches rights and obligations, without which citizens would be unable to call government to account. Thus when rights to challenge and access to information[14] are constitutionally protected, citizens feel encouraged to question government. They are supported through the media and various public processes which allow citizens to exercise an oversight role that they were previously denied. The *contrary* also applies in that an unwilling and unsupportive political and administrative leadership could limit PME and CMC as citizens would not be protected when calling government to account. This was the pre-democratic situation when citizens did not have the legal clout to obtain performance information about a department which is supposed to deliver social and economic rights and benefits to them.

[14] Department of Justice and Constitutional development Promotion of Access to Information Act, No. 3 of 2000. Republic of South Africa. Pretoria.

There is a critical *normative benchmark* for assessing performance, which coupled with *Batho Pele* principles sets the bar against which the Public Service can be judged. The catalyst or converter for delivering good governance is when M&E, in all of its forms, acts in tandem to translate policy inputs into values for good governance as an effect or outcome. The Table below compares these perspectives in more detail.

Table 4.3: Comparison of M&E perspectives along key characteristics

Defining characteristic	Mandatory M&E	Persuasive M&E	Citizen M&E
Legal basis	Constitution, Chapter 10, Public Service Act	Cabinet decision on M&E Performance Management Development System (PMDS)	Constitutional imperatives Political pronouncements Parliament exercising its function through decree
Direction of pressure	External, above, imposed	Internal, but also responding to external	External, but this time towards the department which for citizens is government
Reporting type induced	Upwards and outwards, generally to satisfy requirements of national entities	Primarily to internal management structures, may support external reporting requirements	Advocacy and media, tends to be used to highlight deficiencies or support advocacy
Resource requirements	Oversight entities expect departments to use their own resources to generate reports and data, seen as statutory obligations	Requires investment in terms of establishing funded units	Largely funded externally, donor driven, dependent upon resourcefulness of CBOS and NGOs
Positioning	Accepted authority of oversight institutions	Authority and credibility needs to be established, relationships need to be established and contestations around location, the distinction between management and M&E must be resolved	Tends to be confrontational
Descriptors	Prescriptive, sanctions, extractive	Voluntary, persuasive, coercive, developmental	Democratic, activist, sensational

Drawing on the above, an operational definition of M&E to guide this assessment and which has been gleaned from the conceptual framework of the study but modified for the South African context has been formulated. It is:

> *...an act or process intended to bring about scrutiny and transparency of operations (in this case government) and which supports a public sector ethos that is*

democratic, reflective and accountable. M&E would work as an adjunct to those laws, policies and conventions that reinforce the above values.

Having clarified the logic of the perspectives and thus the logic of the thesis, the discussion now proceeds presents the specific questions posed.

4.9 GOOD GOVERNANCE IDEALS AND THE PERFORMANCE OF GOVERNMENT

The analysis in this study moves between levels and across units of analysis. The question of scale is an important consideration for any government department, as its programmes are delivered across different scales and each level poses its own challenges. This means that the Public Service cannot be considered as homogenous, and contextual factors, raised as important in the conceptual framework, are important for assessment and understanding. The implication for this is that national statements and commitments may not pass through into departments at all level and with the quality expected. This pragmatic consideration is important in assessing how effective policy statements are in reality. In summary, the above can be encapsulated in the following objectives which have already been stated in chapter 1. The questions that are addressed in this study are:

1. What is the nature of M&E in South Africa, and how does it compare to the practice of M&E internationally?
2. How effective is the South African developmental State in using M&E to support efforts towards good governance?
3. What lessons can be learned from practice to date, and how can this better inform the implementation strategy of M&E in South Africa?
4 What is the impact of M&E in promoting good governance in South Africa, as evident from the case study of the DSD?

i Good governance brought about by MME

An assessment of the extent to which M&E contributes to good governance in the DSD is a key focus of the study. There is a global shift from the notion of government and its ineffective bureaucracy towards the notion of governance with its ideals of democracy, transparency and efficiency. The push towards greater accountability stems from both internal and external sources. Key questions that are examined include:

a) How successful has the developmental State been in successfully instituting compulsory measures for good governance in the DSD?
b) What has been the form and impact of MME measures in improving transparency and accountability in DSD?
c) How effective is M&E in communicating performance information to decision-makers and role-players?
d) How well does the DSD articulate with the broader M&E community?

The methodology includes techniques that draw on secondary data sources, with interpretative techniques that are constructivist and critical.

ii Good governance brought about by non-mandatory, persuasive M&E

This theme looks specifically at the role of *Batho Pele* (as a code for public serve behaviour and conduct) and performance management systems, in improving the propensity for good governance. The South African Public Service has recognised the importance of the people question, and attempted to change the work ethos through programmes such as *Batho Pele* (people first). It has also instituted performance measurement systems. The former is best measured by how the public perceives service delivery and the latter by how supervisory levels see individual performance changing. Both aim to institute transparency and accountability for money spent on the human resources of government.

The key questions are raised in relation to whether these interventions are working. The results point to whether there has been transformation in behaviour, which is critical for supporting good governance.

iii Good governance brought about by civic M&E

This third dimension examines the role played by citizens in holding the DSD to account. It looks at the political oversight role, and focuses on the role played by the NGOs and CBOs – termed NPOs. It also looks at how civic interests are protected. It provides a valid perspective on how civics, as users of performance information, help in driving accountability. Key questions asked are:

a) How effective have these groupings (Parliament, the NPOs and citizens) been in holding the DSD to account for its performance?
b) What has been the impact of the range of players in this category for producing good

governance at the DSD?

c) How effective have the different mechanisms (*Batho Pele*, Hotlines) been in raising public consciousness about what to expect of the DSD and what has been the response to the concerns raised?
d) What are the civil society perspectives on the performance of the DSD?

The data for this section is drawn from assessments of Parliament, the NPO sector, and includes expert insights from persons involved in this terrain. It also includes perspectives from oversight bodies like the PSC, which direct public perception information to the executive to acts. The data from these sources are cross referenced to establish contradiction and validity.

4.10 ETHICAL QUESTIONS

The researcher is an M&E practitioner employed in the PSC. As such, he has access to evaluative data of government, and the DSD. A possible conflict of interest exists when using data from the PSC. However, the information used in this study is from published reports, which are already in the public domain.

The study also uses reports on the department which he has had a role in writing. In this case, the necessary disclaimer is made. All PSC data is considered as secondary, and subject to critical, meta-evaluation review before it is used.

In the course of this study, the researcher detached himself from the PSC, and made it clear to the DSD through the protocol of an introductory research protocol letter that he is studying the DSD for personal research purposes, and that the department would be provided with a copy of the thesis upon completion. This disclaimer is important as the DSD should not construe this research as a PSC evaluation.

The researcher followed the necessary protocols and adhered to the ethical guidelines of the University of the Witwatersrand in terms of this research. This included obtaining the necessary permission to use information for research purposes, ensuring that validation takes place, and acknowledging sources of information.

4.11 CHAPTER OUTLINE

This study does not follow a traditional chapter outline for a thesis, which is where there is a separation between the conceptual framework, research methods and research questions. This is not deemed to be particularly useful in this study. There are 5 concise introductory chapters, which locate the study, Chapter 1, Introduction, identify and clarify concepts, Chapter 2: Conceptual framework, which is followed by Chapter 3, Literature review. These chapters form the basis for Chapter 4, Research methods, whilst Chapter 5 provides a detailed description of the DSD, which is the unit of analysis that is subject to assessment of the M&E-good governance relationship through three empirical, perspective chapters (Chapters 6, 7 and 8), whilst the last chapter 9 provides an overarching commentary by returning to the research questions and objectives of the study.

Chapter 5

Background and Description of the Department of Social Development

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a background and description of the case study, in order to locate it within the policy environment of the developmental State. Given that the thrust of the developmental State is redress and development, the case study of the DSD reflects the extent to which transformative polices largely implemented by the national DSD can contribute to the goals of the developmental State.

An assessment of the DSD using the three M&E perspectives referred to in chapter 3 of this study, seeks to establish how well the DSD responds to different levels of oversight and scrutiny, and whether this improves the propensity of the DSD to deliver services more effectively. Given that M&E supports management, a well-managed DSD is critical for the realisation of the policy objectives of the department and the developmental State. This chapter describes the configuration, policies, strategies and managerial infrastructure of the DSD as a backdrop to the empirical chapters that follow. In this description issues of location, context and partnership are highlighted, both of which point to how the DSD seeks to realise its mandate. The DSD is also a department with an operational M&E function, both at the departmental[1] level and at the level of its implementation agency, the SASSA[2]. Whilst this thesis focuses on the DSD, it will consider the M&E of the SASSA in its assessment. The DSD is thus an appropriate and contextually relevant case study.

5.2 APPROPRIATENESS OF THE DSD TO THE QUESTION OF GOOD GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

The DSD impacts upon the lives of all South Africans, given the overarching nature of its policies. It is also a front-runner in terms of effecting socio-economic transformation, as its policies are pro-poor and seek to reduce inequality and poverty. In its Annual Report of 2008, it states that it has extended its social security net from 2,5 million beneficiaries in

[1] Department of Social Development. 2007g. Operational Plan for M&E within the Department of Social development. unpublished, March.

[2] South African Social security Agency. 2007. Annual report 2006/2007. Republic of South Africa.

1994 to 12,3 million (Department of Social Development, Annual report 2008: 14). It also claims to have helped create jobs which are seen as a major milestone in addressing poverty. The two thrusts for addressing poverty, those of social transfers and job creation are at the centre of the debates on socio-economic transformation that are taking place in the country. There remains debate as to whether the approach of providing social grants is financially viable in the long term, and whether it is adequate to move people out of poverty. There are also concerns that this intervention, whilst important at this juncture, may cause large scale dependencies, and prevent people from moving out of the cycle of poverty. However, the fact that the ruling party has not scaled down on providing such grants, and has in fact increased the grant options and reach of this form of social assistance, probably indicates that it is a policy that is here to stay. One may thus deduce that the DSD will remain a pivotal department in the years to come.

At a strategic level the work of the DSD has been linked to the NEPAD and African Union, South African Development Community and other initiatives, institutions which also focus on some form of good governance. The issues highlighted in the plan of 2005 are that there has been an expansion of the social assistance programme. In the Annual Report[3] of the department, the thrust of a caring society permeates, with the issues of how the DSD has linked to continental initiatives, such as the International Comprehensive Social Security Conference, resulting in the establishment of an International Social Security Association are raised. The thrust in the political pronouncements has been that the department has attempted to address poverty (Department of Social Development, Annual report, 2008: 6).

As pointed out in chapter 1 of this thesis, the DSD would be typical of any government department, given the homogenising effect of government policy and administrative procedures, which seeks to standardise the operations of a government department. Assessing the DSD would also provide similar insights into how any department could respond to the three M&E thrusts: from above (MME); from within (PME) and from outside (CME). The three directional thrusts from M&E, all of which seek a form of transparency and accountability, should make the DSD more accountable to its political and administrative principals, but most important, the citizens. The Strategic Plan and Annual Report of the DSD do in a sense display the intent to be accountable. Both these documents have been cited in this chapter.

[3] Department of Social Development. 2008a. Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2008. Republic of South Africa.

5.3 LEGISLATIVE MANDATES

The National DSD administers a range of laws or parts of legislation which constitute the legal framework for social development in South Africa. These have been amended a number of times since April 1994. In addition, the White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997 (DSD, 1997) and Population Policy, 1998 (DSD, 1998) provide the policy framework for the department`s work. The Constitution also guides the work of the department, notably Section 27 (1) (c) which provides for the right to access to appropriate social assistance for those unable to support themselves and their dependents, whilst section 28 (1) enshrines the rights of children with regard to appropriate care, basic nutrition, shelter, health care and social services, and detention (Department of Social Development, Strategic Plan 2008). There are a host of Acts that govern the work of the DSD, as noted in its annual and other reports.

5.4 RATIONALE FOR THE CURRENT CONFIGURATION OF THE DSD

The DSD is not a new department, but has been reconfigured and had its mandate expanded to cater for the democratic government. Its policies thus reflect the particular history of the country, in that it seeks to address the human and social areas which need to be improved. Thus in the post-1994 period the DSD accelerated its efforts to deliver social services and social grants to the majority of the population, which previously had limited access to such services. The efforts of the DSD were recognised as being essential for delivering on the election manifesto of the ruling party, with access to a range of transfer payments (social grants being a central deliverable). This was one of the most visible outputs of the democratic State. In the context of high unemployment and social dislocation caused by the migrant labour system, to name but a few, the delivery by the State of social services and grants in rural areas was welcomed and probably a major factor for on-going political support.

The configuration and strategy of the DSD has changed a few times since democracy, with the most prominent recent change (2005) being the removal of the payment of social services (grants) function from the DSD to the agency established to administer such payments, the SASSA. Whilst the SASSA is an arm of the DSD, responsible to the Minister for Social Development, as a grant administering agency its work relates to the broad policy of the DSD. It was established to pay social grants, which includes processing of applications for the different types of grants, the verification and approval of applications, the

disbursement and payment of grants to eligible beneficiaries and quality assurance in terms of ensuring compliance to norms and standards, as well as fraud prevention and detection. There are other agencies which also report to the Minister for Social Development, these being the National Development Agency, the Central Drug Authority, the Advisory Board on Social Development and the Relief Fund Board. From the above, it is apparent that the DSD has a broad mandate, which is directly related to the strategic priorities of government.

At a political level, the DSD has a Minister for Social Development, and is supported by a Deputy-Minister. The Director-General (DG), who is the Accounting Officer (responsible for budget), reports to the Minister. The DG is supported by Branch heads; there are 7 Branches, each at a level of Deputy Director-General (DDG). The Directorate: Internal Audit and Appeals Tribunal Centre report directly to the DG. The DSD employs 534, out of an establishment of 687 personnel, at a cost of 133,479,000 (DSD, Annual Report, 2008). Its vacancy rate is 22,3%, and 37 posts have been filled in addition to the approved establishment. This figure changes depending on budget allocation. The cost for the highly skilled supervisory levels, levels 9-12 out of a band of 16, takes up 40,9% of the budget. It should be noted that the process of migration of staff to SASSA in 2008 was concluded. The turnover rate in critical occupational classes was an average of 12,2%. These figures may be found in the Organogram of the latest DSD Annual Report (2010).

5.5 VISION AND MISSION OF THE DSD

The vision and mission of the DSD is clearly articulated in its strategic plan of 2005/06 to 2009/10, a document that provides both a strategic overview of the department (DSD, 2005)[4], wherein the priorities of the Minister and DG are articulated, together with the strategic priorities, goals and service delivery challenges of the department. It contains the main legislative and other mandates that drive it, and comments on policy developments that seek to make the DSD more effective, and align it to the national priorities. The document also highlights the budget programmes and sub-programmes.

The Minister of the DSD in the foreword to this plan identifies how the work of the DSD fits into the political manifesto of the ANC(2004) which refers to the “People`s contract”, and its focus on issues of “poverty eradication, social integration and the extension of work opportunities” The strategic goals and priorities relate to improving service delivery, seeking

[4] Department of Social Development. 2005a. Strategic Plan 2005/06 to 2009/10. 22005. Republic of South Africa.

the transformation of other welfare services, addressing HIV/ AIDS, poverty reduction and integrated development, and seeking social integration. It also sees itself as steering national involvement in the African and international framework and agreements with respect to socio-economic development.

The vision of the DSD is that it would provide a "caring and integrated system of social development services that facilitate human development and improve the quality of life" and the mission is:

> *…to ensure the provision of comprehensive social protection services against vulnerability and poverty with the constitutional and legislative frameworks, and create an enabling environment for sustainable development. The department further aims to deliver integrated, sustainable and quality services in partnership with all those committed to building a caring society. The DSD commits to be people-centred, to promote equity, to work in partnership, to use resources to deliver services in the most efficient, effective and innovative ways, to operate in a transparent and accountable manner, share knowledge and expertise with other departments and the sector, and to adhere to laws of the Public Service and to the Code of Conduct.*
>
> (DSD, 2005: 17)

5.6 SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

The commitment in the 2005 document relates to shifting the social grants function to a specialist institution, the SASSA. The DSD would then primarily focus on policy formulation, M&E and social services that help improve the lives of citizens. These would include a range of services, most of which are supportive of individuals and communities which otherwise would be unable to cope with socio-economic and psychological challenges. In the DSD strategic plan, the DG notes that the establishment of the SASSA, through an Act in 2004, established a public entity to administer and pay grants, to target the poorest of the poor, and eliminate wastage. In the plan, the DSD seeks to, amongst others, ensure the integrity of social grants administration, to develop and implement a comprehensive and integrated service delivery model for developmental welfare services, and commits to implement new policy on financial awards to non-governmental organisations and other civil society organisations that provide welfare services to the needy and vulnerable. The DSD thus needs to have a good relationship with the NPO sector, which helps it to deliver the type of services that it cannot on its own.

In order to realise this vision, the DSD focuses more on policy and engagement with sectors to improve its service delivery capacity, than the administration of grants. A New Service Delivery Model would thus seek to integrate and expand welfare and developmental services, which is an institutional reform that seeks engagement with civil society partners. A range of grants have been introduced to broaden the safety net and bring more people into the social network. The standardisation of the SASSA seeks to bring in norms and standards to improve efficiency, and also prevent fraud and corruption. The SASSA in 2005 administered R60 billion.

The SASSA also established its own M&E function, and produced an integrated results-based M&E framework[5] (SASSA, 2009). This framework has been mooted to give life to an integrated M&E framework within the SASSA, and the key objective is to provide a framework to M&E the management and administration of Social Security programmes within the context of results based M&E.

This agency now produces its own Annual Report, and whilst it reports to the DSD on certain matters, it remains the responsibility of the Minister for Social Development. The moving of this function to SASSA means that the DSD can concentrate more on social services, which seek to address issues relating to social problems, the main being the effects of HIV/AIDS. It also means that the DSD focuses more on the policy issues, which include matters relating on how to engage with stakeholders and the NGO sector, which is quite pivotal to bolstering the capacity of the DSD to deliver on the social services it promises. The question of sound relationships with external stakeholders, such as NGOs and CBOs is quite pivotal to the implementation of the policies of the DSD.

The proposal of a New Integrated Delivery Model seeks the integration of the provision of social security support, welfare services and developmental interventions. The services would be integrated, and services meant to target the right people at the right time, with the model delineating the scope and services of different providers. A strong thrust is the use of partnerships, especially with civil society, brought about through financial rewards.

[5] South African Social Security Agency. 2009. Integrated results-based Monitoring and Evaluation framework. 2009/10-2011/12, Tools series 1: January. Republic of South Africa.

5.7 STRUCTURE OF THE DSD

The DSD is structured around programmes, each of which seeks to ensure that the above is realised. There are 6 programmes in the DSD, and these are briefly described in the Table below.

Programmes and functions of the DSD, constructed from the Annual Report 2008.

PROGRAMME NAME	CORE FUNCTIONS
Programme 1: Administration	Policy formulation by the Minister and overall management and support services to the department, including legal, international liaison, financial management and development.
Programme 2: Social security, policy and planning	This implements, develops and monitors the policies and strategies of Social Security and Social Assistance. It also assesses the social, economic and fiscal impact of social security programmes.
Programme 3: Grant Systems and Service Delivery Assurance	This programme seeks to ensure that services are provided to social assistance and disaster relief beneficiaries.
Programme 4: Social assistance	This is a transitional programme, which manages and provides funds to the provinces for social assistance transfers and provincial administration, and funds the establishment of the SASSA.
Programme 5: Welfare Services Transformation	Seeks to facilitate the transformation of development-oriented social welfare services to vulnerable individuals, households and communities. The strategic objective is to develop, monitor and facilitate the implementation of welfare service policies, strategies, programmes and service standards to empower and support vulnerable people, older persons and persons with disabilities, and mitigate the impact of substance abuse and crime.
Programme 6: Children, families and Youth Development	This programme is responsible for the development and implementation of policies, legislation and programmes that are intended to address various challenges that pertain to the rebuilding of families, childcare and protection, violence against women and children, youth development and youth at risk.
Programme 7: Development Implementation Support	Responsible for developing, co-ordinating and managing sustainable income-generation projects, developing strategies and programmes which contribute to the well-being and social integration of vulnerable individuals, groups and communities; and developing policies and programmes to create and enabling environment for NPOs.
Programme 8: HIV/AIDS	The effects on the social sector are noted, which are that the chronic nature of the illness has implications for social grants, development and child care, which in turn brings about the disintegration of basic family units, increases the number of child-headed households and increases the number of orphans. To address this, the programme looks at community home-based care and support programmes, and other programmes, largely which seek to co-ordinate efforts to support these groups.
Programme 9: Population and Development	This looks at the population question from different angles, which draws from the 10 year review. This relates to the framework of encompassing interest (people`s contract), improving the performance of the State,

	addressing the consequences of social transition and improving regional environment and implementing NEPAD .

Source: Department of Social Development, Annual Report 2008.

The Annual Report of the DSD lists, for each of the programmes, M&E measures. These are the outputs, performance measures, targets for the year under review (previous), the actual output and finally the percentage deviation from the target. he Annual Report thus becomes a measure of performance, although self-reported, of the DSD, and is a key M&E tool.

5.8 M&E WITHIN THE DSD

The DSD has a Chief Directorate: M&E, which falls within the Branch: Corporate services. It is staffed by 6 people, who are expected to manage the M&E of the department. This unit has four key result areas (KRAs), which are as follows:

a) KRA 1: Improve institutional performance monitoring
b) KRA 2: Improved service delivery monitoring of social development services and programmes
c) KRA 3: Effective information coordination and reporting system
d) KRA 4: Integrated M&E system across the sector

The main task of the unit has been to help the DSD report on its programmes, as per the requirements of the NT. This means that it helps units to define outputs within the programmes, develop performance indicators and targets, assess the measurability of performance indicators and report on actual performance and reasons for non-performance. It thus provides the DSD with the technical capacity to improve its own self-reflection and evaluation.

In terms of the KRAs listed above, the Chief Directorate has produced templates to report on each area, and in essence looks at performance against time frames, costs and comments on performance targets. In terms of institutional performance monitoring, the outputs relate to the institutional performance framework, the Annual Report, the annual performance measurement report, quarterly reports and performance review meetings.

With regards to service delivery, the M&E Directorate produces a range of reports on service delivery, and has systems to track performance thereof. It has also commissioned citizen satisfaction surveys. This study will look at this area in chapter 7, wherein the perspective of citizens and external stakeholders will be considered. This effectiveness of the M&E in the

DSD, in relation to the above and its contribution to good governance will be critically appraised through the empirical chapters 5, 6 and 7 which follow.

5.9 SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME (DSD, STRATEGIC PLAN 2004/5 – 2009/10)

The DSD does have a service delivery improvement programme, which may be regarded as the normative benchmark against which the department can judge its own performance. This programme should have been the outcome of discussions and negotiations and would reflect what the DSD considers to be its priorities, as it indicates who it considers to be its potential service users. The service standards are the commitments made by the department in terms of what it can offer the clients.

An assessment of the strategic plan reflects how the DSD defines itself in relation to the context within which it operates, and reflects on the area of policy and legislation, and how it sets about to support provincial departments with implementation. It also lists its primary services, which are the provision of social grants, welfare services, poverty relief and support for victims of HIV/AIDS. In most instances the service users are listed as communities, community-based organisations and non-government organisations. This is in relation to financial and technical assistance for poverty relief projects, financial and technical assistance for HIV/AIDS projects and for other social development projects. The standards in these areas relate to acknowledging receipt of request within 48 hours, assessing requests within 2 months of receipt and transferring funds according to agreements. In terms of the area of disaster relief, the victims of disaster are the clients, with the service delivery indicators being the assessment of disaster within 7 days of occurrence and making payments within 3 months of confirmation. An area to be mentioned is NPOs, which are key clients and to which the DSD commits to registering applications within 48 hours and processing applications within 2 months of receipt. The Population Information Resource Centre sees its clients as government departments, and the main output being making information accessible through the department website. In terms of information, there is a commitment to members of the public and parliament to acknowledge receipt of letters within 48 hours and reply within 14 days, in the language of choice where possible.

The DSD has also committed to consultation arrangements, which include national consultations and bi-lateral meetings, and a commitment to meet with communities and visit projects. The modalities for such consultations are also indicated. In terms of information, there are commitments to undertake national campaigns for the registration of grant

beneficiaries improve the delivery of social security services, transform welfare service to improve services in rural areas, standardise and simplify procedures for communities, CBOs and NGOs, promote multi-lingualism, etc. In terms of transparency, the department provides a toll-free helpline, brochures on its services and mechanisms for complaints.

5.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter has sought to sketch the vision and mission of the DSD, and by citing its key planning and reporting documents, it has indicated the context within which it operates, and described the leadership and management configuration that is in place to give effect to policy. The chapters that follow assess the DSD in terms of how well it responds to, and has been shaped by M&E, as it reviews the department from the three M&E thrusts described.

Chapter 6

Mandatory M&E and Good Governance

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Mandatory M&E is the first of the three M&E perspective chapters, and examines what the relationship is between this form of M&E, which seeks to bring about compliance and accountability, and good governance. It describes the legislative and policy environment that has been put in place to ensure compliance with norms and standards in the Public Service, and assesses how well the DSD has responded to these imperatives.

A key question that is asked is whether meeting compliance criteria, and hence addressing the accountability dimension, is sufficient for producing the effect or outcome of good governance, or whether the production of good governance requires a more comprehensive application of M&E. In other words, is there not also a need for M&E that produces transparency and learning, which is also seen as critical aspects by Roper and Petitt (2002) and Gray (2009). This question is asked in relation to the dilemma that may face M&E practitioners when they try to drive all three M&E perspectives simultaneously, but fail to recognise the inherent tensions and contradictions between the perspectives (Perrin, 2007).

The discussion on good governance in chapters 2 and 3 has indicated that accountability and transparency are some, but not all, of the indicators of good governance. There are others, such as participation, the rule of law and inclusivity, which point out that even if there is good compliance by government, this is but a partial contribution to good governance, which is a more comprehensive, all-embracing concept. It is possible for a department to perform well in terms of mandatory compliance, but still not meet the standards of good governance, as compliance does not equate good governance, which is broader than meeting administrative standards. It was pointed out that higher level outcomes are what ultimately count, and these are best tested by users of government services, the citizens themselves.

In addressing the above, the chapter is organised as follows:

a) Description of MME, or accountability frameworks, within which all M&E bodies work
b) Contextualisation of MME in the country

c) Discussion of the accountability and governance framework of government
d) Description of the schema for assessment
e) Analysing how each performance area is M&E by different institutions
f) Description of how Parliament works in support of MME bodies
g) Critical appraisal of the impact of MME on good governance

6.2 MANDATORY M&E

MME relates to compliance, and is the form of M&E where the express purpose is to ensure accountability. The following are the connotations of the word 'mandatory':

> *Obligatory, being accountable, discipline, sanction bearing, compulsory, non-negotiable, legalistic, authority bearing, prescriptive, ordained, implicitly meant to change and direct and control, accountable to norms and standards, objective, criterion-referenced.*

Source: Constructed from readings and the researcher`s own interpretation of the area

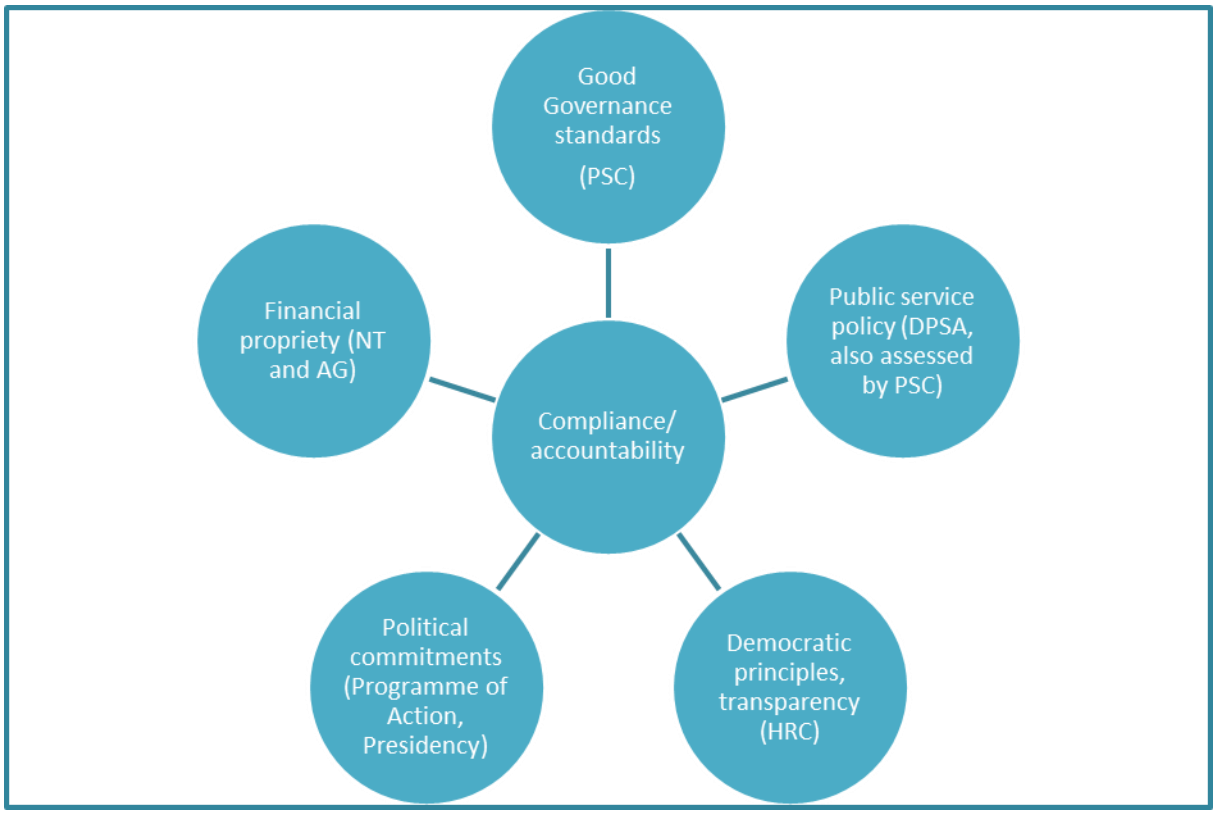
MME is performed by central oversight bodies, each of which assume responsibility for a particular part of the overarching accountability framework. Departments are obliged to comply with the requirements imposed by each of the central M&E bodies, which assume responsibility for the following areas of policy:

a) Compliance with the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles, PSC
b) Financial accountability, NT and AG
c) Compliance with HR provisions, PSC and DPSA
d) Compliance with 8 *Batho Pele* Principles, DPSA (also assessed by the PSC)
e) Accountability for political commitments, PoA, Presidency
f) Ultimately, all departments remain accountable to Parliament[1], which uses the work of the MME bodies to exercise oversight.

The areas interlock, as illustrated in Figure 6.1 below.

[1] A review of the work of Parliament helps to explain how accountability mechanism works, and indicates what the limitations have been.

Figure 6.1: Performance Areas Brought under Scrutiny by Oversight Bodies (Source: researcher)



The Figure above indicates the core areas that departments are expected to comply with, and the institutions responsible for exercising this form of oversight. Each of the institutions work off a political or policy mandate, and has their own protocols for gathering and reporting on performance information.

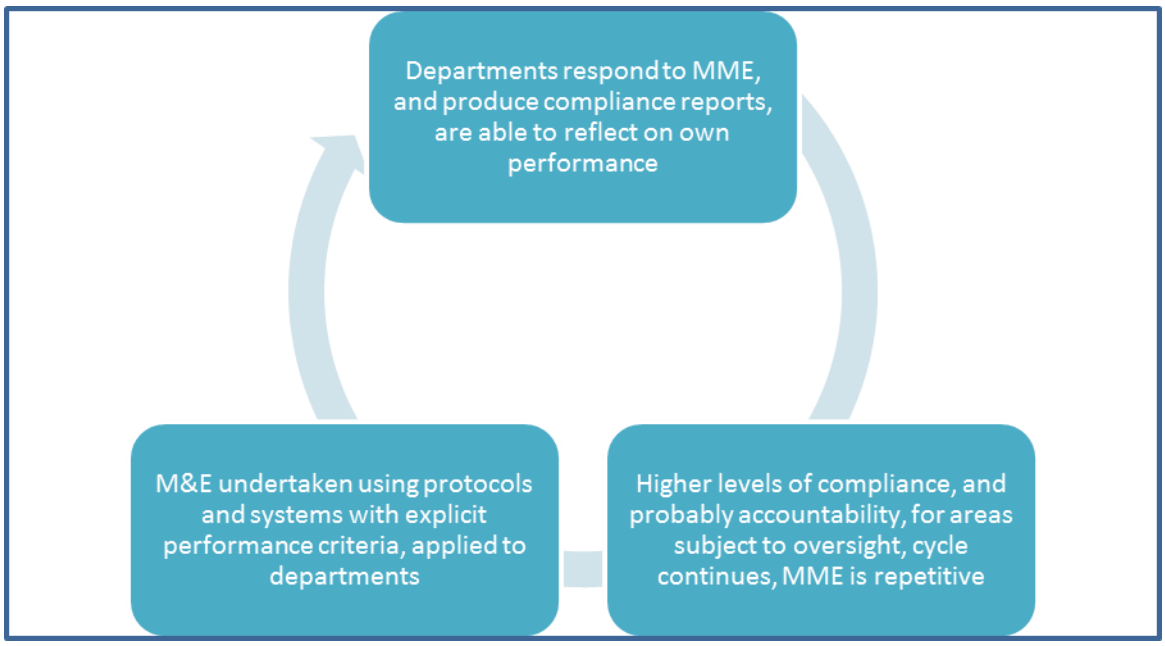
From a systems perspective, the methods used by the institutions meet the tenets of M&E and would also qualify to be described as a system, in that there is a clear methodology for soliciting information and analysing it. The regularity with which the data is collected, analysed and disseminated would meet the broad definition of a system as well. There is an explicit purpose for these activities, clear norms and standards against which accountability can be measured, and forums where results are presented. Each of the institutions contributes in part to enhancing transparency around performance areas, and serves an accountability function given that it shows deviation from specific norms and standards. The Table below expands upon the above discussion and attempts to shows the relationships that flow from a particular form of oversight, to the eventual effect of good governance.

Table 6.1: Focal areas subject to mandatory M&E and its relationship to good governance

FOCAL AREA	INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSI-BILITY	METHODS	PRODUCTS AND INFLUENCES	RELATIONSHIP TO GOOD GOVERNANCE
1. Financial propriety	NT AG	M (in-year reporting) E (Annual reports) AG reports	Expenditure reports, budget presentations, budget votes, Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA)	Promotes some of the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles, such as: Efficiency Economy Effectiveness Accountability Transparency
2. Good governance standards	PSC As custodian of 9 Constitutional Values and Principles	Various, depends on issue and scale	Departmental M&E reports, Consolidated M&E reports Thematic reports	Points directly to how well departments comply with indicators for the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles
3. Public sector policy	DPSA, specific policies also evaluated by PSC and others	Impact assessments and monitoring data on different policy areas	Compliance reports and assessment to the Governance and Administration M&E reports on public administration policy	Policy assessment is necessary to test appropriateness of interventionist policies, and would support the mandate of the developmental State
4. Political commitments Constitutional	Presidency, PoA	PoA on government website	Findings made directly to department and placed in the public domain	Shows alignment between promises and actual service delivery
5. Democratic principles, rights	Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (PAJA) Human Rights Commission (PAIA)	Reports submitted to the HRC on PAJA and PAIA	Finding made public, support provided to build implementation capacity Reports tabled to HRC in terms of provisions for access to information	Accountability Transparency Professional ethics

The collective impact emerging from the above should be a more compliant and accountable Public Service. Figure 6.2 summarises the above in terms of how these measures could potentially translate into the expected outcome and effect.

Figure 6.2: Cycle of MME



The MME bodies are characterised by clear guidelines and protocols for engaging with departments. They have the power to sanction, and/or withhold resources and produce results without censorship. They generally have a strong monitoring capability and can insist on upward reporting. The presumed effect is that they increase transparency and accountability, and may as a secondary effect improve organisational learning.

The aforementioned will be referred to in the subsequent sections of this chapter, where the M&E bodies will be further described and assessed in terms of their interaction with the DSD. The discussion now moves on to contextualise this form of M&E in the country.

6.3 CONTEXTUALISING MME IN THE COUNTRY

It is important to provide a perspective of how MME operates in the country, as this will show the link between the political mandate and the role played by the MME institutions, which help to realise this aim. This overview will show that there were many types of interventions used to align implementation to policy, and M&E bodies help to bring about this alignment.

A central feature of the newly mandated Public Service has been ensuring that transformative policies and regulations are supported. There has been a clear legal basis, contained within relevant acts that seek to regulate the Public Service and also make it

perform in an optimal manner. The permeating political message is that there must be accountability for all areas of policy, and operations should be characterised by transparency and accountability. In this light M&E becomes a tool for supporting the attainment of accountability, and helping produce higher levels of transparency, which support good governance.

At the apex of reporting on accountability is Parliament, which due to its multi-party nature, produces a level of debate when Parliament receives reports from the MME institutions. Considering how Parliament has exercised its role is thus important. Driving political compliance and accountability is the Presidency, which monitors compliance by departments against the PoA[2]. The PoA is a practical way of demonstrating political commitment to bring about an accountable Public Service, when performance information is made available to the public. The Presidency also leads in the roll-out of the GWM&ES, which has been replaced by the Twelve Outcomes for Performance[3], and has produced synthesis reports on the implementation of government programmes, the most comprehensive one being *Towards a Ten Year Review*.[4] Given that it interfaces with international bodies, such as the UN, which requires information on how government is performing in meeting the targets of the MDGs, it has published a set of development indicators relevant to South Africa's progress[5].

The main performance area is around financial discipline, and supporting government in achieving its policy goals is the NT, which has the instrument of the PFMA to compel departments to comply with principles of efficiency and effectiveness. The implementation of the PFMA is reported on to relevant committees,[6] and the NT is able to assess how government departments have responded to its financial management measures[7]. The NT has also improved the financial accountability cycle by integrating the budget and planning processes at the national and provincial level. It has standardised programme performance measures, and supports departments in reviewing their measurable objectives so as to improve overall performance information. Its formats for reporting allow for both quantitative and qualitative information to be integrated. Importantly, it has customised reporting formats for key sectors, all of which are service delivery related, that is, education, health, social

2 Presidency. 2007a. Government`s Programme of Action. Republic of South Africa.
3 Presidency. 2010a. Guide to the Outcomes Approach. 1 June. Republic of South Africa.
4 Presidency. 2003. Towards A Ten Year Review. Republic of South Africa.
5 Presidency. 2009. Development Indicators 2009. Republic of South Africa.
6 Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) is a multi-party structure of Parliament.
7 National Treasury. 2004. Progress report on the Implementation of the Public Finance management Act (PFMA), 1999 as at 31 March 2004. Presented to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts

development, agriculture, and transport. The format for each sector has key performance indicators, and allows for data to be compared across provinces[8] .

The NT exercises economic power over departments, and through its expectation of periodic in-year reporting on expenditure, it has the power to intervene when needed. It conducts assessments of how well its own policy works, and plays a direct role in guiding the process for budgeting, through the MTSFs and MTEFs. This helps to ensure that political priorities are translated into operational plans, and monitored. It produces clear guidelines in this regard.[9] It links policy and service delivery, and the NT has strong monitoring capability, which it uses to keep departments focused on realising political priorities. It is understandable that the NT has entered the M&E terrain by attempting to standardise the language of performance, through the production of a framework for managing programme performance information[10].

The financials of departments are audited by a Chapter 9 institution, the AG[11] and Public Audit Act, which in section 20(3) clearly states that it reports on the three Es (efficiency, economy and effectiveness) and also ensures that performance auditing standards are met and that there is quality assurance[12]. The reports of the AG are made public, debated and may be acted upon through other oversight institutions[13]. The AG provides an evaluation of financial performance, whereas the NT focuses more on the monitoring aspect.

The DPSA has a responsibility to assess the extent to which government policies are adhered to, and as part of its policy formulation process, requires its own M&E systems. In terms of the latter it produces its own assessments of policy but also draws upon the work of other oversight institutions and bodies. The Minister for Public Service and Administration, as the political head for the Public Service, is vested with significant authority over the Public Service. A strong M&E capability is thus required from the DPSA.

The PSC is a Chapter 10 Constitutional body that has been set up to "investigate, monitor and evaluate public administration practices". It is independent and operates "without fear,

8 Verified information with Chief Director, National Treasury.
9 National Treasury. 2007. Medium Term Expenditure Framework. Treasury Guidelines, 2008 Republic of South Africa.
10 National Treasury. 2007b. Framework for managing Programme Performance Information. Republic of South Africa.
11 The AG is governed by Section 188 of the Constitution.
12 Republic of South Africa. Public Audit Act. Section 13(1).
13 Section 196 of the Constitution allows the PSC top issue recommendations for compliance.

favour or prejudice". [14]Through its work it promotes "good governance" largely by assessing adherence to the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles. The process of presenting its findings supports transparency and much of this information enters the public domain. To date, it has produced the largest body of M&E on the Public Service in the country.

The MME institutions listed above are external to departments, protected by Acts which allow them to insist on the provision of information, and able to punish, through withholding resources or public admonishment, those departments that do not comply. These bodies have recourse to higher oversight bodies should they not be respected. The cumulative impact of these MME players is the generation of a compliance culture.[15] The degree of independence exercised by these bodies should theoretically remove bias and ensure that they remain focused on their primary mandates. Noting that good governance is multidimensional, no one body working on its own will deliver against all the criteria and norms of good governance.

There are certain features that the above bodies have, and which provide them with the power to exercise their oversight. The first is that they receive direction from the highest political office, and departments that fall under them are obliged to comply, or there could be serious political or administrative consequences. They thus have the power to sanction, which may take the form of a negative judgement or rebuke or the withholding of resources. The bodies may make performance information public, which can then be taken up by other bodies and used for calling departments to account.

The second feature is that they draw on either a political mandate for assessing performance or compliance to legislation and policy. There is thus a clear authority for their work, and their M&E interventions cannot be reasonably resisted. It is clear in all instances that the work seeks to see whether there is accountability for resources allocated, and in this regard there tends to be a bias towards assessing how resources, in particular financial resources, are used. The M&E efforts are seen as ensuring accountability, and driving compliance, which means that questions of learning may be secondary. The thrust is external, and whilst the efforts may produce higher levels of transparency and greater amounts of performance information, this is more an outcome of the accountability drive than the main purpose of this type of M&E.

[14] Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. 1996. Section 196.

[15] Each institution on its own has powers to sanction. Cumulatively, the bodies instil a compliance culture, due to their ability to seek public approval of their findings, or refer these findings to other, more influential oversight bodies (political, etc.). The connotation of power listed earlier thus applies.

This form of M&E has a strong judgemental nature, and is linked to punitive measures, which may be in the form of publically showing up performance or more serious sanction which is initiated either by the M&E institution or forums where such M&E results are presented. This chapter describes all of these in relation to the prevailing question of whether compliance or accountability driven M&E leads to good governance. It takes the view that good governance is an amalgam of effects and practices, and one form of M&E on its own is inadequate to constitute good governance. It also recognises that the different M&E effects (accountability, transparency and learning) may pose practical tensions and raise contradictions. Perrin (2007) makes this point when he talks of how the quest for accountability may be in contradiction with other M&E outcomes.

Finally, these bodies produce information that has political and public interest, as it relates directly to the performance of government. There will thus always be a vested interest in results. Performance information from MME, given its potential to highlight poor performance and demand accountability, is highly political, as noted by Kusak and Rist (1997).

Before proceeding to describe and analyse how the M&E institutions assess compliance in the DSD, it is necessary to present and assess the two key compliance frameworks for public service departments, namely the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles and 8 *Batho Pele* Principles. These frameworks are the basis for the validation referred to earlier by Weiss (2000), which is the evidence that there is compliance, and hence accountability. Accountability frameworks are rooted in legislation and policy, and may have different focus areas for different content or subject areas. Thus, the financial accountability framework which is derived from Treasury Regulations will emphasise compliance with spending norms, and look at economic, efficiency and effectiveness considerations. In a similar manner the area of professional ethics may look at aspects of fraud prevention, detection and response, to provide an assessment of how well departments comply with this aspect of accountability. The discussion now proceeds to describe the accountability and compliance framework used by government.

6.4 ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS OPERATE

Government departments, as publically funded institutions are subject to various forms of accountability, each of which uses different means to solicit, analyse, report and act upon different types of performance information. The need for government to demonstrate its commitment to accountability has been widely cited, and relates to the interest in the

measurement of the State (Fox, 2002). Accountability is a key measurement dimension. The primary thrust for accountability comes from the political sphere, and as Taylor and Balloch (2005) illustrate, gives M&E impetus. Kusek and Rist (2004) indicate that apart from evaluation being used for making political decisions, it is also used for making economic decisions. These studies indicate that there is a broad acceptance that M&E plays a key role in ensuring accountability. The accountability or MME aligns itself with those methods which are close to the auditing discipline, and where there is strong support for supporting the governance function (Cook, 1997: 14).

This chapter assesses the different governance frameworks that are in place. At the political level there is the accountability thrust from the Presidency and Cabinet, which finds expression in the PoA, Parliament and its committees. The benchmark here tends to be the extent to which high level political commitments are met quantitatively (number of houses built, electrification rates, etc.). At an intent level, there is a commitment to being transparent around this process, with the PoA being placed on the government web-site. Information from Ministries, and presumably originated from the M&E units within departments, is fed upwards and then packaged for reporting. These reports are periodically updated, but there is limited information available on its effectiveness as an accountability tool.

There are also political oversight structures which departments have to comply with, and these include Parliament and its committees. These committees use information generated from departments themselves, mainly Annual Reports, to exercise oversight. They also use the work of oversight bodies and departments such as the NT, AG, the DPSA and PSC to call departments to account on aspects relating to governance. By virtue of access to these committees being public, and the multi-party nature of the composition of these committees, one can assume that there is a degree of rigour and debate on the findings. Some of the deliberations may find their way into the public space which may be used by civil society and which serves to further bolster the accountability thrust.

There are two explicit governance frameworks, elements of which are drawn upon by the key oversight bodies, these being the NT, AG, DPSA and PSC. The first is the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles for public administration which is the M&E framework or definition for good governance of departments, and the 8 *Batho Pele* Principles. These values and principles contain directives for public administration, and how well departments respond to these may be considered an indicator of compliance to this accountability framework. The governance perspective is in terms of the ability to comply with what is politically agreed upon as good practice.

The Constitutional Values and Principles has elements which overlap with international definitions of good governance, which Santiso (2001) states is relatively new, and which emerged from the 1989 World Bank`s report on the crisis in governance in sub-Saharan Africa. (Kaufmann *et al*, 1999) define good governance as strengthening accountability, enhancing the rule of law and promoting participation. The most pertinent insight is that of Weiss (2000) who sees governance as going beyond government, and implies that there must be some validation or judgement of activities. The M&E bodies thus provide a type of validation (compliance and accountability) and a perspective of the extent to which this type of M&E contributes to the overarching concept of good governance.

The *Batho Pele* Principles provide an assessment of governance from the perspective of the citizens. It provides a benchmark of what citizens can expect with regards to service delivery. It may also be considered as an accountability framework.

6.4.1 Constitutional Values and Principles for public administration

The key Public Service accountability framework may be regarded as the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles which stipulate the behaviour expected of the Public Service, in terms of how it is managed and operates. This relates to a range of areas of public administration. The values and principles intersect with the values of M&E, democracy and good governance indicators, the common denominator being the production of transparency and accountability. It may thus be assumed that if the Public Service is managed in a manner that directs performance towards attaining the Constitutional Values and Principles, good governance is promoted.

The custodian of the Constitutional Values and Principles is the PSC, and is responsible for testing compliance against these values and principles. It drives these through its application of the Transversal Public Service M&E System which measures compliance at a departmental and aggregate level. Thus far it has produced over 100 such reports, and 6 consolidated reports. These values and principles have also been used as the framework for the PSC`s nine State of the Public Service Reports which are high level Annual Reports that talk to these performance areas on a thematic basis. Collectively, it is the standard for good governance for departments, and government generally.

The Public Service is expected to enact these values and principles, and through its size[16] become an example for the country as a whole when it comes to matters of effective governance. Whilst many of the values and principles would meet global governance standards, in South Africa there is a contextual bias, noted in that there are additional values and principles that address historic factors, hence the addition of the value and principle of transformation (or representivity).

These values and principles resonate with the Nolan principles[17] in some regards, but more importantly intersect with the values expected of a constitutional democracy, including transparency, accountability and public participation. A right that is conveyed within this set is the right to fairness, and by implication the right to redress. There is also an expectation that there would be administrative and policy compliance, which would relate to the principles on human resource management and representivity.

The Constitutional Values and Principles are the bedrock for good governance in South Africa and can apply to the Public Service broadly. They can be seen as relevant for all of the three M&E perspectives. As the bedrock for good governance in South Africa, it would be necessary to expand upon how the values and principles apply to the M&E perspectives selected for this study. The Table below illustrates the "governance element" for each value and principle, which are the normative benchmarks for assessing the performance of the Public Service.

Table 6.2: Constitutional Values and Principles and contribution to good governance

Constitutional value and principle	Contribution to good governance	Other contributions
1. A high standard of professional ethics must be maintained ***Ethical performance***	This is a personal attribute that must be promoted. There is the expectation that public servants will not abuse their office for personal interest. The intersecting values between ethics and good governance are being efficient, transparent, accountable and honest. The broader question asked of departments within which public	Foreign sentiment, political and economic,[18] is influenced by perception of the quality of a country's Public Service, which is the key interface between development actors and partners. Corruption indices are indicative of the state of ethics in the Public Service, and the large number of conventions signed by the country is an

[16] The Public Service in South Africa is the largest employer, at 1, 2 million employees, and thus influential across a large economic, social and geographic context.

[17] 7 principles for public service, which include selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, stewardship.

[18] Refer to the State of the Public service Reports of the PSC since 2004, see www.psc.gov.za

Constitutional value and principle	Contribution to good governance	Other contributions
	servants operate would be how well the environment promotes and presents ethical conduct.	indication of a need to comply with international ethical standards thus positively enhancing international image.
2. Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted ***Financial performance***	Given that the Public Service disburses public (citizens) funds, it should do so with prudence and ensure that there is sufficient probity which is necessary to meet the standards of good governance. This requires systems that allocate and track expenditure, and curb wastage. It also requires systems that lead to more efficient use of scarce public resources, and which report back to the citizens on how its funds have been disbursed. It is clearly a good governance issue.	The financial size of Public Service makes it necessary that systems ensure efficiency, as problems in individual units that lead to wastage, when aggregated upwards can be quite significant. Good financial management does require a degree of micro-management, and systems from the NT and other M&E instrument ensure this. More broadly, private sector investment is influenced by the macro-economic policy and general fiscal performance of government. This principle also links to the principle (1) above, as corruption is a key factor that can negate this principle being realised.
3. Public administration must be development oriented	The governance implications are more long term, as a stable and economically sound country is more likely to enjoy better levels of stability and democracy. Policies that seek to reduce inequality and reduce the Gini coefficient are meant to contribute to good governance.	Service delivery is a part of good governance, not only in South Africa where there is a need to redress apartheid legacies. The development focus of government provides the impetus for other investment. This may be seen in private-public sector partnerships, those that support specific socio-economic improvements, such as the poverty reduction programme, increasing educational access etc. It also links to efforts to meet the MDGs.
4. Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias	This is also "contextually specific" although it is universal. In South Africa it is particularly meant to drive rights – thus ensuring that citizens are treated equally and fairly, and this is a good governance driver. The Public Service is seen as a lever to entrench and	As a member of the global community the country subscribes to international conventions on human rights. This is most evident from the Public Service point of view through the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, which seeks to prevent

Constitutional value and principle	Contribution to good governance	Other contributions
	deliver these rights, and thus enhance human dignity which allows for democratic benefit to be experienced more fully. It is a norm that can be measured from the perspective of citizens, and in many instances would be their main evidence of whether government is working for them.	unfairness in administrative decisions. Most citizens experience some form of administrative decisions and from their point of view this is telling of how well government is working.
5. People's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making	This is also a "contextually specific" principle, but links more broadly to issues of democratic engagement by citizens. It is privileged due to the quest to move from the old, autocratic order to a new democratic one, and seeks to make the Public Service accountable to the citizens themselves. From a good governance perspective it offers the potential for checks and balances to corruption or the abuse of power, and seeks to prevent the Public Service from becoming a self-perpetuating and non-accountable institution.	Ensuring that this principle does in fact work is a challenge. The main value of an engaged citizenry is to hold government accountable, which means that citizens must have information and opportunities to participate. This is a cornerstone of good governance.
6. Public administration must be accountable	At the apex of democracy is an accountable Public Service, wherein all its public actions are subject to review and scrutiny. The effectiveness of institutions of democracy (Parliament, legislatures, specific bodies empowered to oversee government), will be the true test of whether accountability, and thus democracy is working, which in turn is an indicator of good governance.	The data from the institutions of democracy (Chapter 9 and 10) in the Constitution, together with the media, clearly indicate how accountable a government is. This in turn influences sentiment, and translates into public perception, voting, investment, etc.
7. Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information **Considered under MME: public**	A precursor to accountability, this value has particular importance in SA, due to the apartheid past. The extent to which word is translated into deed and the extent to which performance information is actually used, is indicative of the quality of governance. The main value would be that citizens can	The Public Service is obliged to be explicit about what it policies and procedures are. This allows for monitoring of its compliance, and through the media and civic engagement, it helps accountability. The extent to which the country is "open", produces further effects in terms of sentiment, confidence,

Constitutional value and principle	Contribution to good governance	Other contributions
administration	use such information to hold government to account.	investment, etc.
8. Good human resource management and career development practices, to maximise human potential, must be cultivated	This is also a good governance issue, in that a competent public sector should translate into better benefits for citizens. Given that the South African Public Service is the largest employer in the country (1,1 million public servants), it stands to reason that this capacity must be well managed.	The effect of good human resource management can be seen in how citizens experience service delivery. This takes various forms, and it should be noted that there are many faces to the public sector, given the vast range of services provided.
9. Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation	This is very much a "contextually specific" issue in that achieving representivity is necessary for better service delivery and demonstrating democratic achievement in practice. It seeks to reverse racial stereotypes around competence and help promote a more inclusive Public Service to meet the needs of a democratic country.	Data indicates that large scale absorption of Previously Disadvantaged Individuals has contributed to the emerging black middle class, which in itself serves to improve the overall socio-economic profile of citizens.

6.4.2 Batho Pele principles

A further framework for compliance is the 8 *Batho Pele* principles which are a set of standards that citizens can expect of government when it comes to the delivery of services. Whereas the Constitutional Values and Principles is a set of managerial imperatives, relating largely to how departments should be managed, the *Batho Pele* Principles are public servant imperatives, indicating what is supposed to be done when public servants and departments interface with citizens, who are the clients.

The DPSA is accountable for ensuring that departments implement the *Batho Pele* Principles, which it does in various ways. However, the PSC and civil society also conduct appraisals of the implementation of these principles. The chapter on CME will look at how the DSD has responded to this accountability requirement, which is largely an assessment of the quality of service delivery from the citizen perspective. It will require examining the M&E system of both the SASSA and DSD, in terms of examining what these systems prioritise.

The Table below indicates the *Batho Pele* Principles in terms of how these relate to good governance.

Table 6.3: *Batho Pele* in relation to good governance

Principle	Relation to good governance	Measurability[19]
Consultation	Leads to a people-centred government, services are relevant to the needs of citizens Relates to Constitutional Values and Principles – principle 8 (people's needs must be responded to)	Forms of public participation Use of *Izimbizo*, citizen forums Executive committee meets the people Resources available for engagement
Service Standards	Introduces a level of predictability with regards to services, creates certainty and stability, reduces arbitrariness, helps to reduce corruption, produces equality	Waiting times stipulated Clearly stating what are the application requirements Turn-around times stipulated Adhering to service delivery commitments
Access	Gives substance to the commitment of being responsive to citizens needs	Convenience of operating hours Ability to contact department telephonically and by other means Access to building by elderly and disabled
Courtesy	Basic human relations, indicates that citizens are the central subject of government	Greetings Availability of water and toilets Cleanliness of facilities Officials work beyond time
Information	Key way through which citizens can get empowered	Availability of signage Information desk Availability for forms and user-friendliness Language of documents
Redress	Allows for recourse to higher order, if dissatisfied, is a check and balance to prevent the abuse of power	Mechanisms to respond to complaints Responding to grievances Suggestion boxes
Value for Money	Meets the economy, efficiency and effectiveness principles from the Constitutional Values and Principles (principle 2)	Effective services provided Reasonable costs for services
Openness and Transparency	A key measure of democratic government (from Constitutional Values and Principles) that relates to transparency. This is a critical means by which good governance can be promoted, as it prevents abuse of power and helps with the scrutiny of decision making.	May be measured through the quality of Annual Reports and adherence of departments to the Promotion of Access to Information Act. It may also be measured at site level, which is where citizens are able to access information on government.

[19] Interview with Senior Manager at the PSC responsible for Service Delivery and Compliance Evaluation, 16 February 2010, to validate study on drivers on citizen satisfaction by the PSC.

Having presented the two accountability frameworks for the Public Service, the discussion now looks at how performance management has been institutionalised.

6.5 INSTITUTIONALISING PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

All of the above relates to improving compliance with frameworks deemed appropriate for good governance. It is important to note that this has taken place in the context of broader discussions which sought to institutionalise performance management in the Public Service. The post-1994 period was characterised by political promises for holding the Public Service accountable. Since 1994 the Minister for Public Service and Administration has been promising that the Public Service would be accountable and managers held to account. Similar statements have been made by the President of the country in key State of the Nation Addresses.

The post-1994 period was supposed to institutionalise performance management in the public sector, and oversight bodies expected to ensure there is compliance to these policies and systems which are assumed to be a lever for better performance management. The PMDSs were constructed very much in the period of NPM (Ferlie and Ashburner, 1996). The increased call for measurement of results was an outcome of the democratic period, where South Africa became a signatory to international accords on good governance like NEPAD (Amuwo, 2000), and this has translated into developing M&E systems within the Public Service. It has also been an era where the democratic administration became involved in M&E initiatives at a country, continental and international level, such as overt support to evaluation associations such as SAMEA and AFrEA. Given the political nature of evaluation, it is not surprising that these initiatives were also politically supported (Taylor and Balloch, 2005).

Having sketched the social and political context which was conducive to M&E, one needs to look at how well individual performance management systems actually work in government, and whether they have, through their compliance and accountability thrust, contributed to good governance. Whereas in the pre-1994 period performance was largely individualised, focusing on the so-called “incidentation” reports, and staff mobility at the time linked to issues of seniority. Theoretically the post-1994 period was intended to be a period where individual performance needed to be aligned to institutional performance. In other words, the performance contract of the Head of Departments (HoDs) should have key result areas that

are aligned to the political mandate of the department, and he/she would then contract to subordinates who would have key result areas that align upwards and downwards across the organisation. The assumption is that if performance management systems are in place and contracts aligned, with managers complying with time-frames for conducting assessments, the desired outputs would be delivered.

This makes certain critical assumptions about how performance can be managed and improved. It assumes that once the necessary contracting for performance takes place there is a legal and administrative basis for managing staff and their performance. It also assumes that there will be a cascading of responsibilities from the Minister to HoD, to other levels of staff, and this will ensure that key result areas are met. It also makes the assumption that the conducting of performance assessments will deliver the appropriate levels of reflection and frank feedback, learning will take place and future performance will be improved. It is a very systems approach to human resource management, and is predicated on the assumption that there would be objectivity and neutrality in managing the system. However, the fact that aggregated results show that there are still major service delivery challenges, it would appear that despite contracting systems being in place, they are not effective in generating the results where it matters, which is at the citizen interface with government. The ability to comply with elements of performance management does not imply better governance, only better compliance.

6.6 THE ACTORS AND INSTITUTIONS THAT DRIVE PERFORMANCE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

The performance of government depends on whether there is service delivery. The actors and institutions which exercise oversight, largely the mandatory institutions which this chapter assesses are there to ensure that the Public Service is directed to achieve quality service delivery. It means that they do not exist in their own right, but are there for a purpose of improving performance towards the attainment of service delivery. These actors and institutions comprise those bodies given oversight responsibility based on constitutional and legal imperatives, such as the PSC and those which execute specific mandates as prescribed by regulation, such as the Public Service Act, 1999. This grouping drives different types of compliance, which in the case of the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles is driven by the PSC. With regards to financial compliance it is the NT and the AG and as far as public administration policy is concerned, it is the DPSA. These three institutions have a very direct relationship with government departments, all of which are obliged to adhere to different reporting requirements which they prescribe. Overall, they drive compliance, and exercise

oversight through implementing their own M&E systems, or drawing from M&E data. The oversight work conducted by such bodies is dealt with in this chapter under the heading of MME.

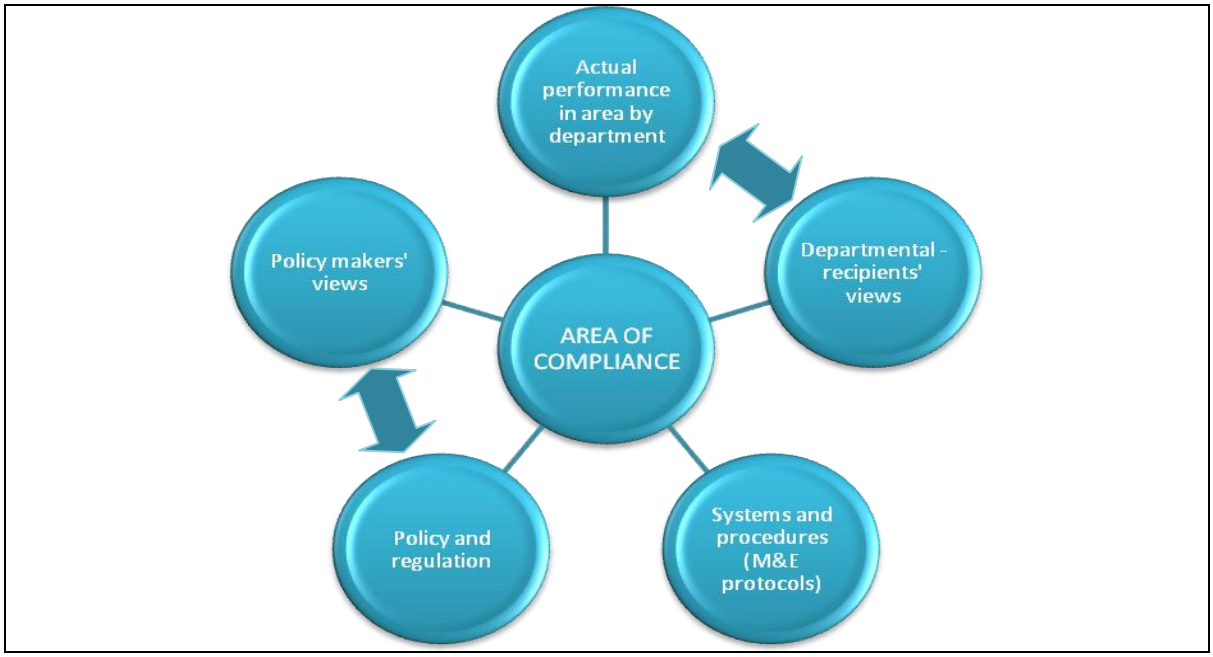
Based on the literature review, and researcher observations, the can be assumed that MME shapes the internal managerial ethos of departments by directing management to meet the requirements of oversight bodies. All other work of the department tends to be influenced by these priorities. This will be taken up in chapter 6, to see how dominant this influence is in influencing management practices, and whether it is valued as useful or not. Validating whether this happens is practice is Parliament, which as a key oversight body, has the space and responsibility to judge whether there is compliance to good governance principles.

6.7 SCHEMA USED FOR CONDUCTING ASSESSMENT

The areas of compliance identified are assessed in terms of the schema below. For each area of compliance the following will be presented:

The relevance of the area to good governance
The rationale of the system from the policy-makers perspective
The systems used to gather, analyse and present findings
The contribution of the particular system or focus area to M&E and good governance

Figure 6.3: Schema for Assessing Compliance



6.8 ACCOUNTABILITY TO CONSTITUTIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

The 9 areas which departments need to comply with constitutionally, as prescribed in the Constitution, could be regarded as an operational definition of good governance in South Africa. As already stated, the Constitutional Values and Principles relate to other internationally accepted definitions of good governance. The PSC uses the Constitutional Values and Principles as its evaluation framework, which serves as the lens through which departmental performance is assessed. Through the application of the Transversal Public Service M&E System, which measures regulatory compliance, it has thus far produced over 100 departmental reports, which it has used to engage departments with in terms of their compliance to these principles. This assessment begins by showing how the DSD has complied to the Transversal Public Services M&E System in terms of the two applications of the system in the department, but focuses on the issue of professional ethics in more detail as it sees this as being a key area of vulnerability for departments, and which can undermine the thrust for good governance.

6.8.1 Rationale of the system(s) from the policy-makers perspective

The translation of Constitutional Values and Principles into indicators and a comprehensive M&E system is based on the premise that by focusing on relevant indicators, the management of departments are obliged to focus on areas deemed important for good governance. The Transversal Public Service M&E System has undergone much iteration since its inception in 2001, and what one currently has is a centrally managed M&E system that periodically appraises departments on their compliance levels with the Constitutional Values and Principles. The latest framework may be accessed from the PSC website[20].

Interviews with the designers and managers of this system indicate that they show a strong belief in its ability[21] to focus attention on the Constitutional Values and Principles. They also felt that it was taken seriously in that there had been improved levels of co-operation from departments, and the departments acceded to the request by the PSC to receive the report at a management level. They also interpreted the fact that most departments did not use the opportunity to provide comments on the draft report as meaning the system was acceptable and the findings authentic. However, they were not able to indicate whether the system was perceived as valuable from the managers of departments where it is implemented, or

[20] http://www.psc.gov.za

[21] Senior managers responsible for the PSMES at the PSC, who implement the system nationally.

whether one could conclude that it improves the quality of governance. This is an important observation, and the inability of managers who drive the system to know whether it has an impact beyond highlight the value, and the fact that the system was not subject to any critical, externally review, is concerning. It may suggest an uncritical application of a system without appreciating its value and of achieving compliance without recognising the importance such a system could have for improving learning and reflection. The researcher noted that little effort was made to present and engage the results with the department, which is the critical learning moment. The emphasis has been on producing the report and returning thereafter to test compliance with adherence to the recommendations. Thus one cannot accept that this system on its own promotes good governance. Its true value may thus not have been achieved due to the factors mentioned above.

The Table below indicates the key systems of the PSC, based on its operational areas, in terms of the different target audiences or users.

Table 6.4: Key M&E systems of the PSC

Governance Area[22]	System	Activity	Audience
Corruption and service delivery reporting	NACH	Manages Hotline and refers and tracks cases	Departmental management Media Parliament
Performance management of Heads of Department (HoDs)	Framework for the evaluation of HoDs	Co-ordinate and chair panels for HoD evaluations, act as secretariat, provide advice on performance to Executive Authorities	Ministers and Members of the Executive Committee (MECs)
Financial propriety	Report on Financial Misconduct Management of Financial Disclosures of Senior Management service	Draw on data of departments where officials have been charged, and develop annual trend reports Monitor submission rate of financial disclosures, and produce fact sheets	Political principals Managers Parliament Media
Grievance management	Adjudicate individual grievances and produce trend reports	Adjudicate referred grievances, and produce trend reports	Organised labour Management of departments
Service delivery	Inspections and *Batho Pele* surveys	Individual reports to political heads, with plan for follow-up on	Political principals, management, public

[22] The researcher engaged with senior management of the PSC in the production of this list.

	recommendations made

From the above, it is clear that the focus of the PSC is more on compliance and testing adherence to policy. There is an accountability focus, and whilst there have been engagements with stakeholders on its work, this has been limited. It is not surprising therefore that an independently commissioned impact assessment of the PSC[23] found that its impact in many key areas was limited, and that it was difficult to distinguish what it had done in terms of improving a more efficient Public Service. The discussion now focuses on the application of some of these systems on the DSD.

6.8.2 Results of the DSD based on the implementation of the PSM&ES

The DSD has been subject to two assessments in terms of the above system. The results for these periods are as follows:

Table 6.5: Summary of results of the DSD in terms of the PSM&ES[24]

Constitutional Values and Principles	YEAR 2001/2 Percentage	YEAR 2007/8 Percentage
1. A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained	70	70
2. Efficiency, economy and effectiveness	90	60
3. Public administration must be development oriented	70	90
4. Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias	60	100
5. People`s needs must be responded to and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making	80	100
6. Public administration must be accountable	80	90
7. Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information	100	100
8. Good human resource management and career development practices must be cultivated	80	60
9. Public administration must be broadly representative of the SA people	100	90
TOTAL AVERAGE	**70**	**85**

[23] Public Service Commission. 2009b. An assessment of the impact of the work of the Public Service Commission on policy. Republic of South Africa.

[24] The results were extracted from the reports of the PSM&ES for the evaluations conducted in 2002 and 2008.

From the above Table, which compares performance between two evaluation cycles, the DSD has improved in its compliance to the indicators at an aggregated level, from 70% (2001/2) to 85% (2007/8). Over the 6 year period, performance has been sustained or improved for most of the Constitutional Values and Principles, the exception being values and principles 2, 8 and 9. These are for the areas of efficiency, human resource management and representivity. In the area of efficiency, where financial management is considered, it was found that the score dropped from 90% to 60%, due the decline in the achievement of priority outputs. In the first period it was higher as more of the priority outputs were achieved, hence the score of 80%, but fell to 60% in the second period as only between 40-59% of the key priority outputs were achieved. The achievement of priority outputs is a key area of performance, as it points to the impact that a department is having in key policy areas. Where this has declined this suggests a misalignment between planning and service delivery.

The decline in the performance area of human resources was due to the slow filling of posts, which fell outside the 90 day time period, meaning that capacity was not replaced when vacancies arose. More importantly, a skills development plan had not been implemented to the standard where two-thirds of the plan was implemented and two-thirds of planned skills development activities that impact on service delivery had been assessed. This is a concerning finding, and suggests that the key public-departmental interface issues was not taken seriously. In terms of principle of representivity, the performance declined because diversity management plans were not implemented. Therefore, in unpacking the performance of the DSD, it can be found that whilst overall performance has increased, in key areas of performance there were serious declines in performance standards.

In terms of this assessment, a more detailed focus is made on the area of professional ethics, given that corruption is a key factor which undermines service delivery and stymies good governance. This focus is also informed by the fact that most of the compliance work undertaken by the PSC relates to this area, as noted in Table 5.5 above. The combating of corruption is dependent upon the extent to which compliance to the frameworks put in place to prevent corruption is transparent, as putting such information into the public domain helps to drive accountability. Addressing corruption is also a good governance indicator (World Bank definition). Therefore the focus on principle one under the work of the PSC is deliberate in that it seeks to answer two questions:

a) How effective are the systems that are used by the PSC to identify areas of vulnerability in promoting good governance?

b) Can the act of compliance be equated to good governance?

6.8.3 Ethical compliance as an indicator of good governance

The first of the nine Constitutional Values and Principles, the "promotion of professional ethics", is critical to good governance given that policy is mediated and implemented through public servants. The human factor has been identified as central for the transformation of the bureaucracy, and the personal disposition of public servants (as intermediaries between policy and citizens) is important, given their influence over decision-making and resources. The integrity they display at the workplace is a critical factor influencing service delivery. If public servants are dishonest, one can expect that the best intended policies will not come to fruition as the priority will not be on producing public value, but rather appropriating State resources for personal gain. The crisis in governance in many countries was really a crisis around corruption.

This area thus considers professional ethics alongside risk management, with the former focusing on what is done to promote a certain type of behaviour and the latter examining how systems are used to make departments corruption resistant. Ethical compliance is thus viewed through two frameworks; the different policies and measures to ensure ethical compliance by public servants, and the quality of the risk management systems in departments.

The magnitude of the issue needs to be looked at in the context of the South African Public Service, which at the national and provincial level, employs over 1,1 million public servants at a remuneration cost of over R70 billion Rands per annum. This is the investment by government in its Public Service and public servants are expected to translate policy into public goods and services. Ensuring that public servants adhere to ethical frameworks is an element of good governance, as unethical public servants would misdirect State resources and thus undermine service delivery. In this context it becomes important to look at how public servants are monitored in terms of compliance, and how departments adhere to risk management strategies. Both are necessary to keep the Public Service resistant to corruption, and a consideration of this is important in terms of the broader question of good governance.

The South African Public Service operates within a global scenario where countries belonging to the Commonwealth, the continent and other bodies are constantly rated in

terms of their integrity (World Bank, 2008). The investment potential of countries is influenced by the extent to which minimum stipulations[25] are met, and membership of such bodies is dependent on the degree to which countries have policies and practices which reflect a commitment to fighting corruption in the Public Service, which includes political pronouncements and practical commitment to fighting corruption.

A concrete measure in the country has been the adoption of a Code of Conduct, which was promulgated in 1997 as a "guide for employees as to what is expected of them from an ethical point of view, both in their individual conduct and their relationship to others"[26]. The efficacy of this code has been assessed, and whilst it has been shown as important in establishing a culture of appropriate behaviour, on its own will not curb corruption.[27]

In essence, a combination of regional and international commitment to anti-corruption by government, the implementation of domestic policies and legislation to ensure that departments deal with corruption, coupled with a strategy to inculcate certain values in public servants, makes up the tools for fighting corruption. How well this works in practice is shown by results from the key oversight institutions that focus on this element.

6.8.4 Measures used to promote the Constitutional Values and Principles of professional ethics

A key determiner of ethical compliance is the conduct of public servants and the quality of the risk management infrastructure in departments. The former seeks to instil a disposition in public servants that makes them professional and not self-serving, which is an indicator of good governance.

A comprehensive strategy has been put into place to create an ethical climate that is conducive to good governance. At a policy level the establishment of a spectrum of role-players dealing with anti-corruption, which includes the public, private and civil society sector, to work in concert to address the problem has resulted in the formation of the NACF which has instituted a range of projects to translate its vision into practice. It candidly reflected on its achievements in 2007 when it found that it was able to implement 27

[25] Republic of South Africa. Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act, 2004 (Act No. 12 of 2004).
[26] Code of Conduct for the Public Service as contained in Chapter 2 of the Public Service Regulations, 1999.
[27] Public Service Commission. 2006a. Report on Measuring the Efficacy of the Code of Conduct for the Public Service. Republic of South Africa.

resolutions taken during the Second National Anti-Corruption summit in 2005[28]. The overall strategy may be described as follows:

a) Adopting a *pragmatic approach* to making departments corruption-proof, through the implementation of policies that insist on risk management strategies within departments. This includes issuing directives from the NT and the DPSA, which compel departments to identify and report on risk.[29]

b) A legislatively driven approach, through *catalytic policy instruments* such as the PFMA, 1999. This requires that the HoD to exercise his/her role as the Accounting Officer, which means being held personally and severally responsible for all aspects pertaining to risks and ethics[30] .

c) The *implementation of risk management strategies is M&E* by the oversight bodies such as the PSC, which through its Transversal Public Service M&E System (PSM&ES). The system assesses departments' risk management strategies, and uses this information as an indicator for determining how well a department complies with the norms for professional ethics, accountability and transparency. The risk management strategy and effectiveness is also M&E by the AG and the NT.

d) The *inclusion of the public to M&E, the ethical conduct* of departments and individuals. This is most pronounced through a Cabinet decision[31] that there would be a NACH, which points to areas of concern for investigative follow-up.

e) The *placing of the burden of proof on individuals* to prove they are not corrupt. This takes the form of submitting Financial Disclosures, which makes transparent the financial affairs of officials, assisting in the detection of conflicts of interest.

The above are the key thrusts to ensure that the value of professional ethics is prioritised.

6.9 M&E SYSTEMS USED TO ASSESS RISK AND CORRUPTION IN DEPARTMENTS

There are many ways in which departments are assessed for complying with this principle. Through looking at its risk management strategies, one can deduce how vulnerable a department is to risk. By assessing data on aspects of financial compliance, financial misconduct, feedback on cases referred to departments from the NACH, one can get a sense of the ethical climate of a department.

[28] National Anti-Corruption Forum (NACF). 2007. Annual report on the Activities of the NACF 2006-2007.
[29] The Annual Report requires critical information to be provided on this area, thus bringing about transparency around the issue of risk management.
[30] The Accounting Officer takes responsibility for risk and ethics, and is obliged to report on it periodically.
[31] This was reported in Cabinet, and is recorded in Cabinet Memorandum 45 of August 2003.

Ethical conduct and compliance is the end product of an effective risk management strategy. Given the magnitude of risk faced by departments, mainly in the area of financial fraud, a comprehensive, multi-pronged strategy is required. Central to this strategy is the *relentless implementation of M&E systems that test whether departments have complied with measures to make their organisations risk averse and effective in detecting and dealing with corruption and maladministration.* However, there are other risks around tendering for example, which is supposed to be a way to get efficiency (lowest cost). The system has been shown to be vulnerable due to collusive tendering practices, meaning that whilst lowest cost is obtained, this is done in an unethical manner. The large scale collapse of public investments, such as defective housing, indicates that despite the measures being adhered to (procedurally), the outputs are defective. Billions of Rands have been lost due to the politicisation of the tender process, and this is the main subject of reporting on government in the country. From a good governance perspective the inability of government to deal decisively with corruption to date, indicates that the systems are not working. It may therefore be that the risk strategy is not addressing the correct issues. It is for this reason that the entire tender process is currently under review by the NT[32].

This section describes some of the measures to test the risk potential of departments generally, and the DSD specifically. The anti-corruption strategy hinges on effective communication and promotion. A message that corruption is unacceptable and that such behaviour will be detected and dealt with sets the behavioural parameters for government. In countries that score poorly on the Corruption Index[33] or the other measures by Transparency International, the prevailing reason for pervasive corruption is that corruption has become an acceptable practice across society. In these cases the normative benchmarks are low and tolerance levels for corruption high.

In South Africa, communication around corruption appeals to the *conscience* of the public and civil servants, and tries to make ethical conduct akin to the broader ideals of democracy. Whilst seemingly persuasive, its overall impact on producing desirable behaviour has not been tested empirically, with much of the M&E of corruption making assumptions about its causes and location, which is not embedded in any solid research. The comparison of current levels of corruption with the corruption in the Apartheid era is also not possible, due to the censorious climate then. There is thus no valid baseline against which to make an

[32] Gordan, P. 2010. Minister of Finance. Budget Speech. 17 February. Joint Sitting of parliament. Cape Town.
[33] *Ibid*

assessment between the current and past. In the democratic era current monitoring data on the subject becomes the baseline from which to proceed.

However, such an approach may also not be empirically sound, since an increase in the rate of, for example, reported cases of corruption is not necessarily an indication of an increase in the incidents of corruption. Rather it may signal an increase in the levels of reporting, and vice versa. These reported cases in themselves remain allegations which must be tested, and most of them are not due to limited investigative capacity. The point emphasised is that the data emerging from such systems should be viewed with circumspection. The NACH as a system thus has limitations and analysing data from this system must take into account that it is merely a reporting and referral system, and not an integrity barometer. There is to date no operational integrity barometer in the country, and the subject of the levels and trends in corruption remains a source of intense public debate[34]. The decline in confidence levels in government from independent surveys, cited in government sources[35], indicates a decline in public confidence.

This calls for the use of proxy measures to test how corruption resistant departments are. One such measure is the responsiveness of departments to cases reported to it from the NACH. The response rate will indicate the resolve and/or capacity a department has for dealing with corruption, as its investigative activities sends a clear message within departments that action is taken on cases reported to it. It indicates the commitment of leadership and management to corruption. The response rate to cases referred has dropped to under 20% over the past 3 years, showing that this system is not working[36]. These issues were raised in a summit of the NACF in 2008[37] .

Other assessments would include a review of the fraud prevention infrastructure of departments. The PSC Public Service M&E System has an element within it which measures the quality of the fraud prevention infrastructure. There are also mandatory reporting obligations placed on departments to report fraud to the NT, PSC and submit such information in the Annual Reports. Appraising this data does point to how well this element is

[34] A review of press clippings over a 2 month period indicates that reports on corruption in the Public Service are a weekly, if not a daily occurrence. It also tends to be lead article news, and the subject of several editorials of national newspapers, including the *Mail and Guardian*, the *Star, City Press* and the *Sunday Times.*

[35] The outcomes indicators produced by the Presidency, January 2010, acknowledges this as a problem by citing evidence of declining levels in public confidence.

[36] Personal interview with Senior manager at the PSC, responsible for managing the system, 10 January 2010.

[37] National Anti-Corruption Forum. 2008. Report on the Third national Anti-Corruption Summit. Birchwood, Johannesburg. 4-5 August 2008.

dealt with managerially. An important report is the one on Financial Misconduct[38], which reports completed cases investigated, is another indicator of the propensity for corruption in departments, as it gives actual case data. This is probably the main document produced on this area of vulnerability and is the subject of debate when released publically. It brings the executive and management of departments under intense scrutiny and forces accountability, and is thus a contributor to good governance.

At the level of the individual, one could examine the return rate of Financial Disclosure forms of the Senior Management Service, as an indication of how political and administrative leadership ensures that its Senior Management Service complies. The return rate is an important indicator, as there is a process before the forms are submitted to the PSC, which should include an application of mind by the Executive Authority (Ministers or Members of the Executive Councils) on the submissions, to identify and follow-up on potential cases of conflicts of interest. Yet another important measure is the speed with which departments deal with cases of misconduct, which once again is a measure of how effective the internal disciplinary processes are in bringing perpetrators to account. Should there be no decisive action, the message spoken about earlier of the issue not being taken seriously, will translate into an erosion of discipline in departments, and make the identification of corruption difficult.

It must be pointed out that in seeking a quantifiable measure of the extent of corruption, the problem is confounded in that most corrupt activities go undetected or unreported, and if reported, many are not validated due to the lack of investigative capacity. The assessment will thus look at the results of the DSD when these systems are applied there. It will lead to an assessment of how well the constitutional value of professional ethics works in creating the conditions for good governance. The assessment will start by examining how the department adheres to the requirements for effective risk management.

6.10 PERFORMANCE OF THE DSD IN RELATION TO THE M&E OF ETHICAL COMPLIANCE

a) Compliance to risk management policies

The key issue from a governance perspective is that there must be a capacity to predict and respond to incidents of fraud and corruption. This is precipitated on the notion that

[38] The PSC produces reports on Financial Misconduct, which is an assessment of those cases that have been investigated and reported by departments to it, as required by legislation.

management has a responsibility to safeguard State resources, and ensure that it is used for the designated purposes. Treasury Regulations and the Public Service Anti-Corruption Strategy require that departments have an anti-corruption and fraud prevention strategy which must address fraud, abuse of power, embezzlement, bribery, favouritism and nepotism, extortion, and insider trading/abuse of privileged information.

Before proceeding to the DSD, it would be useful to consider the results from a PSC audit of anti-corruption capabilities[39] in 2003 showing then that just over half of the sampled departments had dedicated anti-corruption units. In the self-assessment phase, only 8% of departments rated themselves as fully effective, with 60% of departments not having a mandate or policy on anti-corruption. Investigate procedures were only present in 15% of departments, whilst clear reporting and accountability structures were evident in 20% of departments. The important aspect of whistle-blowing was not adequately dealt with, with the policy existing in only 25% of departments. Clearly the global picture for departments in the Public Service in 2003 was concerning. However, given that this was the first audit of its nature, it is a good baseline against which to assess subsequent progress.

The DSD assessment shows that it *performed better* than this national picture, which is evident from both the Public Service M&E System's reports for the 2001/2002[40] and 2008/9[41]. The DSD is one of the few departments where the system has been applied twice, making it possible to draw comparisons around performance over a 6 year period. This interim period (2001-2007) is also important in that during this time there has been heightened focus on dealing with corruption. In both assessments, it is evident that the department complied by applying the legislation rigorously, which may be viewed as an area of strength of the department. Another measure of the quality of the departments risk assessment strategy can be gleaned from the results from of the PSC Public Service M&E System, emanating from two reports 7 years apart, which show that there has been much improvement from the 2001/2 period to the 2007/8, with the rating for accountability, of which risk management is included, improving from 70% to 90% at the compliance level. The PSC 2007/8 assessment showed that there were no cases of fraud on the data base.

In support of the above, an examination and assessment was made of key reports produced to support risk management in the DSD. The first is the A*nti-corruption and Fraud Prevention*

[39] Public Service Commission. 2003. Audit of Anti-Corruption capabilities in Departments. Republic of South Africa.
[40] *Ibid.*
[41] *Ibid.*

Policy[42], which deals with the corruption types already mentioned. In the DSD the policy is executed by a board, established in accordance with the PFMA, 1999, and appointed by the DG[43], who is the custodian of the strategy. It also seeks to reinforce the department's adherence to ethical conduct as required by *Batho Pele*. The document is an explicit policy statement, listing actions constituting fraud, corruption and maladministration. It states who is responsible to conduct investigations, how losses are to be recovered, and the policy is signed by the DG and Minister, and thus adopted politically and administratively.

The DSD also has an *Anti-corruption and Fraud Prevention Strategy*[44] which aims to curb all forms of corruption in the department. It is mandated on a range of legislative prescripts[45]. It seeks to instil zero tolerance of corruption and fraud in the department, draw in support for its strategy, take action against perpetrators and improve the controls on fraud risk areas. The DSD also has an *Anti-corruption and Fraud Response Plan*[46] which does damage control as soon as an incident of fraud and corruption has been reported. It stipulates the responsibility for reporting and reporting procedures, states how aggressive measures will be used to deal with fraud and corruption, lists the disciplinary measures in place, and the type of training recommended. It also cites measures used, such as civil action and blacklisting to address fraud. It has also been adopted by both the DG and Minister for Social Development.

In support of the above, there has also been the production of a set of protocols for doing investigations. This includes a report titled *Anti-corruption and Fraud Investigations*[47] and provides guidance on how this is to be done[48]. The DSD does *comply* with Treasury Regulations and the Anti-Corruption Strategy of government. It has a Loss Control Committee, appointed by the DG to assist with the development, implementation and

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42 Department of Social Development. 2007e. Anti-Corruption and Fraud Prevention Policy. Republic of South Africa.

43 The DG is required in terms of Treasury Regulations, paragraph 3.2.1, as the Accounting Officer, to ensure that the Fraud Prevention Plan is fully developed and operational.

44 Department of Social Development. 2007a. Anti-Corruption and Fraud Prevention Strategy. Republic of South Africa.

45 The following are the relevant pieces of legislation from the National Treasury. Public Finance Management Act, 1999; Treasury Regulations, Public Service Act, Public Service Regulations, Protected Disclosures Act, 2000; Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities (Act, 12 of 2004); Labour Relations Act, 1995; The Promotion of Access to Information Act (No. 2 of 2000); the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (No. 3 of 2000) and the Financial Intelligence Centre Act (FICA)(No. 38 of 2001)

46 Department of Social Development 2007e Anti-Corruption and Fraud Response Plan. Republic of South Africa.

47 *Ibid.*

48 There is a protocol of how investigations are to be conducted, and includes guidance on planning, preparation, reporting writing, gathering of evidence, listing of disciplinary steps, protocols for recovering money and guidelines on dealing with the media.

maintaining of the Anti-Corruption Fraud Plan, which creates awareness of what unacceptable behaviour is and how to deal with perpetrators. Staff are expected to comply with the Public Service Staff Code, ethics and the policy statement of the Anti-Corruption Fraud Prevention Plan.

Another important report that was examined is the risk assessment report of the department, which is an attempt to quantify all areas of risk, covering the entire area of operations.[49] This report looked at the 53 directorates in the DSD that were involved in the risk assessment process, and for each was able to produce a weighted residual risk, based on an assessment made on a 5-point scale. The likelihood of potential fraud is assessed for each area on a 5 point scale, which helps to show which the most vulnerable areas are. The exercise is useful from a governance perspective in that it helps identify units at risk and helps prioritise areas for focus. This exercise has helped to identify *areas of risk in the department* to enable the Internal Audit Function to focus on the internal audit effort in this area.

The report identifies the benefits of risk management, such as improving service delivery, enhancing risk management strategy decisions through quantification of risk tolerances, enhancing accountability and corporate governance processes, and ensuring greater transparency in decision-making and on-going management processes. The report is a very practical tool for managers to reflect on the importance of their functions, and identify issues that may impact on their ability to deliver on objectives. The report is particularly important in that it priorities areas that the department needs to examine over a three year rolling period, 2008/2009, 2009/2010 and 2010/2011, and also states how the various areas of risk will be reviewed. In most cases it will be through a compliance review type assessment. The next chapter looks at how management implemented these recommendations.

In summary, based on the above, it is clear that the DSD has complied with the requirements from MME oversight bodies, the main being NT and the DPSA, in putting in place an ethics infrastructure. It has established the appropriate committees to ensure that public power is exercised in the public interest, and these work in keeping the Accounting Officer informed of any potential threats to the integrity of the department. At an administrative level, the DSD has complied meeting the requirements for good governance.

[49] Department of Social Development. 2007b. Results of the Risk Assessment project presented by Ngubane and Co. September.

However, when other data is considered[50], and which is elaborated upon in chapter 7, it will be found that the DSD does not respond timeously to cases referred to it by the NACH (with 94% of the corruption related cases not being responded to), suggesting that dealing with fraud is not as good as complying with regulations around fraud. This is concerning and shows the disjuncture between administrative compliance and accountability to oversight bodies, and actually being effective.

b) Compliance to ethical frameworks for managing conflicts of interest

This section focuses on the M&E of professional ethics. The compliance to ethical principles is measured through the financial disclosures framework, which seeks to address the vulnerable area of conflicts of interest, which happens when managers exercise power over resources. This is an important area for good governance, as it relates to whether public power is not compromised by private interests. There have been assessments made of the issue and evaluations produced relate to how conflicts of interests are managed.[51] The contentious issue of the management of gifts has also been assessed, as the receipt of gifts can potentially lead to corrupt practices[52].

There are a range of regulatory provisions currently applicable to the receipt of gifts. This pertains to unauthorised remuneration[53], the need to operate in an unbiased manner[54], and the need to disclose interests[55]. In addition, there are Treasury Regulations[56]. Of critical importance, the matter has been escalated to key Acts relating to corruption, such as the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act, No. 12 of 2004, which looks at the question of gratification, by defining it and stating what is meant by unauthorised gratification.[57] The issue of gratification is taken into the Draft Public Service Administration Bill, in which the conduct of an employee is stipulated. [58]

[50] The researcher has examined the response rate to cases referred to the DSD from the PSC, and the picture shows an extremely weak response to cases referred to it.
[51] Public Service Commission. 2006b. Report of Managing Conflicts of Interest in the Public Service. Republic of South Africa. .
[52] Public Service Commission. 2008d. Report of the management of Gifts in the Public Service. Republic of South Africa.
[53] Public Service Act, No. 103 of 1994 (as amended), Section 31 1 (1)(a)
[54] Public Service regulation. Chapter 2 (Code of Conduct)
[55] Public Service Regulations. Chapter 3 (Financial Disclosures) (D.(d),(e)&(f)
[56] Treasury Regulations. Regulation 21: Acceptance of gifts, donations and sponsorships to the State (21.2., 21.2.2, 21.2.3)
[57] Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act, No. 12 of 2004 (PRECCA), Section 1, 3, 4 and 10.
[58] Republic of South Africa. Draft Public Service Amendment Bill, Section 33.

An M&E instrument to prevent conflicts of interest and curb corruption is the process of *scrutinising the Financial Disclosure forms of public servants* at the senior management levels[59]. Given their managerial role it may be that their public roles conflict with their private interests, and the annual disclosures of interests to the Executive Authority, seeks to prevent potential conflicts of interest. In an assessment by the PSC of this aspect between 2000 and 2005, it was found that at the level of HoDs (either level 15 or 16) the highest potential conflicts of interest are likely to occur[60]. Evidently, this points to how susceptible high level officials in the Public Service are to being influenced. The area needs to be considered in the light of how gifts, another area that threatens ethical conduct, is managed[61] .

The instrument of Financial Disclosures is a simple form that gathers work related data[62]. It is possible through scrutinising these forms to see if there is a discrepancy between levels of remuneration and assets held, and instruments such as lifestyle analysis and other measures used by bodies such as the Receiver of Revenue, can detect discrepancies. There is a clear process for administering these forms[63]. The PSC has curatorship over the forms, and there is limited access to these forms within the PSC. They can be called for when an investigation happens, but by and large the PSC plays a custodian role.

The contribution of this M&E instrument to good governance is that is brings about *transparency,* albeit to a limited degree, around the private affairs of the Senior Management Service, to the Administrative and Executive HoDs. This process in itself can serve as a check for corruption, although its efficacy is not absolute given the loopholes that are used to conduct business interests when such measures exist. Examples are that many of the business interests are registered in the names of spouses, who are as yet not obliged to declare their financial interests. The submission of these forms, however, is not enough, as the scrutiny levels are low, and in the absence of cross-verification and lifestyle audits, the submission of the financial disclosure forms on their own cannot be viewed as a proxy for good management of ethics. Indeed, the question of lifestyle audits, which will corroborate evidence between the deeds registrar and other financial institutions, has started, and initial

[59] This is levels 13-16 which is the decision-making echelon of government.
[60] Public Service Commission. 2007a. Report on the Management of Conflicts of Interest through Financial Disclosures. Republic of South Africa.
[61] *Ibid.*
[62] It also asks for declarations of holding of shares, directorships. It requests information on gifts received, sponsorships and the value of fixed assets, i.e. residential property.
[63] Process wise, each form is supposed to be certified by a Commissioner of Oats and submitted via the Director-General to the Executive Authority, who is expected to scrutinise these and submit to the PSC by 30 April of each year.

results indicate that there has been misrepresentation (underreporting)[64] by members of the senior management service. The issue has also been listed in the 2010 Budget Speech of the Minister of Finance as an area of priority. The fact that this is now acknowledged as a problem shows that the practice of using public office for private gain has become commonplace in the South African Public Service, and that the compliance measures to date have not proved effective.

The *rate of disclosures of forms does point to the effective management on the matter*. However, for reasons pointed out above, submission on its own does not imply honesty. The Table below shows a very rapid improvement in compliance by the DSD on this aspect, from being seriously below the country average of 77% in 2004-5, to exceeding the average of 2006-7 of 87%, by 10% and coming out at 97% in 2006/7. It is now one of the best performing departments when it comes to getting senior managers to disclose their financial interests, which is an indicator of good governance. It shows strong political will and administrative leadership in the department, in ensuring that there is compliance. The figures need to be viewed in light of the points being made about the probity of these forms, which has not been tested. Unless the submitted data is verified with lifestyle audits this simply suggests administrative compliance, which although high, is partial given the limitation of the tool and processes.

Table 6.6: Financial Disclosures and the Performance of the DSD[65]

Year	2004-2005 FY	2005-2006 FY	2006-2007 FY	2007-2008 FY	2008/09 FY
National Departments	79%	74%	87%	80%	79%
Overall Provincial	75%	86%	87%	90%	83%
Country average	77%	80%	87%	85%	81%
DSD National	44%	91%	97%	100%	96%
Deviation from country average	**-38%**	**+11%**	**+10%**	**+15%**	**+15%**

The results of the DSD are important and must be viewed in context of a national situation where this matter has been deemed as poorly managed. The low rate of return has been cited by the PSC as a dereliction of basic leadership and management responsibility, and the institution has argued that only a 100% rate of compliance can be viewed as satisfactory[66]. The DSD is above the country average by 15%, which indicates effective performance in this area.

[64] A joint project by the PSC and Auditor-General showed that many managers had interests in companies, which they did not declare on the forms. This emerged only when checks were run between different databases.

[65] Table constructed from PSC database on Financial Disclosures.

[66] refer to the State of the Public service reports of the PSC.

c) The management of discipline as an indicator of ethical compliance

A third aspect that is now considered is the management of discipline. A disciplined workforce is essential for service delivery, and with the transformation of the Public Service there have been new codes and procedures put in place to guide the process. The transformation culminated in the parties, the employer being the State and the employees being labour represented by the unions, signing an agreement on a new Disciplinary Code and Procedures for the Public Service (Resolution 2/99), which was implemented on 1 July 1999[67]. In addition to this, there are clear codes in terms how long a disciplinary process is supposed to take (20-80 days). If departments exceed this period, it points to their inability to resolve matters speedily, and could lead to an erosion of discipline as perpetrators are not brought to account. This indicator as a proxy for professional ethics has been critiqued, and the PSC is currently reviewing its indicators, given that professional ethics is more comprehensive than just addressing discipline and misconduct. The issue of financial disclosures and feedback to cases referred by the NACH must be incorporated.

The manner in which discipline is managed within a department is indicative of the resolve of management to implement ethical frameworks and promote professional conduct. There are clear regulations and procedures in place for the management of discipline, and complying with these indicates how well management within departments understand the regulation and their role within the organisation to instil discipline.

The maintenance of discipline in the Public Service needs to take place within agreed upon procedures, and as such it is mandatory. It is monitored by the PSC, and the information generated from this process points to broader issues of ethics. The main indicator for Constitutional Values and Principles used by the Public Service M&ES for professional ethics is the time taken to deal with cases of misconduct. There is a perception that misdemeanour in the public sector goes undetected, or if reported, not acted upon. It is for this reason that an assessment of the disciplinary infrastructure and processes within departments is an important proxy measure for pointing to the quality of ethical conduct in a department.

The system that measures this element is *standards driven*, with the various standards being

[67] As part of the transformation process, the Public Service Coordination Bargaining Chamber concluded two agreements relating to incapacity, namely the incapacity Code and Procedures for the Public Service (Resolution 10/99) and the incapacity Code and procedures in respect of ill health (Resolution 12/99).

the benchmark for assessing compliance, and by inference the value and principle of professional ethics more broadly[68]. Also assessed is whether there is frequent training provided on the handling of cases of misconduct and that the department has a fraud prevention and anti-corruption plan and strategy.[69] The rating is based on a system that assesses how many standards have been met[70].

In this assessment, results for both the national and provincial DSD were considered. This is despite the point made earlier about the fact that there is no clear subordinate relationship between the national DSD and provincial DSD. The issue at hand is that results from a department in the provinces, in this case the provincial DSD from two provinces concerned points directly to managerial aptitude in driving ethical compliance at the important provincial level, where service delivery takes place. These reports produced from the system are standardised and allow for cross-referencing. They are also available on request from the PSC, and submitted to all managers of departments themselves.[71]

Over a 8 year period the PSC has assessed four departments within this social cluster, two national and two provincial, these being the National DSD (2002)[72], Provincial Department: North West (2002)[73], Provincial Administration: Eastern Cape (2006)[74], and recently the National DSD (2008)[75]. The results from these departments' form part of the overall assessment and are contained in the consolidated reports of various cycles.[76] The assessment below is based on all four reports.

The National DSD has performed well in complying with this ethical aspect, and in 2001 had already instituted an anti-corruption and fraud prevention strategy. In 2001 it had already established a Departmental Financial Misconduct Board with clear terms of reference for

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68 The standards relate to the existence of a procedure for the reporting, recording and managing cases of misconduct, that managers have a working knowledge of the system, and cases of misconduct are brought to a disciplinary hearing within 80 days,

69 *Ibid.*

70 Adherence to each standard is assessed and given a numeric value that is finally calculated to produce a composite score for this principle. There is rating on a 5 point scale, with 1 meaning that none of the standards have been met whilst 5 means that all have been met.

71 Republic of South Africa. 2008j. Fifth Consolidated Public Service M&E report 2007-8. Republic of South Africa.

72 *Ibid.*

73 Public Service Commission. 2002. Monitoring and Evaluation Report for the period April 2001 to March 2002. Department of Social Services, Arts, Culture and Sports: North West Province. Republic of South Africa.

74 Public Service Commission. 2006c. Monitoring and Evaluation Report for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006. Department of Social Development. Eastern Cape Provincial Administration. Republic of South Africa.

75 *Ibid.*

76 *Ibid.*

operation, and the minutes of this Board indicated that management reporting was done and action taken against officials. In 2001 the DSD reported 47 cases of financial misconduct and 5 other type cases, and reports clearly showed the level of official involved, the type of crime committed and sanction applied. There was also the capacity at the National level to deal with cases of misconduct. For this performance the department received a rating of 65%, which is considered above satisfactory.

These results should be compared to KwaZulu-Natal, where an assessment was made of professional ethics, and found that the same issues discussed above; capacity to deal with corruption, collaborating with other enforcement agencies, challenged departments within provincial administrations. The report shows that promoting professional ethics requires going beyond mere compliance, but rather it is a multi-faceted task that requires leadership and resources.[77]

The performance of the provincial departments of Social Development was less impressive. The department in the North West in 2002 had a labour relations unit, but did not have the ability to deal with cases of misconduct and referred these to the Misconduct Unit in the office of the Premier. There were 28 cases (most fraud related) referred, but management did not seem to take the matter seriously. The Misconduct Unit in the Premiers office is well capacitated and most of the cases referred to this Unit resulted in dismissals of officials. Overall this office was rated 40%, meaning that its performance was unsatisfactory.

In the Eastern Cape there was no formal reporting of cases being dealt with to management and no evidence of management action, with 10 cases dealt with. Most managers surveyed did not have the capacity to deal with cases, no training was provided and cases were drawn out beyond the 80 day limit. This department was rated 30% (weak). The provincial departments complied poorly with this indicator, unlike the DSD which complies well with this indicator, evident when comparing the results between the 2001/2 with the 2007/8 period, where performance improved from 70% to 90%.

The results above show that there is an uneven capacity to deal with misconduct, despite the framework being in place for almost 9 years. It can be concluded from this M&E instrument, which is indicative of the management of some aspects of professional ethics, the DSD at the national level has complied with the standards of the PSC systems. However, this result must be viewed with circumspection, in that the system is limited and

[77] Public Service Commission. 2007a. An Assessment of Professional Ethics in the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Administration. Republic of South Africa.

focuses on some of the managerial elements of professional ethics, not all. The inability to respond timeously to the cases referred to it from the NACH, and which is not captured in any of the formal systems mentioned here, shows that the DSD is lacking on a key area of accountability, which is to citizens who report cases to it for follow-up.
This result must be looked at in terms of how it also deals with risk management and submits its financial disclosures.

d) Financial Misconduct in the DSD

This section now looks at reports on cases that have been investigated and reported to the PSC, as required by legislation. This area of financial misconduct needs special attention given that it has the greatest impact on the budget of departments[78]. In terms of the requirements of the PFMA, departments are also obliged to report on its cases of financial misconduct in the Annual Reports, another public document which can be used to make judgements on performance and ethical compliance. There are thus many obligations placed upon departments to minimise financial misconduct, as it reflects poorly on them which arises from the obligatory reporting on the matter. As pointed out in (c) above, the system could also be limited as these are reports only on investigated cases, and when cases have not come to this level, the reporting could be deceptively positive for a department but mask a backlog of potentially serious, un-investigated cases, which is the case in the DSD if one were to look at the non-addressed NACH cases. This thesis has already mentioned the lack of investigative capacity, and hence this result must be treated with caution.

The M&E instrument that brings this information to the fore is the reports on Financial Misconduct. Departments are obliged to annually report to the PSC on their finalised cases of Financial Misconduct. The reporting has resulted in the PSC being able to systematically track this aspect over time, and currently presents this report to the SCOPA[79]. In this forum it receives political scrutiny and the report enters the public domain thus contributing to transparency around government operations. These reports provide an indication of what financial misconduct is costing the State. Whilst not naming the errant officials, the reports do provide statistical information of financial misconduct, broken down by department, together with the types of sanctions imposed, thus providing a high level of public scrutiny and forcing accountability.

[78] Financial misconduct is probably the most reported form of ethical transgression, and the terms "wasteful, unauthorised and fruitless expenditure" are well know publically, and these terms are commonly used in reports of the Auditor-General in his assessments of departments.
[79] The PSC presented its Overview on Financial Misconduct for the 2006/2007 financial year to SCOPA on 13 May 2008.

As mentioned earlier, a lot of fraud goes undetected, but instruments such as these do provide a proxy, albeit partial, measure of the level of ethical compliance in the Public Service, as financial conduct is a key element of ethical behaviour. It is telling of the ethical climate of the Public Sector and serves as a barometer for ethical compliance, as it relates directly to fraud and breaches of the Code of Conduct. A focus on the frequency and nature of financial misconduct is telling of what crimes are committed within the Public Service and becomes a precursor of the ethical direction that the public sector is taking. M&E in this context serves a predictive function which supports management.

The overview of financial misconduct report for the 2006/7 financial year[80] is of particular relevance to the DSD, as the Chairperson of the PSC in his foreword states that there has been a large percentage of cases dealing with *social grants fraud*, and that this undermines the fight against poverty. As mentioned earlier, social grants are not disbursed directly by the DSD, but through its agency, the SASSA. Whilst the DSD does not deliver grants, it produces the systems that enable the efficient transfer of funds to the SASSA, and given that the DG of the DSD is the Accounting Officer, he remains accountable for the funds.

In this report, the main categories reported (reported means cases where there has been a hearing and conviction) are fraud and theft and this comprise 64,7% of cases reported. Of the 1042 finalised cases, in 2006/7 financial year, 83% of employees were found guilty, which shows a high "conviction" (not in a legal sense) rate, and points to a good ability to take cases forward through the disciplinary process. It should be noted that the perception of the public sector as one typified by fraud is reinforced by the high number of media reports of tender and other irregularities, and this result is consistent with the public picture held. Unless there are also reports of the actual sanctions imposed, the perception that the public sector is soft on corruption will continue, and lead to more corruption.

The cost of fraudulent conduct is high, which for the 2006/7 period was R130,615,998, of which *only 20% was recovered*. In looking at the sanctions it was found that there was *no* consistency, and dismissals not used, but rather progressive discipline preferred. In relation to the point made about sending a message about what the norm is and what would happen should it be transgressed, this has obviously not been the case. When reports such as these enter the public domain, government is not rated well when it comes to the good governance indicator of corruption. There is thus transparency, without the follow-through with

[80] Public Service Commission. 2008c. Overview of Financial Misconduct for the 2006/2007 financial year. Republic of South Africa.

accountability, pointing out that at the key level of acting on M&E information, there is grave problem. In chapter 7 in particular, where the role of civics is considered, this problem will be elaborated upon. It with thus appear that there has been the political will to put policies to curb corruption in place, but not the follow-up in acting decisively when required.

Overall there was an increase in the number of cases of financial misconduct, with 1,042 cases reported in the 2006/7 financial period (up from 771 in the 2005/2006 period). From 2001/2 to 2006/07 there has been a steady increase in the cases reported, from 434 to the 1,014 in the 2006/07 year. The DSD reported 3 cases out of the 370 (0.8%) nationally reported cases. The provincial departments had a total of 672 cases, for the social development departments in the 7 provinces that reported cases (Free State and Gauteng did not have reported cases), the number was 27 out of the 672 (4%) cases, bringing the total to 30 out of 1014 cases or 0.27%. The overall cost (National and Provincial) was R775,395. The net loss to the State (based on cases where there was no recovery) for the DSD was R6,133, meaning that the DSD managed to recoup most of the lost funds, which attests to good management in this area.

From the above results it can be seen that whilst this is a problem for national departments generally when it comes to reporting and acting on fraud cases, the DSD performs relatively well. Once again, addressing fraud is complex and requires many interventions. The managerial compliance is satisfactory on this element, compared to the national average.

The value of this type of reporting is that it shows action is taken in this important area of ethical transgression, and the transparency and accountability that should follow help to focus attention on the matter. As noted earlier, it is precursor information to assessing an important element of ethical compliance for both the country and department.

e) Additional indicators of ethical compliance

This section looks at other indicators of ethical compliance. This includes data from the NACH which becomes a barometer for the state of ethics at a national and departmental level, given that cases can be disaggregated according to type of compliant and source of compliant (departments are named). There was only 1 complaint lodged relating to the DSD via the NACH for the 2005/6 period[81]. This low level of reporting to the NACH may be due to the DSD having its own Hotline, which is popularised and part of the M&E system of both the DSD and SASSA.

[81] Data drawn from the Data Base of the National Anti-Corruption Hotline, housed in the PSC.

The PSC receives complaints lodged with it, many of which relate to the behaviour and competency of staff (an ethical element as it is about transgressing *Batho Pele* principles). Complaints are lodged directly with the PSC or through the NACH. The *majority of cases lodged with the NACH relate to unethical behaviour.* This is borne out by the fact that 271 of the 749 cases referred to the NACH, for national departments and the provinces, relate to the category of unethical behaviour. It may thus be deduced that where there is a large number of these cases concentrated within particular departments, there is obviously non-compliance to ethical frameworks. In cases where the complaints lodged deal with matters relating to the public, these are referred to the Public Protector. In terms of the cases reported to the PSC which fall within the parameters of the Complaints Rules, the trend in reporting unethical behaviour has increased from the 2004/2005 period when it was 1, to 23 in the 2005/2006 financial year. In the 2005/6 period, only 2 complaints were lodged against the DSD. This was very small compared to other departments[82]. However, this low rate of reporting cannot be extended to imply that there is satisfaction with the DSD; it is but one of many streams of information on compliance with the ethical framework in the DSD. Data for subsequent periods indicates that the number of cases increased significantly, which probably was due to the increased popularity with the PSC Hotline, or the actual increase in detected cases of fraud.

Another indicator of ethical compliance would be the nature of grievances in the Public Service. This is because the grievances reported do indicate the level of disquiet staff have with management in their departments, and especially when the grievances relate to allegations of misconduct or nepotism, it must be taken seriously. The number of grievances received, and the time taken to resolve these points to the quality of human resource management in departments. In 2007, out of a total of 1104 grievances lodged nationally, 426 (38,58%) were finalised, with 130 (11,7%) within the time-frames. For the DSD, there were only 2 cases reported (0,18%) of the total, and both were resolved.

At the national level, the number of aggrieved officials in the DSD was 2 out of 1104, from January 2005 – June 2006[83]. This element is well managed in the DSD, with it having the least number of aggrieved officials. However, it may mean that very few cases reach this level of reporting, as they are dealt with internally, which would also be positive.

[82] Public Service Commission. 2006f. Trend Analysis on Complaints Lodged with the Public Service Commission during the 2004/2005 and 2005/2006 Financial Years. Republic of South Africa.

[83] Public Service Commission. 2007c. Report on Grievance Trends in the Public Service. Republic of South Africa.

6.11 COMPLIANCE TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF ETHICAL COMPLIANCE

This sub-section selected the area of risk management and professional ethics as an indicator of good governance. It started by making an argument for why this aspect needed to be complied with, and what measures and strategies were put into place to drive the agenda of creating a corrupt-resistant Public Service. It showed that at the legislative level there has been much progress in putting in place the provisions, regulations and procedures for minimising risk and addressing corruption. The assessment showed that the key players in driving the infrastructural development for anti-corruption, has been the NT, which has used the PFMA as the main instrument to hold DGs accountable.

The assessment showed that whilst the state of anti-corruption units was weak in 2003, it has progressed significantly thereafter and that the DSD has performed satisfactorily in complying with the provisions around this. In fact its performance has been shown to be favourable compared to other departments, and even when looking at how it performed against the Public Service Transversal M&E System (PSTM&ES), it has improved its performance from the 2001 to 2008 assessment. The rate of compliance for financial disclosures is higher than the national norm, there are few cases of financial misconduct reported and overall one gets a sense that the department performs well when it comes to addressing the compliance requirements of the systems mentioned. There is evidence that it has responded well to MME for this aspect, and appears to have good internal M&E systems to keep management informed and comply with this aspect.

Therefore, for this aspect of MME, the DSD performs favourably, if one were to look at its ability to comply. Moving beyond the DSD the following general observations can be made:

a) It has made the argument that at the policy level there has been a clear commitment to addressing fraud and corruption in the Public Service, and appropriate regulations and codes have been put in place to set the normative benchmark for behaviour. The matter of professional ethics has been emphasised through the NACF, and largely through promotional work done by the PSC, that is part of its responsibility for managing the NACH. More importantly, several forms of M&E have been applied to the area of professional ethics which can be summarised as follows:
    - The M&E of ethical transgressions, in particular financial misconduct, done by the PSC and which makes reporting of cases obligatory. This has the effect of ensuring accountability and demonstrating that transgressions are addressed.

- The M&E of the disciplinary procedure, to ensure that cases are dealt with timeously, sends out the message that poor conduct will not be tolerated.
- The M&E of public inputs on their perception of government departments. This is via the NACH, and the response rate to complaints lodged will indicate a department's investigative capacity and corruption to dealing with ethical transgressions.
- The M&E of financial disclosures, which helps to regulate private interests in a public position of power. The data herein currently serves the purpose of compliance. What is not clear is the degree of scrutiny is within departments in assessing these disclosures.

b) The nature of grievances and complaints also provides a sense of how well a department is managing its staff.

c) An assessment of its fraud strategies shows seriousness in establishing a capacity to deal with fraud. Of particular mention, is its risk management plans which have managed to quantify risk for managers, and help in M&E how this element is addressed. In this area of MME, the DSD has performed well.

6.12 THE CONTRIBUTION OF THIS FORM OF OVERSIGHT TO GOOD GOVERNANCE

This section summarises how the work of the PSC through its M&E contributes to good governance. It critically revisits the methodologies used before making comments on how the PSC work in this area contributes to good governance. It draws on the conceptual framework in chapter 2 in undertaking this critique.

a) Methodological issues

It is apparent that the systems used by the PSC to assess compliance with the Constitutional Values and Principles falls within the positivist, largely quantitative tradition, with the emphasis being on the objective and measurable. The criteria and indicators are upfront, and based on policies which seek to drive individual and departmental behaviour in a particular manner. The results from these assessments, which are largely statistical, compliance reports serve an accountability and enlightenment function. The reports cited in terms of the DSD and this area all fall within this type, and there was little evidence in any of the reports of a serious engagement with the contextual issues and the purpose of a type of report in terms of supporting the objectives of the developmental State. The importance of context has been cited in the literature as fundamental to any M&E, yet the PSC systems and reports are largely silent on contextual issues, and the systems, like the Transversal

Public Service M&E system fail to reflect these realities. The manner in which a policy department complies with the Constitutional Values and Principles would be different from an implementation department, yet the system fails to tweak the indicators or mention this fact in the reports. The reports and systems also fail to triangulate data, with the corruption indicators, for example, not taking into account public perception issues and not drawing on what is being said about a department on this subject in critical civic domains. It is too rigid in its application, and one is not sure where the compliance leads to; the focus appears to be largely regulatory, monitoring, as opposed to serious evaluation.

However, apart from the various reports showing compliance on a comparative basis across departments and over time, there is little analysis, and the figures are in many cases conveyed as an irrefutable answer to questions; the truth. This is a limited approach, as demonstrated by Black (1999), and the limitation stems from an approach biased towards the quantitative. This is particularly apt when it comes to the reports on financial disclosures, financial misconduct and the PSM&ES, although there is some attempt in the PSM&ES to contextualise performance. The limitation of the Public Service M&E System is its inflexible application; it uses the same indicators for policy and service delivery departments, and has not been able to nuance the indicators to cater for these fundamental differences. There is limited evidence in the above reports of the widespread use of mixed-methods, which could address some of these deficiencies (Greene and Carecelli, 1997). In the 9 years that the system has been applied, it has shown that compliance levels with basic policy has improved marginally, but remains largely unsatisfactory. The lack of diagnosis is a major weakness of the systems, given that its recommendations are just about the need to comply, and there is little evidence of engaging with departmental management in constructing and working through the recommendations[84]. The question of utility, form a diagnosis and learning perspective is not clear. The reports are generally received as being punitive, with the engagement and learning element limited.

The bias towards quantitative system approaches, applied in a standardised and a-contextual manner does not distinguish it much from the systems used by the NT and the AG, means that it does in effect conduct more monitoring than evaluation. If one were to argue that monitoring is in any case a management function, then what the PSC does is a duplication of what departments should do, and is in a sense another level of management and monitoring. The PSC through its system collapses monitoring with evaluation, with the

[84] The researcher has examined all of the recommendations emanating from the system to arrive at this conclusion. He has also documented the critique from departments on the system when the reports have been presented to management.

scores for departments being seen as “the evaluation”. However, evaluation is deeper than measuring compliance, and implies deeper interrogation and investigation, moving beyond the data, which the system fails to do. The scoring system is based on discreet categories and indicators of performance, which is then aggregated. It would thus be erroneous, as the PSC has done, to aggregate performance and convey this as an evaluation of the department in terms of the Constitutional Values and Principles, and by implication the quality of good governance. All the system can be is an application of a set of limited indicators against the values and principles, the results of which are based on documentary evidence that must meet levels of tolerance of an indicator system. Any further extrapolation of the value of the system would be problematic. The system, in its favour, however, does direct performance towards areas of importance and does increase transparency about how the department performs administratively. It also does bring about a degree of accountability, and helps to reinforce the work of other oversight bodies. It also tracks the implementation of its recommendations. These are in themselves valuable.

Based on the conservative, neutral approach of the PSC in its work, it may be understandable that there has been criticism for the PSC in terms of what its value-add has been. This is in light of there not being a discernable impact on quality of public administration. It is a concern in that the same issues are raised repeatedly in the same area every year. This indicates that the results of poor performance, even within this limited approach, do not translate into organisational learning. The PSC approach may thus be considered unsound. It may have improved accountability and compliance, but does not appear to have supported the culture of learning (Engel and Carlesson, 2002).

The PSC does not assume an overt political role in ensuring that results are translated into actions. It relies on the bodies it reports to, which are expected to call to account and have the power to do so. Its role is in presenting evidence, which it argues as being persuasive enough and which cannot be disregarded, as it shows deviation to policy explicitly. The PSC does not have powers to direct, only to make recommendations. The type of work undertaken by the PSC in this area would fall within the description of Rossi (2004), professional work, but not taking a political position on it. It appears to have conducted its work independently, and presented well-research findings to decision-makers, but there is no evidence of a utility that goes beyond driving compliance and increasing transparency. It does not fall within the Patton (2004) view that utility should be the primary purpose, and in adopting a positivist, independent focus, there is no evidence of whether it has genuinely engaged with users of information to produce work that is valuable. In its reports it constantly cites its protected independence, and professes a neutrality, which would be at odds with the

view of House (2004: 19) who dispels this notion of neutrality in M&E. In emphasising its independence, it may dissuade a much needed critique of its approach and methods, as which is necessary even if construed negatively and dispelled as a threat to independence. It has been pointed out that influence comes from engagement, not detachment (and independence), and the PSC would do well to adopt this approach by subjecting its systems to broader scrutiny.

b) Contribution to good governance

One cannot discount that monitoring ethical compliance is a foremost aspect for promoting good governance, and the DSD appears to have complied adequately with the frameworks. It has managed to build a risk-management infrastructure and appears to be effective when it comes to declaring financial interests and reporting on financial misconduct. Disciplinary cases are dealt with decisively. At a level of managerial compliance with the framework for the Constitutional Values and Principles, the DSD has performed well.

The level of transparency around the above is important, in that unless these vulnerable areas are focused on and all aspects of performance therein are monitored and reported on, unacceptable practices can go unnoticed. The transparency dimension is supported when these types of scrutiny are applied, and is a critical good governance indicator. It does indicate that there is accountability for how State resources are used. The discussion has shown that good governance goes beyond compliance, and deeper levels of analysis are required of compliance data before concluding that a form of compliance equates good governance.

6.13 FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

6.13.1 Relevance of area to good governance

Sound financial management is an essential component of good governance in that its quality is reflective of the ethical propriety of departments. The judicious use of public resources is central to good governance and monitoring and evaluating how funds are used becomes a responsibility of the State. The key oversight bodies for finance at the national level of government are the NT and the AG, both of which are constitutionally mandated to monitor and evaluate the finances of departments. In a similar manner to the PSC and typical of M&E bodies which drive compliance and assess accountability, the NT and AG have systems and protocols that inform their work. The M&E approach towards assessing

adherence to financial policies and protocols, which also tends to fall within the quantitative, positivist tradition and which emphasises periodic reporting of performance against norms and standards for financial management. From a good governance perspective, these address issues of accountability for public funds.

This section considers the work of these oversight institutions, which is supported through certain Constitutional Values and Principles for public administration,[85] in light of the performance of the DSD. Both the NT and AG work towards helping departments to achieve this outcome by rigorously monitoring and evaluating financial governance.

The NT has been effective in putting in place a range of polices and monitoring instruments to hold departments accountable for the funds allocated to them. There is a strong monitoring bias, which coupled with mandatory reporting, produces the levels of transparency, scrutiny and accountability to prevent a situation where fraud and mismanagement of funds go unnoticed. There is always a high public interest in the manner in which public funds are expended, which means that the instruments and mechanisms for reporting on financial performance need to be credible.

Apart from the financial monitoring role played by the NT, there is also the *financial evaluation* role played by the AG. The latter evaluates the financial performance of departments, using standardised evaluation levels that allow for comparisons of performance across departments. These evaluative judgements provide insight into the financial propriety of departments. It should be noted that the matters discussed around risk management and ethical compliance in the earlier part of this chapter are relevant and have a bearing on financial performance. This is in terms of the financial management infrastructure, and which includes the audit manual[86] that informs financial management practice in departments.

6.13.2 Importance of sound financial management for the developmental State

Sound financial management is not an end in itself; it is a part of good governance and is essential for service delivery. Unless resources are used judiciously, the developmental State will not be able to deliver on its ambitious goals of reducing inequality and addressing service delivery backlogs. The previous section addressed why ethical compliance is an

[85] Principle 2, is a "norm" for this aspect, and calls for public administration to be "efficient, economical and effective." It is supported by the principles of 'accountability" and "transparency".

[86] Department of Social Development. 2007c. Internal; Audit manual. Republic of South Africa.

important Constitutional value, and presented arguments as to why the State needed to meet internal norms and standards which obliged member countries to address corruption. Apart from countries seeking approval for their governance stance, the global environment requires countries, in particular their treasuries to be active in ensuring that their departments operate to the highest levels of financial propriety. It has been shown that international investment ratings, which influence Foreign Direct Investment, are based on the quality of this part of government infrastructure, and in this regard questions of financial predictability and stability become key factors influencing these ratings. The investment ratings of countries by international bodies are taken seriously by government.

In light of the global financial environment and domestic imperatives, there is a need for sound financial planning, and it is here that aspects such as the MTSF and MTEF become strategic features which drive departments to operate in a manner that is indeed deliberate and careful in how it goes about seeking its budget and expending it. These frameworks aim to bring about the alignment between the thrust of the developmental State and actual service delivery.

In view of the above, the constitutional value and principle of being "efficient, effective and economical, the so called "3Es" when considered in the context of the developmental State, presents certain contradictions. This is because the 3Es concept applies best in a private sector environment, where such levels of efficiency and economy are necessary to optimise resources and maximise profits. It is also a concept that applies better in countries which do not have to straddle such a high socio-economic divide, and where issues of redress in the first instance are not necessary. In the context of the developmental State, as mentioned, sound financial management is necessary to optimise service delivery through effectively deploying resources that maximise the ability of the State to meet its service delivery challenges, hence being "effective".

In South Africa, the State has had to be effective first, by intervening in a manner that has not necessarily proceeded from the basis of efficiency and economy. An example would be the high levels of social spending, largely through the DSD, which help immediately ameliorate the levels of poverty, create social stability and provide a social safety net. In the broader development debates, this could be considered as a wasteful form of expenditure. The magnitude of the current spending is high and this form of intervention is considered critical for improving the quality of lives[87] of citizens, evident in the fact that currently, nearly

[87] Manual T. 2006. Minister of Finance. Budget Speech 2006. 15 February 2006.Republic of South Africa.

22% of the population receive some form of grant[88]. In many instances this is considered as not worthwhile, as it could create a dependency situation.

Irrespective of this debate, the developmental State purports to be activist and interventionist, and has intervened in similar ways to improve the socio-economic stability necessary for the country. This does not mean, however, that efficiency considerations are unimportant, as the discussion below will show.

6.13.3 M&E systems used by the NT to ensure financial accountability

The main financial oversight institution of national government departments is the NT. The NT has at its disposal the PFMA[89], which gives effect to key sections[90] of the Constitution,[91] and which provides a framework on how finances of the national and provincial spheres of government are to be managed. The PFMA claims to adopt an approach that focuses on *outputs and responsibilities*, rather than the rule-driven approach. It is a phased approach[92] towards improving the quality of financial management in the public sector. The PFMA is a road-map of how finances need to be managed, and the NT in promoting it, also emphasises the need for Accounting Officers to be held accountable for the financial management of their respective departments. Whilst the PFMA and its subordinate Treasury Regulations provide a broad framework for financial management, Accounting Officers are required to develop and implement financial policies and procedures in line with the business needs of their respective departments.

From the above, it is clear that sound financial management is promoted through standardisation and driving compliance. The NT promotes uniform treasury norms and standards, and there is a compliance bias in its operations. As the custodian of State resources, it is able to stipulate the direction and type of financial governance of departments, which is necessary to ensure that there is overall fiscal discipline. The global financial rating of the country is influenced by the quality of financial governance arrangements that are in place, in particular in the public sector. The performance of

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88 Department of Social Development. 2006a. A profile of social security beneficiaries in South Africa. Volume 3. University of Stellenbosch. Department of Sociology and Anthropology. June 2006.

89 National Treasury. 1999. Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999. section 38 to 40. 1999. Republic of South Africa.

90 In the PFMA, the relevant sections are 213, 216, 216, 217, 218, and 219 of Act 108 of 1996.

91 *Ibid.*

92 The first phase….proper financial management systems…and accountability arrangements for the management of budgets….subsequent phases look at efficiency and effectiveness and best practices' (PFMA, p. 1).

departments, individually and collectively, is critical for ensuring that macro-economic policies are met. Listed below are measures and tools used by NT to ensure compliance and to *standardise* the financial affairs of departments.

The key reporting stipulations of departments from the NT are:

a) *In-year monitoring*[93]*.* Within 15 days after the end of the month, departments report on their expenditure and projections on a monthly basis, within 15 days after end the month. This allows for the NT to intervene when it sees there is likely to be over- or under-expenditure[94]. The NT requires that departments, in terms of Treasury Regulation, report on expenditure against projections on a monthly basis. This in-year monitoring allows both the department and NT to determine whether the budget allocated will be expended by year-end. The NT also provides norms regarding what the expected expenditure should be on a monthly basis, so that departments can compare themselves to the norms. The problem that arises, however, is that there are invariably troughs and spikes in spending, with the early part of the year usually slow and acceleration towards the end of the year when there is the invariable "March spike". This refers to the time when departments try to expend their funds, often on non-service delivery activities, so at to keep with the 2% norm[95]. The in-year monitoring system is an "early-warning system" that helps departments to self-regulate their spending.

b) *Adhering to the guidelines for the preparation and tabling of Annual Reports (ARs)*[96]. The ARs are considered a key M&E instrument of departments in that they ensure that departments report on performance against policies and plans. It is a criterion referenced form of reporting. As such the Annual Reports have multiple uses, but the most central is that they promote transparency and accountability. The AR for the NT is an accountability document, in that it shows whether and how well departments used their budgets, and through a range of financial and non-financial indicators, points to broader issues of management and governance. They indicate the quality of management, as the extent to which plans are realised in practice (the AR is backward looking), indicates the capacity within departments to plan, budget and expend according to the outputs stipulated in the form of strategic objectives. The

[93] Section 40 (4) of the PFMA.
[94] This helps to keep departments on track, preventing budget deficits. From this data, judgements can be made about the quality of expenditure which in turn is reflective of how well the definable and measurable strategic objectives are met.
[95] The NT develops trend reports of departments financial spending, and is able to identify these variances.
[96] *Ibid.*

Annual Report allows for oversight bodies and institutions (this question is addressed in chapter 7) to assess whether departments have met their mandates, and whether the standards of governance, based on standardised indicators, have been met.

c) *Adhering to financial statement templates prescribed by the NT.* Departments are obliged to compile their financial statements in terms of Generally Recognised Accounting Practice and in accordance with templates and notes as prescribed by the NT.

At a macro-level the NT produces reports which indicate at an aggregated level expenditure patterns. These include:

a) *The publishing of reports on state of the budget*[97]*.* Within 30 days after the end of each month the NT publish in the National Government Gazette a statement of actual revenue and expenditure with regard to the national revenue fund. The aforementioned statement must specify, amongst others the actual revenue for the relevant period and for the financial year up to the end of that period and the actual expenditure per vote for that period and for the financial year up to the end of that period.

b) The *Annual Consolidated Financial Statements*[98]*.* The PFMA requires the NT to prepare and table consolidated financial statements for departments, public entities, constitutional institutions, the South African Reserve Bank, AG and Parliament. It highlights the financial results per cluster[99] mainly to address government priorities and policies. The Consolidated Financial Information System provides information on the financial performance, including the achievement of government's social objectives and priorities.

Moving on from the reporting stipulations, there are systems used by the NT as part of its M&E of finances of departments. The permeating feature of the methods is that they are based on verifiable, quantitative, reported data, collected periodically and used to compare against baselines and established norms and standards. In cases of deviation, the NT is empowered through legislation to intervene and assume control over the finances of departments. The features of the systems are as follows:

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97 See Section 32 of the PFMA.
98 See Section 8 of the PFMA
99 These refer to the Central Government Administration, which are Financial and Administration Services, Social Services, Justice and Protection Services and Economic Services and Infrastructure Development.

a) *A system of budgeting that is based on receiving and translating political priorities into government priorities.* The NT has prescribed that budgeting is done according to policy directives from the Executive, which means that the programmes of departments must contribute to policy priorities.[100] For departments to secure the budgets they propose, they need to *quantify the benefits of a programme* and report on a *quarterly basis their progress against their business plans*. This relates in particular to the overall budgeting processes that are contained in the MTSF and the MTEF, both of which work on the notion of multi-year planning and budgeting, thus introducing predictability into the system. It produces what is known as the estimates of national expenditure[101].

b) *Annually departments are expected to report on their actual delivery against the strategic objectives*, in the prescribed, uniform format of NT. It is possible to quantify performance by measuring the ratio of achievements against plans, and the NT prescribes that at least two-third of the objectives must be realised. This is the benchmark for effective performance in terms of planning and delivery.

c) The NT is currently in the process of developing a *financial management capability maturity model with the view to determine the financial maturity of departments.* The level of financial maturity of departments, once determined, will indicate to the NT the level of customised support and intervention strategies required to assist departments to improve their financial management[102].

As can be seen, the NT monitors the expenditure of departments, and through this monitoring it is able to keep the overall spending of departments on track, and ensure that the macro-economic targets are also met.

6.14 THE AUDITOR GENERAL: EVALUATING FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE

The AG is a State institution established by Chapter 9 of the Constitution. As such, it is independent, subject only to the Constitution and the law, is accountable to the National Assembly[103]. It must submit *audit reports* to any legislature that has a direct interest in the

[100] The country has a Cabinet Lekotla process, where policy directions are agreed upon and instructions given to Ministers and their DGs to implement. This requires the Ministers to propose budgets which show how they support a programme, list the outputs and measures thereof, for presentation to Parliament. This takes place within a MTSF (3 years rolling) and a MTEF (also three years rolling), meant to create certainty.

[101] National Treasury. 2008a. Estimates of National Expenditure report. Website. Vote 16. Department of Social Development.

[102] National Treasury. 2008b. Strategic Plan 2008/11. Republic of South Africa.

[103] It is incumbent on all other organs of state to ensure its independence, impartiality, dignity and effectiveness. In terms of section 188 of the Constitution the AG must audit and report on the accounts, financial statements and management of all provincial and national departments.

audit, and any other authority prescribed by national legislation.

The AG needs to provide an opinion, which enhances the quality of financial statements, by providing a level of assurance, but not absolute, to the users of such statements. This evaluation is important in that it is indicative of the quality of financial governance. In essence the AG can provide the categories of assessment mentioned in chapter 4. There are elaborated upon below.

a) Unqualified audit opinion: This is a good opinion, where the financial statements fairly reflect the financial status of a department or entity;
b) Unqualified audit opinion with emphasis of matter: Least severe opinion but there are a number of issues that are a cause of concern which are raised in the matter of emphasis;
   Qualified audit opinion: Severe opinion, the auditor concludes that an unqualified audit opinion cannot be expressed, but the issues are not so severe so as to lead to the next level, of adverse;
c) Adverse opinion: The financial statements are seen as not presenting fairly the situation, material disagreements; and
d) Disclaimer: No opinion expressed, due to the severity of the situation, and no opinion can be expressed.

In discussing these opinions, it should not be mistaken with the reports of the Audit Committee, which is an *internal structure of departments* to advise the Accounting Officer of affairs, and which normally deals with the findings of the internal audit unit. The roles of the NT and AG must be considered in context of the various oversight committees that amplify the work of these bodies, in that they receive reports and consider it, and are empowered to pass resolutions or issue directives, to departments.

6.15 SUPPORTING FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT: THE ROLE OF COMMITTEES

There are many parliamentary oversight committees which assist the Legislature to exercise political oversight of departments. Key amongst these is the *Public Accounts Committee*, which is the “protector of the public purse”, and focuses on issues raised in the General Report of the AG on Auditor Outcomes[104]. The NT has produced a guideline[105] to assist

[104] It focuses on issues of fraud as raised, compliance with the PFMA, interrogation and evaluation of over expenditure and other issues of unauthorised expenditure, irregular and fruitless expenditure, corporate governance and risk management.

them exercise their political oversight, which emphasises the importance of the Annual Report[106]. The Annual Report is meant to be a backward looking document, assessing what happened over a year, and is thus an indication of the quality of governance within a department.

The *Portfolio Committees* look at the technical quality of Annual Reports, whether performance targets were reported on, the quality of performance information, the 3Es of service delivery as measured by the performance indicators in the Annual Report, and commenting on the evaluation by the Minister or MEC of the Accounting Officer (DG or HoD) and the proposed bonus or sanction which is imposed. The *Portfolio Committee on concurrent functions* oversees the relevant national departments. These committees are expected to have a comprehensive view when looking at, for example, social development. It would examine how the 9 provinces function and can consider the 9 provincial Annual Reports and make comparisons. It can also consider any AG report, and also request any national department to make an assessment on its inputs on the outcome of the performance of any national department, and get inputs on the Annual Report of all of these. Clearly, this is an important, supportive, oversight committee.

6.16 ASSESSMENT OF FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE OF THE DSD

The DSD is now assessed against the NT and AG framework. There is also a consideration of these assessments by the PSC when it implements its system.

6.16.1 Compliance to the PFMA

Compliance to the PFMA is mandatory and as parts of the compliance the DSD is required to produce an internal audit manual,[107] which is supposed to guide the operations and the audit methodology to be applied by Internal Audit Unit of the DSD[108]. Its importance from a governance perspective can be seen in that it clearly articulates roles and responsibilities in terms of internal audit and stipulates how the Audit Committee operates in relation with other stakeholders (AG, office of the Accountant General) and peers. It also lists the methodology that will be used in the audit and deals with the Code of ethics[109]. In the Annual Report there

[105] National Treasury. 2005. Guideline for Legislative Oversight through Annual Reports. 26 January 2005.
[106] Section 40 and 55 of the PFMA stipulates how and when Annual Report must be tabled.
[107] *Ibid.*
[108] This document needs to link to the audit policy and internal audit charter of the department.
[109] In this regard issues of standards of conduct, principles, independency and objectivity, confidentiality and conduct are listed.

must be a statement that the department has complied with the PFMA, which the DSD has done. The provisions of ensuring that the correct management structure to implement the PFMA is in place and duly authorised was found to compliant[110].

6.16.2 Compliance with the reporting requirements of NT and the DPSA

The Annual Report[111] of a department coincides with the financial year of government, which is from 1 April to 31 March. The reporting of progress against plans, which is a schedule of the strategic objectives of a department, follows the same time-lines. This makes it possible to arrive at a quantitative assessment of "delivery", which in the case of the DSD relates to its key outputs. The extent to which objectives are realised (the NT prescribes that two-thirds of objectives must be realised), is telling of the quality of departmental governance, as it shows how well resources and objectives are brought together. This is made possible by the application of M&E within a department, which in turn is an indicator of good governance.

The Annual Report remains the main window for the public into the workings of a department, and the current format has been prescribed by NT and the DPSA. Its standardised format helps to create a common language around performance, and also assists in comparative assessments. The DSD has met the requirements of the NT and DPSA, by amongst others, making explicit its legislative framework, and clearly explaining the management structures, and how these tie to the tiers of responsibility[112]. The Annual Report must explain how voted funds are disbursed, in a form that shows the key measurable objectives, programmes and achievements. In the AR of the DSD its 6 programmes[113] are reported on, and as is obligatory, it has reported on variance against budget for each of these programmes. The DSD has shown that it has strong M&E capability, it that it has managed to quantify its objectives in terms of quantity, quality and time, and thus report quantifiably on it. It has also explained the programmes and the management measures, as required of it, which helps to clarify its relationship with the SASSA[114]. There is also a clear explanation of the accountability mechanisms[115].

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[110] The DSD has a duly appointed CFO, with clear responsibilities for supporting the AO on the PFMA.

[111] *Ibid*.

[112] See page 17 of the 2007 Annual Report, which stipulates the Acts which the DSD works with.

[113] The programmes are administration, comprehensive social protection, social security, transfers and administration, welfare services, development and research and strategy, regulatory and oversight management.

[114] *SASSA* has been set up to administer the budget by making disbursements at a site level. In this regard it can take credit for transfers to households, which in 2006/7 amounted to R57,050 billion.

[115] The Minister appoints a CEO, and also signs an Agency Agreement which defines the relationship between SASSA and the DSD. A service agreement further governs the relationship between the partners involved, and this is signed by the Minister, MECs, the DG and the CEO of SASSA. The Minister also approves the

At a governance level it is clear that performance measures are in place and there is monitoring of the attainment of objectives and spending of funds. The DSD thus complies with this governance requirement of the PFMA.

6.16.3 Ensuring that expenditure is within the 2% range

The 2007 Annual Report for the 2006/7 period indicates that the department received 62 billion Rands and spent 99,4% of it. Its spending was within the 2% range allowed by NT, and this means that the DSD has performed well in efficiently expending its allotted funds.

6.16.4 Meeting the standards of quarterly reporting

This is an in-year monitoring exercise, with the DSD having to provide reports to the NT on a monthly basis, but also using quarterly reports to assess itself. It is a self-reflective managerial exercise that will be explained more fully in chapter 6. The outputs are quarterly performance reviews aimed at initiating remedial action where necessary. Where there is a percentage deviation, early reports allow for this to be rectified in the remaining period. It means that programme information needs to be presented against set quarterly targets and financial performance of each programme for the period under review assessed. There is also provision for non-financial performance reporting, which whilst difficult to prove where there is no quantitative and target deviation information, also helps in the analysis.

In an assessment of 4 quarterly reports of the DSD, the following was found.[116] The format allows for easy monitoring, as each programme is reported within a programme, but broken up into functional areas, with outputs, measures and indicators, targets for the annual reporting period (2007/08), followed by performance for each quarter and percentage deviation. This clear monitoring tool is performance oriented, and the report for each quarter then proves quarterly reports of allocations, expenditure and projections (based on the rate of expenditure). What is noteworthy of the report is the statement that this activity and discipline which it instils should lead to “an intuitional performance monitoring culture” being

annual strategic plans and budgets and requires quarterly reports on progress. In terms of the NDA, the Minister appoints a board and the CEO of the NDA, and also approves budgets and requires quarterly reports.

[116] Department of Social development Quarterly Reports submitted to national Treasury for the periods April-June 2007; July-September 2006; August-October 2007 and November-March 2008.

gradually instilled in the department (DSD, 2007: 79)[117]. An important aspect of the report is that it is able to make a broad analysis of performance.

6.16.5 Financial management assessment undertaken by the PSC

It would be useful to consider other assessments of this aspect undertaken. The Public Service M&E system has already been described. What is now presented is its assessment of the DSD for the 2007/8 financial year[118], for the principle of efficiency, economy and effectiveness. The PSC system rates the following elements for the principle:

a) Planned expenditure versus actual expenditure
b) Quality of department's service delivery indicators
c) Achievement of priority outputs

Each of the areas is allocated a third of the weight for the overall assessment of this principle. A brief synopsis of the results follows. It was found that for *planned expenditure versus actual expenditure*, the department had an under-expenditure of 1,1% of the amount voted, which was within the acceptable margin of 2%. The under-expenditure in the 2001/2 period, which was when the PSC assessed the department using this instrument, increased from the 0,3% during that period. This result should be seen in context that the budget over the period also increased significantly. Of the 6 programmes, 4 showed under-expenditure, the worst result being in programme 6 (Strategy, Regulatory and Oversight Management) where there was a 38,3 percent deviation. Reasons have been provided for this, which relate to turn over and staff delays in the filling of posts. The system requires that material variances are clearly explained, which has been done, and the DSD was rated 100% for this element. The DSD has shown sound financial management around this aspect, in that it has effectively monitored its expenditure and been able to explain material variances.

The second aspect examined by the PSM&ES is the *quality of department's service delivery indicator.* The sub-elements that are measured are the measurability of outputs and indicators, with the PSC instrument examining the quality of service delivery indicators under this principle. The DSD was found to have 6 measurable objectives, with 211 service delivery indicators, of which 134 were measurable in terms of quantity, quality and time; and

[117] Department of Social Development. 2007d. Quarterly Report July – September 2007. Republic of South Africa.
[118] Ibid.

77 were not. The most measurable of the indicators was in programme 2, which is social security transfers and administration (100% of the objectives were measurable).

Also assessed is the *linkage of output indicators*. The standard is that the department`s strategic plan[119] must have a clear linkage between functional areas, outputs, Spatial Development Initiatives (SDIs) and targets. The report found that some of the SDIs found in the strategic plan were not measurable in terms of quality, quantity and time dimensions. Overall, however, more than half were measurable (64%), and the PSC instrument awarded a 100% for this element. Finally, the system assesses how well the DSD achieved its *priority output.* It was found that the DSD has succeeded in achieving the priority outputs, with its overall achieving 86 of the 211 priority areas, which is a 41% success rate. In looking at the specific programmes, the worst performance was in the comprehensive social protection area, where only 15% of the priority outputs (which were 26) were achieved. The problem was compounded in that in this programme most of the outputs were not stated in Quality, Quantity and Time dimensions. The PSC standard for this element is an achievement of between 40% to 59%, and thus the 41% means that they score within the band and are scored 100% for the element.

6.17 FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE IN RELATION TO M&E AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

a) M&E

The systems for monitoring and evaluating financial compliance used by the NT, AG and PSC fall within the quantitative domain, are empirical and universal, and show deviations from norms and standards. They are based on clear reporting protocols and have a set of measurable and verifiable indicators. The NT, unlike the PSC has the power to intervene if there is unacceptable deviation from the norms and standards, and as such its role as an oversight body is likely to be taken more seriously. It has the power to withhold resources, and this gives it much influence on how departments shape their budgets. By insisting on certain types of reports, largely expected throughout the year and at the end in the form of the Annual Report, the NT does direct financial practice. It goes beyond producing reports for the purpose of transparency; the accountability outcome of these is more direct as it has legislation to hold the Accounting Officers personally liable for the poor management of funds. It also has recourse to committees which have more power and which can censure poor financial performance. The NT thus uses M&E for policing, and given its legislative

[119] Ibid.

support is able to ensure accountability for financial performance, much more than the PSC can for the Constitutional Values and Principles.

The AG may be considered as providing an evaluation of financial performance, and its opinions are now part of the language of performance and its reports taken seriously. However, it too has faced challenges in that many of the departments which receive adverse audit opinions are repeat offenders, and this shows that there are serious deficiencies in the political-administrative interface when results of poor performance fail to translate into any improvement in performance. The point has already been made about the lack of translation from findings to action, as being a weakness in the accountability framework and which could potentially undermine the thrust for good governance. The recent work of the AG has focused more on the ethical element, with it now scrutinising aspects such as financial disclosures and looking more deeply into irregularities around conflicts of interests. It has also moved into assessing performance management systems of departments, moving away from the traditional function of providing opinions only on the quality of financials.

It may thus be summarised that the NT and AG may be regarded as part of the M&E bodies, but as in the case of the PSC, their work is more directed towards monitoring compliance, although there is an attempt to also look more deeply at the outputs of spending. The Annual Report remains a key accountability schema, and is a very useful public tool for holding departments to account.

b) Financial management and good governance

The DSD has shown sound financial management, having met the requirements of the NT and AG. In doing so, it has met exacting reporting standards, and put into the public domain its performance. This has increased transparency around how the DSD uses its budget, which is supportive of good governance. It also helps to show the extent to which the programmes of the DSD contribute to meeting the goals of the developmental State. The most important type of management is financial management, and a department that performs well in this area shows a responsibility for how it uses public funds, and is thus accountable. To achieve financial accountability, however, is not easy as there are several requirements that have to be met. In practice it compels departments to properly reflect on its vision and mission, to plan within the budget, to quantify outputs and constantly assess whether its plans are met in practice. If a department achieves these, and this is validated by the NT and AG, noting that validation is a necessary part of good governance, the achievement is noteworthy.

This sub-section has shown that there is explicit policy for the oversight of finances of departments, which is accompanied by effective M&E mechanisms for the aspect. The M&E of finances is led by the NT, but carried out at different levels. An important value-add to the process is the opinion of the AG, which is a summative evaluation of the performance of a department in terms of its financial management capability. The committees of parliament provide another level of oversight, largely through their scrutiny of Annual Reports, which are theoretically a key transparency and accountability inducing mechanism. The actual performance of Parliament in terms of oversight is assessed in chapter 7. Finally, one has the PSC which also conducts assessment on this aspect on a periodic basis and is able to provide a quantitative assessment of how well a department manages its finances.

It was found that the M&E of finances contributes to transparency and accountability of departmental operations, which helps in its governance. The PFMA remains a key legislation for holding the DGs, who are the Accounting Officers, personally accountable for the finances of their departments. There is a complete machinery of financial support systems and mechanisms to ensure that the finances of department are well managed. There is a slew of regulation to support the system, and this includes the prioritising of ethics and risk management.

The case study showed that the DSD has been compliant in all areas, with even the assessment by the PSC using the transversal PSM&ES, allocating the department a high score for the principle of efficiency, effectiveness and economy. It would appear that the M&E of finances has contributed to greater transparency and accountability, and as far as the M&E of finances goes, it is an important contributor to the overall compliance climate. However, administrative compliance whilst important does not equate good governance, and in the absence of impact studies on the work of the DSD, the value added in terms of development remains to be seen.

6.18 ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLIANCE

6.18.1 Relevance of area to good governance

Administrative compliance is essential, but should not be equated to resulting in good governance, in that is shows a commitment to the prevailing policies. There is a strong oversight role played by the Department of Labour (DoL), the DPSA, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJCD) and the PSC in M&E different aspects of administrative compliance. The thrust for administrative compliance “in terms of just and fair

decision-making" comes from principle four[120], whilst the thrust for sound human resource management comes from principles eight[121] and nine[122]. Principle eight is more universal, whilst principle nine is country specific.

This assessment focuses mainly on compliance with human resource and management practices, as this has been identified as key to improving the quality of public sector personnel, which is seen as a necessary condition for better service delivery and thus good governance. The Public Service has in place the necessary legislative and regulatory framework that makes specific provisions to drive human resource management in a particular direction. Key amongst there is a human resources development strategy, which has emerged from a White Paper on Human Resource Development[123] in the Public Service. The main purpose of this paper was to support the transformation of the Public Service by improving upon how human resources are managed from a centrally controlled, process-driven Public Service to a service that is representative of all people, treats public servants as a valuable resource, holds public servants accountable for their actions and is focused on service delivery outcomes. The White Paper introduced a changed approach to Human Resource Management with a clear focus on improved delivery and enhanced performance. This approach built on the ideal of a people-centred Public Service that is devoted to addressing the needs of the community that it serves. As can be seen, citizens are foremost is this model.

There is an emphasis of promoting skills development, and this is embodied in more specific Acts and regulations[124]. To give effect to skills development, there is a multi-year skills development strategy in place.[125] In the South African context, an important element that is also monitored is the compliance with the Employment Equity Act[126]. This stems from the affirmative action programme, which seeks to redress the legacy of apartheid and make the public sector representative of the demographic composition of the country.

[120] Principle 4: Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias.
[121] Principle 8: Good human resource management and career development practices, to maximise human potential, must be cultivated.
[122] Principle 9: Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation.
[123] Department of Public Service and Administration. 1997. White Paper on Human Resource Development in the Public Service. Republic of South Africa.
[124] Refer to the Skills Development Act, No. 97 of 1998. Republic of South Africa
[125] Refer to the National Skills Development strategy for South Africa, 2006-2010. Republic of South Africa.
[126] Refer to the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998. Republic of South Africa. Specific provisions are made for mandatory reporting, the publication of the report, and other provisions.

6.18.2 Areas of administrative compliance where oversight is exercised

The main area of administrative compliance where oversight is exercised is around human resources management. This includes the M&E of employment equity, the Human Resource planning of departments and the promotion of administrative justice. The main role players that exercise this oversight are the DoL, the DPSA and the PSC. The systems used relate to mandatory reporting obligations on departments, wherein departments are expected to submit information based on templates. There is feedback provided on these performance areas from these two institutions, which tends to be in the form of high level reports that aggregate the data from all the units (departments or entities) that report into these institutions.

6.19 M&E OF EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

The policy intent of government is that the public sector should mirror the demographic composition of the country. To achieve this, a series of M&E activities on the aspect are undertaken, primarily by the DoL. There have also been evaluations conducted of progress around representivity, which provide a broad overview of how government as a whole has met the Employment Equity targets[127].

From a monitoring perspective, departments are obliged, in terms of section 21(2) of the Employment Equity Act, to report to the DG of the DoL on representivity[128] statistics annually on the first of each October. This comes from a requirement that each department is expected to develop an Employment Equity Plan[129], which requires that departments provide information in a prescribed format.[130] In addition, the report must stipulate what the management infrastructure is within the department in terms of the Employment Equity plan, and this includes roles and responsibilities for the tiers of management, a description of the consultative forums that are in place, the communication strategy and the M&E and reporting procedures.

[127] Public Service Commission. 2006e. An Audit of Affirmative Action in the Public Service. Republic of South Africa.
[128] Representivity is defined as meeting targets for race, gender and disability.
[129] Provisions are set out in section 20(1) of the Employment Equity Act. The plan is multi-year, and subject to annual review.
[130] The prescribed information requires race and gender information along lines of occupational class/salary levels. It requires specific information of support (policies and measures) for designated persons, and progress against targets, with variance reporting. It is a clear monitoring tool.

6.20 ASSESSMENT OF EMPLOYMENT EQUITY COMPLIANCE IN THE DSD

The compliance of the DSD around employment equity reflects full compliance, and is contained in the Employment Equity plan[131] and its 2007 Annual Report[132]. More updated statistics are drawn from the Vulendlela[133] data-base. The targets and performance thereof are indicated:

Target: Blacks at management level: 75% target
Actual: DSD 88% (progress from 33% in 2002)

Target: Gender (women at top, senior and middle management level): 50%
Actual DSD 61%

Target: Disability: 2% target
Actual: DSD 2,6%

It was also found that all of the Employment Equity Plan stipulations for the DSD were fully met. The DSD met the requirements of having in place a HIV and diversity management plan.

6.21 M&E OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Each department is expected to have in place a human resource plan for its office, which must be aligned with the MTEF. A template is provided for this, meaning that information is collected on a standardised basis.[134] At a legal level, the plan requires a sign off by the department. Each plan provides an overview of the department, its vision and mission statement, values, strategic objectives, HR planning overview, HR challenges and HR planning and process matrix. It also requires an environmental scan, requiring a consideration of key environment factors that could impact upon the department, trends in the macro environment, envisaged changes in the macro environment, and its possible impact on the department. There is also a workforce analysis required, that reports on the organisational structures, competencies, training and development, types of employment

[131] Department of Social Development. 2006c. Employment Equity Plan. January. Republic of South Africa.
[132] *Ibid.*
[133] This is a data-base that is housed by NT and provides Representivity statistics. It has been augmented with statistics from the DPSA and Persal (payroll system).
[134] This refers to the reporting template provided for reporting on human resource matters for the period related to the MTEF.

and resourcing, staff turnover, budget analysis, employment equity, employee health and wellness and values and ethical behaviour. It needs to also address the priority human resource issues, as well as an implementation plan and M&E.

An assessment was made of the Human Resource plan of the DSD for the period 2008-2012, and for the financial year 2008-2009[135]. This assessment examined the document to establish the extent to which the DSD has complied with the template and reporting provisions. The HR plans is a DPSA requirement. The report is comprehensive and requires information across the following thematic areas; organisational location, environmental scan, workforce analysis, human resource gap analysis and priority departmental human resource issues. As part of the self-regulation promoted, the report also requires an action plan and an M&E report. It comprises 23 tables, which provides a clear description of the definitions and types of information that is required. Its status is that it must be signed off by the departments, both by the DG and the Minister.

The report is illustrative of the broader work and intentions of the DSD, and this is best captured under the strategic themes which are then linked to the strategic objectives[136]. The importance of this inclusion is that it situates the relationship between the human resource requirements and the human resource capacity. The external and internal environmental scan provides a matrix which identifies the contemporary trends (along the lines of political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legislative) and requires the DSD to apply its mind to what this means to the department and also requires that the department comes up with a possible course of action[137]. A similar assessment is made of the internal environmental scan, but this time the cross-cutting categories relate to departmental factors. It is deemed important that these be addressed from a governance perspective.

The workforce analysis is a gap analysis, and delves into what the demand and supply are for categories of skills. This is then linked back to the functionality of the departments. Also included is a very clear competencies assessment, which identifies the competencies per occupational classification, and identifies the steps required to address these. This is a clear way in which departments are made to identify their HR needs, and commit to addressing

[135] Department of Social Development. 2008b. Human Resource Plan for the period 2008-2012. Financial Year: 2008-2009. 29 September 2008. Republic of South Africa.
[136] See item 2.5, pages 7-9.
[137] See item 3.1, pages 11-14.

them. The matter is well documented in the area of critical competencies[138]. Demographic data is also provided, to anticipate retirement, and there is a turnover analysis, with the reasons thereof. The DSD has a vacancy rate of 24%, which is above the norm of 10%. Whilst the filling of posts is an administrative requirement, and helps to ensure that departments are capacitated to meet their mandate, it is an internal requirement. It is important that departments possess the requisite skills and capacities to implement policies.

The main part of the report is the addressing of priority issues[139]. The most compliance driving element of the report is the action plan which has to be submitted, and which shows the activities to be carried out, the targets, responsibilities, budgets and monitoring actions.

Overall, at the compliance level, it is clear that the DSD has complied, and based on the aforementioned assessment, it is possible that through this aspect, good governance around human resources is promoted. This would be because it links to greater transparency and accountability around the aspect.

6.22 M&E COMPLIANCE WITH THE PMDS

The manner in which individual performance of personnel is managed in departments is critical to its overall governance, given that any performance management system is rooted in principles of transparency and accountability. The contracting of performance means that there is commitment to delivering products and services within the constraints of resources but with clear indicators in terms of outputs, levels of quality and dates. It is an essential part of good governance in that it helps to hold individuals to account to their supervisors, and there is a clear basis at the end of the period for a discussion and reflection on what actual performance has been. In the absence of such a system, there is no basis for measuring whether the resources at the disposal of the employer has been optimally utilised. This links back to the earlier discussion on the question of professional ethics, risk management and the principles of efficiency, effectiveness and economy.

The DPSA has produced a PMDS, which is a regulatory provision that all public servants have to comply with. There are some differences in the detail of the system, but in essence it requires performance contracting, either more formally through signed performance

[138] Table 6, page 28, lists the range of competencies required for the full operation of the department. These include policy and legislation development, research, programme implementation, M&E, impact assessment and customer satisfaction skills, service delivery skills and ethics, with focus on *Batho Pele* principles.
[139] Table 22, this cites the departmental priorities, its risk and approaches to mitigate risk and achieve outcomes.

agreements at the Senior Management Service level, or signed work plans at levels below this. The importance can be seen in that it is referenced in key regulatory[140] and policy frameworks, and has also been adopted as a resolution[141] in terms of collective bargaining. The PMDS is supposed to translate into better service delivery, and this also contained within is the critical White Paper on *Batho Pele*[142], which is a deliberate strategy to instil a culture of accountability within public servants, in relation to service delivery.

There are also specific provisions for the performance management of the Senior Management Service[143], where the question of performance contracting is much clearer, as there is the requirement for signed performance agreements, and a more explicit guide on how this translates into performance levels, which then translates into pay progression (for satisfactory performance), the invoking of poor performance measures if it is found to be unsatisfactory and the granting of bonuses if it is found to be good. The extent to which the PMDS is implemented at the Senior Management Service level could be reflective of broader compliance levels for the PMDS at other levels.

It was found that the DSD has been implementing the PMDS at all levels within the department. This is evident from the Annual Report and strategic plan of the DSD. The DG, in terms of his performance agreement with his Minister, has been subject to an evaluation which was chaired by the PSC. This is in relation to the annual guidelines that are issued by the PSC to inform the process[144]. The documents that are submitted at this meeting include the following, all of which have been reviewed[145]: The Annual Report of the department, the signed performance agreement between the HoD and Minister Verification statement, which is an account of actual performance against plan and a self-assessment on the rating instrument together with the Minister's assessment.

Based on the review of the documents, and the observation by the researcher who was present in the actual evaluation, it can be noted that there was compliance to the evaluation system for HoDs. Furthermore, the interrogation of performance by the members of the panel (other Ministers and a peer DG) indicates that the process did generate the correct

[140] The regulations referred to are the Public Service Act, 1994, Public Service regulations, 2001, Treasury Regulations, 2000. They are revised by the DPSA.
[141] See Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council Resolution No 13 of 1998.
[142] Department of Public Service and Administration. 1997. *Batho Pele* White Paper. Republic of South Africa.
[143] Chapter 4 of the SMS handbook deals with the process and requirements of performance management and development for members of the SMS. It is a directive of the Minister for Public Service and Administration, in terms of Part III/B.3 of Chapter 4 of the PSR, 2001.
[144] Public Service Commission. 2008e. Guidelines for the Evaluation of Heads of Department for the Financial Year 2006/2007. Republic of South Africa.
[145] The researcher sat on this panel and was able to observe adherence to the process.

levels of scrutiny. An important outcome of the HoD evaluation process is that it helps to bring out strategic issues which are of concern to the performance of the department, and which is then provided as feedback to the DG/HoD by the Minister. The PSC has produced more detailed research on this aspect[146], in which it illustrates the value that is added due to the system of HoD evaluations. In its report, it makes the point that the exercise of performance management should proceed beyond mere compliance.

It should be mentioned that the DSD is fortunate in that it has had the same DG and Minister since 2003, and there is thus organisational stability and continuity. This point needs to be viewed in context of a public service that has an average turnover rate of HoDs of 24%[147], and where such instability can undermine the ability of a department to perform optimally, due to too frequent ministerial and administrative leadership changes.

6.23 COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE PROMOTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE JUSTICE ACT

The legal framework and quality of adherence thereof is an element of good governance. It points to issues of the independence and credibility of the judiciary, and also relates to issues of the separation of powers. A key element of administrative compliance is the compliance with the Promotion of the Administrative Justice Act, 1996. The Act has been cited as critical transformative legislation, in that if there is due scrutiny to the manner in which administrative decisions are made, this will prevent the abuse of authority and lead to good governance. The main players here are the DoJCD, which has responsibility for the Act. The PSC has conducted a joint assessment with the DoJCD on the Act[148]. The problem of poor compliance has been found across of departments that are subject to the PSM&ES[149].

It was possible to look at compliance with the PAJA in terms of the PSM&ES that was applied in the DSD in the 2001/2 and 2007/8 financial years[150]. The standard indicators used by the PSC are that:

[146] Public Service Commission. 2008f. A report on Strategic Issues Emanating from the Evaluation of Heads of Department. Republic of South Africa.
[147] Public Service Commission. 2008g. The Turn-over Rate of Heads of Department and the Implications for the Public Service. Republic of South Africa. .
[148] Republic of South Africa. Compliance with the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000 (Act No. 3 or 200). December 2006.
[149] Public Service Commission. 2007b. Fourth Consolidated Public Service Monitoring and Evaluation report. Research Cycle 2006/2007. Republic of South Africa.
[150] Ibid.

a) All decisions are taken in accordance with prescribed legislation/policies and in terms of delegated authority
b) All decisions are justified and fair considering the evidence submitted in this regard
c) The procedure required in the PAJA in communicating administrative decisions are duly followed

The DSD submitted 9 documents for scrutiny, and in its (PSC) assessment the DSD was found to be fully compliant with the provisions of PAJA. The matters that were reviewed covered a range of issues, most of which had financial implications. There was a need for the DSD to chart out a decision-making map. The DSD received a 100% rating for the 2007/8 period, up from 60% for the same element in 2001/2. This result is above the *national norm,* and indicative of good management.

6.24 ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLIANCE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

a) M&E

The systems used to monitor and evaluate administrative compliance, notably in the areas of employment equity, human resource management, performance management and PAJA are less quantitative than the systems used by the NT and AG. In making these assessments the DoL, DPSA and PSC consider a broader range of documentary evidence, and whilst they still look at the extent to which there is compliance to the prescripts, they also consider the processes used.

b) Administrative compliance and good governance

It stands to reason that if departments are able to adhere to the administrative policies of government, there is the necessary discipline and commitment at the level of operational units for other forms of instructions to be met. There is a clear logic behind the policies of government, and given that many of these expressly seek to bring about transformation, they must be met. The PMDS, if properly implemented will bring about the levels of scrutiny and reflection necessary for good governance in that it enhances transparency and accountability for performance. Similarly, the evaluation of HoDs also qualifies as a measure of good governance, in that if properly implemented it shows at the highest level of government that there is a commitment to holding leadership to account for performance.

The MME of administrative compliance tends to focus on human resource issues. This is in accordance with the overall thrust of principles 8 and 9 relating to human resource management and employment equity. The results indicate that there had been steady progress in improving compliance, and given the clear targets that have been set, it is relatively easy to track progress. The highest levels of achievement have been with regards to employment equity and results for the DSD show that targets set for attaining the various representivity targets have even been exceeded. It is not clear whether the DSD (or any other department) where such a situation of over-representation of a group is achieved, which tends to be largely with regards to the racial category of blacks. Measures are instituted to correct the situation. The data seems to suggest that this does not take place, meaning that the policy of achieving diversity is probably not being implemented. This does not augur well for the avowed intention of a representative public sector workforce, which is perceived, and in many cases actually Africanised.

The achievement of women at the management level has been significant, with the data showing achievement above the target level of 50%, it being 61%. The achievement in the levels of persons with disability remains problematic across the Public Service[151], although the DSD has managed to exceed the target. The good compliance to the provisions with PAJA may be due to the stable leadership in the DSD, which means that issues of delegations are now well embedded.

However, whilst there has been good compliance, it is not clear whether this has translated into improved human resource management, or whether it is done by managers just for compliance purposes. It may be that whilst the DSD has been compliant, this in itself cannot be construed to mean that on its own it constitutes good governance. The relationship between reporting and being compliant, and actual improved governance is complex, and addressed in chapters 7 and 8 of this thesis, where the use and action on results is considered.

6.25 THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENT IN PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE

The mandatory bodies, apart from using traditional management[152] and forums to present their oversight work, are dependent upon Parliament and its committees to act on oversight findings by calling departments to account. Parliament is thus a convertor of findings and

[151] Cited in the 2006, 2007 and 2008 editions of the State of the Public Service reports of the PSC.
[152] The AG and PSC present draft reports to departmental management leadership to comment on, as part of a process of finalisation of reports, and committing to acting upon recommendations.

recommendations into actions, as it is able to call the Executive to account[153], and censure when there is no action on the part of the Executive.

This section focuses on the role played by parliament and its committees in oversight. It looks at the conventions of parliament that bring about oversight, such as the parliamentary question and answer process, the Budget Vote Speech and the work of Portfolio Committees in using such information to hold departments and their political principals to account. Parliament potentially contributes to good governance by providing the mechanism for accountability to be exercised, and due to the composition of Parliament and various committees, which in a multi-party democracy enhances debate and transparency, helps M&E to produce an impact. The impact referred to is when there is action stemming from evaluation, and performance improves or policy is reviewed based on this assessment. If this is not the case, then M&E probably serves just an enlightenment purpose, which given the high investment and expectation of oversight bodies, may not be justifiable. If this is the case, the developmental State will not be sufficiently supported, either because it does not receive the correct information, or that its key partner, Parliament, is not exercising the oversight required. Through an examination of the inner workings of Parliament and considering its impact, a more comprehensive assessment of MME can be undertaken.

There are two questions that need to be asked when reviewing Parliament in relation to answering whether MME contributes to good governance. The first is whether Parliament is structured and operates in a manner that supports its mandate to exercise oversight, and the second is whether there is evidence, based on how Parliament operates, to suggest that this institution does indeed serve to action the work of MME bodies, and thus demonstrate evidence of improved transparency and accountability. If this happens, it is supportive of democracy in that there is the prevention of abuse and holding to account of management for their actions.

The issues of transformation of the Public Service have been raised in Chapters 1 and 3. Here the contribution of M&E to the developmental State was demonstrated[154]. The role played by the DSD towards this transformation was illustrated in Chapter 5. Parliament is thus central to the process of transformation, and due to historic reasons it has been accorded a special status and symbolises higher end values, and there is a public

[153] The Committees of Parliament are entrusted to hold the Executive to account, although this process has not been effective in the past.

[154] In chapter 2 of this thesis, the argument is made as to why M&E is necessary for the developmental State to be effective.

expectation that members of Parliament will act in holding up this ideal[155]. Given the influence of the Public Service on transformation, and the specific role expected of the developmental State as an enactor of policies, the interface between Parliament and departments, which is often mediated by M&E information and bodies, is an important consideration in the discourse on good governance. The operations of Parliament are better informed based on evidence, produced by M&E bodies, which can then form the basis for Parliament to engage departments more rigorously.

The assessment of how effective Parliament is in supporting MME has been done through triangulation, whereby the following elements were identified as relevant, and assessed based on observation, documentary review, interviews with member of parliament who worked in such committees and researchers. The tabling process used by the MME bodies, in terms of the protocols of what information is sent to committees, and for what purpose was also examined. This served to track evaluations into the domain of parliament, and see what happens to it. Thus in answering the effectiveness question, two functional areas were examined, namely:

a) The operations of Parliament in general, by drawing on an independent panel review[156] of the workings of Parliament, and observations of how some critical oversight work of the PSC and the AG was managed
b) An assessment of the specific working of the committees of Parliament (referred to as Portfolio Committees) is examined. This draws on interviews with members of such committees and observations and interviews with persons from M&E bodies and departments.

The impact element relates to the quality of outcomes, which is best assessed in looking at performance beyond the lens of the mandatory oversight bodies. It comes about when the producers of M&E are especially reliant on Parliament to act on results, and assessing whether this happens in practice will indicate whether the throughput from the production of performance information to its use takes place.

[155] All references to the South African parliament situate the current institution within a journey from apartheid to democracy, and the term "People`s Parliament", also shown in artefacts within Parliament, seeks to portray the institution as accessible. This is a shift from the old institution which passed repressive laws.
[156] Parliament,. 2009. Report of the Independent Panel Assessment of Parliament. 13 January 2009. Republic of South Africa.

6.26 THE EXPECTATION OF PARLIAMENT TO EXERCISE OVERSIGHT

The South African Parliament was reconstituted with democracy in 1994, and was a break from the past when the institution served partisan interests. Since democracy, it has sought to re-establish itself as an institution with credibility by being a "peoples` Parliament" (as stated by former President Nelson Mandela). With this ideal, the institution was set up to enact laws and engage in debate typical of a multi-party democracy, and importantly, configured to hold the Public Service accountable for its performance. It does this, as mentioned through the various committees that are tasked to exercise oversight over specific policy areas. The South African Parliamentary processes have been, at a theoretical level, designed to serve as a key nodal point for political/administrative interface.

Apart from the legal authority which gives Parliament the power to hold government to account, parliamentary engagement with departments induces transparency, and given the nature of reporting, helps to put performance information into the public domain. Most of the proceedings are open to the public and media, and through the deliberations emanating from the committees it can be fed into other levels, where it can ignite debate, all of which are signs of a healthy democracy and supportive of good governance. There have been many examples of where the Parliamentary privilege has been used by the opposition parties to highlight alleged maladministration, and which have subsequently translated into investigations, in support of the public good. The manner in which Parliament has been vigilant though, has been inconsistent, and many questions continually stalk Parliament when it comes to whether this ideal is consistently met. The review has provided insights into what the shortcomings have been by Parliament.

6.27 PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT IN PRACTICE

Understanding parliamentary processes and commenting on its practice will show the discrepancy between ideal and actual, and this is a key question given that several reviews and observers have slated parliament for not living up to the expectation of being a People`s Parliament and acting in the public interest[157]. When Parliament is rigorous in its oversight, it strengthens the accountability chain by respect for the work of MME bodies, which rely on Parliament to make decisions and hold the administrative and political leadership to

[157] The respect accorded to Parliament means that this institution is seen as the final judge in the decision-making chain, and citizens and the media use parliamentary information to arrive at performance judgements.

account[158], as required of the Constitution. The most vocal committee has been the SCOPA, which recently called to account a Minister, but was not respected leading to major questions asked about the quality of democracy, and whether the ruling party was not using its muscle to stifle debate and prevent Ministers from being subject to the work of these committees. The Open Democracy Foundation for South Africa has argued that recalcitrant Ministers and party politics undermine the institution`s ability exercise oversight[159].

The assessment of Parliamentary effectiveness, not in terms of its policy role but that of oversight, must be looked at in terms of outcome indicators. The work of the Presidency has provided 12 key areas of delivery, and which are premised on the notion that performance in most of the areas is weak and needs to be addressed. Although the system is not yet operational, the preliminary documents appear to emanate from an acknowledged crisis of governance, in areas of education, crime, public administration, to name but a few. It cites many public confidence surveys which shows a decline in public confidence, and which once again point to the fact that the accountability frameworks and mechanisms are probably not optimal. It is expected that the performance agreements between Ministers and the President will be made available, and one would envisage that Parliament uses these agreements to comment on the performance of the executive. There have been public pronouncements on the matter, and practice will tell whether these are met. In order to get a sense of how parliament works, the following areas were focused on, using mixed methods, to get a sense of the quality of Parliamentary probity. As a backdrop, the review of Parliament[160] locates this study within the APRM review process.

a) The *Parliamentary process, including the question and answer sessions*, is an avenue for the public to ask the executive to explain in writing or orally, transgressions. The assessment focused on questions asked of the Minister for Social Development, drawing from Parliamentary records (Hansard) between the period 2008 and 2009[161]. This indicated the content of issues with regards to oversight.

[158] The nature of the democratic transition and Constitutional provisions makes Parliament responsible for ensuring that the Constitutional democracy works. There has been much investment in supporting parliamentarians, most of whom are new, understand their roles as they engage in different oversight processes.

[159] As reported in *The Star*, 4 May 2010.

[160] *Ibid*.

[161] All the questions posed to the Minister for Social Development between 2008 and 2009 were assessed, and categorised on the basis of questions asked for clarity and/or information, or probity in terms of departmental performance. Those relating to accountability issues were assessed to examine the efficacy of the Parliamentary processes in promoting accountability.

b) The *Budget Speeches* of the Minister of Social Development were reviewed, as it is a significant reflective moment on performance, and includes opportunities for critique from members of Parliament. In this regard, the Budget Vote Speeches for 2007, 2008 and 2009 were examined.

c) Interviews were held with *Parliamentary researchers, who work* directly with the committees and are in a good position to comment on the operations of such committees. Importantly, they can comment on what happens to the volume of work generated on the performance of a department, and help shed light into the quality of interrogation by oversight committees[162].

d) The researcher has drawn on his own experiences in observing Parliamentary processes, especially at the level of Portfolio Committee oversight since 2000[163]. Interviews were conducted with former members of Parliament and key respondents to get their views on how they saw these processes. The Independent Panel Review of Parliament was used as a base document to inform this assessment, and interviews were conducted with key members of the team to probe some of the findings. In terms of the DSD, the researcher has observed the assessments of the DG. The relevance of this is that representatives of committees of Parliament and other stakeholders participate. Through this process, insight is obtained of how the DSD is viewed as part of a broader community of overseers.

6.28 THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF PARLIAMENT, IMPLICATIONS FOR OVERSIGHT

As a backdrop to the research on the effectiveness of parliamentary processes in terms of oversight over government, it is important to reflect on the findings of a review undertaken completed in 2009[164], and which was initiated as part of a broader country evaluation process, that being the Parliament`s engagement with the APRM process. As mentioned in chapter 2 of this study, the APRM is an instrument established by the NEPAD, which is a voluntary, self-monitoring initiative for good governance. The mandate of the APRM is to ensure that the values and practices of participating countries conform to the values,

[162] This is when reports from oversight institutions get presented to committees for them to exercise their oversight.
[163] The researcher has been a part of teams that have reported to different committees since 2000, and has had extensive exposure to the inner workings of these committees.
[164] *Ibid.*

principles, codes and standards enshrined in the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance. A report was produced on South Africa, but the finalisation was mired in controversy with the civil society sector accusing government of taking over the process, and claiming that their voices were not adequately represented in this report.[165]

In light of the APRM process, the Parliament`s Joint Coordinating Committee on the APRM considered a review of Parliament appropriate, and whilst the assessment failed to meet the time-frame for being considered for this review, it has subsequently been used to inform Parliament on how better to meet its constitutional mandate in promoting and entrenching democracy. This assessment is a critical one in terms of addressing whether Parliament had evolved to meet the expectations as outlined in the Constitution (a key one being oversight), but an equally important one has been whether Parliament has promoted and entrenched democracy. The panel comprised leaders from the field of democracy, governance, politics, gender, civil society, race relations, management, labour, to name but a few. It brought to bear a leadership for the review that kept to its mandate of executing an independent assessment. In assessing the methodology, the researcher found that it was consultative, using public hearings, and sought to bring in the marginal voices, with many civil society role-players providing key insights. It has included the media and the leaders of political parties.

The point of departure of the assessment of Parliament is whether founding principles have been adhered to, and in this regard cites a speech of the former president Mandela fundamentally questioned whether Parliament achieved what it set out to do over a decade ago. The elements extracted from the speech and emphasised here in parenthesis, are germane to the issues of public participation and oversight being reviewed.

> *...the breadth of (consultation and public participation) that few would have imagined possible... and reflects people`s deepest aspirations.....the 100 laws passed have created a framework for the transformation of society and government.....requiring oversight of government as never before*
>
> *(Extract from the speech of Former President, Nelson Mandela, 26 March 1999[166]).*

[165] The former Minister for Public Service and Administration was criticised for not incorporating civil society voices, and pushing government policy.

[166] As reported in the review, citing the speech of the former President which was used as a yardstick for the assessment.

The findings that are relevant to this discussion on the relationship between Parliament as a civic, exercising M&E in pursuit of good governance, were contained in specific chapters of the report. The key points in terms of the research questions are highlighted and commented upon.

In chapter 3 of this assessment, Parliament`s oversight mandate is examined, with questions being asked about the quality of reporting on oversight visits (taken up here when looking at Izimbizo). The assessment found that the mandate remains intact, however, questions were asked about how effective the oversight visits were, and more specifically what the follow-through has been in terms of acting on findings and recommendations. The issue of follow-through appears to be a systemic problem, with many communities feeling that politicians only visit at election time, and make promises that they do not keep. It has also been pointed out the *Izimbizo*, whilst demonstrating political commitment to listen, does not follow- through in terms of administrative action. Thus whilst the mandate is uncontested, questions remains as to whether Parliament has been effective in reaching out to communities and drawing in marginalised voices and acting on these concerns. It would appear that many of the outreach initiatives are symbolic, with little follow-up.

The role of oversight institutions (chapters 9 and 10) is also considered, and the aspect of not following through appears to be a systemic problem with Parliament, with the process leading to the enacting of independent findings (referred to as converting performance information into action), being unsatisfactory. One thus has a situation where there is no shortage of evaluation findings, but a dearth of Parliamentary efficiency and political will to act on repeat offenders, such as departments with track records of qualified audits and disclaimers. The AG has expressed his disappointment at this situation in most of his reports, yet the situation prevails. The lack of political follow-up can potentially adversely affect the credibility of these institutions which can be perceived from the public as ineffective. If they are not bolstered in terms of being taken seriously and having their recommendations acted upon, a key part of the oversight mechanism stands to fail.
The researcher conducted a personal interview with a member of the Independent Panel Review, and asked what he/she saw as the main issue that needed to be addressed to improve Parliamentary oversight:

What would you say is the central problem with Parliamentary oversight?

Parliament has to take itself seriously. The problem was with political patronage, which meant there was no sense of accountability to the people, but to the party. This is a central blockage to the independence of the legislature. Both the Kader Asmal review and this independent panel review had not been subject to debate, meaning that there were not converted into resolutions. When this does not happen, there is no action taken. If there is no debate, it is useless and an example is the HIV/AIDS issues, where there was a refusal to debate, and only a year later it was reported on and then sent to some committee of Parliament, and nothing has been heard since. The independence of Parliament is not possible in the context of political patronage. Unless this changes there is no accountability to the people of South Africa.

How responsive has Parliament been to the voices of citizens?

There needs to be integrity – when MPs go out they need to listen, and act on that information. The same applies in the case of when people come to parliament. There are too many instances of people not being listened to. They must listen to what, especially the poor, say.

This is a critical perception, and given the status of the interviewee, reinforces other information which indicates where the problem is, and why there has not been the accountability expected of Parliament. It is concerning that the Independent Panel Review report, which was commissioned by Parliament, has to date not been debated, given the fact that it was brought up as an essential part of the APRM. This research has, through more in-depth assessments amplified on these issues in a more critical manner, and has drawn from the researcher`s own experience with Parliament over a decade, and these follow in the sections below.

The findings indicate that whilst parliament has been set up, there is a lot more that needs to be done to make the institution effective. Preventing Parliament from doing this has been the capacity differential between departments and Parliamentary committees, which do not have much research capacity.

6.29 THE PARLIAMENTARY PROCESSES, INCLUDING THE QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSIONS

Oversight by parliamentary committees takes place within a parliamentary calendar, which imposes competing demands on members of Parliament, who spread their time between

constituency work, party meetings, policy groupings, and other engagements. There are thus few events where actual oversight by members of departments takes place, and it is these Portfolio committee meetings that are important as is here that deliberations on performance, informed by the work of MME bodies takes place. There is thus limited time, and what becomes a consideration is how effective the committees are in exercising their oversight.

The Portfolio Committees are the engine of Parliament, and assume responsibility for performance areas, with departments falling into a cluster. The DSD falls in the social cluster. The purpose of these committees is to provide the multi-party oversight of departments, and this should include engagement from the planning processes of departments right up to when the Budget Vote Speech, a celebratory event, is held. The researcher observed that the meetings are held infrequently, about three times a year, and the time allocated to the session is limited. There are also issues of poor attendance, with meetings sometimes being cancelled due to a lack of a quorum. Interviews with members of the committees have pointed out that the problem lies with the lack of research capacity, and the fact that there is too much to read, and the material is not accessible. It is for this reason that there is a reliance on the presentations, with limited engagement following this. The exception has been the SCOPA, which has been more active.

The researcher examined the time spent on actual engagement with the DSD, and found this to be limited, a point that was confirmed by interviews with former parliamentarians who saw this as often being done for show. There was a great reliance by the parliamentary committees on the formal, departmentally produced documentation and reports on its performance; which meant that departments led the process, not the committees. This is a major weakness, and points to an imbalance in the research capacity between parliament and departments, which also undermines the actual effectiveness of such committees. This point was corroborated by interviews with a former parliamentary researcher[167], former Chairs of Committees, observation, and the Independent Panel Review report. The opposition party has also repeatedly pointed out to the lack of resources to take the process forward, although the SCOPA has been the most effective to date. The result of poor preparedness, limited time and capacity and the review process being directed by departments, has resulted in the lack of probity of the results, and hence limited accountability.

[167] Personal interviews with a senior Parliamentary Researcher and former Members of Parliament.

A telling statement about the effectiveness of parliamentary oversight can be seen in a presentation made by the former Chair of Chairpersons[168] of Parliament, G. Doidge (former Member of Parliament), who at a strategic planning session[169] of the PSC in 2008 stated that the reason the PSC did not see action on its recommendations is probably because the deliberations of these committees were not translated into resolutions of Parliament, and hence the lack of calling to account. This is a serious indictment of evaluation use, and the finding was reinforced by a PSC commissioned impact assessment of its work, which made a similar finding in relation to the awareness of the legislature and Parliament on the work of the PSC.

The Independent Panel Review report looked at how effective the chapter 9 institutions were, and found that there was limited interaction between these bodies and the committees. There was limited engagement, which is concerning, as these institutions of democracy have been set up with high expectations and at great cost, and whilst they produce high quality oversight reports (chapter 5), but rendered weak when taken into the next level, that of the Parliamentary system.

On the question of the effectiveness of parliamentary oversight, this was a response by a former member who served on the Portfolio Committees for Education and Public Administration since 2004:

> *The key problem is the lack of research capacity, Members are faced with many reports which they have to go through, and do not have the time to interrogate them. They then rely on the presentations by the department. There is also very little actual time spent on oversight, as the time of members is taken up in meetings. There is a need to be out on the ground more.*
>
> *(Former Member of Parliament, Personal interview, 28 January 2010)*

This statement points to the lack of evaluation use, which goes back to the lack of capacity within Parliament to support members to understand often dense and inaccessible reports. Furthermore, the practice of providing the reports a few days before the oversight meetings prevents a critical reading of such reports, and this leads to the problematic situation where the probing is based on a brief power-point presentation, led by the department. The

[168] A key position responsible for coordinating and guiding the Chairs of the several committees of parliament.
[169] Strategic Planning Session of the Public Service Commission held between 21-24 April 2008, under the theme "To the start and beyond".

researcher has observed this practice and also that frequently the agendas of these meetings is long, with the initial time allocated being cut-down, and making the sessions ineffective from an oversight perspective. The only meaningful questions asked come from the opposition parties. In very few instances does the meeting end with the Chairperson stating a decisive course of action. Matters are left to hang over till the next meeting, and often party representatives are changed between meetings, resulting in a lack of continuity.

A further perspective was provided by an equally senior former Member of Parliament, who was more critical of the process (Personal interview, 28 January 2010). He/she said:

> *The oversight process is ineffective, due to the inequitable resources between the Executive and MPs, and between the departments expected to oversee and the portfolio committees. Whilst parliament is expected to hold the executive to account, it does not, due to fear and being disloyal to the party. The lead in making presentations is the department, and it seems like the information provided is deliberately confusing. The departments and Ministers have a full network of resources at their disposal, we have none. There is just no time to engage meaningfully. The actual capacity of members to understand the issues is in many cases weak. We do not really take into account citizen voices, we should start from the point of what citizens want, not what departments tell us.*

This narrative points to a more serious concern, that being a tacit acceptance that one must not be too critical lest it be perceived as being disloyal. It links to the problem of representation mentioned, and the lack of direct accountability between citizens and Members of Parliament (MPs). It is obvious that the lack of resources to engage, in the form of providing research has rendered oversight ineffective, at times bordering on the symbolic. Another interview was conducted with a former parliamentary researcher, who stated:

> *The entire system of oversight is not working, there is very limited research capacity and most reports do not get read or acted upon. There are very few active NPOs, and one only hears the voices from those that are donor funded. The interface is not clear, and in many cases the system to raise issues is dysfunctional.*
>
> *(Parliamentary researcher, personal interview, 26 January 2010)*

The above three statements illustrates the fact that whilst there is parliamentary consideration, there is often no parliamentary action. This is most apparent in a statement

made by the House Chairperson of Committees, referred to before, who acknowledged the problem, and demonstrated that the conversion function of Parliament does not take place. It is not surprising that frustration has often been expressed by oversight bodies like the Human Rights Commission, PSC and AG. The point is illustrated by a statement made by a member of the Democratic Party MP, when she said of the PSC State of the Public Service Report: “this report sounds familiar, although it is a new year, the same issues have been raised previously”. The specific engagements are now considered.

The Annual Reports, which have been commented on as a key oversight tool, may be to an outsider technical, highly aggregated and masking the real performance of a department (Personal interview, person working within an NPO, which seeks assistance from the DSD, January 2009). Thus, whilst the process for the tabling of the Annual Report is significant, and seen as a validation process for a department, in the absence of technical skills to probe these, the event may be one undertaken for show.

The convention of parliamentary questions is popular and used mainly by opposition parties to force the Ministers to answer questions on behalf of their departments. The departments in turn have an entire section, headed by parliamentary offices, whose function is to channel these questions into departments and generate the written responses required. It is a form of monitoring government, as any question may be asked (parliamentary privilege), and responses are required within a stipulated period of time. The presence of the media at these sessions ensures that matters raised are put into the public domain, which has been shown to contribute to public debates on performance, as matters get reported on and analysed from different angles.

The researcher examined all the parliamentary question papers for 2008 and 2009[170], and focused on the nature of the questions asked of the former and current Minister for Social Development. It was found that most of the questions were posed by the opposition party (Democratic Party), and the two examples below typify the nature of questions posed.

[170] A full list of the question and answer session may be accessed from the Parliamentary website.

Example 1

Mrs J A Semple (DA) to ask the Minister of Social Development:

(1) Whether a tender has been awarded to replace the Scopen system used for the disbursement of pensions? If not, why not? If so, why?

(2) Whether the company chosen to supply the vessel monitoring systems was awarded the contract on the basis of a public tender process? If not, why not? If so, (a) (i) in which edition of the Government Tender Bulletin was the tender advertised, (ii) how many tenders were received, (iii) from whom were they received, (iv) what amounts were tendered in each case, and (v) in which edition of the Government Tender Bulletin was the successful tender announced and (b) what criteria were used to assess the capabilities of the company that was chosen to supply the new system with regard to (i) service delivery, (ii) the price, and (iii) the suitability of the technology?

(3) Whether his department has paid the required amount for the implementation of this new system? If not, why not? If so, how much was paid?

(4) Whether there have been delays in implementing the new system? if so, (a) what were the delays and (b) what are the reasons for these delays?

(5) Whether any money (a) has been lost or (b) is predicted to be lost in future by his department due to these delays and (c) any steps have been taken to ensure no further delays with the implementation? If so, (i) how much in each case and (ii) what steps?

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Example 2

Mrs J A Semple (DA) to ask the Minister of Social Development:

Whether any steps have been taken to give effect to the recent court order regarding the Alliance for Children's Entitlement to Social Security (Access) against his department? If not, why not? If so, (a)(i) what steps and (ii) what effect will this have on the department's budget and (b) how does his department intend informing the public of their rights in this regard?

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In **example 1** it can be seen that the issue relates to procurement and potential corruption. This appears to be the main type of questions posed to the Minister of the DSD, and this shows that there is interest from parties that the matter is dealt with properly by the department. In **example 2**, there is the issue of compliance with court orders, and this also addresses the issue of transparency and rights. As the questions indicate, there are very specific responses required, forcing the department to provide credible responses.

The researcher has examined another important database to get a sense of the issues raised by the public, and that is the data from the NACH. Through a review of the nature of cases reported on the DSD, which are very specific in that the names of alleged perpetrators and transgression, it was found that the feedback rate from the DSD was very low. Of the 274 cases of alleged corruption referred to the DSD and 156 cases to the SASSA, a total of 430, only 4 of the cases (a response rate of 9,3%) received feedback, meaning that 90% of the cases remain unresolved over a long period of time, and this probably results in the public sentiment that government does not act against corruption. This is against the background of an entire section in the PSC which monitors the process, and which has sent several reminder letters. It is concerning that the public facility of the Hotline is ineffective, and not able to bring about the urgency and brevity for dealing with such matters. The lack of response from the Ministry, and department is a grave concern[171]. Thus when one looks at this data, one finds a low compliance by the DSD in a critical area. Furthermore, many of the questions posed to the Minister deal with the issue of social grant fraud, the key matter reported on the NACH. The inability to stem the problem has dented public confidence, and the media has reported extensively on the lack of effective sanctions against offenders. There is obviously a problem when it comes to taking action, and this undermines the accountability framework, as the sanctions tend to be uneven and mild for such offences.[172]

This assessment shows that whilst this process offers valuable space for the opposition to hold the ruling party to account, it is more about transparency than accountability, as the assessment of responses on various matters showed an almost clinical response to very specific questions. It was not established whether, based on this highlighting of issues, other processes came in to take the matters to the next level of accountability. The parliamentary question process thus appears to be followed, without adequate attention being given to the quality of the process.

6.30 THE BUDGET SPEECH AS A REFLECTIVE EVENT

The Annual Budget vote of a department is another public event, during which the Minister reports on the achievements of his/her department, and fields questions from parties. Whilst the events have become celebratory and many have been mired in controversy due to the cost of these events, the annual Budget Vote is a window into the actual performance of a department. Questions may be posed by members of the committees on the reports, which

[171] Personal interview with a Senior Manager responsible for the NACH, 20 January 2010,.
[172] Public Service Commission. 2008h. Evaluation of the Consistency of Sanctions Imposed for Misconduct in the Public Service. Republic of South Africa.

as previously mentioned is a summative evaluation of many areas of performance of a department.

In terms of engagement, it was found that in the DSD the matters related more to policy and what this has meant. There has been discussion on how the agencies contribute to the DSD achieving its mandate, with much discussion around the SASSA and the Central Drug Agency (CDA), both of which also table Annual Reports, reports. An interrogation of the CDA, which is a statutory body[173], meant to forge social pacts to deal with the drug problem. Its board comprises representatives of universities, research institutes, government and NPOs. In an engagement between the researcher and the authority[174], the CDA was concerned that it lacked capacity or budget to perform its duties, and was stymied by the administrative dependence on the DSD. Thus whilst this body is meant to promote public engagement, it does not do so in practice, or as effectively as it ought to.

On public participation, whilst there were processes such as public participation events, petitions and parliamentary democracy offices, there was a need for a comprehensive review, so that public feedback fed into Parliament. Many of the initiatives cited need to result in tangible outcomes, and feedback should be provided. According to a person who was a part of the review panel and former researcher for the ANC (personal Interview, January 26, 2010), the main problem lies in the lack of research capacity within Parliament, which is compounded by the fact that donors have supported just a few organisations that use this to regularly make submissions at public hearings.

6.31 SUMMARY PARLIAMENT IN SUPPORT OF MME

At a compliance level, Parliament is operational in that it meets the stipulations of adhering to the parliamentary calendar, which means that most of the oversight meetings such as the Portfolio Committee and SCOPA are held. One thus has high levels of transparency around performance, but low levels of accountability. It is thus important to separate the terms transparency and accountability, where it is often assumed that the former leads to the latter, and that there is a natural causality between the two.

[173] The Central Drug Agency was established in terms of the Prevention and Treatment of Drug Dependency, Act 20 of 1992, and meant to ensure public participation in addressing social problems.
[174] Presentation made by the researcher to the Central Drug Agency on 21 January 2010, HSRC.

6.32 SUMMARY: MME

This chapter set out to examine the role that mandatory oversight bodies have on good governance. It drew on the conceptual framework to show what measures have been used locally by formal, MME bodies to make the bureaucracy more responsive, efficient and transparent. After establishing what the MME bodies are and how they worked in practice by examining the results of the DSD, several observations about the relationship between this form of oversight and good governance is made.

It is important to reflect on the contribution of such oversight to the attainment of good governance. In chapter 2 various definitions of good governance were presented, with the commonality between these definitions being that of transparency, accountability and participation. There was also mention of the rule of law, as well as issues of inclusivity. In reflecting on work of the MME bodies, it was found that there is a strong policy and legislative basis for oversight and this is contained in a slew of Acts and regulations. This has been a feature of the developmental State, which has implemented these measures to transform the apartheid government and align government practice in South Africa with global imperatives for good governance, and to which South Africa subscribes. The data generated by such bodies is thus important for external consumption, and is influential as it indicates what the quality of governance, of which financial management is central, is.

The NT was shown to be the most effective in exercising its oversight, and the results of the DSD indicate that complying with the range of instruments and reporting formats does in the end produce the type of outputs envisaged. In the case of the DSD this has yielded an “unqualified audit opinion”, which is a positive assessment. Furthermore, if one were to link this to the cases of financial misconduct reported, it is lower than the national norm, and the spending is within the prescribed band recommended by NT. The systems for financial compliance may thus be rated as effective. It can be stated that it has produced higher levels of transparency around administrative compliance, particularly with regards to the management of budgets and the achievement of plans. The most notable contribution has been from the NT and the DPSA, which in redesigning the format of the Annual Report have directed departments to report in a manner which is more rigorous and allows for comparisons of performance across departments. The Annual Reports, however, whilst helping the public to access information, is biased towards the reporting of technical and regulatory compliance, with very little mention of citizens themselves, except in terms of providing statistics on delivery. In the DSD Annual Report mention is made of increased engagement with the NPO sector, which indicates commitment, but does not directly

address public participation. The oversight of administrative compliance tended to be concentrated around representivity. The human resource assessments were reduced to reporting on compliance aspects according to formats.

It was found that the levels of transparency around the compliance with these areas of performance was high, which indicates a strong regulatory compliance culture within the DSD. This is most apparent in the unqualified (favourable) audit opinions that the department achieved since 2005. Other areas of compliance which were relatively high were the adherence to the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles for public administration. However, when probing the statistics and asking deeper questions about the instruments themselves, it may be that what is being measured is easy to attain managerially, and should become simpler to adhere to over time, but may be measuring issues that are not critical to service delivery and may even be inconsequential to what citizens want. Thus one cannot conclude that compliance with a defined set of indicators tantamount to good governance, as good governance is a more overarching concept. The work of MME bodies helps to produce transparency and a degree of accountability around only some of the indicators, not all. It is thus necessary to return to the methods used by the MME bodies, to examine where the strengths and limitations lie, before assuming that they contribute to good governance.

A key gap in the work of the MME is the attention to citizens, or what the relationship is between a departments` policy and service delivery impact. The application of the systems is very technical, and whilst there have been some attempts to afford departments an opportunity to respond to opinions or recommendations, that is after the fact and limited. There was no evidence of the departments themselves engaging with the instruments or methods, and the top-down approach is evident in this form of oversight (see chapter 3). The aggregated level of these results may mask deeper problems, and there is little attempt at diagnosing problems. This becomes apparent when one looks at the good governance area of corruption. There is a discrepancy between results on a limited set of indicators and public perception and evidence which suggests this is a major problem. An assessment was made of limitations with the current assessment framework for corruption, with it being found that the indicators do not really get to the key area, which goes beyond having a policy and risk management strategy in place (which is important and must be measured, but is limited in itself). In looking, for example, at how the DSD responds to cases from the NACH, it was found to be weak, and this is what should count as critical for addressing corruption. Thus, whilst disciplinary cases and reporting on financial misconduct may be complied with, the

critical departmental-public interface is more important than what a department does internally.

It was found that the systems of the NT, AG and PSC are largely quantitative in nature, and whilst they are able to provide assessments of what compliance has been, there has been little contextual analysis. The issue of context has been mentioned as critical, as a-contextual assessments tend to be too generalised to be identified with, and may be seen as punitive and not generating a proper discourse on what results means, and how performance can be improved. These systems are also focused on what management must do, to make the departments more compliant, and there is very little mention of how all the compliance impacts on service delivery or good governance. The systems resonate with the tenets of NPM, and there is the belief that in measuring something, it will improve. This is not the case, and what happens to results is the subject of chapters 7 and 8, where the conversion of findings into actions will be assessed. Therefore, the results produced must be looked at not only in terms of the enlightenment contribution (which is apparent in the transparency produced), but also in terms of utility, in that recommendations need to be acted upon. What is not clear is whether these results are engaged with and contribute to organisational learning, and if so, how deep into the organisation results are taken and engaged with. The extent to which MME influences internal or PME will be interrogated in the next chapter.

Chapter 7

Persuasive M&E

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the second M&E perspective, that of persuasive (or internal M&E) - PME, by examining how M&E information, generated both internally and externally is utilised by the management collective of the DSD. The aspect reviewed is thus utility, which should emerge if there is perceived value to the information generated. Given that performance information generally purports to bring about positive impacts, it use may be considered as important for good governance.

This chapter thus lists the types of performance information available in the DSD, and looks at how management values it. It is suggested that the more valued it is, the more likely is it to be used, and this would demonstrate whether M&E does contribute to good governance or not. Whereas the previous chapter looked at MME, where there was compulsion to respond to reporting obligations, this chapter focuses on the non-mandatory form of M&E, which being internal, has less power to prescribe action upon its findings and recommendations. Outside of MME, there are less managerial obligations to act upon performance information. Action on such information will only come about if there is a learning propensity within the organisation and a commitment to using evidence for decision-making. This implies that there must be the forum and opportunities where this form of reflective information is presented, debated and taken forward. The key issue of learning stems from a situation where there are incentives for its utility. It is for this reason it is termed persuasive, rather than mandatory.

The M&E objective or intent brought about by this form of M&E is learning, demonstrated through utility, and which is evident when there is a demand for such information. This chapter considers how information is produced and engaged with, in order to answer the question of whether PME does meet the utility objective of M&E. Given that learning is a subjective experience, and the extent to which individuals assimilate knowledge differs, this chapter draws on a perceptual survey that was administered to managers at the DSD, the PSC and a third cohort termed non-DSD (NDSD). The purpose of the survey is to establish whether there are differences of opinion on a range of M&E related issues across these three cohorts. The first context is a grouping drawn from a selection of departments where

there is no formal M&E in place, termed NDSD. One would expect the knowledge of M&E from this group to be limited, and it can be viewed as a type of control group. The second group is drawn from a sector of M&E professionals, the PSC, who should have the highest levels of understanding of M&E as it implements M&E systems. The third group draws managers from the DSD, which is where there is operational M&E in place, and is termed as the experimental group. The chapter tests the views on a range of questions to see whether there are differences of opinions, and what these may be attributed to.

The demarcation of the respondents into these three cohorts seeks to establish the levels of understanding around M&E for each, and establish whether being an M&E practitioner or working in a department where M&E is established, influences one's perceptions of the value of M&E. The issue of context becomes particularly significant in that this study seeks to establish what the role of a functional M&E is, in promoting good governance in a department.

By seeking responses from three cohorts of respondents, perceptions are compared across various issues, in order to assess whether there are differences between the cohorts, in terms of how M&E is valued. The question is whether M&E use in the DSD has contributed towards good governance, by making a discernable difference to its performance, and which can be traced back to management which acted on performance results. An important aspect considered in this chapter in relation to the above is M&E effectiveness, and the question asked is whether the current structure, capacity and strategy of the M&E function at the DSD is optimal for bringing about the type of managerial effects desired. These are the entrenchment of a reflective, performance driven organisation, which engages with the intention of improving organisational learning, by demanding and using performance information in its management deliberations.

The views expressed by Tuckerman (2007) and Engel and Carlsson (2002) suggest that performance information should be used to bring about critical self-reflection, in a non-threatening manner, and in an environment where mistakes are seen as opportunities from which to learn (Tuckerman, 2007). The use of M&E here would tend to emphasise the "learning" or information aspect (Engel and Carlsson, 2002). Questions need to be asked, however, about whether the management culture in departments such as the DSD is conducive to learning, and whether the use of performance information is affirmed. A part of assessing this is to test the propensity towards M&E through the perception survey that has been undertaken here.

In this context an understanding of how the key human element responds to oversight or good governance imperatives should illustrate where the challenges are, when information generation fails to translate into more effective management. Vedung and van der Doelen (2007: 104) suggest that this "does not oblige the target to act". There is an element of choice. It is for this reason that the term persuasive is used, and this is what distinguishes this perspective from the earlier one.

What this thesis seeks to establish is whether the internalising of results with a view to improve upon future decisions, is seen as valuable in itself. The results from the perception survey which forms a key part of the evidence for this chapter will indicate the extent to which this happens in practice.

Another key question addressed in this chapter is whether PME is reinforced when there is strong MME. It is argued that MME serves to establish the overarching context within which PME operates, and does to an extent give internally operating M&E a degree of authority and direction. MME tends to set the management agenda of a department, as it consumes much time of management which has to report periodically on several matters. In assessing the contribution of this element to the overarching question of good governance, this chapter charts the actual managerial context within which managers exercise their influence, and seeks to establish whether having a functional M&E in a department, such as the DSD, has influenced perceptions about the value of M&E or not. This is in light of the hypothesis of the study that M&E does contribute to good governance, which is an assertion that can only be realised if there is actually better performance in a department with M&E than one without M&E.

Whereas chapter 6 looked at how the DSD responded to the obligations placed upon it by MME institutions, this chapter probes how individual managers in the DSD view issues of oversight, M&E and good governance. In chapter 6 the basis of assessment was the norms and standards used by MME institutions, and as such was a more objective assessment. In this chapter the focus is more subjective and impressionistic, and brings out the thinking on the subject of M&E and good governance. It is deemed important, as the perceptions and views of managers on the subject are key influencing factors in shaping the performance of a department.

The chapter argues that the greater value ascribed to M&E by decision-makers, or managers, the greater is the propensity for M&E to be used in the decision-making process and the greater is its potential for promoting good governance. This requires an

understanding of the decision-making cycle, as the mere presence of information cannot be taken for granted as resulting in improved decision-making.

7.2 PERSUASIVE M&E

PME relates to issues of influence, and the form of M&E is where the express purpose is to promote transparency and learning. The following are the researchers own connotations of the word “persuasive”:

> *Non-committal, suggestive, influencing, promoting, value-adding, inherently valuable, non-imposing, respecting human agency, prodding...*
>
> *Source: Constructed from literature and researcher observations.*

The M&E outcome of individual and organisational learning, which can be brought about by this form of M&E is important, as suggested by Roper and Pettit (2002). This perspective is embedded in broader discussions about how organisations assimilate and use information, which cannot be taken for granted (Leeuw and Sonnichsen, 2000). It has been shown that government learning is not easy, with government often referred to as a “black box” (Blindenbacher, 2010). The empirical part of this thesis attempts to describe how performance information is used, and assesses whether its use translates to the next level, which is a contribution to good governance.

In this chapter there is a recognition of the mediating role played by individuals, who given their agency filter (interpret and value) information provided to them. There is thus an element of unpredictability as the area of knowledge management is very complex, to the point that one cannot assume causality between information for M&E and decision-making (Rist, 2000). In practice, M&E is one of many streams of information and influences that is used by decision-makers, before decisions are finally made. Tuckerman (2007) illustrates that learning comes about only when there is communication based on self-reflection and dialogue. Nabris (2002) also shows how M&E has a particular learning purpose, as failures are explained. Engel and Carlsson (2002) view evaluation as opportunities for improving organisational learning. They see evaluation as being about learning. In light of these studies, the question that must then be posed is whether the managerial processes in the DSD do this; and whether results are used to dialogue and learn, or used to censure and admonish, as is often the case. These questions will in part be answered by the researcher’s

observation of how particular evaluation results were received, which illustrates the receptiveness to learning and propensity for good governance in the DSD.

The literature indicates that the use or disuse of M&E may not lie only in its availability; its quality may be perceived differently based on perceptions of the M&E agenda, its perception varies based on whether it is used for accountability, transparency and/or organisational learning, to name but a few. Use of information also depends on the perceived utility, which as Patton (1997) indicates, is a key factor in determining how it is valued and responded to. Other factors, such as where the M&E function is locate and how it is perceived in terms of its independence and capacity, also raises issues of credibility and hence potential use.

The perception and behavioural aspect, or organisational-use element of M&E, is critical, and is often neglected as there is an assumption that the availability of good quality M&E translates into usage, but as illustrated above, this is a grey area and causality is not easy to discern. The aspect of how information helps to build organisations has been documented by Leeuw and Sonnichsen (2000) and Gray (2009), who indicate that M&E goes beyond the accountability function. The emphasis on MME has been on accountability. This chapter examines the internal managerial processes of the DSD to see how M&E information is perceived and used by the organisation to improve its learning potential. Apart from describing the decision-making forums, trajectories and levels of authority, managers are surveyed to establish their views on M&E issues. This chapter seeks to provide insights into how M&E is perceived, valued and considered, in order to answer these more complex questions.

Whereas chapter 6 identified the role of MME institutions and commented on how these assessed the DSD in terms of its adherence to the different elements of accountability (as a part of the good governance equation), this chapter presents the views of different cohorts on some of the assumptions made about the relationship between good governance and M&E. It is a more personal and subjective assessment which is different from the more objective, standards-based assessment presented in chapter 6 There has been an attempt to codify and quantify the range of impressions and feelings on the various statements that have been presented for a response, and the Lickert[1] scale, coupled with interviews and the opportunity for presenting impressions and opinions in the open-ended questionnaires, have been used to enrich the data and analysis.

[1] Lickert scale allows for the calibration of views from strongly agree to strongly disagree, with the middle category being neutral.

7.3 CHAPTER ORGANISATION

This chapter is divided into the following sections:

a) *Background and context for decision-making*: This section describes the managerial processes within the DSD, which are the critical points at which decision-making takes place. It is in many of these forums that M&E information, emanating from the M&E of the DSD is considered and which may be acted upon.

b) *Methodology*: The methodology for assessing this element is presented, including the role of the researcher as observer when M&E results were presented to the Executive Management Committee (EXMA). The methodology for the perceptual survey is also presented, which elicits responses on both how managers view their own M&E as well as MME.

7.4 THE DECISION-MAKING CONTEXT IN THE DSD

7.4.1 The managerial context and architecture in the DSD

Decision-making does not take place in a vacuum; it happens in a specific context, which can change and which is biased towards particular issues and priorities. The outcome of deliberations tends to be influenced by the prevailing context. It should be noted that whilst M&E information is used for decision-making, it is not the sole consideration upon which decisions are arrived at. The point is that decision-making is not an objective, rational, information-driven process. The implication is that evaluative information is but one, and not the sole, stream of information that is used before decisions are arrived at.

In the DSD, as with other government departments, it should be noted that there are different decision-making forums composed of different decision-makers (often rank based), which deliberate on different matters which may make recommendations to higher or other decision-making forums. The process from one forum to the next is not necessarily linear, although there is an overarching logic of decision-making, which is based on the fact that there are delegations of authority. The question of delegations is a key consideration in any decision-making process, as these delegations signify the authority accorded to different persons or forums. Thus any understanding of the managerial processes in the DSD must recognise that there are tiers of authority in the department, with each tier having jurisdiction over other tiers. Further, decisions may be taken at a particular level, or such a level may make recommendations to another level, and generally, all management, which constitutes

levels 13-16 (Director to DG) are responsible for the decision-making and sound management of the department.

The authority levels of the department are based on clear prescripts which describe roles and responsibilities, or the accountability framework. The Senior Management Service Handbook stipulates what is to be expected of members of the Senior Management Service. It identifies the generic key result areas they are responsible for, and also indicates the core management criteria. It embeds the management/department relationship within the notion of performance management and requires that performance contracting takes place.

From a good governance perspective, the behavioural attributes and conduct of management are stipulated, and monitoring individual performance contracts through feedback sessions and eventual annual assessments is one activity through which the good governance ethos is reinforced. This happens at an individual level, and is a performance pressure brought about by policy on performance management, which is implemented by management as part of their core responsibilities. Other performance pressures on a department include the political performance imperatives, that is, the PoA, the financial performance assessments (the AG and NT) and the governance performance imperatives (implementation of the TM&ES). In all these assessments the management of the department plays a role as a subject of external reviews (NT, AG and PSC), as an enabler for such reviews (TM&ES and providing support to the audits of the AG and others), and ensuring that its own management is subject to scrutiny based on performance agreements which are in place. Understanding the management architecture of the DSD and government is important for an appreciation of how performance management is implemented.

The M&E of the DSD should be central to all of these processes, as an enabler and capacity builder on M&E for both the management of the DSD, which must respond to external reviews and by infusing a performance discourse within the department as it promotes and implements M&E. It should raise consciousness about M&E, and thus provide management with the language and tools of M&E to make them more performance oriented and effective.

This chapter, in considering how managers view the issue of oversight will thus intimate the extent to which the DSD M&E function has met its objectives fully, or whether it has adopted a narrow interpretation of its work and thus not managed to expand the M&E consciousness in the DSD. More concretely, it solicits views on the DSD M&E function, both from the users of this information as well as the persons driving the departmental M&E. The researcher has through documentary review, interviews with key personnel, and observation, managed to

document and chart the key management events within the DSD[2]. Understanding this context helps to assess how management in the DSD responds to different M&E thrusts, which each of the three empirical chapters assesses.

Many of the key management meetings have as their focus the task of ensuring that key reporting obligations to the MME institutions are met. It can thus be inferred that the work of MME institutions does influence the agenda of internal departmental meetings, given the importance attributed to reporting upwards to such institutions. These meetings are deemed critical from a governance perspective, to the extent that the AG, as part of his/her annual assessment, reviews the minutes of these meetings. This stems from the fact that most management meetings are reviews or appraisals of some sort, and a review of these governance structures is indicative of the seriousness management gives to its own performance.

The DSD holds the following specific management meetings[3] or meeting with the entire management team:

a) Management Committee, levels 13 -16 - monthly
b) Strategic Planning meetings (Middle management and Senior Management Service) - bi-annual
c) Executive Management Committee, Senior Management Service and Ministry) - quarterly

In assessing the quality of management meetings, and to supplement the documentary review, the following questions were posed:

a) Are meetings held as and when scheduled?
b) Are the minutes of meetings circulated on time, and are decisions followed-up?
c) Are minutes of such meetings readily available, and is there a central repository for these meetings, or are they held by the organising unit?

The documentary analysis was done according to the procedures outlined in Chapter 4. It was found that the all management meetings are held as scheduled and properly minuted,

[2] A description of these is contained with the report of the AG.
[3] Schedule of meetings from the DDG: Corporate Services. Agendas of meetings and minutes are filed centrally.

thus forming part of the institutional memory of the department[4]. The minutes were readily available, and copies kept centrally in a section in the Corporate Services Unit of the DSD. It was found that the secretariat managed this function effectively.

The content of these meetings varies, but a review of the agenda and minutes, in particular of the Executive Committee meetings (which comprise the Senior Management Service level), shows that standard items relate to discussing performance against targets (budgets and service delivery), largely in relation to programme and project performance. Ideally there should be a cascading down of political imperatives into policies and programmes which bring about better service delivery. Underpinning the operations of management of the department would be centrally articulated budgeting frameworks such as the MTEF and MTSF. Given the focus on variance or deviation reporting, quantitative M&E information becomes very important. It was shown in chapter 3 that accountability type M&E tends to proceed from quantitative data, wherein deviation from targets and norms becomes the source for judgement.

Based on an assessment of the documentary information and interviews held, it was found that the department does comply with legislation and regulation and decision-making appears to be effective. What was not possible to ascertain or document adequately was how frequently the DG met his individual DDG. These meetings were of an *ad-hoc* basis, and not publically minuted. The form of communication between the DG/Minister and Minister/DDG or DG and individual DDGs or other managers tended to be personal, telephonic, email or Short Message Service (SMS), and the researcher did not have access to this. Based on the interviews with selected managers, however, it appeared that these engagements were in fact quite frequent and filled in the gaps between the more formal management meetings. There is thus both a formal and informal managerial infrastructure operating in the DSD, which is probably true of most organisations.

7.4.2 Observation of how M&E results are received in the DSD

The assessment of the management infrastructure of the DSD was also made possible as the researcher was able to observe and document managerial processes in the DSD, due to his professional role whilst Chief Director and DDG at the PSC. This allowed for a degree of ethnographic research to be conducted. However, it must be stated that the impact of an outsider, such as the researcher, on the actual behaviour and deliberations at meetings must

[4] Interviews with 6 senior managers at the DSD, to ascertain their views on the value of management meetings.

be considered, as it could have influenced how managers conducted themselves when he was present. This is because the PSC, as an oversight body, could be perceived as policing, resulting in management not behaving naturally. The observations emanating from this personal involvement are important in terms of evaluation events led by the PSC, as a MME body. Where specifically the results of the TM&ES were presented and the evaluation of the HoD was chaired by the PSC.

The researcher observed and participated in two presentations made to the top management of the DSD[5], which was when the TM&ES was introduced (March 2008) and results presented to the top management team in August 2008. The researcher observed that in the case of the DSD, relative to other departments also surveyed in the cycle[6], there was good cooperation from the DG which translated into an overall high level of cooperation. This resulted in the research being completed within the three months allocated[7]. At the key meeting when the results were presented, the Deputy-Minister was also present. The results of the assessment were well received, probably because the department received a relatively good assessment, and showed a significant improvement in most of the Constitutional Values and Principles over the previous period when the survey was conducted. From the questions posed at this meeting, and the feedback provided by the DG and his management team, it was evident that there was receptiveness to critical feedback.

An important point that needs to be mentioned was that the Chief Director of M&E at the DSD actively supported the PSC research team, which was made possible by her understanding of the issues and ability to extract critical information that was required. From this observation, it was apparent that there is an existing M&E practice and culture within the DSD, which makes it easier to conduct additional M&E work, and also results in a management team more receptive to M&E. This may be indicative of the value added when a department has a functional M&E, which supports MME work.

In addition, the researcher was also in the privileged position to observe the evaluation process of the DG of the DSD. The current system for the evaluation of HoDs is an example of a regulated, centrally driven and managed evaluation system which has sought to be more inclusive in its composition and more participatory in its application. The committee comprises representatives from civil society, parliament, a peer DG, a Minister, all of which

[5] March and August 2008
[6] Twenty-five departments were surveyed in the 2008/2009 cycle.
[7] The researcher from the PSC was interviewed, with the research schedule and records assessed. Excellent co-operation from the department was observed during the assessments.

are intended to bring in a broad range of voices and perspectives to the evaluation process, and thus enrich deliberations through the diverse composition. At an intent level, it is an advancement upon previous systems which tended to be more bureaucratic and did not have external role-players participating. The panel is meant to be constituted to reflect broad-based participation, by including another Minister, a peer DG, and a stakeholder. The PSC plays a secretariat role, and through the Chair expected to ensure that the system is implemented properly. The importance of this event from a governance perspective is that critical performance information, which is generated from within the department and outside of it, is collated and made available in the evaluation process, and this adds another level of scrutiny to persons who may not normally have been privy to the department's performance. The evaluative information includes:

a) The verification statement of the HoD, which is his /her assessment of one's own performance against the performance agreement that is, signed with his/her EA. *This is a self-reflective document, the process of producing which is valuable from a good governance perspective as it generates individual learning (researcher's reflection).* The Annual Report of the department for the year under review. This contains the much referred to audit opinion, and also the actual performance against the strategic objectives (this has been discussed at length in Chapter 4). *The Annual Report gets used by the panel to verify and reflect on performance, and is a critical document used in these deliberations.*

b) A summary of the verification statement which is produced by the PSC. This contains about three to four questions drawn from the verification statement and Annual Report which the HoD is required to respond to in his response. *The PSC verification statement has in practice tended to be the most read document, and at times became a substitute for panel members interrogating all of the documents provided. Its utility, however, has been in its focus on areas that require a management response, which are those where performance has generally been lacking.*

c) The assessment form which contains the HoD's self-assessment together with the assessment by the EA. It is the EAs assessment which the panel deliberates on, in the case of both the Key Result Areas (which makes up 80%) of the score and Core Management Criteria (which makes up 20%) of the score. *This document quantifies performance, and observing how different panel interpret standards, has indicated to the researcher that there is no consensus in terms of what constitutes acceptable, unacceptable and good performance at these levels.*

The process of the evaluation includes inputs by the Minster and DG, who then recuse themselves. It is meant to be followed by frank interrogation of the presentation and scores awarded by the panel members, who should be unbiased. The Chairperson is expected to maintain the integrity of the deliberations by ensuring that there is objectivity in the process. It is a step in moving away from clandestine assessments, and at an intent level seeks to introduce more rigour, transparency and accountability to individual performance management. From a managerial perspective, this is important in that if the HoD is subject to this level of scrutiny, it is likely that a performance management ethos will also permeate into the department itself. This event has important managerial implications for the DSD, and helps to connect the performance of the HoD with all tiers of management in the department. The organisational performance information is placed within the purview of external stakeholders, representative of a cross section of society, and contributes to transparency and good governance.

7.4.3 Charting of managerial processes in the DSD

In seeking to establish how decision-making processes work within the DSD, a set of preliminary interviews were conducted with 3 managers from the M&E section of the DSD, in order to establish what the *modus operandi* of the DSD is. It has helped to conceptually chart the decision-making trajectories, forums and points where decision-making occurs, so as to work out where performance information is utilised. A part of this process included studying the delegations of the DSD, which is a critical part of the decision-making chain in that it shows where authority is vested within the overall managerial hierarchy. The following documents were reviewed to chart the managerial infrastructure of the DSD:

a) Strategic Plan of the Department for 2005/6 – 2009/10
b) Annual Reports of the DSD from 2005
c) Departmental Organogram
d) Route forms[8]
e) Selection of submissions wherein decisions are made[9]
f) Schedule of delegations[10]

[8] This is a sequence form, which contains the designations of the tiers of management that apply themselves to a subject, and who concur by signing and dating the route form. It provides a track of the persons who have applied themselves to a subject, and usually ends with a decision by the duly authorised decision-maker. This decision is generally informed by the advice of the preceding signatories.

[9] This covered various subjects, the aims was to see who signed and what value (in the form of comments) was added.

g) Promotion of Access to Information Act Manual

The above provided a schema of how management functions, and is typical of government departments in that there is generally the same level of authority allocated to the same levels of management. The Heads of Branches in the DSD are level 15 or DDGs, and called Senior Programme Managers, who assume responsibility for functional and strategic areas, budgets and staff. The Annual Report is organised according to these Branches, and this tier of management is important as it receives and responds to requests for performance information from the MME bodies. It is a nodal point for making decisions about performance as it relates to the department.

7.4.4 Managerial priorities for the DSD stemming from MME institutions

The chapter now links the discussion in chapter 5 on MME with the management infrastructure described, which serves as a backdrop for the discussion that will follow. An M&E taxonomy for the DSD was developed to show power and obligations exerted by oversight institutions over departments. It is observed that the act of responding to requests from MME institutions does influence the priorities of the management of a department. A large part of the time of management is spent on reporting, which has been cited as unproductive activity[11] by management, who often see this form of reporting as an extractive process which does not add value to their immediate work. The Table below indicates the obligations that the management of the DSD have in terms of complying with the requirements of MME institutions. This shows that much time of the DSD managers is taken up in meeting accountability obligations, which involves complying with policies and prescripts. The question that arises then, is that how much time remains after meeting MME obligations, for the department to engage with the findings of evaluation reports (both external and internally produced), in order to engage staff in a critical, reflective and learning process. As the literature has pointed out, one cannot assume a linear progression from information provision to information assimilation and use.

[10] This is a schedule which lists who has decision-making authority for which aspect, and is always referenced to the prevailing legislation. In practice, the Minister delegates certain levels of authority to the HoD, who may then further delegate authority as appropriate.

[11] An audit of reporting and M&E systems produced by the PSC in 2006 and which surveyed managers showed "excessive reporting outwards", with little perceived value from those who did the reporting. There was a call for a rationalisation of reporting by departments, who saw oversight institutions as requesting similar information from them, using different formats, and no central management of information extraction.

Table 7.1: M&E obligations of the DSD

Report type	Requester	Purpose	DSD priority	Management consideration
Financial				
Monthly expenditure reports	NT	Monitor expenditure against national norms	High	Priority of the Chief Financial Officer and Accounting Officer. Signed through to the NT on a monthly basis, based on inputs from Branch managers.
Quarterly performance information reports	NT	Monitor achievement of objectives against targets	High	Considered at Management committees, but generated on a quarterly basis as directed from the Chief Financial Officer.
Financial statements	NT AG	Assess quality of financial management	High – leads to the "audit opinions" which have budgetary and public relations implications	Key task of Corporate Services and Finance in the DSD.
Annual Report	NT DPSA	Overall assessment of department, plans against actual performance	High	Top Management (response from entire management team)
Departmental HR Plans	DPSA	Assess how departments meet human resource targets and performance indicators	High	Top management
Service Delivery Improvement Plans	DPSA	Assess the measures and progress departments make in improving service delivery	High	Top Management
HR report to the DoL (Annual)	DoL	Overall assessment of compliance with human resource requirements	Medium	Top Management, information fed from management
Financial disclosures	PSC	Assessment of ethical compliance	High	Public information (response from DG and Ministry)
Financial misconduct	PSC	Assessment of financial management	High	Public information (response from CFO)

Report type	Requester	Purpose	DSD priority	Management consideration
Constitutional Values and Principles (Public Service M&E system)	PSC (once per 3 year cycle), done in 2002 and 2008	Assessment of adherence to the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles	Medium	Public Information (entire management response)

The Table above illustrates that the work of the management team is already cut-out by the requirements from the oversight institutions, before it even begins to start looking at departmental specific and operational reporting. There is enough of a thrust from the key MME institutions which direct the operations of DSD management towards issues of financial good governance. Whilst there is pressure from the other institutions, the sanction for non-compliance is not so severe, and may result in embarrassment, rather than withholding of resources which may come about when not meeting the requirements of the financial M&E bodies.

The above shows that MME institutions have an influence on the priorities of the management of the DSD. This is because they consume the time of management which is obliged to prepare information to meet its reporting obligations to such bodies. What was found to be useful was that these reports get tabled at a top management level, usually to Branch Heads, who sign off before it is submitted to the DG. By such information being sent to this level of decision-makers before being submitted, for their concurrence, is in itself a useful process as it provides an overview of key performance areas, as listed above.

The question that needs to be asked is whether these activities are complied with for fear of sanction, and whether there is malicious compliance rather than implementing such systems because there is a belief in their inherent value? The rationale for the various systems has not been questioned; as they talk to issues generally accepted as valuable for good governance, and which support the public discourse for corrupt-free administration. In interviews with managers at the DSD[12], the reporting upwards, whilst cited as onerous, was seen as value adding in that it helped management to focus on key performance areas, which are generic to any department. The issues of financial management, human resource management and service delivery improvement, are central to the good governance of a department, and which reporting thereof may be onerous, they do correctly direct the attention of management on aspects that are central to the achievement of good

[12] Four managers, three of whom were at the level of Director and one, Chief Director, from the DSD were interviewed following their completion of the questionnaire. These managers agreed to a follow-up interview with the researcher, who contacted them through email.

governance. The improvement by the DSD in its performance across these areas, indicates that there has been a contribution to performance improvement. Thus, the reluctance to report or citing that reporting is time consuming, must be considered against the value this activity provides in terms of contributing to the general good, and its utility can be inferred by the performance improvement over time on all of the above areas. There has been good compliance to key areas of M&E, which translates into a contribution to good governance.

The discussion now revisits the MME institutions, to explore the link between meeting obligations as imposed by MME, and improving one`s own managerial practice through responding to internal M&E. In terms of the oversight by the PSC, the main system that is applied across all areas of governance is the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles. The system is supposed to be applied once in a three-year cycle. In the DSD it was first applied in 2001 and then again in 2008. Given the lack of regularity with which this system is applied, it is not sure certain whether the managerial interest generated during the application is sustainable. The Constitutional Values and Principles system, due to its nature probably exerts the following influences on the management of the DSD. It emphasises the importance of the Constitutional Values and Principles at the management level, and in the application of the system it demonstrates how these values and principles contribute to good governance. Based on this, there would probably be some learning in that managers would be exposed to M&E terminology, such as performance indicators, standards and scoring systems. Whilst understanding these concepts does not imply that managers have acquired a sufficient grasp of M&E, it does indicate to managers the importance of being able to quantify performance, which should be a part of their normal managerial function. There is thus an important utility dimension generated.

It may thus be surmised that the application of the PSC`s PSM&ES does help in improving understanding of the targeted department of the importance of M&E, and points to its relationship to good governance. This system, which falls within the domain of MME, also displays the following characteristics:

a) There are clear performance standards, norms and criteria for assessment. It is possible to quantify performance on all aspects, ranging from professional ethics to the management of budgets.
b) The MME “actors” (NT and PSC) reinforce each other. It is common practice for each player to draw on information generated by the other MME actors to reinforce their findings.

c) In the reporting phase, the systems compare performance with peers, and apply value judgements when it comes to performance. There is often a apartheid element, which is accountability driven but which may negate the learning element of M&E.

d) A strong underlying feature is fiscal discipline, with all aspects related to this receiving attention.

e) An important element ensuring from the application of the above is the need for good governance, as transparency and accountability considerations are emphasised.

The imposition by the MME bodies such as the PSC has set priorities for DSD management, which it needs to address in addition to its normal work of achieving the strategic priorities of the DSD. The issues from the MME institutions relate to governance issues, the "deemed good", which whilst in certain areas prescribes managerial behaviour, in other areas tends to be more of a persuasive nature. The MME institutions thus cannot be considered as a homogenous group, although at an aggregated level they are enjoined by their common drive for transparency and accountability, which have already been indicated as central features of the good governance equation. The discussion now proceeds to look at how the views of managers were solicited to test the relationship between M&E and good governance.

7.5 METHODOLOGY FOR PERCEPTUAL SURVEY

7.5.1 Survey instrument and key themes

The choice of a questionnaire, which is the key survey instrument was deemed appropriate, and used as the basis for soliciting views of managers on a range of issues relating to M&E. It also became the basis for further probing, which was done by the researcher when personal interviews were conducted. The underlying principle in designing the questionnaire was to ensure that this instrument was easy to fill and not time-consuming. The idea was to solicit initial impressions, and for respondents not to go into a pondering stage where they would try and provide what they might consider to be an appropriate or correct response. The respondents were also afforded the opportunity to speak directly to the researcher, rather than respond to the questionnaire. Based on the responses received, the researcher followed-up with certain respondents who requested further clarity and information, or who wished to talk through some of the elements in the questionnaire. These discussions were captured on the relevant questionnaire.

Research questions and themes explored in the general questionnaire administered across the three cohorts of the DSD, PSC and NDSD. A letter of permission (**Annexure 1)** preceded the questionnaires **(Annexure 2),** which allowed for an analysis of the following themes and issues; the level within the organisation, the managerial forums within which respondents participate, their opinion of M&E and perceptions of value added by oversight institutions to the work of the DSD.

The Lickert scale was deemed appropriate to elicit responses on a series of statements that:

a) Gauge how elements of oversight are valued and viewed by managers.
b) Test responses to nationally imposed requirements from the NT, AG, DPSA, Department of Labour, and the PSC. These responses are important in that they show: (1) understanding or knowledge of the work of these oversight institutions, and (2) show how respondents value them.
c) Establish whether respondents view the work of the above as important to their own work.
d) Assess whether the reporting requirements are considered a burden or not.
e) Assess the effectiveness of M&E within the DSD.
f) Look at how managers in the DSD rate and value their internal M&E functionality. It assesses elements of:
    - Location and capacity
    - Quality of reports produced
    - Institutionalisation of the Unit
    - Status given to M&E
    - Managerial role in promoting good governance

The section also assesses how individual managers view themselves in terms of promoting or contributing to the overall good governance ethos of the DSD. The main issues being assessed are:

a) Information management within the DSD.
b) Compliance with the Promotion of Administrative of Justice Act[13].
c) Relationship with external stakeholders. This relates to the expectation that government departments will pro-actively work with communities. It is an element of good governance in that it moves away from an inward-looking organisation to an

[13] Discussed in chapter 4, this relates to how management delegations are exercised.

outward one. It shows a sense of appreciation of civic or public responsibility. This tests how M&E is perceived; accountability and/or learning. This is further explored in Chapter 8.

d) Views of specific M&E systems (PSM&ES). Given the processes around the implementation of this system, the entire management team would have been involved. This assessment is thus important.

e) An assessment of the management processes to see whether it is perceived as adding value.

f) Training and experience. This looks at how far M&E training and experience has permeated into the management echelon of a department. It also identifies where the needs and gaps are, and is thus future looking.

g) Challenges: This is also a test of M&E, but now relates more broadly to the field and tests whether the national plans, communication and strategy on M&E has filtered to an operational managerial level. The question looks at how M&E works in the country – which will show whether the perceived view that M&E policy-makers may have is as such in reality. The last section looks at possibilities for improving M&E.

In addition to the general questionnaire, which was customised to cater for the three cohorts where it was administered, a specific questionnaire was designed for administration within the M&E unit in the DSD **(Annexure 3).** This was to assess what the views of the leadership of M&E at the DSD were, against the views of the managers in the DSD. This specific questionnaire was followed-up by telephonic interviews with the respondents, and the information was updated by the researcher.

The researcher interviewed selected managers from the M&E Chief Directorate, to establish their views on how they see the management of the DSD responding to M&E. This is an important perspective, given that many M&E personnel often get disillusioned that their work is not taken seriously by the leadership and management of departments. The problem has been documented in studies, which point to the following reasons as to why M&E is often not being taken seriously or institutionalised within organisations:

a) The M&E function does not enjoy the support of leadership, and/or is perceived to support a “policing” or accountability function. It is sometimes seen as an extension of leadership, where one tier of leadership uses the M&E function against other tiers of leadership. In this scenario, there is often mistrust and suspicion.

b) The M&E function may be seen as duplicating other similar functions in the department, such as the audit function. This can lead to internal conflicts and contestations, with questions asked about what unique value the M&E function adds.

c) There is also a problem with the location of M&E. It generally should be located at a sufficiently high level to be taken seriously, but this may bring about the problems of being perceived as policing.

d) Management may view M&E as duplicating a managerial function, with some views held that M&E is an adjunct, or tool, for management, and therefore should not be viewed as distinct or unique.

e) There is also the problem of what issues get identified for M&E. The issue of prioritisation is always contested, as the issues that are identified for investigation or M&E may be seen as the problem areas, and this brings to the fore the issue of the competence of the managers who manage units that will be M&E.

f) Often times M&E is not institutionalised, which means that there are no regular forums where findings are presented.

Based on the above, the questions that were posed to the cohort of M&E managers were:

a) Do you think that the M&E unit is well located?

b) Are you satisfied with the support for M&E from the HoD and management?

c) Do you feel that M&E is adequately resourced?

d) Does your Unit enjoy support from the managers in the department?

e) What are the key forums where you present your findings?

f) Do you track the implementation of your recommendations? What systems do you use to assess your impact?

The above set of questions examines the issues of organisational location, authority, support and institutionalisation, and was captured in a questionnaire administered specifically to staff in the DSD M&E. The responses to the above questions are important, as this is the thinking of leadership on M&E.

7.5.2 Ethical questions

The following ethical issues were factored into the questionnaire design and administration. The respondents were afforded the opportunity to respond with their identities known, although they were promised anonymity should they so require. There was no compulsion in writing their names, but there may have been concern that their identities could be revealed

given that the questionnaires were distributed via email, and responses expected via the same mode. To address this concern, respondents were given the opportunity to return questionnaires via post or fax. Furthermore, it was important that the participation of the respondents was not seen as compulsory. This impression can easily be created given the accompanying letter from the HoD, and the affiliation of the researcher himself, who as an employee of an oversight body, may create the impression that the participation is obligatory. This was made clear in the covering letter of the questionnaire.

7.5.3 Piloting of questionnaires

The core questionnaire mentioned above was piloted with managers in the PSC and DSD. Based on the responses, it was redesigned to ensure simplicity for use by the respondents and data capture. The core questionnaire was customised in places for administering in the different cohorts[14]. The instrument was kept simple and short. A phased approach involving awareness raising, piloting and validation was followed to ensure that the quality of data captured was adequate for assessment.

The questionnaires were administered to the entire management of the DSD, which comprised 64 managers. At the PSC a purposeful sample was used where it was sent to the entire management of the Branch: M&E and the Regional Directors. In terms of the NDSD cohort, it was sent to a combination of national and provincial departments.

7.5.4 Data capturing

All data was captured using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). This was seen as the most appropriate research instrument, and a sound data base was generated. Based on the survey, a set of frequency figures were generated, which was used for conducting this assessment. In terms of the Lickert scale[15], both numeric values in terms of frequency and averages were generated. Both were used for this assessment. Through the use of SPSS, data was captured according to the following parameters:

a) Overall data captured on figures/ percentages
b) Data disaggregated according to the three cohorts
c) Average weighting figures created to complement percentile figures on responses

[14] See Questionnaires which are at annexure 1 and 2.
[15] Lickert scale allows for the range of views to be captured.

d) All qualitative data captured and categorised post-implementation, through the identification of key themes

.

7.5.5 Identification of cohorts and preparation for the administration of survey

In the absence of a baseline for assessing the before and after effects of M&E on good governance in the DSD, the researcher established the following cohorts which would help to assess the impact of the primary influence that M&E is deemed to have, which is to promote good governance. As such the questionnaire was administered across three cohorts, namely:

a) The DSD management team (DSD). This is the group where the influence of its own M&E functionality on promoting good governance is being tested. It is the primary group used for comparison purposes.
b) The PSC management team. This is the group of M&E professionals who would have a superior understanding of M&E, given their role in implementing various systems across governance departments.
c) A control group of other managers termed NDSD. This is a selection of managers identified from both central oversight departments, such as the DPSA and the NT. It also includes managers from two provincial administrations, the Free State and KwaZulu-Natal, the Office of the Premier (Gauteng) and managers from the Constitutional Court of South Africa.

Overall, an even number of respondents was eventually received, totalling 62 which are statistically significant for the survey. The cohorts are referred to as **PSC, DSD** and **NDSD** in the assessment that follows. The identification of decision-makers for further engagement was informed by the following considerations:

a) The area of MME and who in the organisation this area is most likely to be allocated to in terms of being responsible for reporting
b) The persons responsible for the key areas of administration, budget and M&E
c) Key informants: people who have been involved in M&E within or of the DSD, and who have intimate knowledge of its managerial practices[16]

[16] This included the CD of M&E, the Directors of M&E and the Technical Advisor to M&E.

The researcher began engaging with the DSD in April 2008, and by the time the questionnaire was administered in October/November 2008, sufficient knowledge of the department was obtained making it easier to secure access to documents and persons. In the case of the DSD, several events were used by the researcher to inform the potential respondents of the study, and this helped to produce the levels of co-operation that were secured. The researcher, in his capacity as Chief Director and DDG at the PSC presented the results of its PSM&ES to the EXMA. This meeting was important, in that the DG and the Deputy-Minister for Social Development were present, and hence had the necessary authority.

As noted, the researcher obtained written permission for the study from the DG, and this was distributed with the questionnaire to all managers in the DSD. Contact was established with the M&E unit of the DSD, which helped to produce the contact details of management of the department. The initial batch of questionnaires was administered to 29 respondents, with a covering note explaining the purpose of the study, and the letter of permission. A follow-up had to be made telephonically to those who had not responded. This assisted in increasing the response rate to the 58% eventually realised.

In the case of the PSC, the questionnaire was slightly modified. The researcher identified managers from the M&E Branch of the PSC[17] and before sending them the questionnaire explained its purpose to all potential respondents. The response rate was 67%.

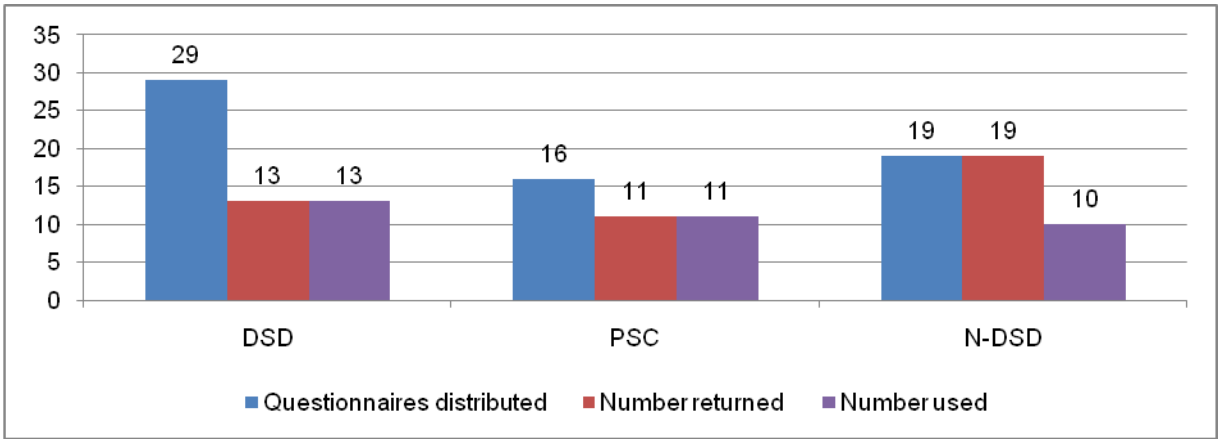
The third cohort, termed the NDSD, refers to managers selected from those managers who were neither implementers of an M&E system, nor exposed to formal M&E in their departments. It included those departments which exercise oversight, such as the DPSA, the NT and Statistics South Africa. In each of these cases, persons were identified who were involved in implementing an oversight system using the purposive sampling approach. The second batch of departments selected involved identifying respondents from three provincial departments (Gauteng Premiers Office, KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and the Free State Premiers Office). The other was respondents from the Constitutional Court of South Africa. This was a good mixture of respondents for the NDSD group. The return rate was 53%.

Questionnaires were sent out via the email address of the researcher, and respondents were offered the option of responding via email, post or fax. Telephonic follow-ups were made to

[17] This is the section within the PSC which implements various transversal systems across government.

most respondents, and there was a need for reminders after the initial date of response was not adhered to.

Figure 7.1: Response rates to survey questionnaire



As the above Figure indicates, the rate of return varied based on the cohort. However, overall the rate of return was good, and the number of questionnaires of 34 can be regarded as statistically significant for purposes of analysis. Nine of the questionnaires were scanty and not used for analysis.

7.6 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS OF SURVEY

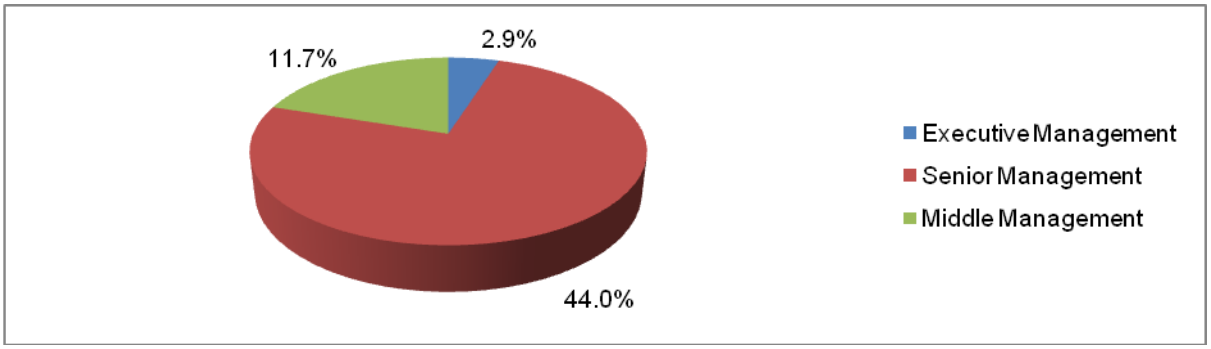
7.6.1 Profile of respondents in terms of seniority and committees in which they participate

The questionnaire solicited information from the respondents on their post-level, the management forums they participate in, and the number of years in their current positions. This information was seen as useful in that it helps to differentiate the pool of respondents in terms of their relative authority within the management echelon, as this band is broad and ranges from middle managers (at level 11) to top management (level 16). Although the questionnaires were distributed to the management (and hence the entire decision-making echelon), it is useful to have an understanding of the relative authority and power of the decision-makers surveyed. The years of experience that a manager had in a particular post is also a useful indicator and telling of the experience base within the management echelon of government. The managerial seniority question is an important one in the Public Service, given that this cohort has become relatively less experienced over the past decade, due in part to the removal of minimum periods of service for each promotion level. The phenomenon of rapid upward mobility has meant the hollowing of the skills base of managers in the public service, as institutional memory has been lost. This has a direct

impact on the issue of organisational learning, and has meant that when individuals move, the institutional memories also move and do not get embedded within the organisation.

It is in this context that M&E must play an even more important role in building knowledge bases and helping new incumbents to understand developments and processes. Knowledge management has been widely cited as major problem within organisations, with most not having a coherent strategy to induct new staff, and this problem becomes exacerbated when institutional memory is lost due to high staff turn-over, and when the experiential base of the management collective becomes less over time. It may be that the new managers, who are often transient, meet their accountability obligations, but fail to move beyond compliance and manage in a way that raises the levels of understanding of staff by using evaluative information in a manner that enriches and capacitates the organisation. This would help to mitigate against the loss of institutional memory that comes from the phenomenon of managerial transition. This section thus quantifies the experience of managers and is a useful backdrop for the assessment.

Figure 7.2: Distribution of respondents according to management bands



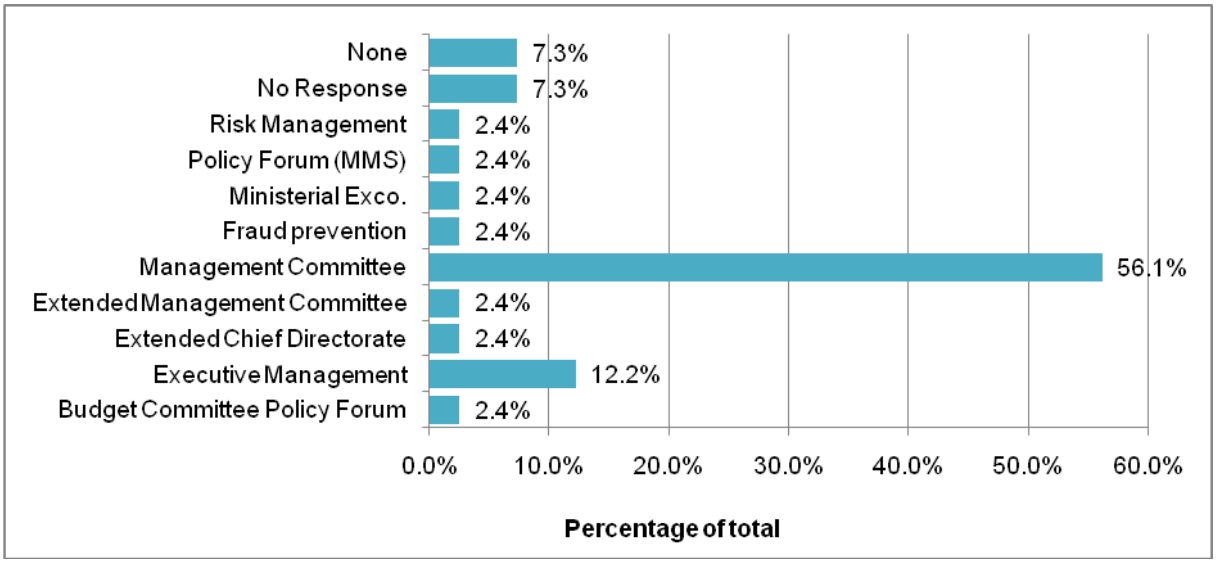
It should be noted that, given the fact that managers often sit on more than one forum, they failed to indicate an exclusive category, hence the overlap evident above. The blurring of the lines come about with the categories executive and senior management, with executive understood as levels 14, 15 and 16, but such managers also being referred to as senior managers. Most of the respondents fell in the Senior Management and above level (47.3%), which is the key decision-making band, and in proportion terms, where most of the managers in government are placed (Figure 6.3). These bands exert the most management influence.

7.6.1.1 Management forums within which respondents participate

The questionnaire requested respondents to indicate which forums they sit on, in order to get an understanding of where they exercise their management roles, and what the content

issues are. Respondents were also afforded the opportunity to indicate if they participated in any other forums than those indicated. The results are reflected in Figure 6.3 below.

Figure 7.3: Management forums respondents sit on (in %): Multiple responses



The above Figure indicates multiple responses, and hence it will not add up to 100%. From the Figure above, it is evident that most respondents participate in Management Committees (56%). The Executive Management comprised 12.2%, which would include in this case the Chief Directors, DDGs and DG. Of significance is that a very small percentage of respondents also participated in committees critical to good governance, such as the Budget, Fraud Prevention and Risk Management Committees (2.4% each). Only 2.4% serve on policy forums.

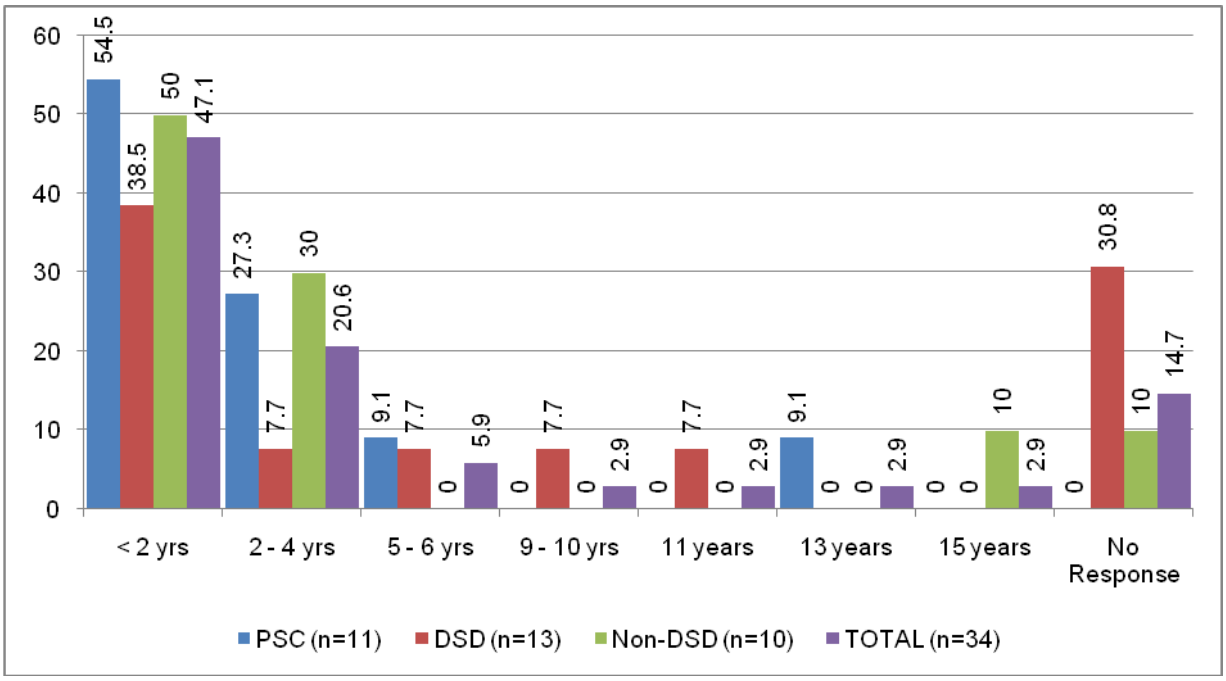
The data above would suggest that most members of management serve on generic management committees, than those specifically allocated to areas related to more specialised areas of importance to good governance, such as risk management and budgets. The question that must then be posed is why such a small percentage of management is exposed to specialised committees, and what implication does this have for their ability to transcend generic management functions and focus on more critical areas related to good governance. It may thus be that in pursuing specialisation and directing few management members to specialised committees, most managers do not get exposed to core areas vital for sound management (such as finances, risk and policy).

7.6.1.2 Years in current position

The question of experience in a post (and this relates to the years in a management

position) is an important indicator of experience.

Figure 7.4: Number of years in current position (in %)



The results indicated that most of the respondents were recent appointees, with 47.1% being in the post for less than 2 years, and 20.6% in the post for between 2-4 years. Collectively, 67.7% of the respondents were in the post for between 0-4 years, and may be classified as relatively junior managers. This probably points to the high turnover being experienced in government currently, where there is no stipulation for a minimum number of years at a level, before being promoted[18]. The point about low institutional memory caused by the relatively junior nature of the management level applies, which is a cause of concern in that organisations fail to stabilise and go about their work uninformed by the lessons from operational experience.

In terms of the DSD management, 6 respondents or 46% of the sample have been in their positions for less than four years, which reflects a relatively junior management team in the DSD. However, 4 respondents or 30.8% of the respondents did not indicate their seniority level, which may alter this view of the DSD team being relatively junior. Looking at the results above, however, it can be noted that 23 out of 34 (68%) of the managers were in their posts for less than 4 years, which reinforces the point being made about the relatively junior profile of managers in employ in government. In such a case, there is an even greater need for M&E to produce learning situations to enrich the managerial experience of this

[18] Research being conducted by the DPSA and PSC on staff turnover rates.

cohort, so as to improve their effectiveness. Unless this takes place, the combination of the high turnover of staff at this level and junior status of managers will result in management not proceeding from a basis of sound understanding of what works and what does not, and making unnecessary errors as they have very little institutional memory to fall back upon.

7.6.2 Perceptions on M&E

An open-ended question was given to respondents, who were asked to provide words that expressed their views (connotations) of M&E. These responses are important in that they provide the level of awareness of the concepts of M&E at a generalised level. However, this awareness should not be confused with knowledge of M&E, which will only be known when more specific questions are asked, as other parts of the questionnaire probe. The responses are captured in the Table below, where the actual key words are recorded.

Table 7.2: Opinion of M&E

Across all three cohorts		
Essential activity, alignment of mandate, process delegations, indespensible tool, monitor performance information, new discipline, cannot manage if you cannot measure, greatest management tool, promoting accountability, achievement against plans, measure policy relevance, ensure proper allocation of resources, check progress against milestones, systematic process to improve effectiveness, value judgement or assessment of progress, weighting against set indicators, to make adjustments for the future, elucidate progress on strategic plans, track performance and provide feedback.		
DSD	**PSC**	**NDSD**
Assists in monitoring performance information, facilitates feedback, effective tool, ensure that there is accountability, checks whether things go the right way, and what the impact is, tracking performance and giving feedback to the relevant people.	Management tool, measure progress against objectives, management measure or activity to plan against resource constraints, aims to verify, process to check, allows for scrutiny	Essential activity, indispensible tool, critical and allows for organisations for check progress against set objectives, helps to elucidate annual performance and strategic plans

From the Table above, it can be seen there is not much difference in the understanding of M&E across the three cohorts, with respondents from all groups showing the same level of understanding of M&E, and picking up on the same permeating issues relating to M&E such as tracking, checking, ensuring quality, etc. This probably indicates that there is not necessarily a better understanding of M&E at the DSD or PSC compared to the NDSD, and that having an M&E within a department does not necessarily lead to higher levels of awareness of M&E at an aggregated level. Thus it can be concluded that M&E in South Africa is understood the same way, irrespective of whether the respondents come from an institution with M&E or not. This common and generalised understanding of M&E at the connotative level may in part be due to the high media coverage of M&E in the country, and

the discourse on M&E within government itself, where most persons are familiar with M&E terminology. As mentioned, this is probably more a question of awareness and being able to link the term M&E to relevant concepts, rather than understanding these concepts in a more sophisticated manner. The questions that follow probe these issues further.

7.6.3 Perceptions of value added by oversight institutions (MME)

This section seeks to establish what an institution that is subject to the work of the oversight institutions think of the value it adds. Given the power relations that exist between oversight institutions and the bodies/institutions they oversee, the relationship is one sided, with the assessor making judgements of the assessed, and seldom any questions asked about how the assessed institutions perceive this activity. It may be because, as in the case of the PSC and the AG, any interference with the work of these institutions may construe obstruction, which is punishable. These institutions also have the power to report erring departments, and seldom if ever are the assessed institutions canvassed on the value they received from being assessed. This section thus is upward looking and indicates more than awareness; it probes the value contributed by the assessing institutions.

It is an important perspective, given that compliance may be due to the sanction imposed, rather than a genuine appreciation of the value added by such an institution. This is often termed malicious compliance, which is a subject discussed in more detail later. If there is malicious compliance to keep within the parameters of accountability, it may mean that good compliance results could be deceptive, and do not really point to good governance. It may be then the act of compliance is an end in itself, but there is really no contribution to learning, either individual or organisational, and as such M&E is simply done for form. An important part of the work of MME institutions should be providing of feedback, for results to be used to improve performance, and for a performance dialogue to emerge, thus contributing to a culture change. The manner in which results are released and disseminated will be analysed later in this section.

In assessing this element, value questions were asked. A value closer to (1) shows strong agreement, whilst a value closer to (4) shows strong disagreement. The neutral is not ascribed a value, but for purposes of the scale is given a (0) and ignored in calculating the averages. The understanding of the role played by the following MME institutions which exercise mandatory oversight over departments, and its perceived value, were obtained. The following were assessed.

a) NT, and its requirement that monthly financial reports must be submitted, and whether this is perceived as adding value to the department concerned.
b) The AG, which requires the submission of financial statements and scrutinises the financial and non-financial performance of a department.
c) The Audit Committee, within a department, which supports financial oversight and is a player when it comes to reporting to the NT and the AG.
d) The PSC, to which financial misconduct must be reported, as well as its role in collating financial disclosure forms.
e) The DoL, which requires departments to submit statistics on its human resource management, including issues of representivity.

7.6.4 Perception of the value added by the NT

There were two statements asked in the affirmative and negative to test how respondents valued the oversight of the NT. The importance of finances has been established as critical for good governance and service delivery (Fox, 2002), and the World Bank definition of good governance places financial management, which is also closely linked to the issues of ethics, high up on the criteria for good governance. Although the ethical question may be perceived as a soft issue, it forms the heart of the ethical infrastructure of a country in that it defines what may be regarded as acceptable behaviour, and thus sets the parameters for conduct of public servants when dealing with public funds. Questions of risk, financial disclosures and transparency, to name a few are germane to the quality of financial management, and any assessment of finances needs to move beyond the quantitative indicators and also consider qualitative issues, like the impact of spending on service delivery.

It is important to examine how institutions view the NT in view of the above considerations, and assess whether it is perceived as simply providing funding and monitoring budgets. It would be useful to see whether the activities and strategies of the MME institution adds value beyond budgets, and whether in assessing compliance with its prescribed performance measures, its outputs are used, which should translate into learning and improve subsequent performance. The translation from ensuring compliance to being used and generating learning, and thus producing a sustainable, self-reflective management culture is what is required. The question posed and responded to below relates to the commonly known and mandatory monthly financial reports required from the NT of departments. Views of this subject were solicited from and rated according to the Lickert scale for the three cohorts.

Figure 7.5: Level of agreement with statement "Monthly financial reports required from NT help to better manage budgets" (in %)

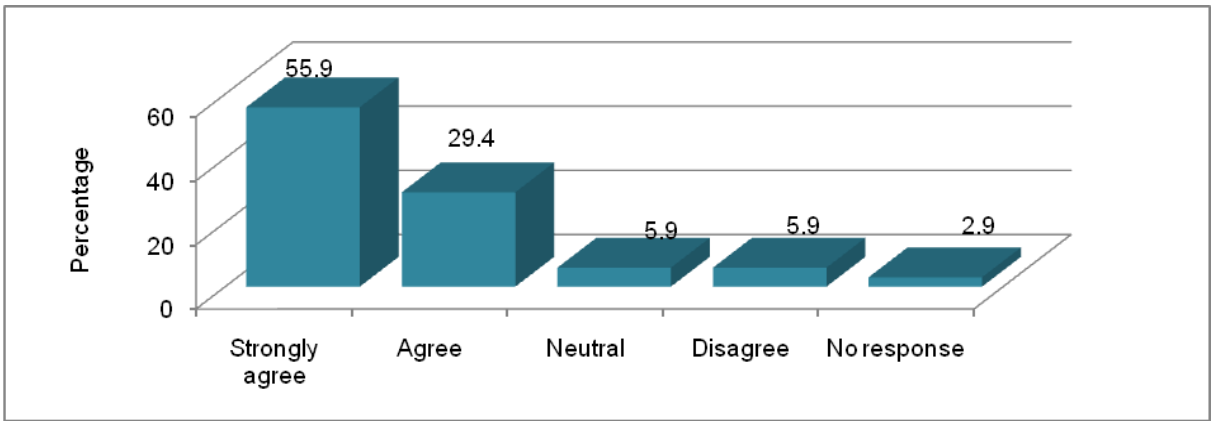


Figure 7.6(a) Level of agreement with statement disaggregated for cohorts

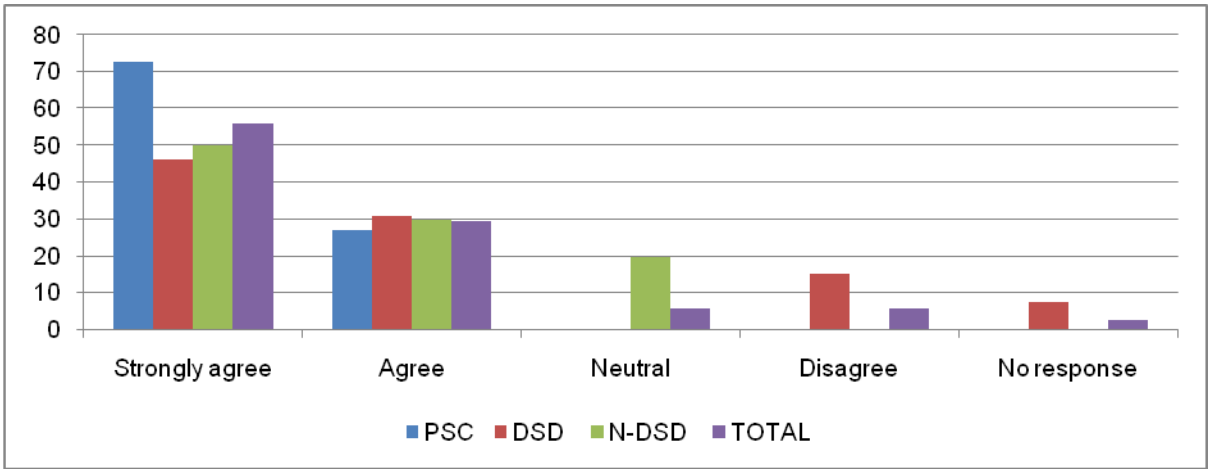
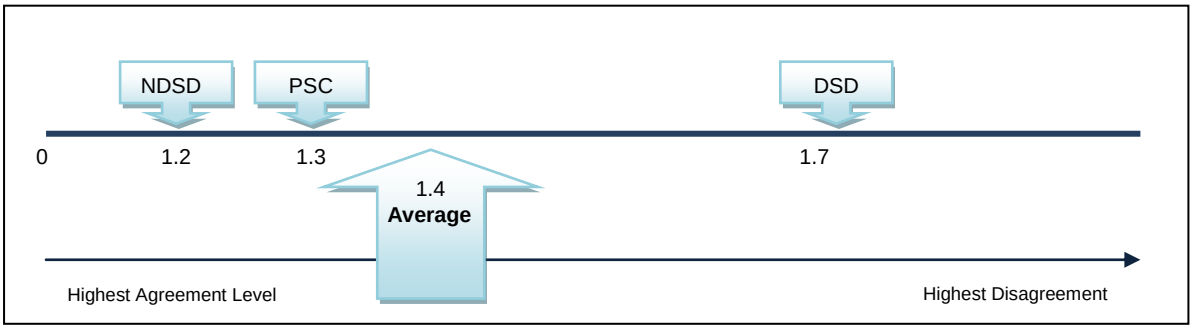


Figure 7.6(b): Weighted average



The result shows a greater agreement with the statement from the NDSD and PSC, than the DSD, which probably indicates in this particular case that managers in the DSD did not necessarily see reporting to the NT as particularly value-enriching. Here 3 or 30% of the respondents either disagreed or presented no response and this shows that at an operational level, there is not necessarily clarity or agreement about the work of an MME institution like the NT, and that there is no discernable difference in how different cohorts

understand this institution. The statement was probed further, this time asking the opposite question and the response is contained in the Figure below.

Figure 7.7: Level of agreement with statement "The reports required from NT do not add value to work" (in %)

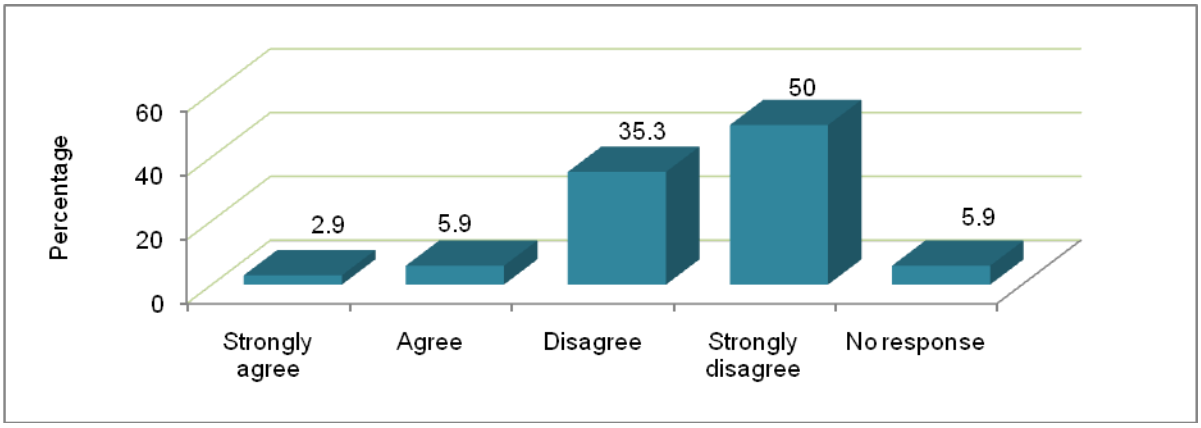


Figure 7.8(a): Level of agreement with statement disaggregated for cohorts

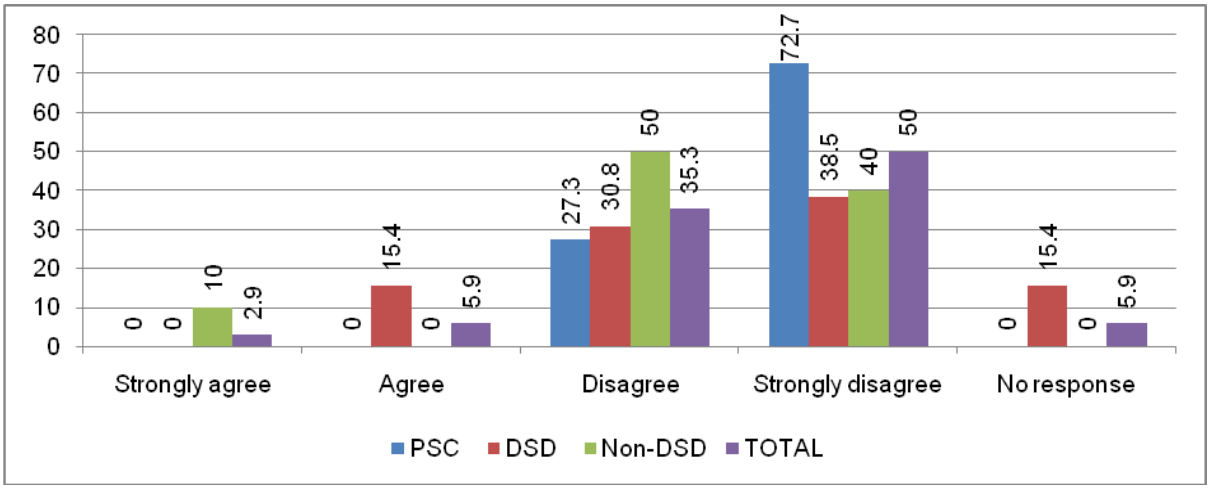
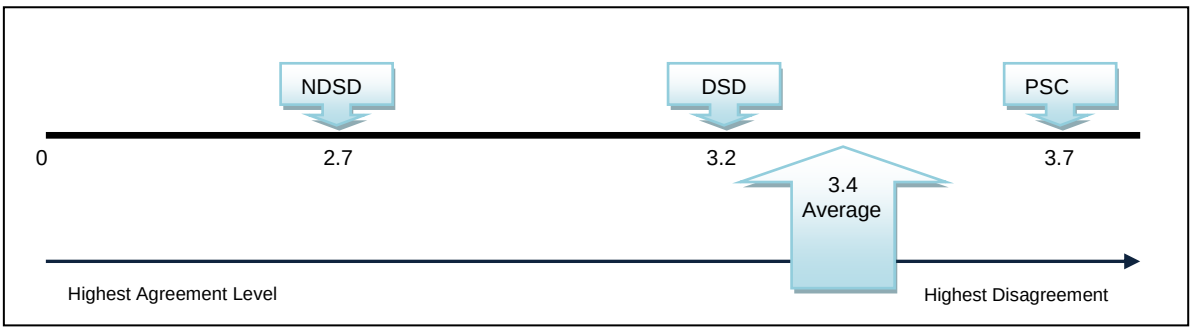


Figure 7.8(b): Weighted average



In looking at the opposite statement which was used to validate the response, it can be noted that at a global level (across all three cohorts), there was a high level of disagreement

(85.3%). Using the weighted average, the level of disagreement was 3.4. The strongest rejection to the statement was from the PSC (3.7), followed by the DSD (3.2%) and the NDSD (2.7). The PSC and DSD result is understandable, the former because it draws heavily on NT frameworks for its own work, and the latter probably because it views itself positively when it comes to the NT and AG, given its excellent financial management track record reflected in the previous chapter (of being awarded the coveted unqualified audit opinion). The result from the DSD varies slightly from the agreement statement that was analysed in the earlier figures. It may be that when the question was posed in such a form, the rejection is stronger from the DSD given its own good performance, which it may not want to be diluted.

Another critical role played by the NT is the production of the reporting templates for the Annual Reports of the departments. These reports are probably the most publically accessible evaluation documents of departments, and have evolved over the past 10 years from being largely descriptive and narrative to more performance oriented, given the intervention made by the NT on reformatting the reports and putting in place processes which make these reports key documents for accountability. The reports serve to show actual performance against plans, and are relatively accessible to readers who can see what has been achieved. The use of concepts such as service standards and indicators, as well as other M&E terminology probably contributes to a richer M&E discourse in the country, as these terms become used in the engagement with the reports. The reports have to be presented to multi-party committees of Parliament, and this leads to the performance of departments getting scrutinised. Therefore, the statement below tests whether the intentions discussed are valued in practice, is realised. With hindsight this question is probably too leading, assumptive, complex and loaded. The results must be treated with circumspection.

Figure 7.9(a): Level of agreement with statement "The format of the Annual Report is useful in that it compels us to develop internal systems to produce performance information around the key areas and helps to self-manage" (in %)

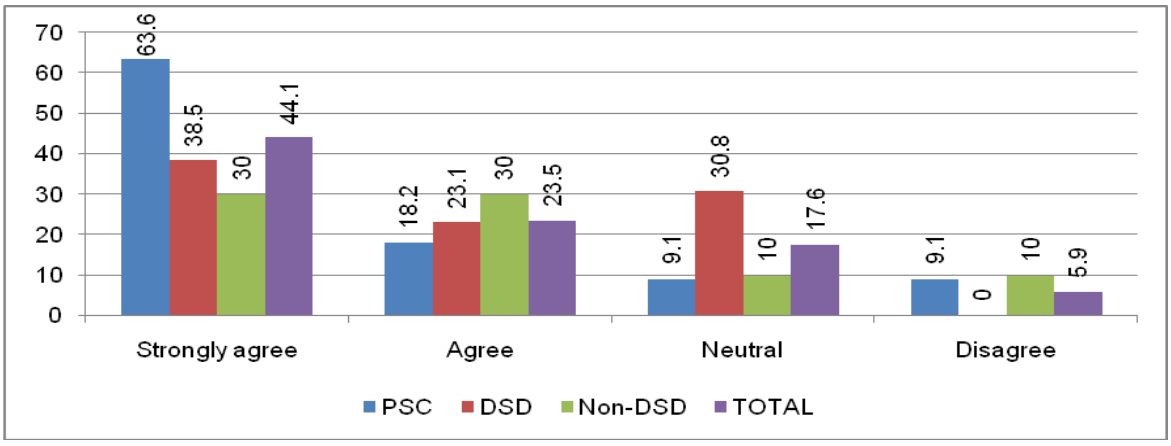
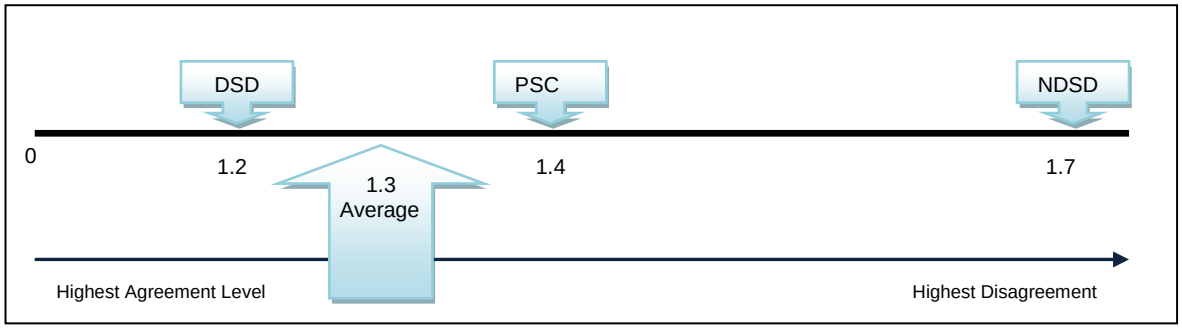


Figure 7.9(b): Weighted average



The Figure above shows an agreement level at 67.6%. However, there was also a relatively high neutral response at 17.6%, and disagreement at 11.8%. The averages show an overall agreement level at 1.3, with the highest agreement coming from the DSD (1.2) and PSC (1.4), with the NDSD agreeing the least at 1.7. The DSD has a very high (30.8%) neutral response, and when looking at these figures there are no discernable trends across the cohorts, as the responses for all the cohorts was internally differentiated. In following up through personal interviews in the DSD and PSC, many managers expressed the view that the Annual Reports were probably just compliance documents, driven from the Corporate Services (administrative section) of the departments, with very little collaboration going into its production, and even less engagement with the reports upon its tabling at the departmental level. They stated that the report was produced generally for the NT, external stakeholders and Parliament, with the least usage taking place within the departments that produce these reports themselves (Personal interviews conducted: December 2008, PSC and DSD respondents). This result, augmented by the personal interviews, probably indicates that the Annual Report has not reached the level of influence as has been stated in the questionnaire, and probably explains the results achieved on the value scale.

7.6.4.1 Value ascribed to the NT

The value ascribed to the NT would show, amongst others, the seriousness with which this MME institution is accorded. It would further indicate the level of understanding that managers have of the NT, which plays a key role in setting and monitoring financial policies, as indicated in chapter 6. If there is sufficient understanding and appreciation of the work of the NT, one could infer that managers would be more likely to respond to instructions from the NT, which in this case relates to mandatory reporting of budgets and adhering to the reporting template provided for compiling and submitting the Annual Reports. All of these form part of the compliance element of the MME, which is a part of good governance. The results from the perception survey appear to indicate that behaviour by all cohorts go beyond

compliance, as there a stronger agreement and disagreement levels around the value propositions from the respondents, which at the 80% plus levels indicating strong feelings on the matter. It could indicate that there has been an assimilation of the value of the NT by managers, and hence departments, to the point where its authority is accepted, and its value appreciated.

In looking at the disaggregated results, it was noted that the highest level of agreement was from the PSC and the DSD. This result is understandable, given that the PSC draws upon the work of the NT in the production of its reports, and uses the findings of the NT to augment its own findings. From a compliance perspective, the results in chapter 6 indicate that there was good financial management in the DSD as it was able to keep within the budget parameters of the NT (2% either way). The ability of the DSD to comply with financial and other matters indicates that it is a department that scores well when it comes to compliance. Overall, one could conclude that the NT is well established as a central, important department, the policies of which are known and accepted, and this indicates that it has contributed through its activities of bringing about good governance, in the DSD, and across departments more generally.

7.6.4.2 Perception of the value added by the AG and the Audit Committees

The importance of the work of the AG in promoting good governance through its assessment processes has been noted in chapter 5, where it was indicated that its ability, sanctioned by law, to present audit opinions publically is a contributory factor for good governance. The assessments provided have value, in that it points to the quality of compliance, governance and leadership. Key reports, such as the Audit Outcomes, which lists the results obtained by each department, is telling of the quality of governance of a department. The coveted result expected from the AG is a “clean audit”, followed by an “unqualified audit”. A disclaimer is the most embarrassing result, and tends to get media attention.

There were two statements presented to respondents for reaction around the area of the work of the AG, namely a direct positive statement about the work of the AG and a related one about the Audit Committee in a department. The results are explained in the Figures below.

Figure 7.10(a): Level of agreement with statement "The work of the AG is important, as it promotes accountability and transparency in the department" (in %)

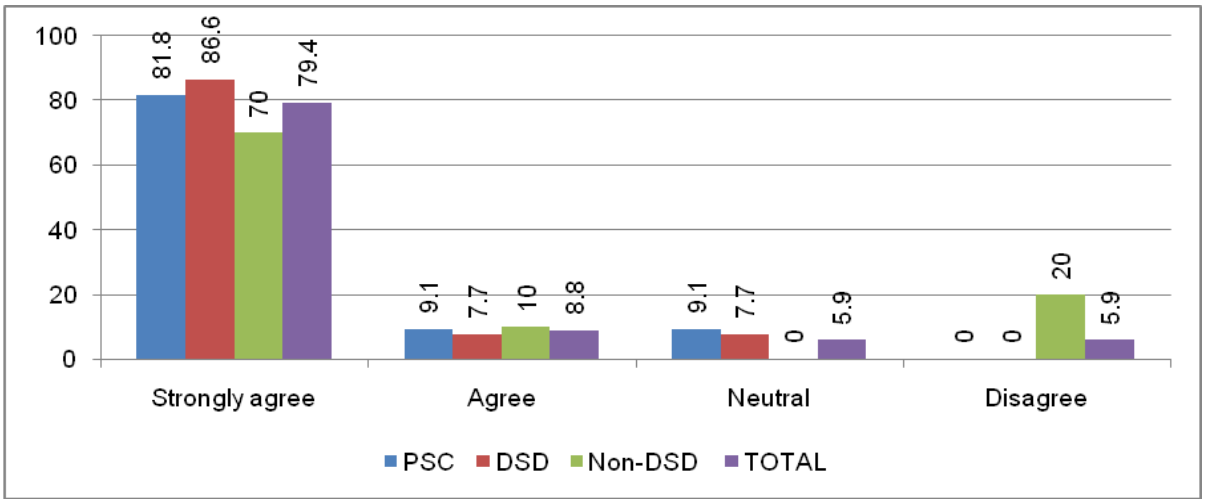


Figure 7.10(b): Weighted average



As can be seen there is a strong level of agreement with this statement, at 88.2%, with the highest agreement levels found in the DSD cohort at 94.3%, followed by the PSC at 90.9% and the NDSD at 80%. The weighted averages confirm this strong level of agreement overall at 1.2 as an overall average. The highest level of agreement to the statement came from the DSD and PSC at 1.1, followed by the NDSD, with an average of 1.5. All scores being below 2 confirm the high agreement level confirming the value of the work of the AG, in particular on accountability and transparency, which are elements key to good governance. This perception is understandable given that the Audit Opinion of the AG is probably one of the evaluations taken the most seriously by any department.

The Audit Opinion in essence is an amalgam judgement of the governance of a department, which previously focused only on financial issues but now also considers non-financial performance matters. It is thus a more comprehensive assessment of a department's financial and non-financial performance, and the rigour with which it is undertaken, which

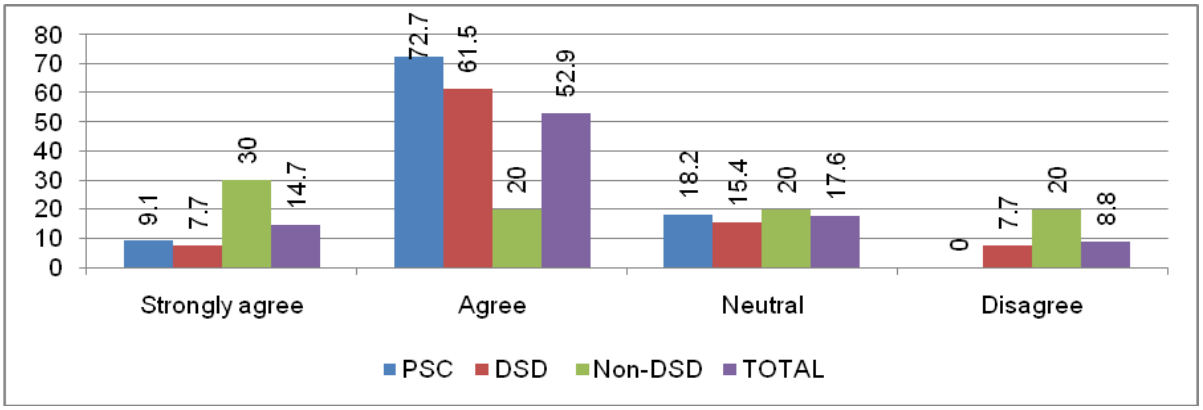
meets international norms and standards on auditing practices for public entities, implies that there is a universality and credibility to these opinions. It would be difficult for these opinions to be contested, as they are considered objective, and fall within the quantitative realm of M&E, where numbers and measures, against levels of tolerance or bands that describe performance are taken as verifiable truths.

In the assessment of the MME institutions, it was found that whilst the PSC often cited the reports of the NT and AG in its work, there was less citing of the PSC in the work of these organisations. This is despite the fact that there is much overlap in the work, and similar work conducted between these organisations. This is probably indicative of the lack of co-operation between MME institutions, which tends to be informed by issues of independence and protecting turf. The net impact of MME institutions exercising oversight on departments in similar areas is that departments get frustrated in producing similar information in different formats, and not receiving adequate feedback on assessments for purposes of engaging with results and learning. In fairness to the Office of the AG, it should be pointed out that it has improved on the engagement aspect, and now has a protocol for engagement wherein the management of departments are afforded the opportunity to comment on interim findings, before these are finalised. This shift needs to be looked at in the historic context, where such participatory steps were not as pronounced previously, and where the issue of independence was self-interpreted to mean that findings could not be contested, or this would constitute a form of unacceptable defiance. Although the AG still falls squarely within the accountability category for M&E, the shift in approach is perceptible and should be welcomed in light of the fact that influence comes from engagement, not detachment, as cited in the literature reviewed for this thesis.

An appraisal of the Audit Committee, which may be regarded as a mini AG, is important; as it is this departmentally appointed committee (which also has external stakeholders serving on it to ensure credibility) which operates on a day to day basis by exercising oversight on the department's finances. It works in support of the HoD, who is also the Accounting Officer appointed in terms of the PFMA. A properly functioning Audit Committee should in theory prevent departments from receiving negative audit opinions, as it serves an on-going monitoring and early detection function. The question that is thus posed to assess its value as described is important, as one wishes to ascertain what the understanding is of this internal, though not highly visible structure is by respondents. As an internal, more regularly operating structure, it is expected to institutionalise the ethos and principles of the AG, and in so doing should promote organisational learning given that it is embedded in the department,

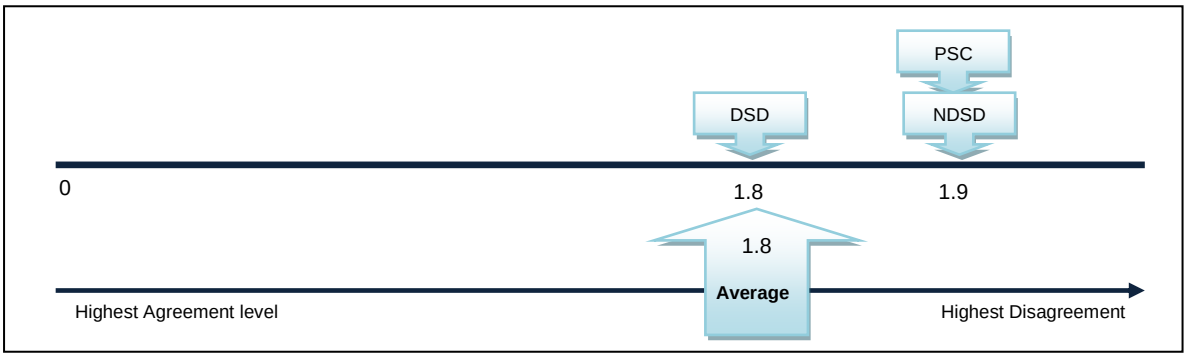
unlike the AG which comes into the department in a contracted period as an external evaluator.

Figure 7.11(a): Level of agreement with statement "As a manager, I am fully aware of how the committee functions" (in %)



The result varied from the view of the AG, which was more known. In the case of the Audit Committee it was found that 67.6%, of the managers (as opposed to 80% for the AG) knew about the work of the Audit Committee in their departments. There was a relatively high neutral percentage at 17.6%, followed by a disagreement level of 14.7%. Such a perception did not exist for the AG, which probably is better known and holds a higher profile accorded to external, accountability driving bodies. This result might also indicate that there is more emphasis placed on meeting the stipulations of accountability bodies than on what should be the internal, persuasive, learning oriented bodies.

Figure 7.11(b): Weighted average



The weighted averages show a greater leaning towards the neutral, with the overall average being 1.8. The results for the DSD (1.8), PSC (1.9) and NDSD (1.9) show overall agreement with the statement, which is slightly different from the result of perception of the AG. Even with the DSD, there was lesser understanding of the Audit Committee, despite there being an internal M&E function where it would have been expected that these linkages would have

been formed, and knowledge about the departments accountability infrastructure made known. One would have assumed that this committee would be better known, as it resides within the department but this is probably not the case and this result confirms the earlier discussion regarding management forums, where it was shown that a very small percentage of managers serve on specialised committees.

7.6.4.3 Value ascribed to the AG and Audit Committees

The respondents showed a high level of understanding of the work of the AG. There was a lesser understanding of the work of the Audit Committees, and this may be because this tends to be communicated less within the departments. It can be deduced that the level of understanding is the highest when it comes from external oversight, as compared to internal oversight, which is concerning as it shows that good governance imperatives tend to be followed when there is fear of sanction, rather than as a natural part of management functions.

7.6.5 Perception of the value of the work of the PSC

Given that the PSC is constitutionally mandated to conduct M&E, and has been performing this function for approximately 10 years, it is useful to see how this MME institution is valued. There were different statements posed to elicit responses, the first being on whether the PSC was seen as adding value when it came to its role in reporting financial misconduct, and whether this activity served as a deterrent. Overall it was found that 67.7% of the respondents agreed with the statement, with a relatively high percentage being more cautious and being neutral (17.6%), whilst 14.7% of the respondents disagreed. The result indicates that the value added by the PSC in its reporting of financial misconduct is not actually regarded as that important, more so given the high level of neutral and disagreeing responses.

Figure 7.12(a): Level of agreement with statement "The reporting of financial misconduct cases to the PSC is useful and serves as a deterrent to staff within the department when it comes to committing fraud" (in %)

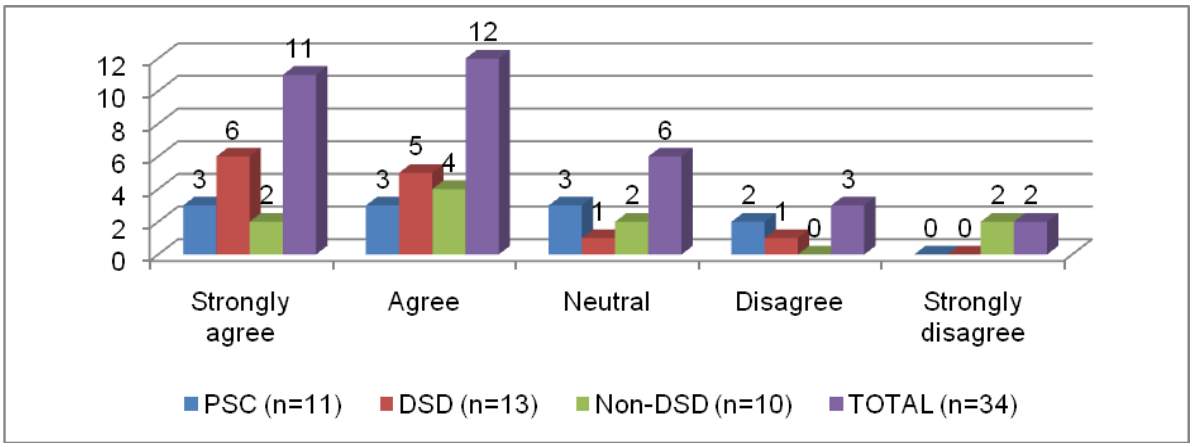
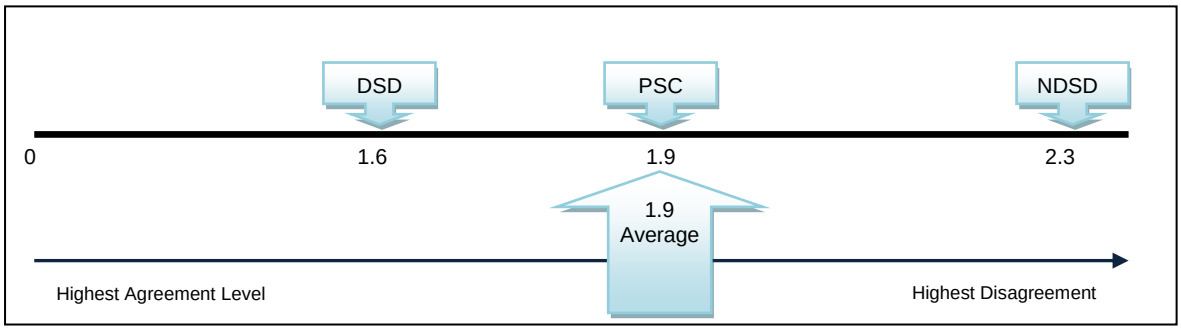


Figure 7.12(b): Weighted average

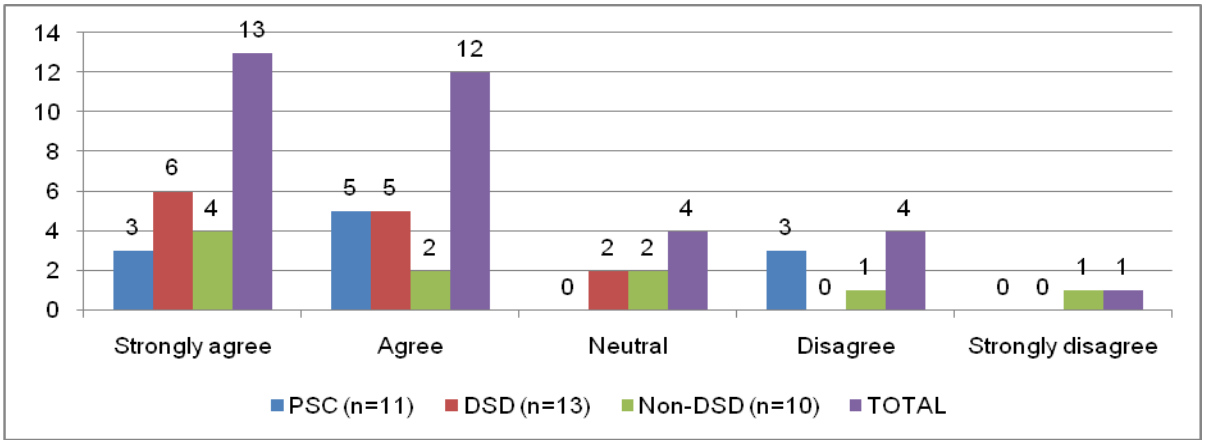


At the disaggregated level, however, the DSD ascribed a high value to this activity of the PSC (84.7%). There was greater scepticism to the statement when viewing the result as weighted averages. The NDSD cohort, at 2.3, showed high disagreement to the value added by the PSC, followed by the PSC (1.9). The DSD seemed to agree the most with the statement, at 1.6. The issue raised about the DSD being strong on compliance probably accounts for this result, but what is important is that there was neither at the aggregated or disaggregated level the same level of conviction about this assertion. It may thus be that the high media which people are exposed to on government corruption results in a cautionary approach to such sweeping and generalised statements, as was offered. From the PSC the correct understanding appears to be that monolithic acts of monitoring some aspects of corruption cannot on its own act as a deterrent. This more critical understanding is likely to be held by the PSC cohort who would engage more deeply with these issues on a regular basis.

The impact of the PSC in terms of another corruption addressing activity, managing the financial disclosures of Senior Management Service managers, was also probed where it

was implicitly proposed that this activity improved the ethical compliance of staff. Once again, this is a sweeping generalisation that does not take into account the complexity of addressing ethics, but in its generalisation it would show whether there has been a critical response. The question thus sought to assess whether the submission of the financial disclosures forms was useful in preventing conflicts of interest, which is a key element that stymies public confidence in the Public Service. The reason for this is that it is felt that the tender processes, whilst outwardly transparent, accessible and creating employment opportunities for previously disadvantaged groups, is in fact not so due to internal manipulation. Several studies have been conducted by the Auditor-General[19] and the PSC[20] on such matters, and both institutions point to poor management around the conflicts of interests. The statement below thus becomes an important indicator for assessing how well this element is being addressed in practice, and whether the mandatory submission of financial disclosure forms for Senior Management Service managers to the PSC, contributes to good governance.

Figure 7.13(a): Level of agreement with statement "The submission of financial disclosure forms for Senior Management Service helps to manage conflicts of interest, and improves the ethical compliance of staff" (in %)



[19] Refer to http://www.auditor-general.gov.za

[20] Public Service Commission. 2009c. Evaluation of Supply Chain management Practices within the R200 000 Threshold. Republic of South Africa.

Figure 7.13(b): Distribution of responses as a percentage

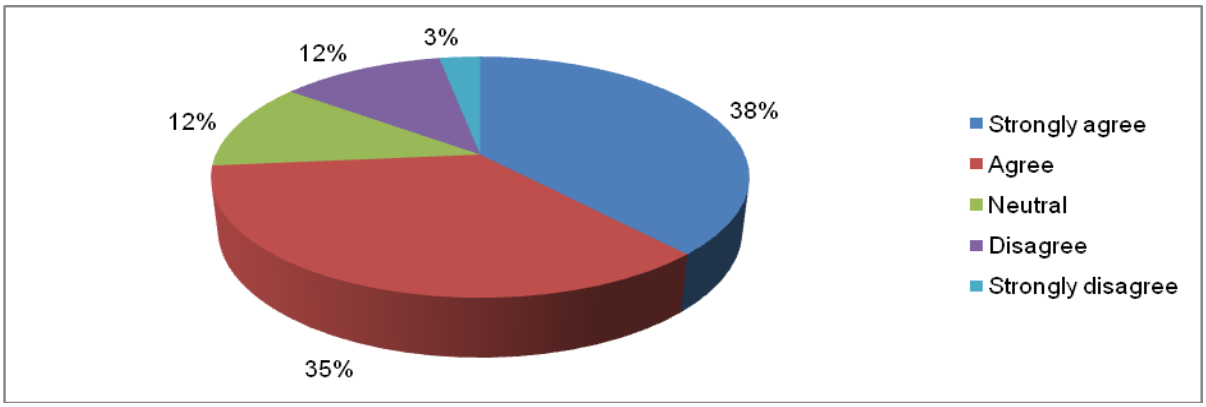
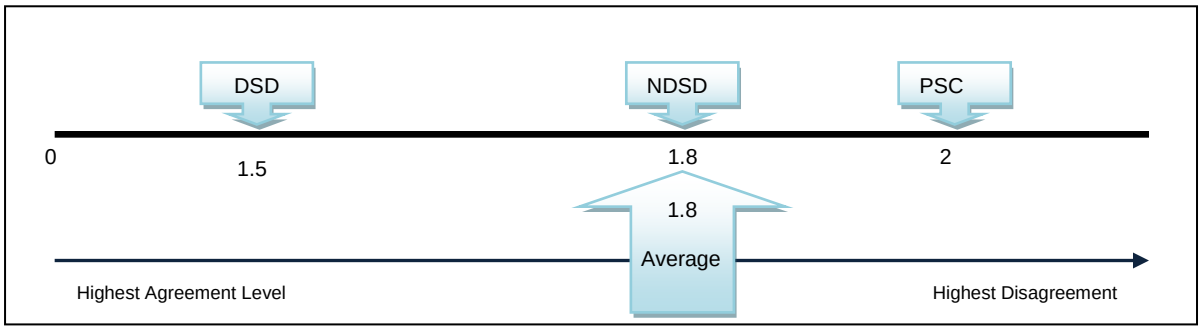


Figure 7.13(c): Weighted average



In terms of the weighted averages, the highest level of agreement to this statement came from the DSD at 1.5, followed by the PSC at 2 and NDSD at 1.8. Once again, it shows that there is a high level of confidence in this process within the DSD, but this weakens when it comes to the PSC and NDSD. The response from the NDSD group probably indicates a more critical perception of what this aspect of work of the PSC can, and cannot do, hence the bimodal pattern of distribution. The level of disagreement from the PSC itself is significant, and may point to the fact that managers at this institution recognise the limitations to the system of submitting financial disclosures, and do not see it as an act which in itself leads to the prevention of conflicts of interest. Other research within the PSC has indicated that many of the business interests are in fact held by spouses of managers, who do not have to declare financial interests, and the system may thus have been circumvented. This ties up with other research which indicates that corruption is more perverse and sophisticated, and it is unlikely that managers who engage in such unethical activities declare their business interests to the heads of the departments they work for, more so in cases where they have secured tenders. The system thus has serious limitations, and is whilst a transparency promoting mechanism, it is not a corruption preventing one (Personal interview, Senior Manager at PSC, 15 January 2009).

7.6.5.1 Value ascribed to the work of the PSC

Overall, the PSC in two aspects of its work, that of reporting on financial misconduct and receiving financial disclosures, which purportedly at an intent level were meant to curb corruption, was not regarded in high value terms at the aggregated level. There was stronger belief in the value brought by the AG and NT, than the PSC. At the disaggregated level of the PSC and the NDSD there was scepticism of the statement. The DSD, however, seemed more convinced about the value added by the PSC through this type of activity in terms of its contribution to addressing fraud.

The results indicate a high level of understanding of the work of the PSC by the DSD, and a belief that the work adds value to the internal operations of the department. This result must be looked at in the context that this survey was undertaken shortly after the DSD had to submit its financial disclosures, and when the PSC was implementing the PSM&ES. Both these events meant that at the management level there was a higher sensitivity to the work of the PSC at the time than could have been the case ordinarily. There is thus likely to be a greater appreciation of the value added by the PSC which may explain this result.

However, the results suggest that when it comes to financial disclosures and the value added in curbing corruption, there was a more critical view from the PSC and NDSD; both groups did not see the link between disclosures and promoting ethics as being so causal. The earlier discussion has alluded to the fact that the system of financial disclosures has its limitations, which has been acknowledged by the key drivers of the system within the PSC itself. These results may indicate that for a highly compliant department like the DSD, there is more confidence in the value or contribution of oversight institutions than those departments which either do not comply as well, or where there is no established M&E.

7.6.6 Perception of the oversight work of the DoL in terms of compliance with employment equity and Human Resource legislation

The DoL, whilst not a classic MME institution in the sense of the NT, AG and PSC, does exercise a degree of oversight over departments given its obligations to monitor progress when it comes to employment equity. It was thus deemed useful to test what value this type of reporting is seen to add to respondents. It thus tests both awareness and value, the former relating to the fact that there is a range of players which compel departments to report, but which may not be known across the management structures of departments themselves.

A statement was posed to test knowledge about the reporting obligations that departments have to adhere to in terms of reporting progress on employment equity to the DoL. It goes on it establish whether respondents see a link between this reporting obligation and how departments conduct or manage human resources internally. In chapter 6 this was indicated as a key reporting requirement, and adherence to the stipulations contributes to good governance.

Figure 7.14(a): Level of agreement with statement "The submission of the Employment Equity plan to the DoL is a useful monitoring measure, which helps to ensure that the department complies with all of the provisions and targets for sound human resource management" (in %)

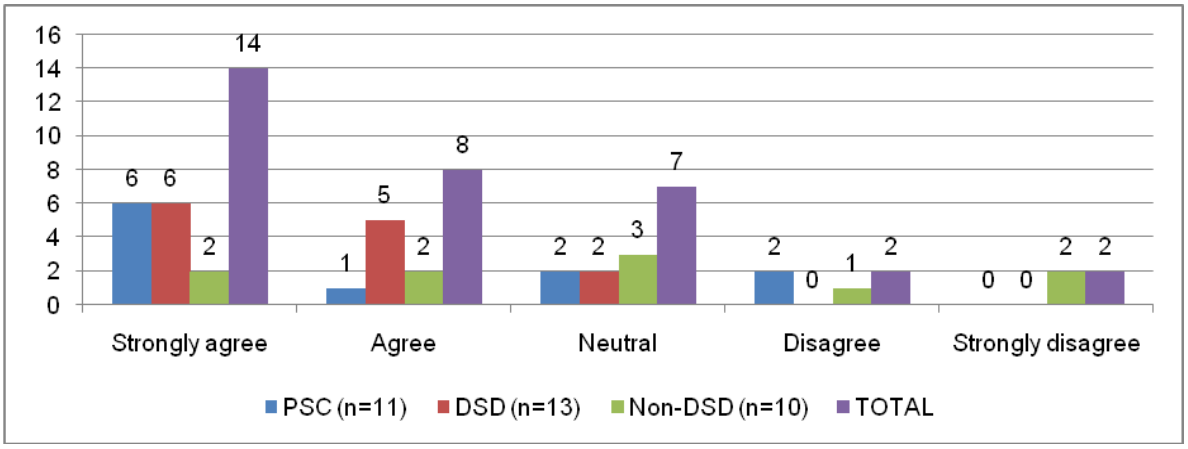
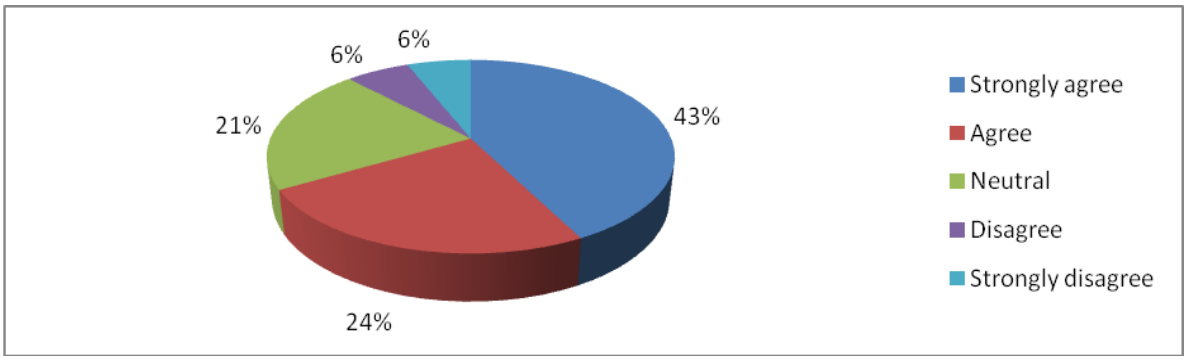
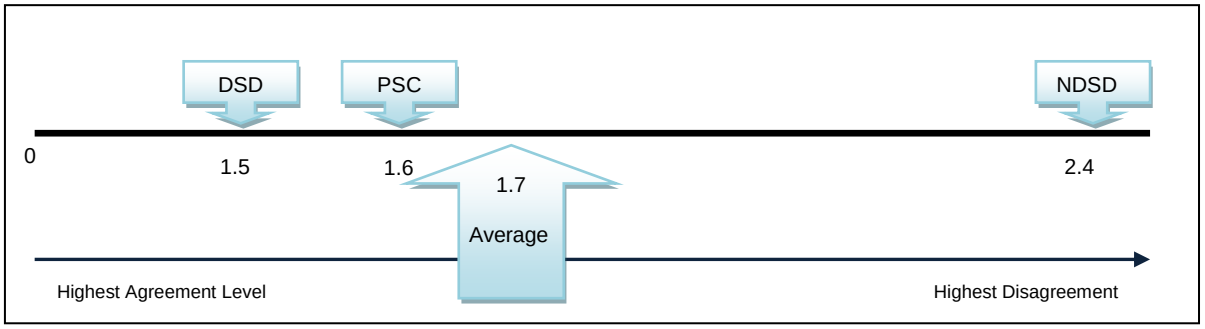


Figure 7.14(b): Distribution of responses as a percentage



The results show that whilst there is an overall 64.7% agreement level, there is also a 20.6% neutral response, and a 14.7% disagreement. In looking at the cohorts, the highest level of agreement was from the DSD at 84.7%, followed by the PSC at 63.6% and then the NDSD at 40%. This indicates that there is no consensus that the submission of Employment Equity plans to the DoL is a useful monitoring measure, assisting with the achievement of targets for sound human resource management.

Figure 7.14(c): Weighted average



In examining the weighted averages, it was found that the overall average was 1.7, with the highest agreement level came from the DSD (1.5) followed by the PSC (1.6), but outside the range of 2. The NDSD cohort, at 2.4, was more sceptical of the value added by the DoL. There is affirmation of the work of the DoL from the PSC, probably because it saw it as supportive of its own M&E work, and its understanding and collaboration with the organisation. There was also an alignment to the statement by the DSD, which also scored well on the compliance aspect (noted in chapter 6) from the DoL. There was much scepticism to the statement from the NDSD, which probably did not know much about the DoL. This result probably indicates a good understanding of the reporting obligations to the DoL from the DSD, which may be indicative of how functional the DSD M&E function is. A key area of reporting within the DSD at the management level is on human resource matters. The reports contained in the Annual Report of the DSD shows that there has been a high level of compliance and that most of the targets have been met. There is thus more agreement with the above statement than with the case of the NDSD.

7.6.7 Perception of reporting obligations and its contribution to good governance

Respondents were asked to assess whether they saw the numerous reporting requirements to oversight institutions as beneficial to improving their own M&E capacity and capability. The point about excessive upward reporting, without this being seen as adding value to one`s own work has been made, and has been termed as reporting fatigue. Upward reporting can have the effect of improving a department's own propensity for reporting, as requisite internal managerial infrastructure needs to be put in place to meet external obligations. It can in a sense assist in bolstering departments own M&E capacity, a point which was made about the impact of MME on strengthening internal utility.

Figure 7.15(a): Level of agreement with statement "The submission of reports (like those mentioned above) to external oversight bodies helps to tighten the internal management processes in the department, and improve its own M&E capacity and capability" (in %)

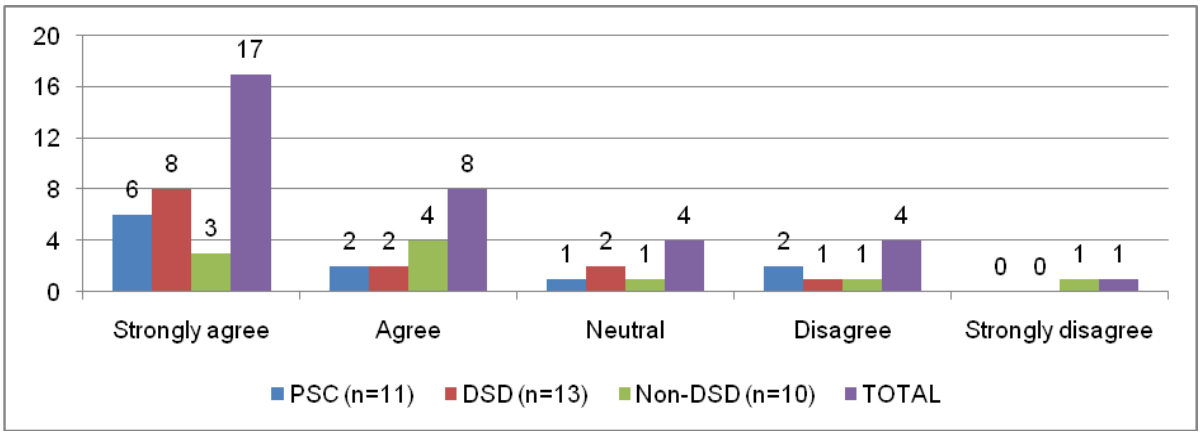
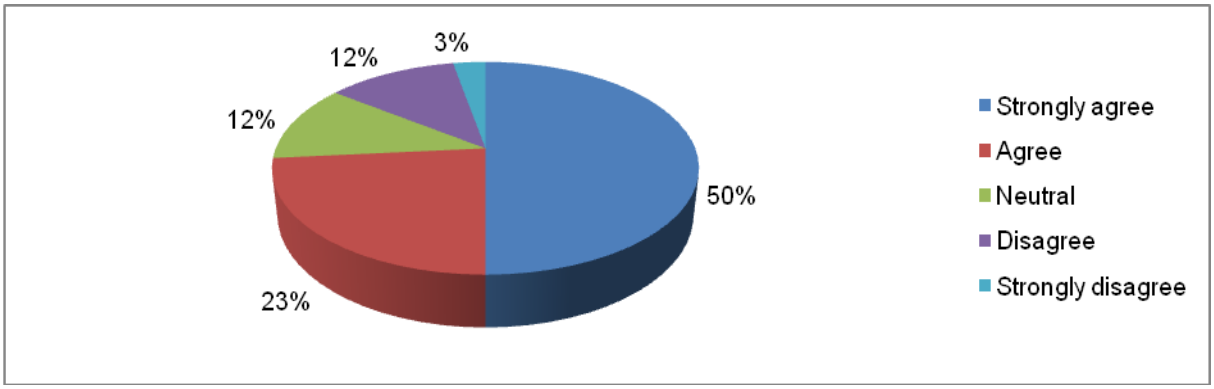
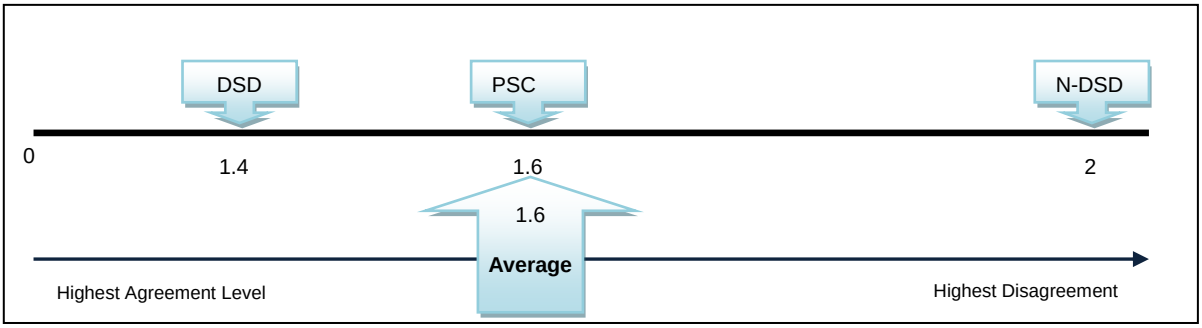


Figure 7.15(b): Distribution of responses as a percentage



The results indicate that there was an overall 73.5% agreement level, with the highest being DSD (76.9%), followed by the PSC (72.7%) and the NDSD at 70%. The highest level of disagreement was also from the NDSD at 20%, followed by the PSC at 18.2% and the DSD at 7.7%. There was also a 10% neutral response. There was thus for the DSD and PSC high levels of agreement with the value added by reporting obligations and its enhancing of internal managerial processes.

Figure 7.15(c): Weighted average



In looking at the weighted averages it was found that the average was 1.6, with the highest level of agreement was the DSD at 1.4, followed by the PSC at 1.6. The rating of 2 for the NDSD shows there was no real bias towards either agreeing or disagreeing. The element was probed further with another statement which posed reporting requirements in a negative sense, suggesting that it serves to distract, rather than enhance a department's managerial objective. The statement was deemed important given the complaints made around excessive reporting by departments.

Figure 7.16(a): Level of agreement with statement "There are too many reporting obligations imposed on the department, and this detracts from the department achieving its strategic objectives"

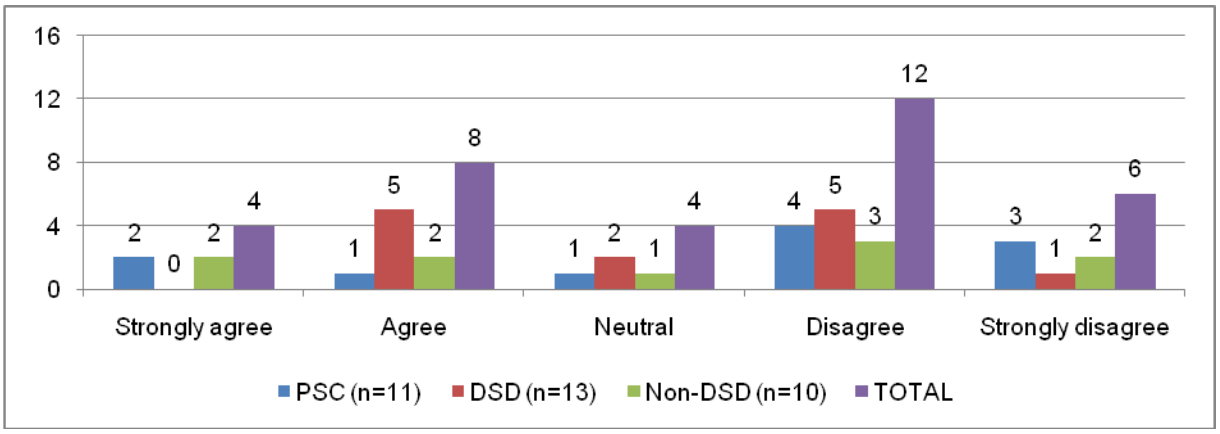
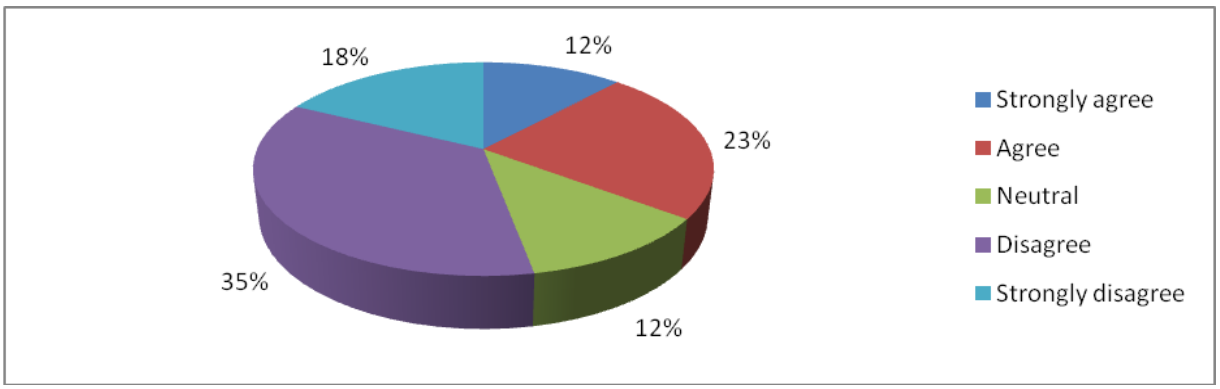
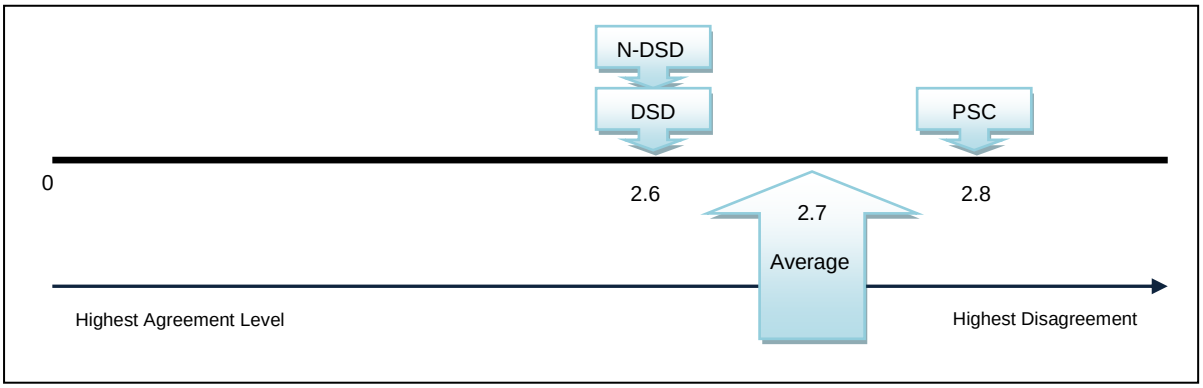


Figure 7.16(b): Distribution of responses as a percentage



It was found that the highest level of disagreement with this statement, meaning that there is an acknowledgement of the importance of reporting obligations, came from the PSC, at 63.7%. This is an understandable response, given that most of the work of the PSC is based on departments needing to report to oversight institutions like it. The NDSD has a disagreement level of 50%, followed by the DSD where it was 46.2%.

Figure 7.16(c): Weighted average



The weighted average scores are not adequately spread to show a difference, with the PSC at 2.8 followed by both the DSD and NDSD at 2.6. One can thus conclude that there is a slight bias towards reporting from the PSC, for the reasons mentioned above, as compared to the other cohorts. The DSD response shows a more nuanced reaction, with 38.5% agreeing, 15.4% being neutral and 46.2% disagreeing.

The next section provides insights into how M&E is perceived in terms of its effectiveness. It covers elements of location, utility and authority and provides another dimension of how M&E is perceived and valued.

7.7 ASSESSMENT OF M&E EFFECTIVENESS

This section assesses the how effective M&E is perceived to be by respondents. It does this by considering responses on aspects that typically influence the effectiveness of M&E in organisations such as:

a) Location and capacity;
b) Utility as a managed tool;
c) Degree of integration into institutional arrangements; and
d) Authority accorded to M&E.

The responses to the questions and themes above provide an impression of how the M&E function is viewed by managers, in particular the cohort from the DSD. These views are then compared with the results from the other cohorts, who were surveyed on similar issues via the customised questionnaires, and an attempt will be made to explain any discrepancies.

It is widely documented[21] that the location of the M&E function can have a significant impact on its overall effectiveness. The issue of location is also highly contested and can be political, in that M&E units may be associated with power, given their ability to generate judgements. They most certainly create ripples in an organisation (Patton, 1997). In view of this, there tends to be debate as to where best the function should be located, what the reporting protocols are, whether it has credibility given its capacity and importantly, what happens to M&E results. It is often argued that if M&E is subsumed within a line function (specific part of an institution), it would be unable to exercise its oversight unfettered by the prevailing hierarchy and bureaucracy. This erodes its power, as it would be unable to operate in an independent manner. This sub-section is thus important to help understand the organisational issues that impact on the effectiveness of M&E.

In looking at the authority and power of M&E, one must consider the question of power by association. This means that if the M&E function is located in a section or associated with significant power in terms of decision-making, it is more likely to be taken seriously. The converse could also apply. Given that M&E units want to be seen as adding value, and must for their own perpetuation be able to justify their efforts, M&E managers need success factors to bolster their credibility. In this regard specific interviews were held with managers from the M&E section of the DSD to get their views on how they saw themselves (in terms of authority accorded to them), and what they saw as success and deterrent factors for M&E[22]. The results of their personal interviews are deemed important in assessing the M&E effectiveness question. The results were considered against the units own operational plan[23].

M&E practitioners are always confronted with the question of demonstrating their utility and value. It is easy for detractors to charge that M&E adds no value, if they do not see or perceive any real management change emanating from M&E reports. It is thus important that M&E be perceived as adding value to management, for its own perpetuation and credibility within an organisation.

Related to the question of independence is the question of integration. There is a debate as to whether M&E should stand apart and aloof, or be a part of the mechanisms of decision-making. It is not clear where on the location spectrum M&E should be, and as pointed out in

[21] Noted in the conceptual framework.
[22] The results are covered separately in this chapter.
[23] Department of Social Development. 2007g. Operational Plan for M&E within the Department of Social Development. March. Unpublished.

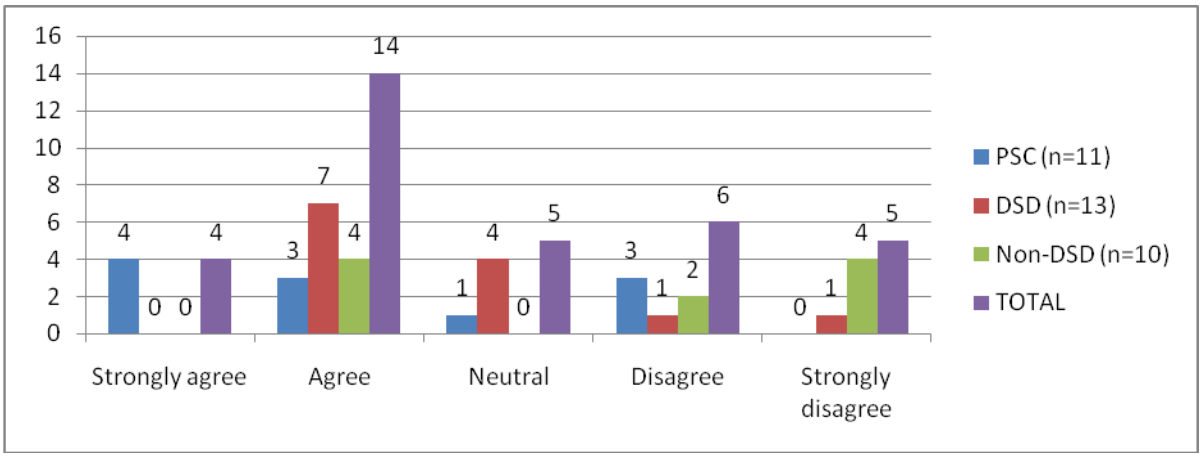
the literature for this thesis there is the view that M&E takes the baton of information to decision-makers, and should not move into the realm of actual decision-making, thus remain apolitical and detached (Rossi, 2004). There is also the view that M&E practitioners need to be proactive and advocate for change (House, 2004), with Cronbach and Associates (1980) seeing influence coming from engagement, not detachment. This empirical assessment attempts to establish what the prevailing view is at the DSD and elsewhere on the subject.

7.7.1 Location, capacity, integration and perceived value

A set of responses to questions relating to issues of location, capacity, integration and perceived value assists in answering the effectiveness question. The perceived value question seeks to establish what managers see as being the purpose of M&E, and whether this falls in the area of accountability, learning or enlightenment. In the case of the PSC the questions relate to M&E within that organisation (the PSC), whist the question is hypothetical for the NDSD.

The important questions of location and capacity were asked as one. The question sought to establish whether respondents saw the location of M&E in their departments as appropriate, and also asked whether it saw the same M&E unit as being adequately capacitated. On hindsight the researcher should have asked two separate questions, as it may be that joining the issues caused confusion for the respondents. Nevertheless the results are indicated in the Figure below.

Figure 7.17(a): Level of agreement with statement "The M&E function within my department is well located and adequately capacitated"



The highest level of agreement to the statement on location and capacity was from the PSC, followed by the DSD. This shows a positive response to the location and capacity of M&E from the DSD where there is a functional M&E and the PSC which performs M&E, albeit

across the country as a whole. In looking deeper into the data of the DSD, one finds that there is a relatively high neutral response (30.8%), and there is no clear agreement.

Figure 7.17(b): Distribution of responses as a percentage

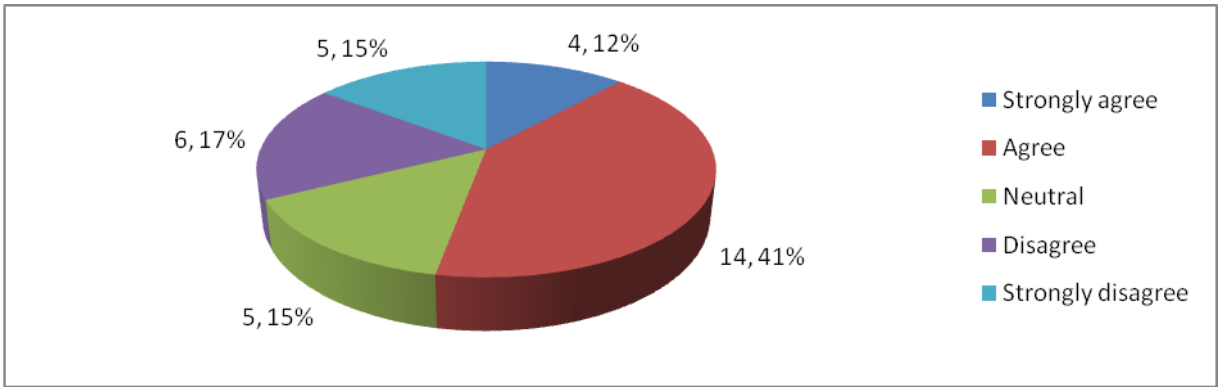
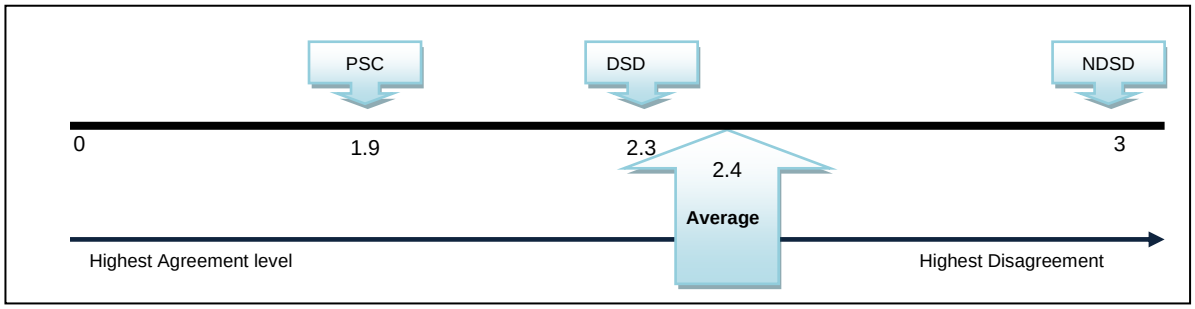


Figure 7.17(c): Weighted average



When examining the weighted averages one sees that the DSD falls outside 2 on the agreement Figure, at 2.3, indicating that there is probably no consensus about the location question of M&E at the DSD. It should be noted that the M&E in the DSD is located within a Branch: Corporate Services, and not sufficiently high up in the bureaucracy to be taken seriously. This is probably understandable given the relatively junior profile of DSD managers, and the fact that there is in general not much understanding of M&E as a discipline amongst managers in government. Interviews with managers from M&E at the DSD pointed out that they felt the location was a problem and undermined their effectiveness (Personal Interviews with DSD managers, December 2008).

The effectiveness of M&E question was probed further, by asking a separate question, this time on integration. It is assumed that the term is sufficiently well-understood by managers and should not create any ambiguity amongst the respondents. Linked to the question of integration is the question of value-adding. Once again, on hindsight these issues should perhaps have been separated, rather than leading the respondents on to draw the link between integration and value-adding.

Figure 7.18(a): Level of agreement with statement "The M&E component is sufficiently integrated into the institutional management arrangements of the department to add value" (in %)

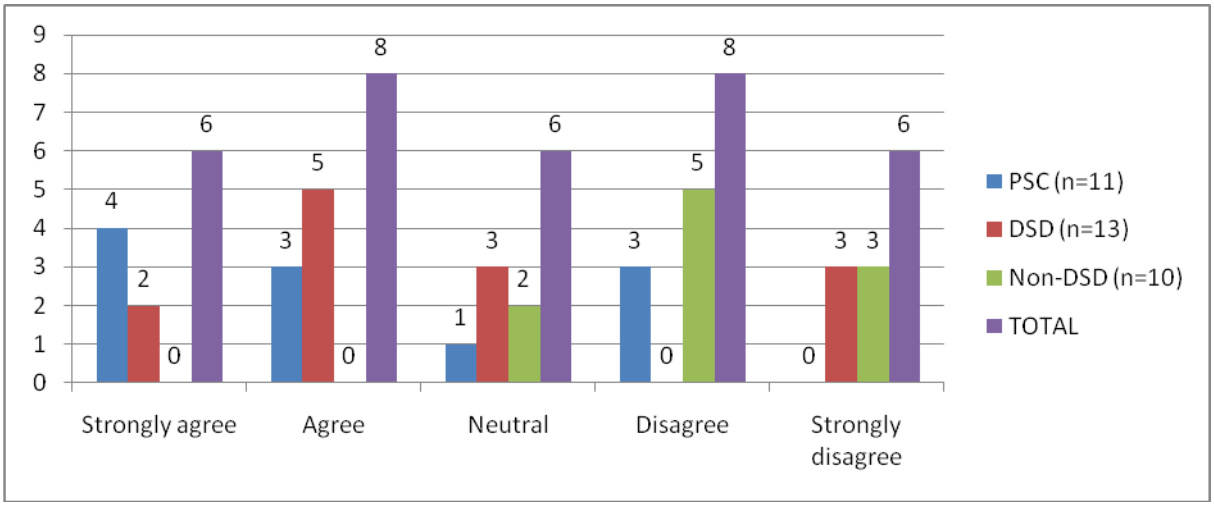
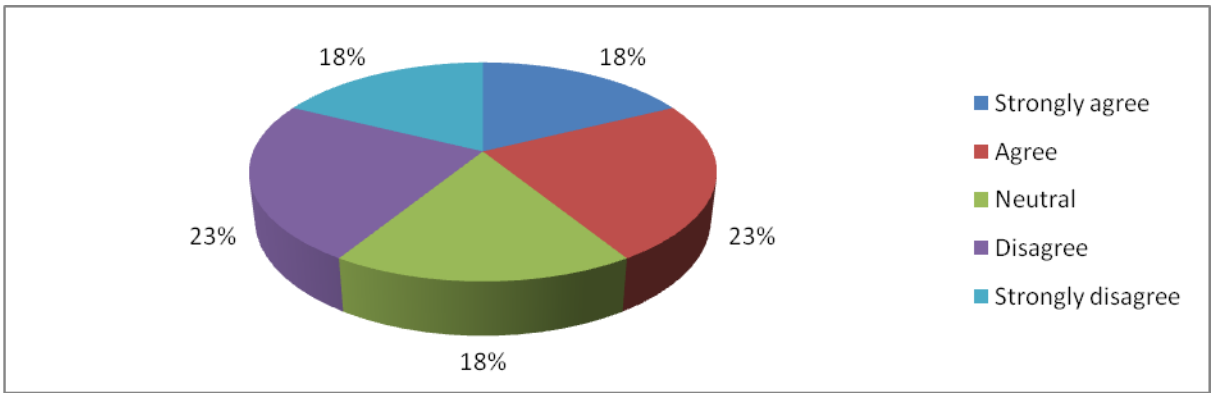
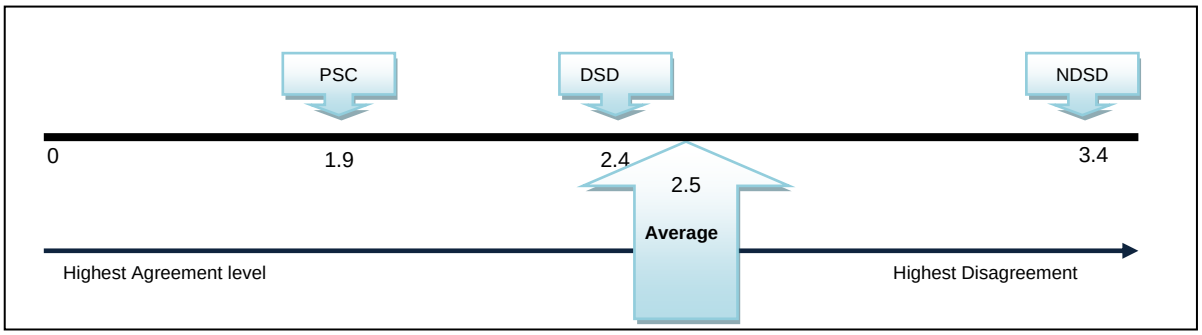


Figure 7.18(b): Distribution of responses as a percentage



The overall agreement level for the DSD was 53.9% whilst for the PSC it was 63.7%, with no agreement from the NDSD. One can expect a high agreement or concurrence with value statements around M&E from the PSC, given its mandate. This indicates a limited understanding of the role or value of M&E in terms of operational matters at the DSD, which is close to neutral.

Figure 7.18(c): Weighted average



The weighted averages indicate the highest agreement from the PSC (1.9). As noted this response must be examined more critically, as it is not departmental specific. The response from the DSD looking at the weighted averages is more important, which at a level of more than 2, at 2.4, shows that once again there is concern about an aspect of M&E effectiveness, whilst the NDSD response of 3.4 shows another extreme. In terms of the DSD there is a concern about how integrated the M&E unit is. It is thus not clear to managers whether the M&E in the DSD is effective or not.

The next Figure looks at the value proposition of M&E, by asking whether M&E has produced value to the management of the department.

Figure 7.19(a): Level of agreement with statement "The M&E component has not managed to produce value to the management of the department" (in %)

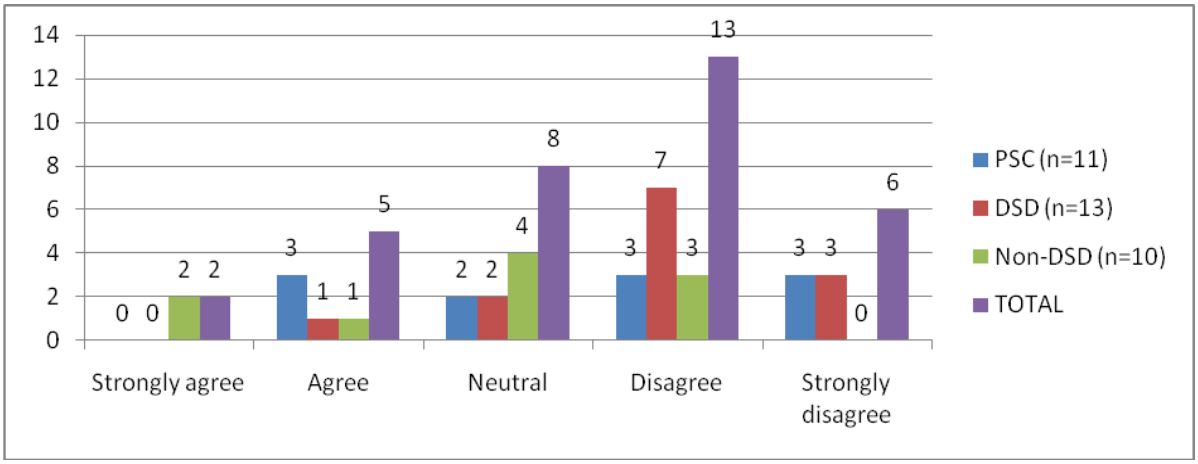
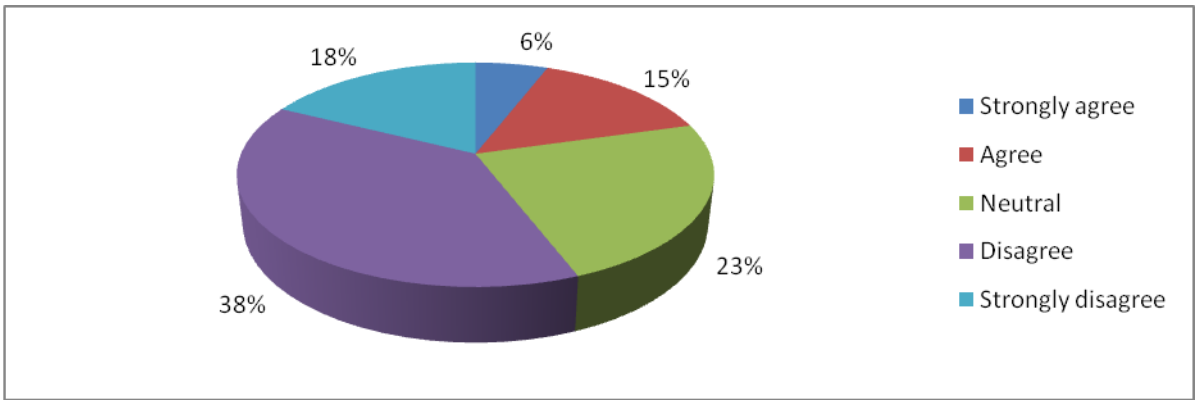
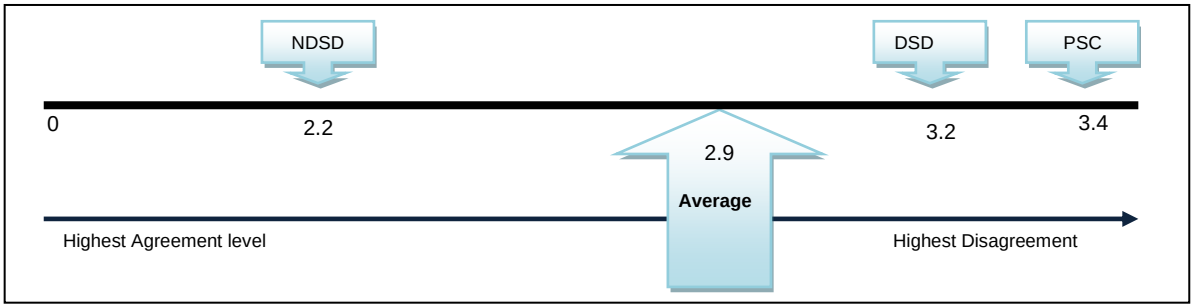


Figure 7.19(b): Distribution of responses as a percentage



In this case there was a very high level of disagreement to this value proposition, wherein there was a suggestion that M&E is adding value. The overall level of disagreement across the cohorts was 56%, with 23% of the respondents being neutral.

Figure 7.19(c): Weighted average



The weighted averages above provide a better picture of the responses, with the PSC showing the strongest rejection to the statement (3.4), followed by the DSD at 3.2. The NDSD is at 2.2, which is understandable as it is a grouping with no functional M&E. It would thus appear that managers in the DSD value the work of their M&E unit, noted in their rejection of this statement.

In probing the value proposition of M&E, a further question was posed asking directly whether M&E is taken seriously by the department and whether it is viewed as a critical management tool.

Figure 7.20(a): Level of agreement with statement "The department takes M&E seriously, and sees M&E as a critical management tool" (in %)

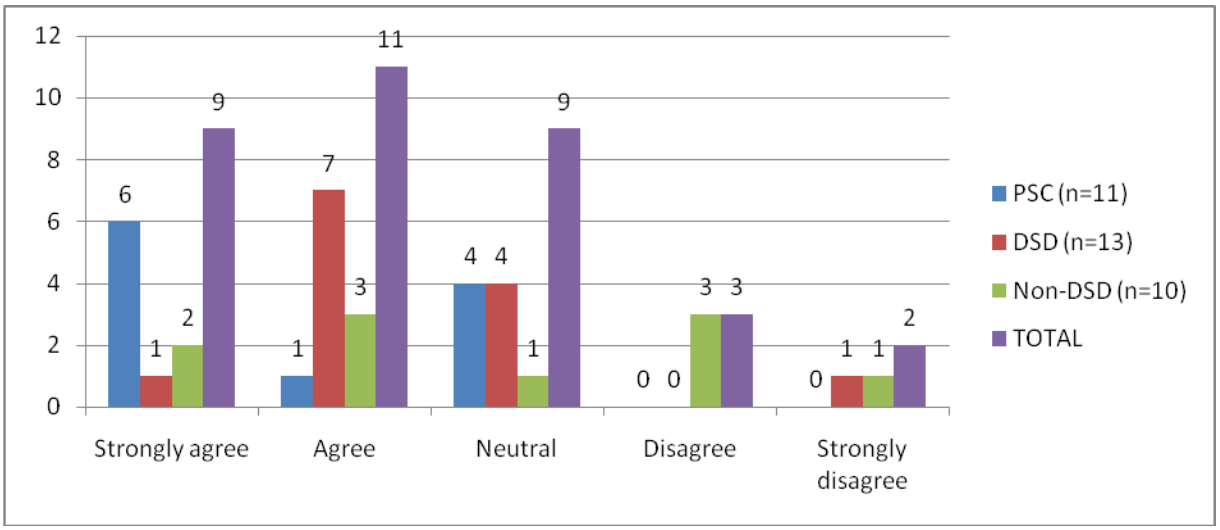
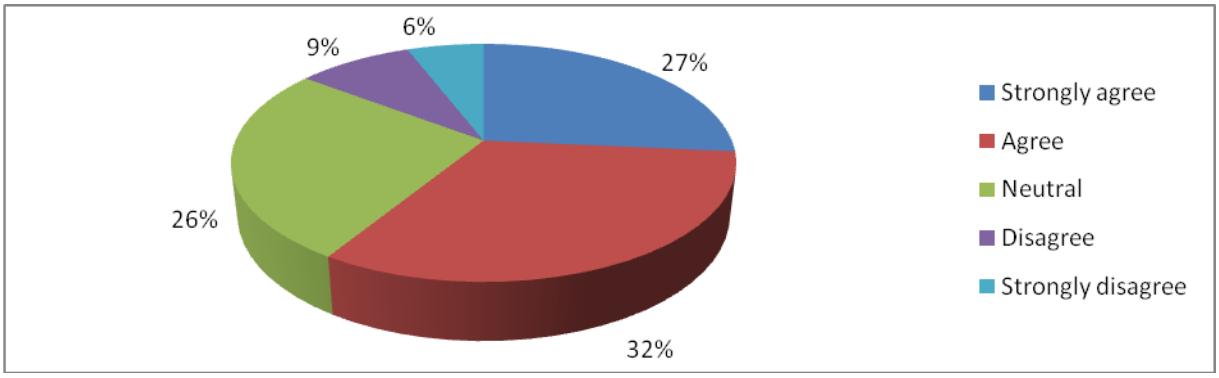
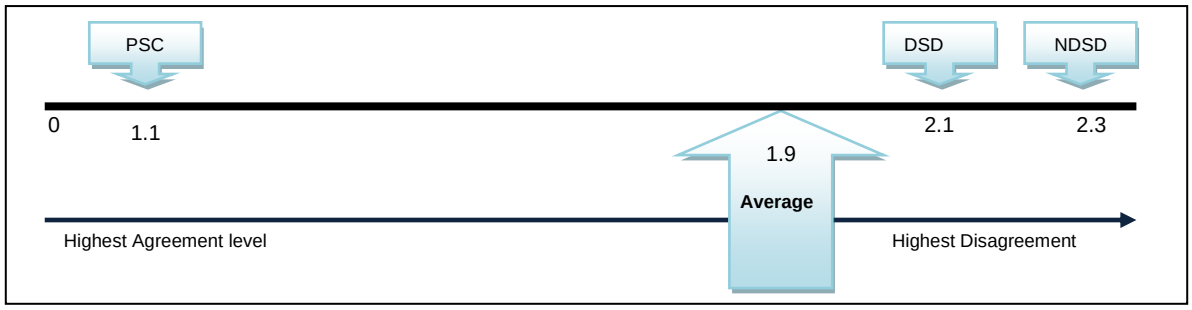


Figure 7.20(b): Distribution of responses as a percentage



The Figure above indicates that at the aggregated level 57% agree, with 15% disagreeing, whilst a high 26% are neutral. The strongest alignment to the statement came from the PSC (63.6%), followed by the DSD (61.5%). There is no clear pattern from the NDSD response. The weighted averages below provide more insight into the levels of agreement with this statement.

Figure 7.20(c): Weighted average



The weighted averages above shows that the average agreement level was 1.9, with the strongest agreement coming from the PSC, which as previously mentioned has consistently seen M&E as adding value. The DSD and NDSD fall outside the 2 range, at 2.1 and 2.3 respectively, and this indicates a less certain position on the value proposition that one might have expected.

In summary, the following observations may be made with regards to the question of M&E effectiveness within a department. Effectiveness is a complex concept, and cannot only be looked at from the side of how effective something is perceived to be. It also requires insights from critical users, such as the executive management, which in this case would be the DG and his/her DGs. These perceptions are captured in the individual interviews that were conducted.

In terms of the general perception of how effective M&E is, it was found that there is no consensus on some key aspects of the M&E effectiveness question from the DSD cohort. The PSC has consistently provided an optimistic picture of the value added by M&E. The DSD response is nuanced, which indicates that there is no consensus on the value added by the M&E unit within the department itself, and may indicate that issues of integration and independence have not been adequately addressed. Therefore, whilst there is a functioning M&E in the DSD, managers are not fully clear about how it should, or does work.

7.8 ASSESSMENT OF THE MANAGERIAL ROLE IN PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE

This section assesses the views of respondents on how they see management as a promoter of good governance. It does so by identifying factors and aspects that are within the control of management, and which if executed properly, contribute to good governance. This assertion is made in light of the fact that government policy in the country and the literature on the subject generally behoves managers to operate in a transparent manner, acknowledge clients and work with stakeholders, facilitate organisational learning, ensure that there is accountability for work done, and make decisions that comply with law. These attributes may be regarded as the drivers of sound management, which more specifically relate to the following, and which are assessed by the respondents.

a) Information management and its contribution to transparency and accountability.
b) Compliance with the PAJA when making decisions.
c) A proactive stance when engaging with external stakeholders. This will be elaborated upon in the next chapter which looks at community and participatory M&E.
d) The use of M&E for accountability purposes.
e) The use of M&E for learning purposes.
f) The perception of the PSC Public Service M&E system to the departments own management effectiveness.
g) The promotion of an inclusive culture within a department, in terms of making managers feel that they contribute to the good governance of the department.

There is a broad purview of issues that fall within the good governance equation, and there must be an acceptance that managers operate within the confines of these imperatives, and not in an arbitrary manner. Similarly, the intention and practice of engaging with external stakeholders, considered in chapter 8, is a further dimension for assessing good governance

as it indicates the willingness of management to engage in a participatory process to deliver its services, and receive critical feedback from key external constituencies. Thus the statements posed here are important to judge what views are held on the subject, and assessing the gradation of these becomes an important indicator for views of the aspect, and secondly points to how the aspect is viewed in the three locales assessed in this thesis.

7.8.1 The role of information management and its relationship to M&E, transparency and accountability, and organisational learning

The issue of information and its use and abuse has already been discussed in this thesis. It was argued that the absence of transparency around information, which was the manner in which control was exercised by the pre-apartheid Public Service, assisted in maintaining the status quo. It has been demonstrated in the last chapter that several mandatory reporting requirements behoves departments to make a minimum set of performance information available for broader consumption, and this has helped in ensuring that external role players and stakeholders receive a minimum level of performance information. Whilst much has been said about the importance of information management, and its importance to organisational learning, it appears that this relationship is often not clear (Marra, 2000). The first statement posed is whether information management in departments is seen as contributing to transparency and accountability.

Figure 7.21(a): Level of agreement with statement "Information management in the department contributes to transparency and accountability" (in %)

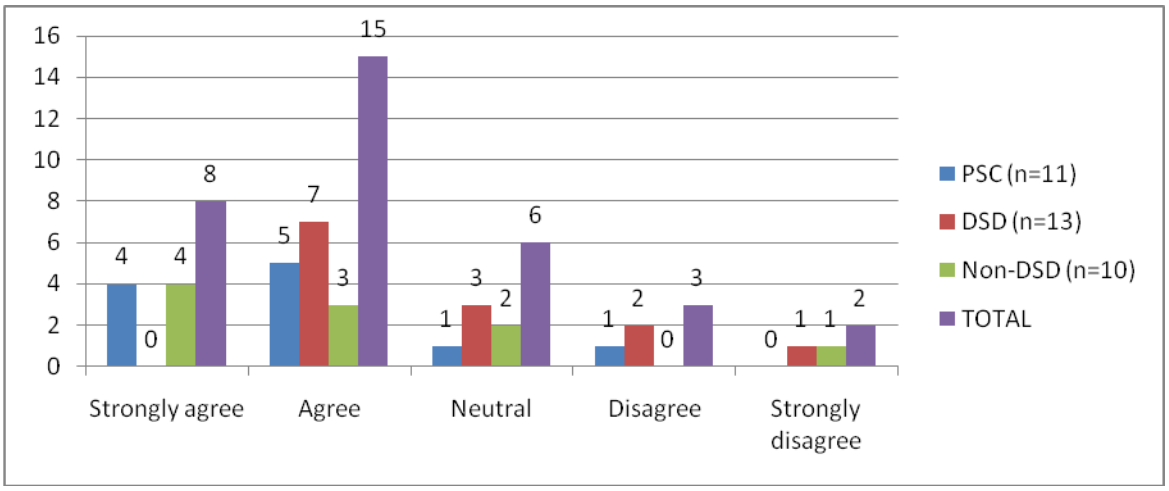
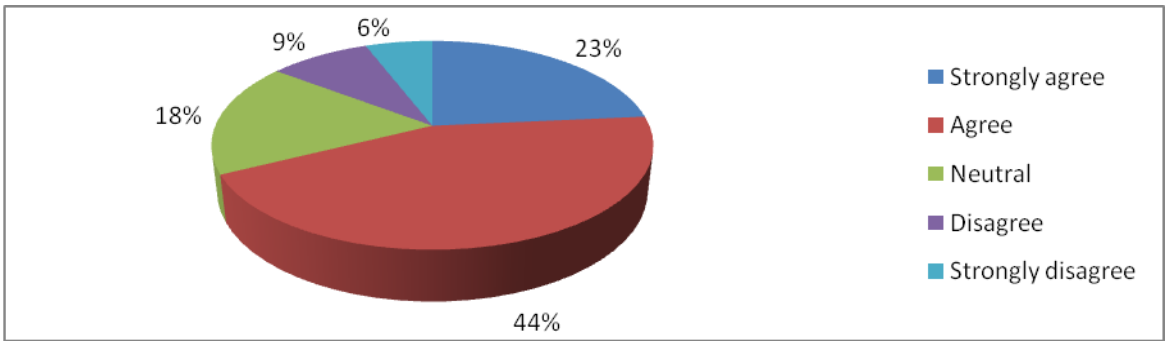
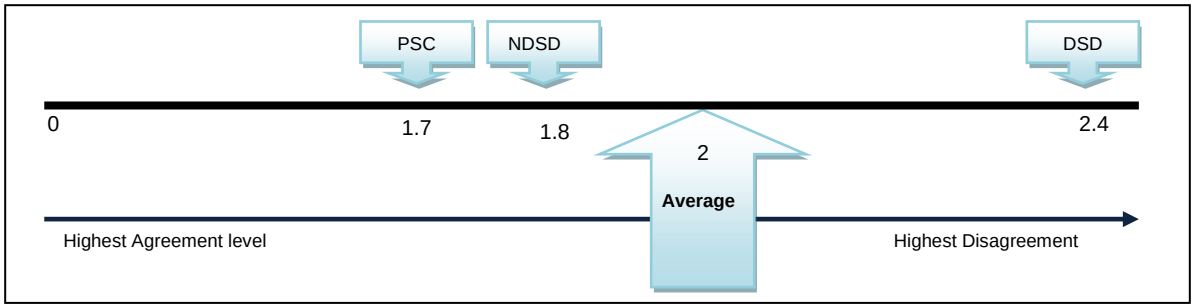


Figure 7.21(b): Distribution of responses as a percentage



The aggregated results indicate that 67% of respondents agree with the statement, whilst 18% are neutral and 15% disagree. This shows that two-thirds of the respondents see the link between information management and transparency and accountability. One would have assumed that this relationship would have been stronger, but it may point to a question of the understanding that currently exists on issues of information management and its contribution to good governance. It has been pointed out in the literature that knowledge management within organisations remains weak, and this result probably reflects this situation.

Figure 7.21(c): Weighted average



Only in looking at the results of the weighted averages does a more critical picture emerge. The average is 2, with the agreement decreasing from that point, with the PSC at 1.7 and NDSD at 1.8. The DSD cohort shows a level above 2, meaning that it agrees the least, and probably closer to the disagreement level. This result shows that the PSC recognises the link, as does the NDSD, but at the DSD where there is an operational M&E the link is not appreciated or as clear. This probably indicates a general lack of understanding amongst managers of the relationship, or it shows that the M&E unit within the DSD has not managed to communicate to the extent that this has become a common understanding amongst managers. It may also be a factor related to the relatively junior management cohort at the DSD which has not had adequate exposure to such issues, and thus does not feel strongly about the issue.

In pursuing the question, respondents were asked to rate what they saw as the relationship between M&E and its use for accountability purposes.

Figure 7.22(a): Level of agreement with statement "The department sees M&E information as being necessary for accountability purposes" (in %)

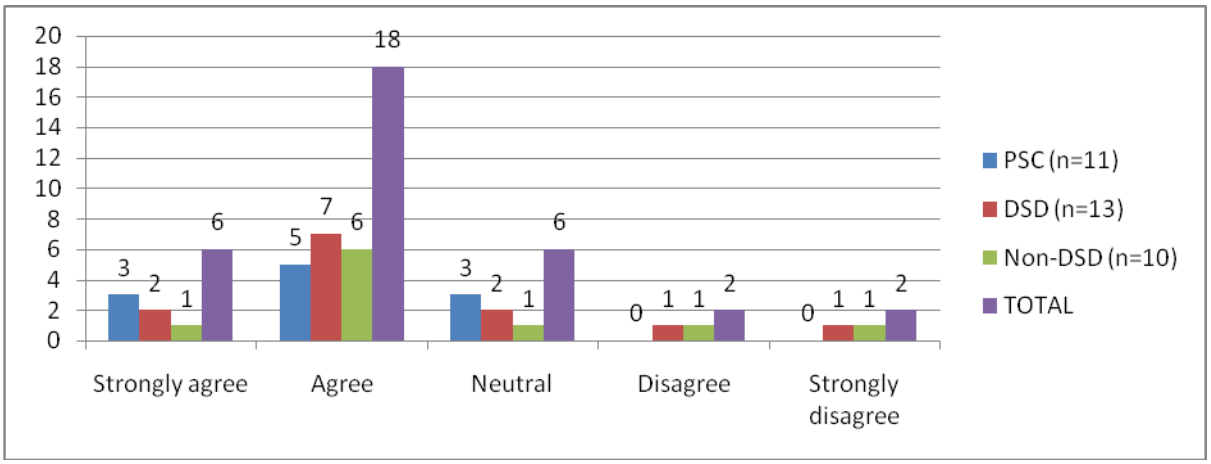
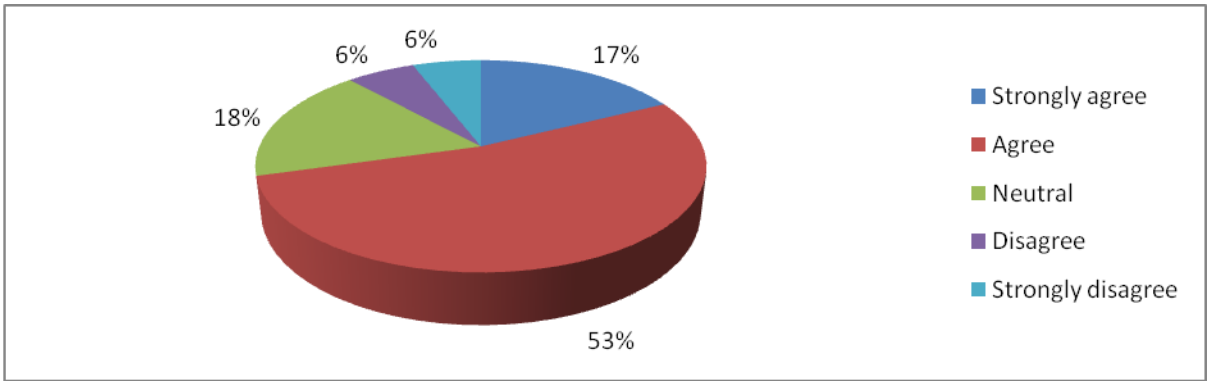
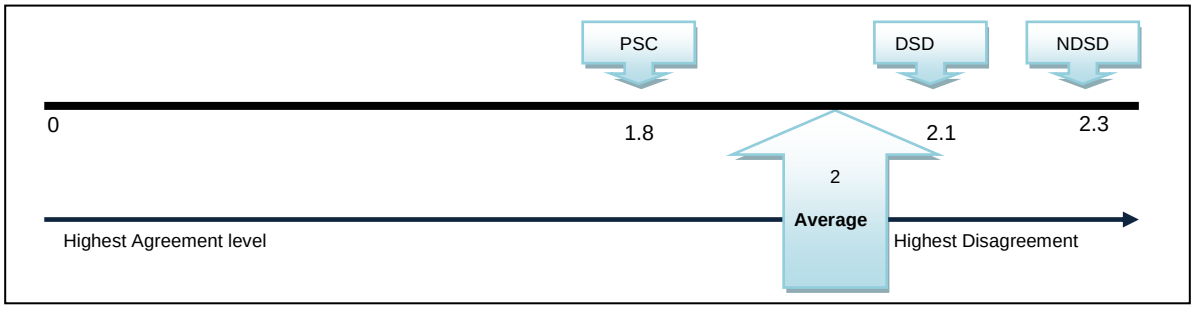


Figure 7.22(b): Distribution of responses as a percentage



In terms of this statement, it was found that 70% agreed that there was a strong relationship between the two, with 18% being neutral and 12% disagreeing. The disaggregated results reflected in the weighted average below, indicates a variation across the cohorts.

Figure 7.22(c): Weighted average



The weighted averages indicate a strong pull towards the average of 2 from the PSC (1.8). However, the level of agreement weakens when it comes to the DSD (2.1) and the NDSD (2.3). This indicates that the agreement is not as strong when it comes to the case study of the DSD, where it is more than 2, than the PSC. The PSC once again agrees with the relationship, whereas the intra-departmental differentiation within the DSD becomes more apparent, resulting in it scoring at 2.1. This result for the DSD is similar to that found on a related issue of the relationship between information management and transparency and accountability where it was 2.4.

Figure 7.23(a): Level of agreement with statement "The department sees M&E information as being useful for learning purposes" (in %)

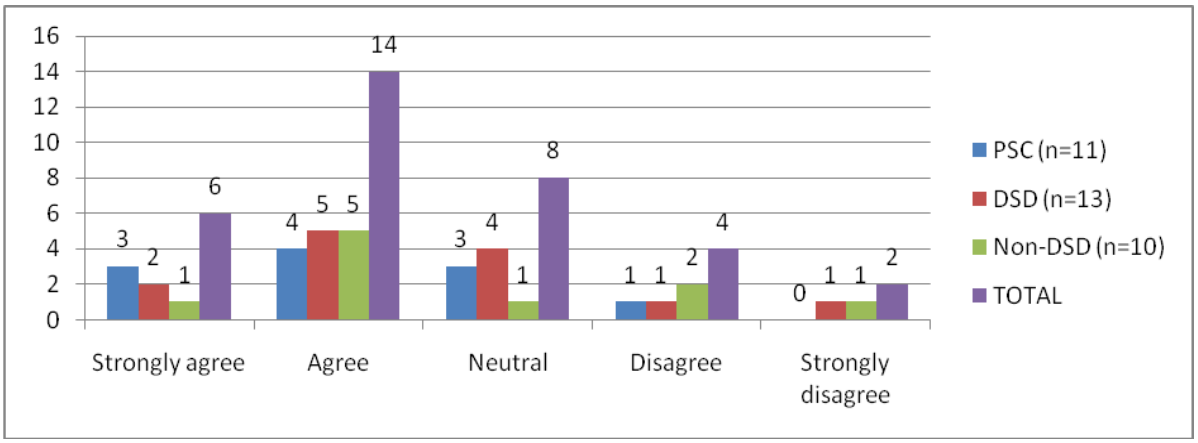
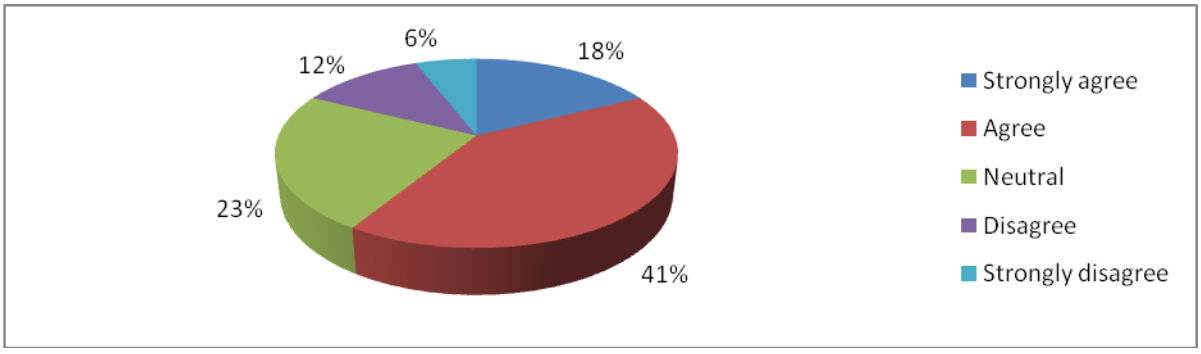


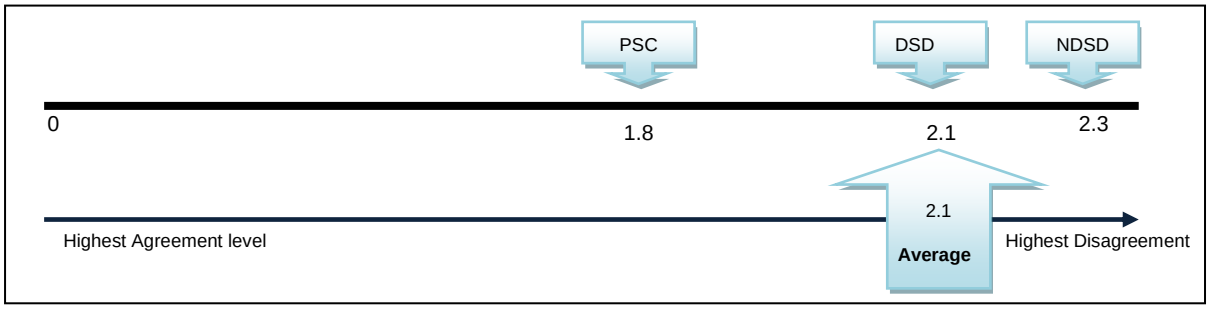
Figure 7.23(b): Distribution of responses as a percentage



Respondents were asked to assess whether their departments saw M&E as being useful for learning purposes. The importance of M&E in contributing to learning has been established in the theoretical chapter, where it was indicated that M&E should not just be about accountability and transparency, but also learning (Engel and Carlesson, 2002). The caution raised by Marra (2000) is that the link between knowledge generation and utilisation is not clear, and this question attempts to establish how this relationship is viewed.

At the aggregated level it was found that the agreement level was 59%, with 23% being neutral and 18% disagreeing. At this level it can be concluded that the relationship between M&E and learning is not clear, and this probably reflects how knowledge is managed within the cohorts themselves. It may also indicate that in most instances the link between the two is not known. If one were to look at the relationships probed in terms of the link between M&E and accountability, it was much stronger. The weighted averages provide a clear picture of the agreement levels.

Figure 7.23(c): Weighted average



The Figure indicates the strongest agreement from the PSC, which was close to the average of 2.1. The level of 2 or more suggests a pull away from the zero level, and here again the DSD and NDSD are at 2.1 and 2.3 respectively. It indicates that when it comes to the DSD there is not a clear relationship established between M&E and learning (in percentage terms for the DSD the agreement level was 53%), indicating once again the lack of a well embedded M&E system within the DSD. Had the M&E within the DSD been more visible and shown and understood to be promoting learning (through seminars and other forms of dissemination), it would not have achieved a result of the NDSD, where there is no formal M&E. The PSC result probably once again reflects and ideal situation.

7.8.2 The perception by management of the PSC M&E system

Given that the main oversight system applied to departments is the Public Service M&E system, and the DSD performance against this system has been assessed in chapter 5. This assessment seeks to establish whether this system is viewed as valuable by the cohorts. It thus tests knowledge of the existence of the system, as well as whether in cases where it was applied, its perceived usefulness. The statement for response is thus one that seeks to establish whether an operational M&E system that is largely accountability driven, is regarded as valuable.

Figure 7.24(a): Level of agreement with statement "The PS M&E system of the PSC, which was implemented this year, produces a useful management report" (in %)

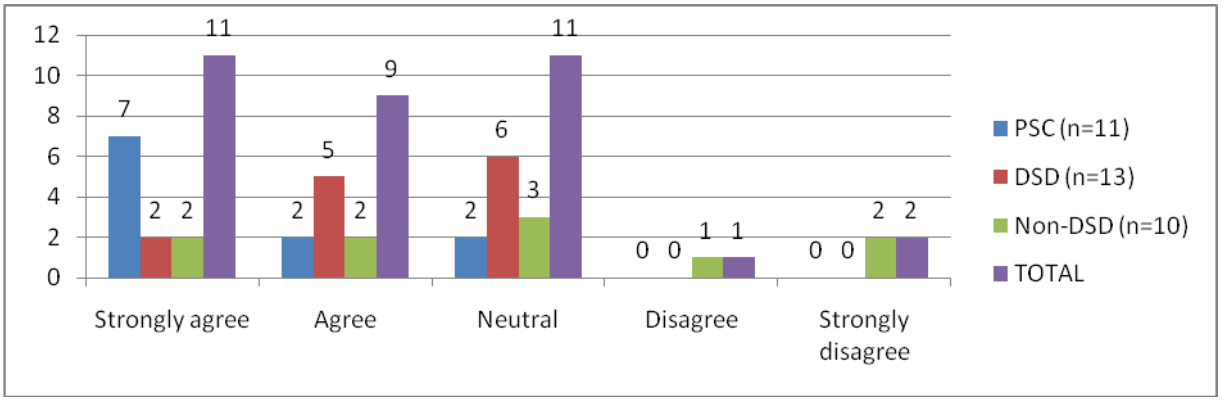
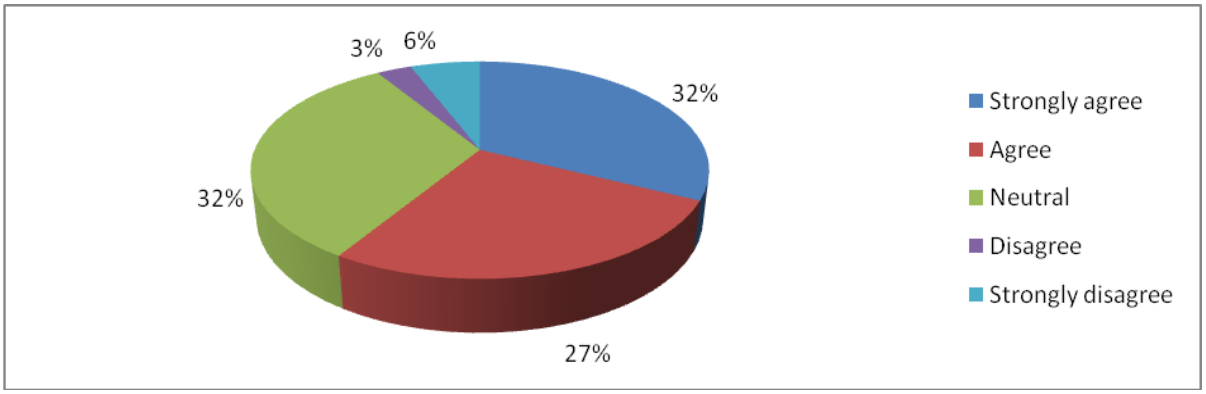


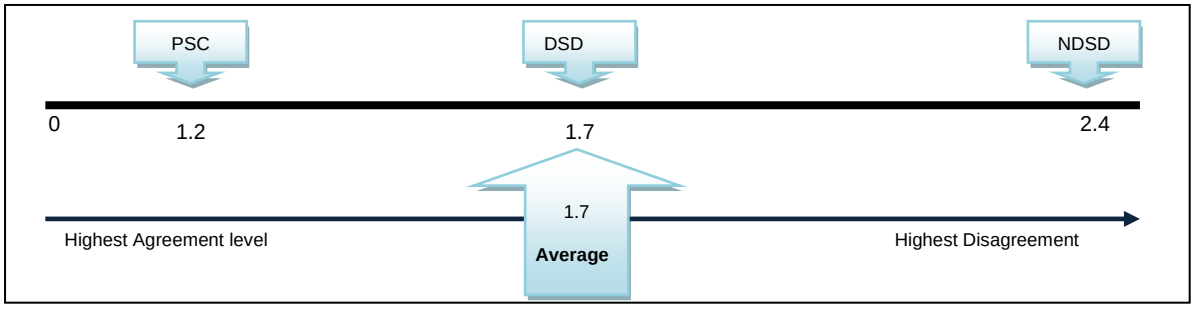
Figure 7.24(b): Distribution of responses as a percentage



At the aggregated level it was found that 59% of the respondents agreed with the statement, with a relatively high 32% being neutral and 9% disagreeing. Thus, less than 60% of the respondents either knew of or saw the PSC M&E system as being useful. This is against the background of a system that was operational for 8 years (at the time of this survey), and which has produced over 100 departmental reports, and 5 Consolidated reports, most of which are accessible on the website of the PSC, and which have been referred to in several oversight reports. This result confirms the findings of an impact assessment of the work of the PSC conducted independently, which showed that at key levels of society there was little understanding of the work of the PSC[24]. The disaggregated picture reflected in the weighted averages below gives a more detailed picture of the relative levels of understanding of the work of the PSC.

[24] Public Service Commission. 2009b. An assessment of the impact of the work of the PSC on policy. Republic of South Africa.

Figure 7.24(c): Weighted average



The PSC predictably agreed with the statement the most, at 1.2, which is better than the average of 1.7. The DSD shows a lesser level of understanding, but as it is below 2, it still falls in to the agreement level. This result may have been influenced by the timing of the survey, which was just after the results of the PSM&ES was presented to the management of the department, and at which time this research was also made known. Had this not been the case it can be assumed that, in light of the other results on the M&E of the DSD, the level of understanding and value would probably have been lower. The NDSD cohort shows a high level of disagreement (2.4), and probably indicates that outside the PSC and the DSD, which was under assessment, very little is known about the work of the PSC generally, or this system specifically.

7.8.3 The perception by management of compliance with the PAJA

Another important element of management is the quality of decision-making, which can be assessed using the steps in the PAJA as benchmarks for sound decision-making. The statement posed was whether respondents saw managers as making decisions in terms of this normative framework.

Figure 7.25(a): Level of agreement with statement "Managers exercise decisions in terms of prevailing legislation and regulation, and thus comply with the PAJA" (in %)

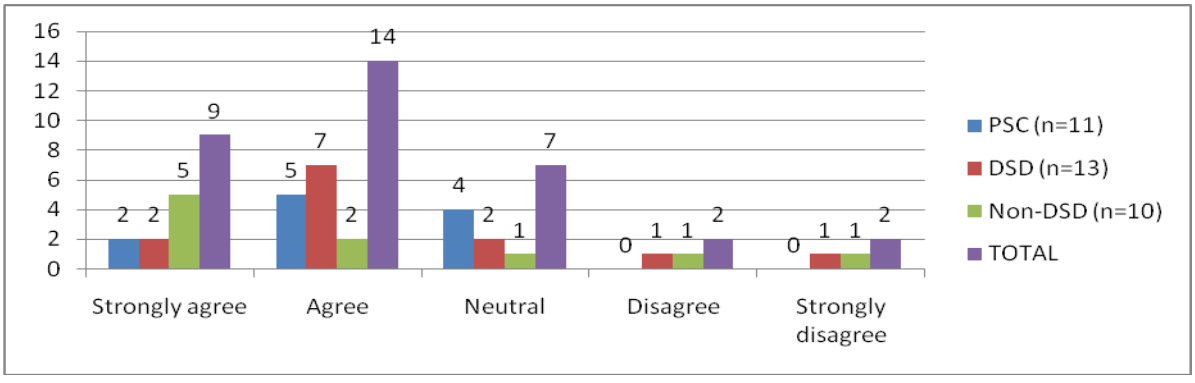
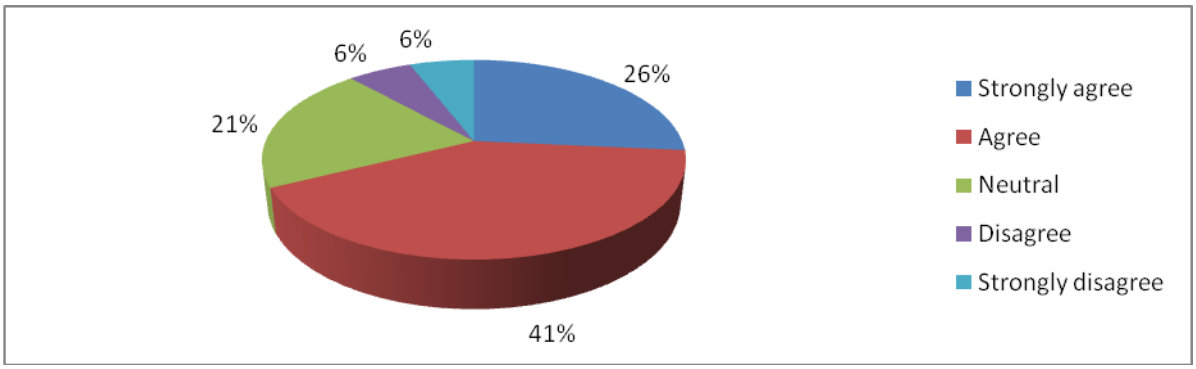
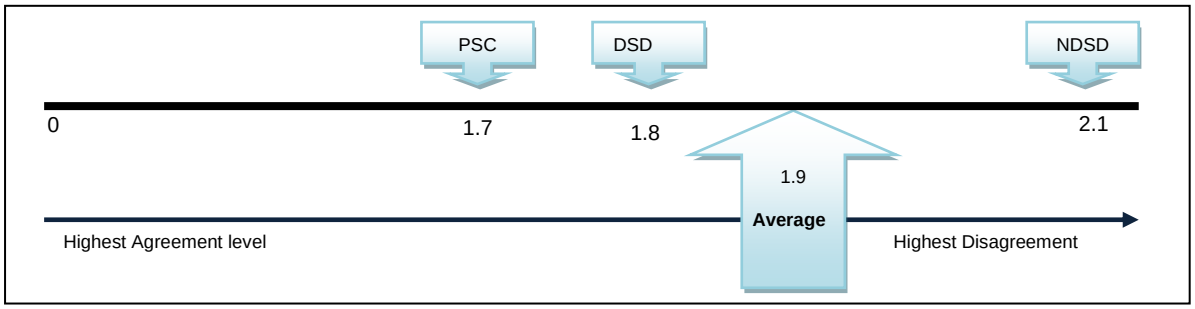


Figure 7.25(b): Distribution of responses as a percentage



At the aggregated level it was found that 67% of the respondents saw the ideal situation as being true in practice, with 21% neutral and 12% disagreeing. Thus two-thirds of the sample saw management exercising their roles within the confines of law.

Figure 7.25(c): Weighted average



In looking at the weighted averages, the picture varies slightly. The average agreement level is 1.9, with the PSC and DSD being slightly above that, at 1.7 and 1.8, respectively. The NDSD was more sceptical and posted a result of 2.1. Generally, however, it seems that there is no problem with how managers are perceived in terms of exercising their decision-making responsibilities, which augurs well for good governance. However, assessments conducted by the PSC using the PSM&ES have shown that the quality of decision-making at an aggregated level is not good, when assessed against the criteria for PAJA. This result from the survey must then be noted as being perception based, and indicative, rather than definitive. The PSC results, against the widespread maladministration reporting in the media are probably indicative that decision-making is indeed not as transparent and accountable as it should be.

7.8.4 Engagement between the DSD and external stakeholders

An important element of management and good governance is the ability to engage with stakeholders. The statement presented to respondents sought to establish whether

management took a proactive stance in engaging with external stakeholders. The issue of engagement with stakeholders is important in that it shows the willingness of the department to engage, which then becomes another influence for enhancing the quality of governance. When there is public participation in the affairs of a department, it is more likely that issues of social relevance will be taken on board by the management.

Figure 7.26(a): Level of agreement with statement "The department takes a proactive stance when it comes to engaging with external stakeholders" (in %)

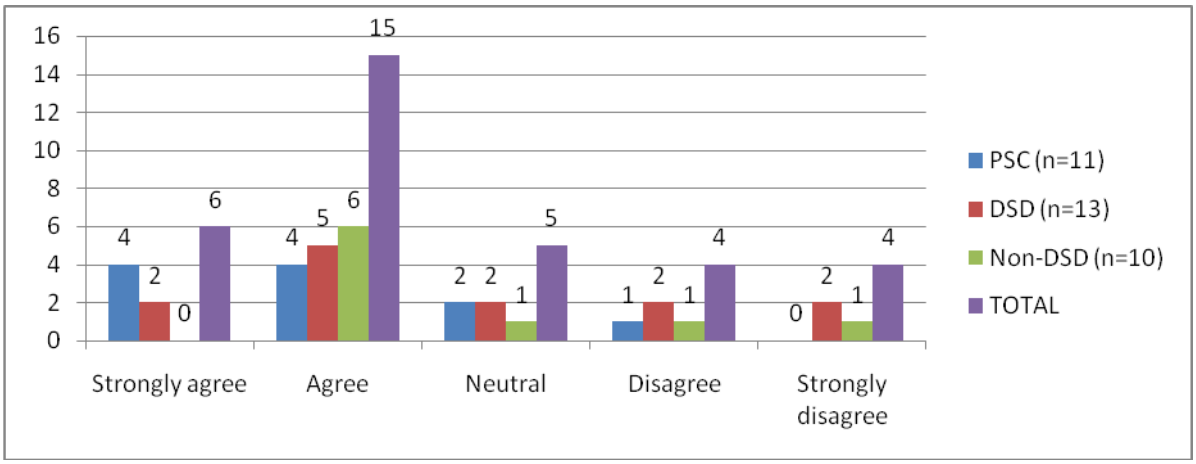
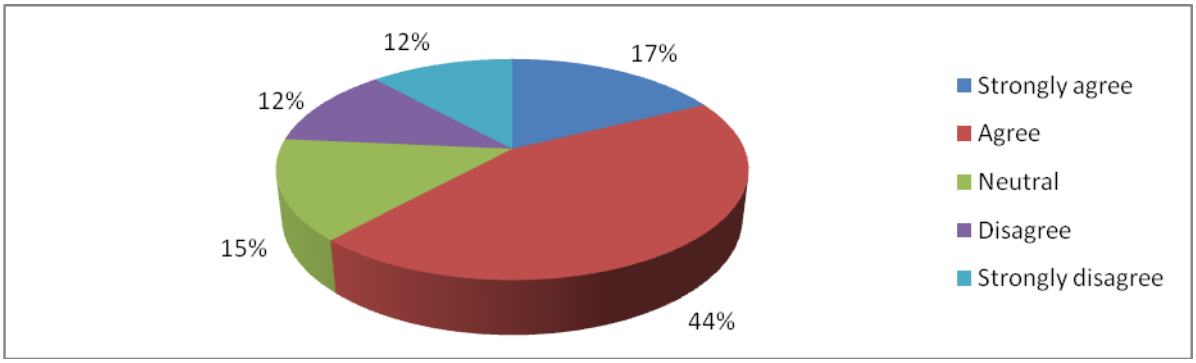
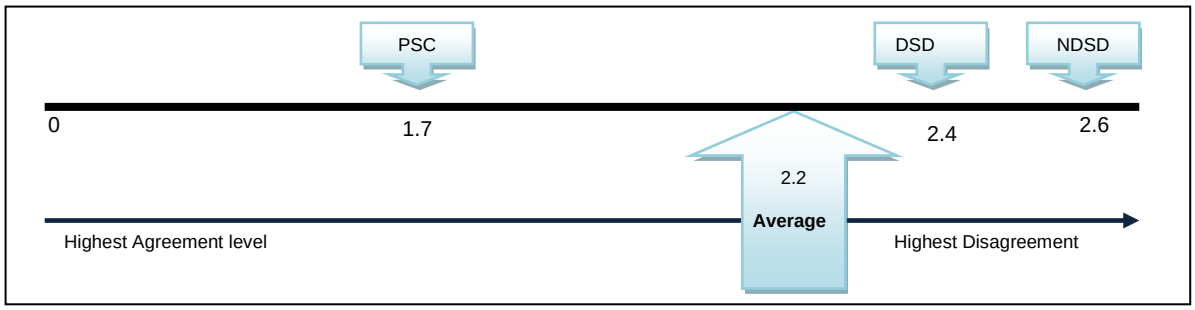


Figure 7.26(b): Distribution of responses as a percentage



At the aggregated level a very uneven picture emerged. It was found that just 61% of the respondents agreed that an external stakeholder process occurred in practice, with 15% being neutral and 24% disagreeing with the statement. It can thus be surmised that the issue of engagement with external stakeholders is either not perceived to be important, or not happening as it should. This result goes against policy statement of government which calls for civil society engagement with the work of the public service. In practice it appears not be a key consideration of the work of departments. This element will be probed in detail in chapter 7, where the entire department-stakeholder engagement will be assessed in more detail. The disaggregated results are important, and show further trends that have already been established.

Figure 7.26(c): Weighted average



It can be seen that the average for this element is 2.2, with the PSC being the closest to that average. However, the DSD and NDSD cohorts are above the 2 mark, at 2.4 and 2.6, respectively, probably indicating that there is very little or inadequate engagement with stakeholders from the side of management. The result from the next chapter which will look more exclusively at how the DSD engages with stakeholders will be compared to this result.

7.8.5 Collectivism of management

The issue of ownership of the management process is important. As indicated, management is not a homogenous grouping, but rather differentiated into ranks, with different levels of power and authority. The purpose of this section is to see whether management operates as a collective or not, as it will reflect whether decision-making only resides in the top levels, or is spread more across the management level. The question was thus posed to see whether managers saw themselves as a part of the collective, and whether they saw there was space within their organisations to engage as a management collective. If the latter occurs, it is an indicator of good governance in that it shows that there are participatory management processes, in which case there is more likely to be management buy-in to issues of oversight and following good governance prescripts.

Figure 7.27(a): Level of agreement with statement "As a manager, I feel a part of the management processes and feel that I can contribute to the good governance of the department" (in %)

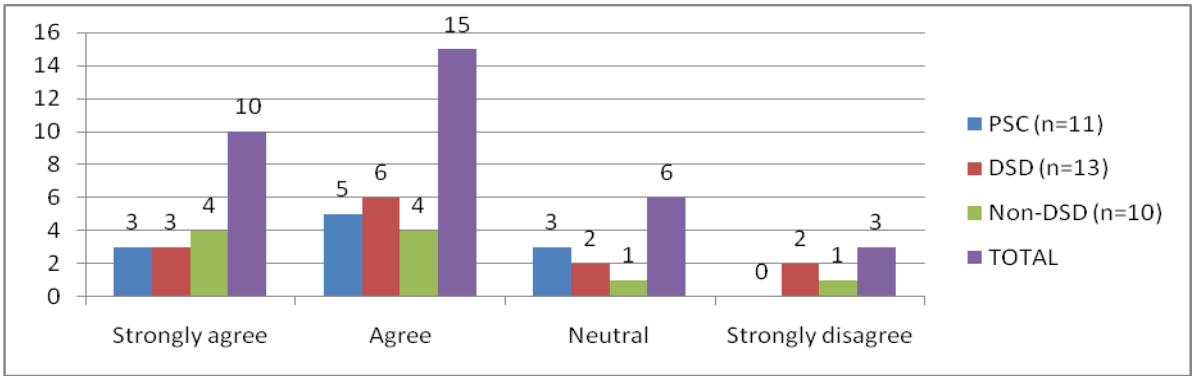
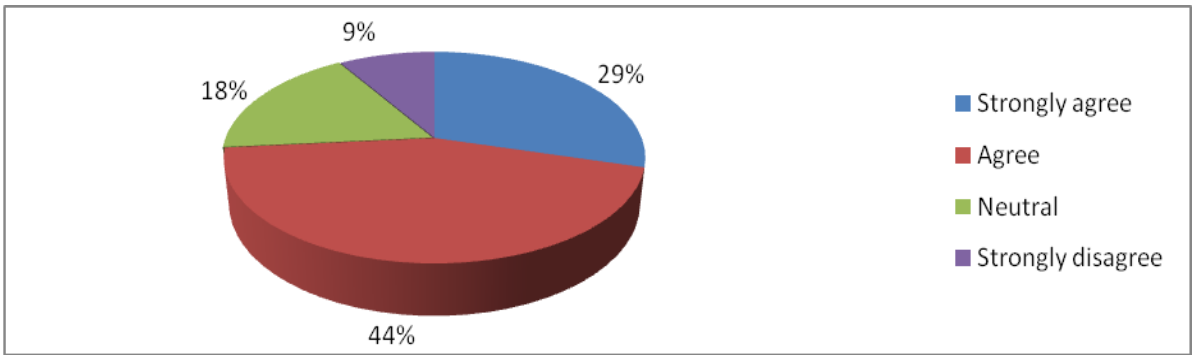
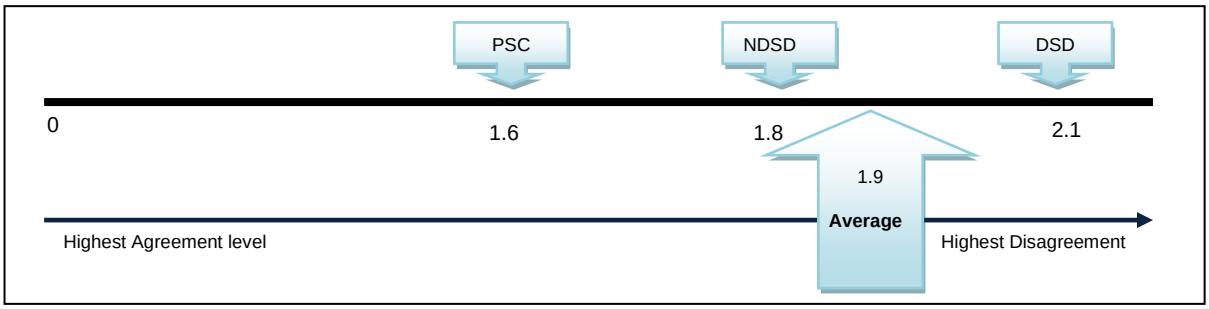


Figure 7.27(b): Distribution of responses as a percentage



At the aggregated level it was found that 73% of the respondents agreed with the statement, whilst 18% were neutral and 9% disagreed. The disaggregated results indicate differences to this picture, when looking at the three cohorts.

Figure 7.27(c): Weighted averages



The above Figure indicates that the overall agreement level was 1.9, which below 2 shows a relatively high level of agreement level across the three cohorts. In disaggregating the result, it can be seen that the strongest agreement was from the PSC, at 1.6, followed by the NDSD (1.8) and then the DSD (2.1). It is interesting to note that whilst the DSD scored favourably at other levels, many respondents did not see the management as promoting as much collective and participatory processes, as in other cohorts. This finding ties up with other findings on how DSD staff view management.

7.9 ASSESSMENT OF M&E CAPACITY

A critical element of M&E effectiveness, relates to the capacity of persons who lead, manage and implement M&E to do so optimally. As the literature has indicated, there are several aspects that must be considered when setting-up and implementing an M&E system. As the literature review in chapter 2 has shown, M&E in South Africa has a particular bent which requires it to also meet the transformational agenda of the developmental State, support

democracy by reinforcing transparency by ensuring that public performance information is put into the public domain, and thus support the accountability framework, and also consciously look at the question of evaluation use, or utility. There are several requirements of M&E practitioners (to include leaders, managers and operational M&E persons), and whilst this study has not set out to explicitly assess the quality of training offered, and the impact thereof, the following should be points of consideration when identifying training needs. This is expressed in the form of a Table which indicates M&E thrust, training requirement or body of knowledge expected of incumbent, and possible outcomes should this be realised.

Table 7.3: M&E thrust, body of knowledge and skills required and potential value

M&E thrust	Body of knowledge and skills required	Potential value
M&E supports a transformational agenda	Understanding of political, State/government relations, ability to understand decision-making processes	Practitioner attuned to political and administrative landscape, operationalise M&E to achieve maximum impact, understands need for achieving utility through M&E
M&E supports democracy	Understanding of the concepts of transparency, accountability, public participation, empowerment	Ability to work in knowledge management terrain, understanding of issues of independence, ability to negotiate, work with stakeholders
M&E for utility	Ability to work with stakeholders to produce cogent proposal for assessments that seek to effect change	Understand need to do utilisation–focused evaluations, see M&E as being potentially transformational
Sophisticated communication	Able to work with multiple information sources and mediums to improve the impact of M&E	Ability to produce differentiated M&E, which caters for diverse audiences
Technical competence in M&E	Understand and be able to work confidently with M&E tools and methods	Provide credible M&E, establish respect for the M&E function, advance M&E as a practice

It should be remembered that acquiring M&E capacity is a process of life-long learning, and experiential. Given the relatively short time-span that M&E has been in operation both in the country and the DSD, it can be assumed that there has probably not been sufficient experiential learning in M&E. Apart from the two SAMEA events held in 2007 and 2009, and a few topical and regional events, there has been little exposure to M&E training at the

national conference level. The SAMEA website offers links and resources, but this is for members only, and the number registered is just 500, although the M&E community is probably much larger, if one were to take into account that not all M&E practitioners are SAMEA members. A quick survey of staff within the PSC showed that less than 20% of staff who conduct M&E was in fact registered SAMEA board members, and this is in an organisation which has a MoU with SAMEA.[25]

One must also consider that the now called PALAMA has produced a curriculum framework for capacity building for M&E within the South African government[26]. The framework is based on a Cabinet decision to approve the roll-out of the GWM&ES, the underlying purpose of which is to improve government and service delivery. To this end the SAMDI initiated a project on curriculum development, as required by the Governance and Administration PoA cluster (sub-grouping that takes Cabinet priorities forward). The purpose of the document has been to "outline the boundaries, principles and guidelines, concepts, values and practices to be taken into account when designing, developing and presenting learning solutions for M&E in South Africa"[27]. The eventual purpose of the programme is to provide accredited training on M&E on a massified scale. The training would be offered on four levels, introductory, intermediate, advanced and expert, and in terms of the provision model, delivered by different accredited service providers across the country, with PALAMA, co-ordinating the programme and ensuring quality control. Each of the programmes has been organised according to themes.

An assessment by the researcher of the roll-out of the aforementioned reveals that it has not been massified as envisaged, and the results of participant assessment, whilst requested by the researcher have not been provided. This probably indicates a reluctance to make public the implementation reality of the M&E training offered by the PALAMA.

In light of the limited penetration that the PALAMA M&E training has had on the actual and potential M&E community within government, other training opportunities, such as short courses by service providers, courses offered by universities, attendance of seminars and conferences would have to be considered as the supply side for M&E capacity building. Thus far no assessment has been made of M&E courses offered in South Africa, but interviews with four SAMEA Board Members, one current and three former (October 2009,

[25] See the website of the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association, www.samea.org.
[26] South African Management Development Institute. 2007. Capacity Building for Monitoring and Evaluation within the South African Government. Republic of South Africa.
[27] *Ibid.*

Personal Interviews) suggest that it is being considered seriously within tertiary institutions, but the most advanced thus far has been in the course offered by the University of Stellenbosch. Data from this institution suggest a growing demand from government departments since the course was initiated in 2005. Evidence from the DSD suggests that this was well managed in terms of M&E, with staff being offered regular exposure to M&E training. In terms of international events, the costs are probably prohibitive and only few, high level staff are likely to attend. No study has been done of exposure that M&E staff in departments has had of such events.

The other level of exposure to M&E comes from participating in the M&E forum managed by the Presidency. However, this event has taken the form of knowledge sharing, largely around the work of the Presidency with regards to M&E, and the exposure is limited to representatives from central departments. It cannot thus be considered as a capacity building initiative.

Finally, exposure to M&E as a discipline probably comes the most from PSC reports. The most explicit foray in the field of M&E capacity building must come from the PSC`s work on its Basic Concepts in M&E[28], which has been distributed to all departments in the country, and which at a basic level illustrates how M&E works in the country. In light of the above one can surmise that the capacity building initiatives for M&E have been largely informal, and exposure to training is not mandatory but comes from the particular priority and value given to it from particular departments. The PALAMA initiative for providing M&E training is still in a developmental phase, and appears to have petered out since is much publicised launch in 2007. In light of this background, it would be useful to see what level of exposure managers and their subordinates have had of M&E training, as broadly defined above.

It has been shown that apart from M&E needing to be properly institutionalised, staff need to be competent in both qualitative and quantitative techniques (Mackay, 2006). The process of building capacity is long term, but requires specific interventions, as shown by Boyle and Lemaire (1999). This is often overlooked in public sector organisations, which McDonald *et al* (2003) indicate as critical for sustainable and effective M&E systems. Given the importance of building M&E capacity, responses were sought from managers on the M&E training they and their subordinates received. This provides an indication of the commitment given to capacity building in M&E, as well as whether relevant skills are present. For the three cohorts it shows what the commitment levels are to providing training.

[28] Public Service Commission. 2008a. Basic Concepts in Monitoring and Evaluation. Republic of South Africa.

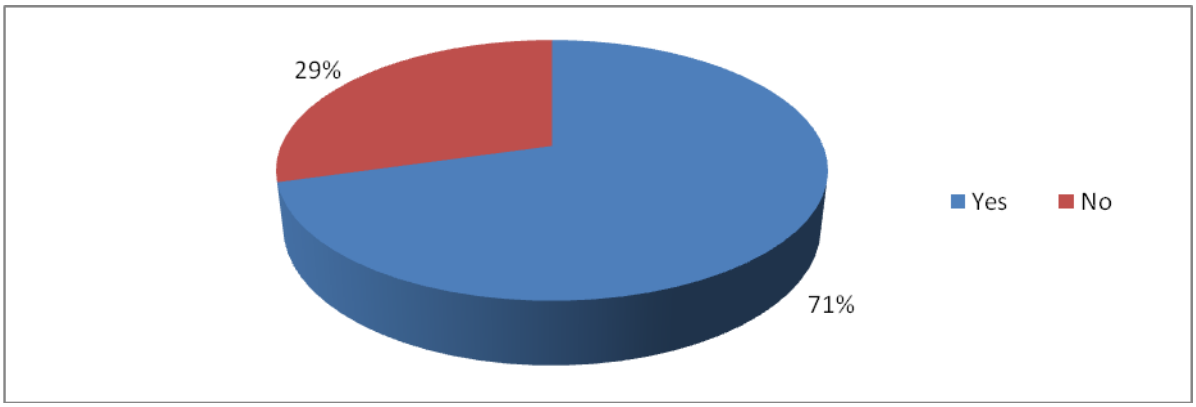
7.9.1 M&E training attended by managers

The first question asked of all three cohorts was whether they had attended any M&E training workshop in the past 7 years. This may appear to be quite an extensive historic time-line, but given that most of the M&E development has taken place in the country since around 2002, as noted in the conceptual part of this study, such a time-line was viewed as reasonable. Furthermore, there is no central authority for M&E training in the country. However, the PALAMA has claimed this function.

It has not managed to prevent training being sought from other service providers, or imbued confidence in government M&E people, to be sought. M&E capacity building may thus be viewed as something that takes place when it is sought personally, offered departmentally or when there is some invitation to an individual. The state of M&E training provision in the country remains underdeveloped, with very few tertiary institutions offering accredited M&E training.

The Figure below indicates that at the aggregated level 71% of the respondents attended some form of M&E training during this period. The disaggregated results in Figure 6.28(b) indicate a somewhat different picture.

Figure 7.28(a): Distribution of responses as a percentage

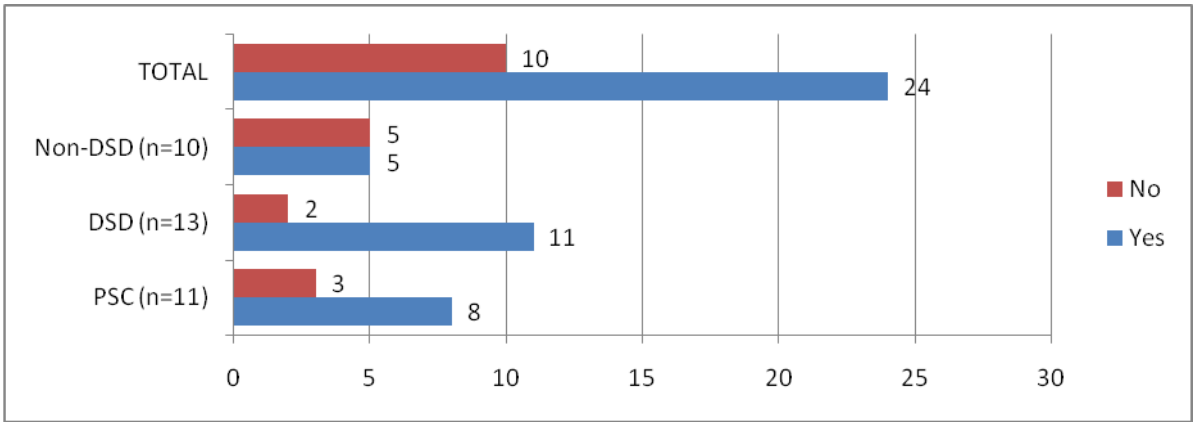


From the Figure below, it can be seen that the highest training opportunities were given to staff at the DSD, with 85% having received some form of training. At the PSC the percentage is 73%, and in the NDSD cohort it is 50%. The results of the DSD were probed by specific interviews with managers from the M&E unit[29], as well as an assessment of the

[29] Personal interviews were held with managers, and the discussion was recorded in writing, with interviewees promised anonymity. The interviews focused on their appraisal of the need for training,

Annual Reports, wherein training has to be reported on. The results confirmed that the DSD has invested in significant M&E training, as evident from the training schedule provided. Most of the M&E training was provided by Dr. Ray Rist, who is acknowledged internationally as an M&E training expert.

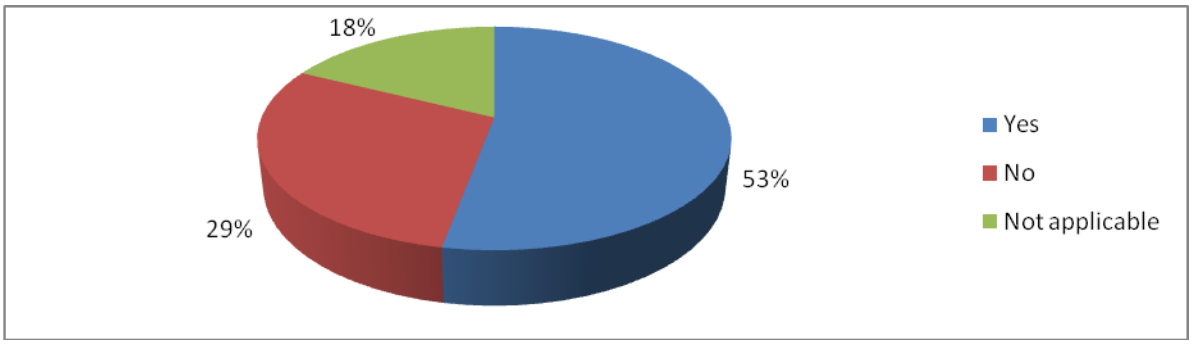
Figure 7.28(b): Whether respondent attended any training workshop in the past 7 years (in %)



7.9.2 M&E training attended by subordinates

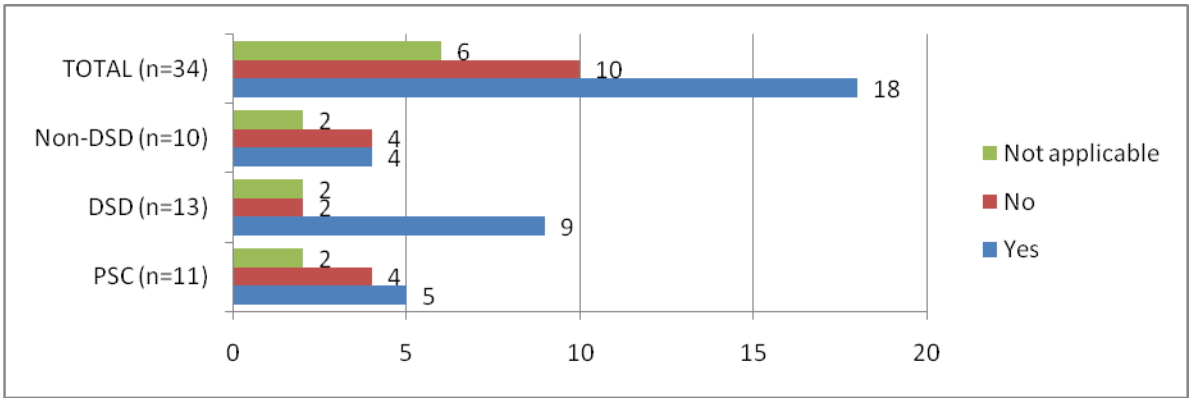
It was also important to establish what exposure subordinates had to training over the past 7 years, as this would indicate whether training was only confined to managers or whether these opportunities were shared with staff.

Figure 7.29(a): Distribution of responses as a percentage



The Figure above shows that at an aggregate level, 53% of managers did provide training to subordinates, 29% did not, and this was not applicable in 18% of the cases. Evidently, the training received by managers is significantly higher than what managers offer their subordinates. It reflects that training opportunities are concentrated at the management level, which may not augur well for developing skills across the organisation.

Figure 7.30(a): Whether staff of respondent (subordinated) attended any training workshop in the past 7 years (in %)



The above Figure disaggregates the results. In the case of the DSD, the greatest exposure to training by managers for their subordinates was offered, 69%. There is clearly an intention to ensure that staff received appropriate training, and that these opportunities are not confined to managers only. The result was probed by interviewing key staff from the M&E directorate of the DSD (Personal interview, CD and Director M&E, August 2009), who indicated that this was a priority and planned and budgeted for. An assessment of the attendance registers, programme and evaluation thereof shows that the DSD has received high quality training[30], and staff at all levels has been trained in M&E over the past 3 years. This is probably the only department in the country which has so purposefully addressed the question of building M&E capacity within its institution. This shows leadership support for M&E, and probably also reflects an acknowledgement of its value to the good governance of the department.

The result from the NDSD cohort is probably reflective of the situation across the country as a whole, where only 50% of subordinates received M&E training. It would probably appear that low exposure to training by managers probably leads them to being less likely to offer training opportunities to their subordinates, as they do not see the benefits. In terms of the PSC cohort, it was found that 45% of subordinates received training, against the 73% of managers at the institution who received M&E training themselves. Training here has been top-heavy, but the data may also reflect more that fact that the PSC as an institution is top-heavy.

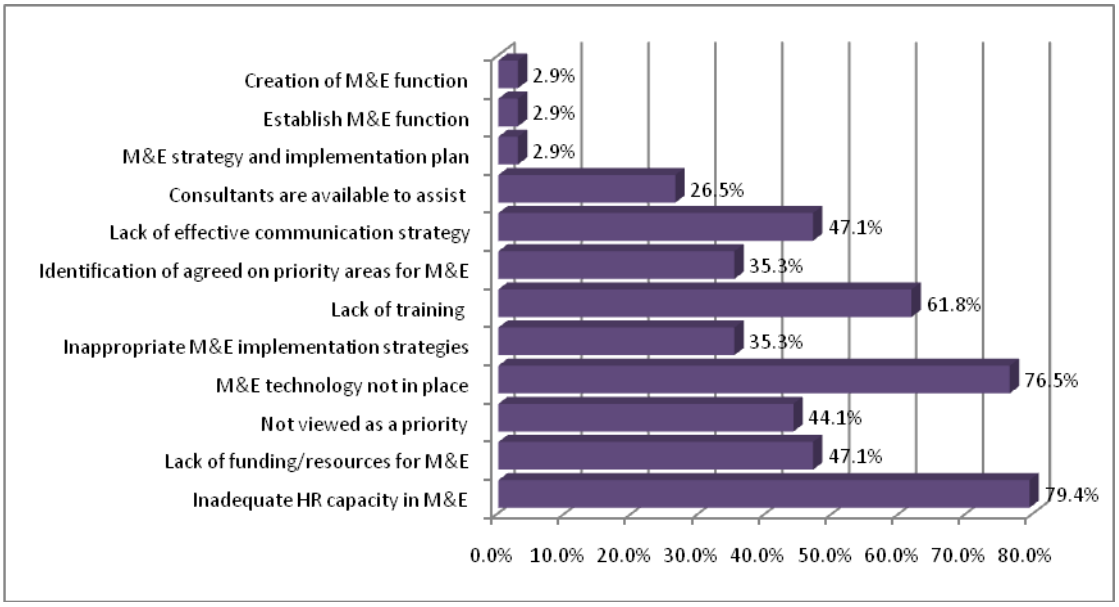
[30] Reports on the M&E training offered to the staff of the DSD are publically accessible. The courses are certified, are in line with the International Programme for Development Evaluation Training course offered. See www.ipdet.com.

The overall result shows that apart from the DSD where it has been a priority, and the PSC which does M&E work, there is little M&E training offered to most staff in the Public Service. The next section looks at the challenges faced in relation to M&E, at the departmental and country level.

7.9.3 Challenges in relation to M&E at the departmental level

Respondents were asked to indicate against a set of statements what they saw as the main challenges being experienced in M&E at their level. They were also afforded the opportunity to list challenges not on the list. All of these were then thematically classified, and the responses aggregated for departments in the country as a whole, and then disaggregated for the three cohorts.

Figure 7.31: Main challenges currently being experienced in relation to M&E in the department (in %): Multiple responses

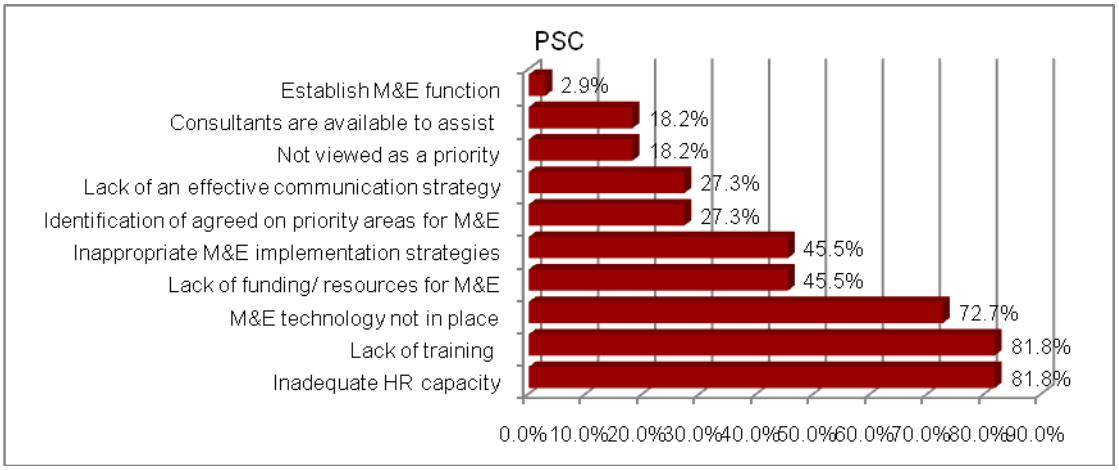


From the above Table it can be seen that the main challenges listed are that there is inadequate human resources capacity in M&E (79.4%), with the related question of the lack of training coming in at 62%. This result confirms the earlier assessment that there is limited to M&E training in the country, which whilst at the management level was 71%, was 53% for subordinates. This result probably also reflects the point made about the relatively late entrance to M&E of the country, which has only accelerated in uptake over the past 5 years, and the fact that the PALAMA promise of massified M&E training is yet to be realised.

The high frequency reflected in the result that the lack of M&E technology being in place (76.5%) is a challenge, is an interesting observation. The issue of M&E technology not being in place is interesting, and may reflect an understanding that M&E needs a strong technological platform, in which case it is probably seen as a "tool", more that an approach and strategy. This result indicates a somewhat limited understanding of what M&E is supposed to be, or do, and equates M&E with technology, rather than an embracing philosophy that seeks to support management in the pursuit of good governance. Falling in the 40% range are issues of the lack of an effective communication strategy for M&E (47.1%), the lack of funding/resources for M&E (47.1%) and M&E not being viewed as a priority (44.1%). Thus the main issues militating against an effective M&E function are those of capacity, resources, and the fact that the importance of M&E is not properly communicated, leading to it not being a priority. These results are confirmed by the literature which indicates that M&E capacity remains a key factor in determining M&E effectiveness, and which is dependent on issues of training and resources (Mackay, 1998).

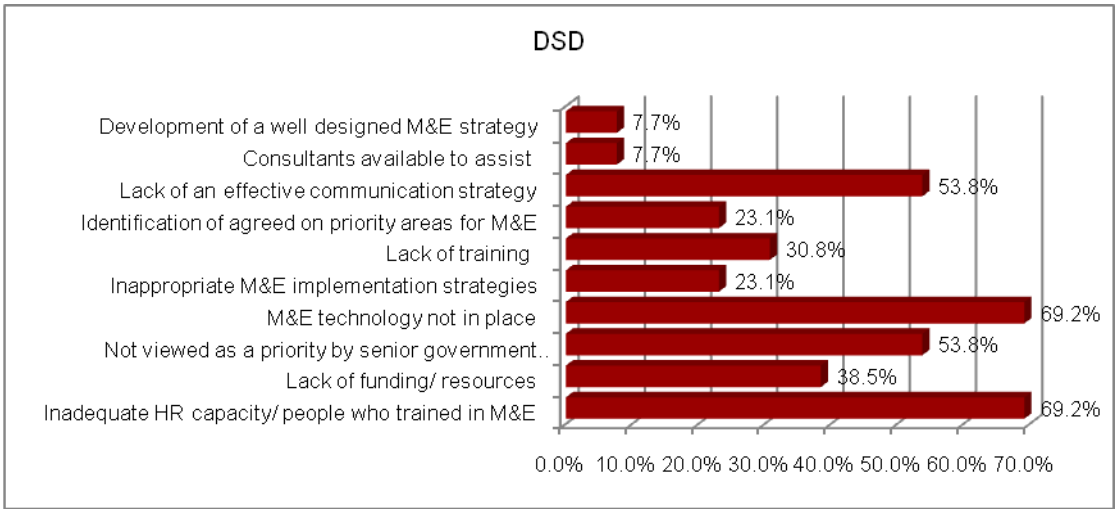
The discussion now looks at the disaggregated results of the cohorts, to see whether there are any significant variations to this pattern across the cohorts.

Figure 7.31(a): Main challenges currently being experienced in relation to M&E in the department (in %): Multiple responses: PSC



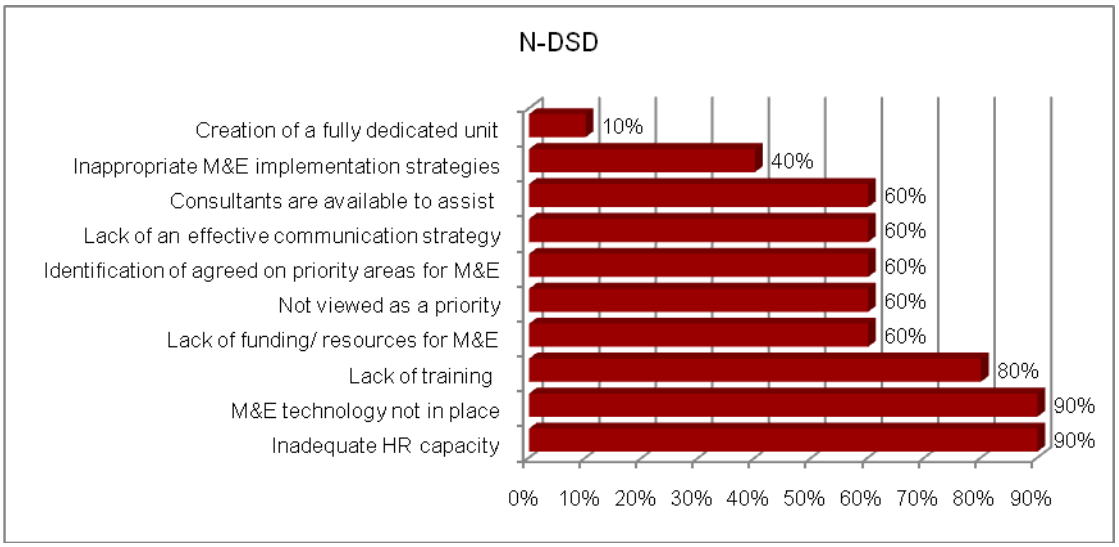
The result of the PSC confirms the generalised picture, but shows a much higher percentage of respondents agreeing to the fact that the lack of training and inadequate capacity are the main challenges (81.8%), followed by the statement that M&E technology is not in place (72.7%). The issue of inappropriate implementation strategies and lack of funding (45.5%), followed by the issues of prioritisation and communication (27.3%) were also deemed to be important.

Figure 7.31(b): Main challenges currently being experienced in relation to M&E in the department (in %): Multiple responses: DSD



In the case of the DSD the respondents cited inadequate human resource capacity/people trained in M&E at 69.2%, with M&E technology given the same rating. This was followed by the lack of an effective communication strategy (53.8%) being seen as a major challenge. This result is different from the PSC one, in that there is less of an emphasis on the fact that training is a challenge, 69.2% as compared to 81.8% for the PSC, and probably reflects that fact that the DSD has offered the most M&E training to its staff compared to the other cohorts (see result for training above).

Figure 7.31 (c): Main challenges currently being experienced in relation to M&E in the department (in %): Multiple responses: NDSD

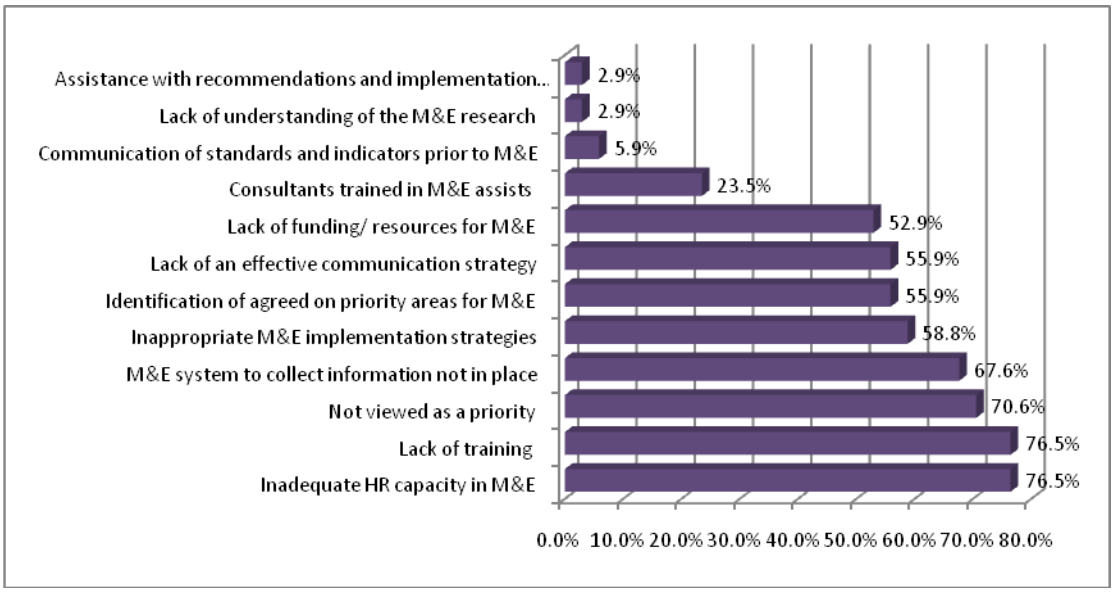


In terms of the NDSD cohort, the top three challenges were the lack of M&E capacity, M&E technology not being in place (90%), and the lack of training (60%). From this group once again the capacity question has been identified as a challenge.

7.9.4 Challenges being experienced in relation to M&E in South Africa

The questionnaire also sought to establish from respondents what they saw as being the main challenges for M&E in relation to the country. This was to establish whether there was a similar view held regarding challenges at a country, compared to departmental level.

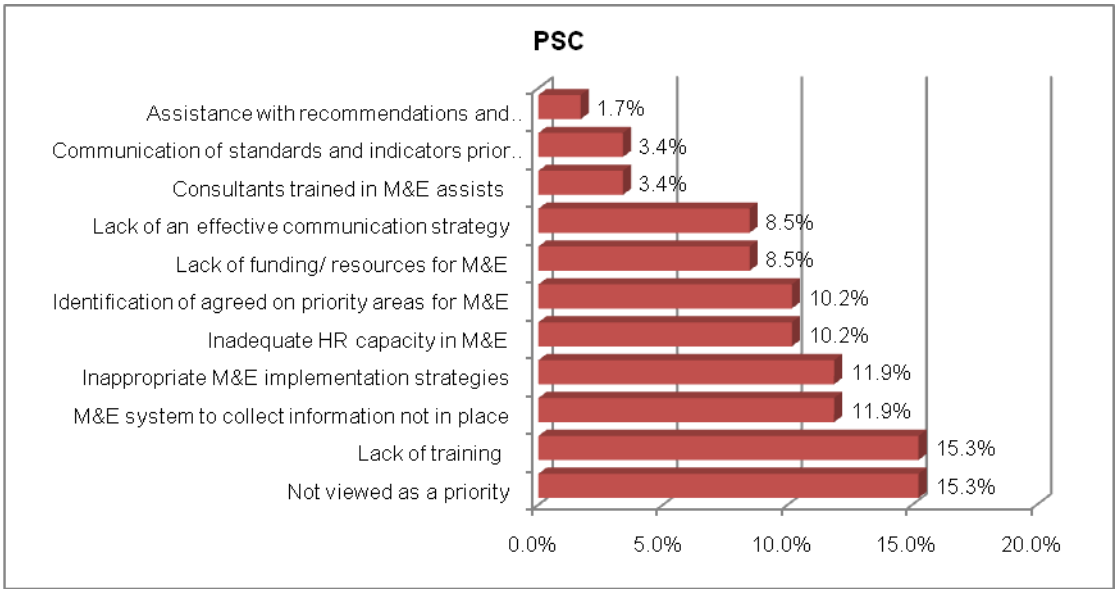
Figure 7.32: Main challenges currently being experienced in relation to M&E in South Africa generally (in %): Multiple responses.



The results at an aggregated level indicate capacity as the main issue; in terms of the lack of training and inadequate capacity (76.5%), which is a similar result as that offered by respondents of challenges for M&E at the departmental level. An interesting difference is that the third most cited challenge cited was that M&E is not viewed as a priority followed by M&E not being viewed as a priority (70.6%). This indicates that whilst M&E has been communicated as being a priority from the Presidency and the PSC, amongst others, it is not seen as a priority for the country as a whole. The result may indicate that the development of M&E at the country level is recognised as not being taken seriously, probably because there has been much M&E activity, largely the body of compliance reports generated from the NT, PSC and AG, but with little discernable improvement, from a public perception point of view, as confirmed by surveys which indicate a lowered confidence in government[31], wherein corruption was cited as increasing. Thus, had M&E been the priority that it professes to be, there would not be a situation where the quality of governance has not changed adequately, as a prioritised M&E should have delivered a more favourable governance result.

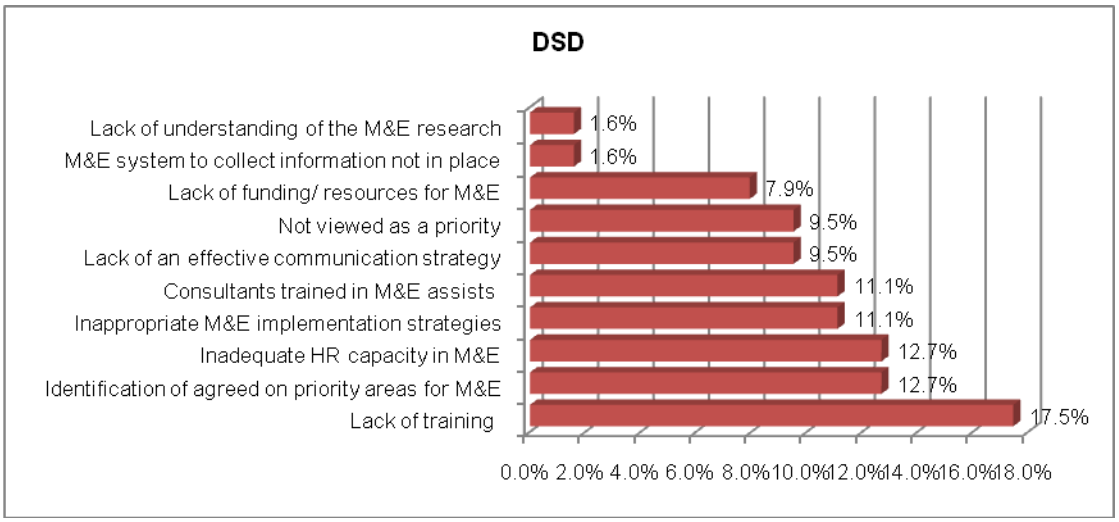
[31] Survey conducted by organisations such as Markinor on a range of issues provides these results. See http://www.markinor.co.za

Figure 7.32(a): Main challenges currently being experienced in relation to M&E in South Africa generally (in %): Multiple responses (PSC)



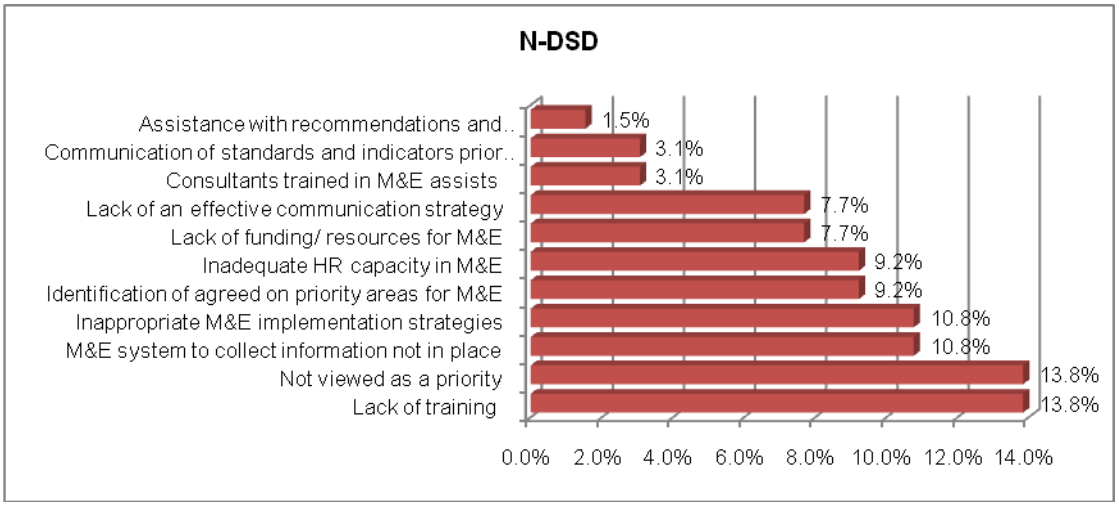
The PSC result for priorities cites the lack of training and M&E not being viewed as a priority as the foremost challenges for M&E at the country level, followed by information systems and strategic issues. The high result on the priority question probably indicates a sense of frustration with the implementation realities faced by the PSC, where it has to grapple with its recommendations not being implemented, and its results showing inadequate changes in performance over time (see PSC State of the Public Service reports, which repeatedly highlight the same issues of non-compliance).

Figure 7.32(b): Main challenges currently being experienced in relation to M&E in South Africa generally (in %): Multiple responses (DSD)



The DSD results also concur that the lack of training is an issue (17.5%), but is more focused and sees the identification of agreed on priority areas for M&E as an issue (12.7%), placing this issue at the same level of inadequate human resource capacity in M&E.

Figure 7.32(c): Main challenges currently being experienced in relation to M&E in South Africa generally (in %): Multiple responses (NDSD)



The NDSD cohort indicate M&E not being viewed as a priority and the lack of training as the foremost challenges (13.8%), followed by questions of implementation strategies and the lack of M&E systems to collect information (10.8%). The question of priority identification and inadequate human resource capacity came in at 9.2%.

Thus from the above results the following observations can be made. The question of M&E capacity and training remain challenges at both the departmental level, and country level. In the case of the country level, there is a view that M&E is not viewed as a priority, and this may be symptomatic of the fact that despite vigorous oversight, there is the public perception that the quality of governance leaves much to be desired. The result from the PSC reflects this situation more strongly, and probably reflects the institution's frustrations with not achieving the desired outcomes for its oversight work. The priority question is probably also indicative of the fact that apart from the periodic political pronouncements that M&E is a key priority of government, this is not experienced at a practical level within departments themselves. The much publicised GWM&ES was supposed to deliver much, but has not and has not been reformulated by the Presidency as the government-wide M&E framework, which as yet needs to be effectively communicated to show results at the departmental level. There thus remains critical challenges for M&E in South Africa, most of which are rooted in the fact there is no common vision for M&E in the country, inadequate training and M&E capacity, and the fact that M&E is not as yet seen as a priority.

7.9.5 Strategies to improve M&E in the future

In moving forward, respondents were asked to suggest how M&E could be improved in the future. Most of the respondents did not provide any responses outside the three suggested areas of increasing capacity, improving training and improving reporting. The verbatim responses were organised and fell into the following four categories, which indicate what should be done to improve M&E effectiveness.

a) *Communicating M&E more effectively*

Improving the communication around M&E, as it is often viewed as policing, and there is no clarity on what compliance brings in terms of improving governance. More needs to be done on the part of management to improve this. Also falling within this category were issues of the particular need to communicate M&E better, given that it is a new concept. This was related to the question of the need for training in M&E to properly cost and measure the benefits of projects.

b) *Correctly locating the M&E function*

There was the view that M&E is often misplaced, and needs to be in a strategic location (suggestion, the office of the DG), so that it got the authority to perform its work.

c) Improving information systems

Several responses cited information related issues, such an information technology, better reporting mechanisms, and training in data collection and analysis as being necessary to improve effectiveness. This was also linked to the question of feedback of results and the action expected thereof. Also listed were issues of coordination and quality control.

d) Providing training and support

Respondents cited issues of the lack of coordinated training, support and mentorship as being key challenges. There was the view that there needed to be M&E frameworks, procedures and manuals to ensure that staff knew how to work and what to do. There was a view that MME training should be provided.

7.10 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter set out to provide a perspective on how internal M&E works. It looked at the entire area of persuasion, as opposed to compulsion which MME bodies seek to promote. In M&E persuading, which was assessed largely in terms of the work of the DSD, the question of value adding was addressed, and the assessment was preceded by an overview of the decision-making context and architecture of the DSD. It was asserted that the DSD, being a government department, has to comply with policies, norms and standards, and the manner in which decisions are taken there would be typical of decision-making in other departments. Observations were made about how the DSD receives its M&E results from MME bodies, such as the PSC. The thesis then argued that management priorities for the DSD are set by MME bodies, which influence internal managerial (and M&E) priorities.

The perceptual survey was organised around key themes, drawn from the literature survey and the work undertaken on MME. The themes allowed for an exploration of a diverse range of issues, such as the experiential base of practitioners, and the manner in which oversight institutions are perceived and valued, particularly in terms of how they report. An assessment was also made of how managers in the DSD viewed their M&E function, and the views of managers within the DSD were also solicited to assess what they saw as challenging their effectiveness. This section was considered to be particularly important in that M&E effectiveness, or its ability to persuade managers to govern better, is dependent on range of issues relating to capacity building, location and priority accorded to the M&E function. The results from the survey were presented for the themes noted, and in most cases at an aggregated and disaggregated level.

A key finding is that whilst the DSD has performed well when it comes to meeting the stipulations of the MME bodies, its internal M&E is not perceived very positively. Its managers (M&E unit) see its organisational location at problematic. There is a degree of ambiguity regarding the value it adds, and the result probably also indicates the limitations in the level of understanding by managers at the DSD of what the M&E function is supposed to achieve. Several questions were asked about how M&E was seen, and what value it was supposed to yield. It was found that for the important area of learning, the impact was minimal. This probably points to the fact that the DSD has pursued an M&E agenda that has focused on ensuring compliance or accountability, than generating learning opportunities. The DSD does, however, perform well when it comes to the training it has been exposed to, which is better than the country average.

The chapter ends with asking respondents what they saw as the main M&E challenges, and these were predictably the lack of training in M&E. It was also noted that a challenge for M&E was that it was not seen as a priority, and this is in a context where there has been much M&E activity. However, this result probably indicates that the communication on M&E has been weak, and the lack of understanding is indicative of the fact that the massified training promised by PALAMA has not as yet been delivered. There could also be a frustration that M&E has not brought about the type of changes to the governance of the country, as expected, due to the low compliance to a very well-crafted accountability framework that is in place. Thus, there is yet a case to be made for the impact that M&E has at a departmental level in promoting good governance.

Chapter 8

Civic M&E

8.1 INTRODUCTION

It has thus far been argued that good governance is an amalgam of many attributes, and it is made possible when different types of M&E are applied. This thesis has hinged on the proposition that cross-cutting feature in any definition relating to good governance is transparency and accountability, which effective M&E can bring about. There would be differences in emphasis and methodology for each of the M&E perspective contextualised in this thesis, but ultimately M&E should generate performance information, which depending on the decision-making infrastructure, should be used to improve performance. This last perspective examines how the form of civic oversight contributes to better decision-making, when information generated by this sector is used to improve performance and policy. Given the high social spending on poverty programmes, these need to and have been evaluated (van der Berg, 2006).

In chapter 6, MME bodies were shown to emphasise and drive administrative compliance and accountability, which is a necessary part of good governance, as adhering to policies which are appropriate from a public policy point of view, is a prerequisite for transparent and effective government. However, the conclusion drawn in the chapter indicated that the emphasis was inward looking and that policy compliance without also adequately recognising the impact of such policies on service delivery had limitations. The main problem is that managers can learn how to comply with systems, and obtain favourable scores in such systems, but without deeper probity, the results may not be very meaningful. Similarly, in chapter 7 on PME it was found that MME bodies exerted a considerable influence on the inner workings of departments, but in looking at the intra-departmental reflection and use, the impact of internal M&E on improving service delivery, as opposed to compliance, was not clearly evident. In addressing the gap between the inward focus of mandatory and PME, this perspective looks at a series of assessments of delivery by the DSD, by considering research generated by the civic sector, to see what has been produced and how it has influenced policy and service delivery. The M&E-good governance relationship would be incomplete without considering this critical perspective, which has been affirmed in policy documents of government which professes to be citizen-centred. The focus on civics (which includes the NGO sector and which is defined more fully later, brings to the fore the voices of

beneficiaries. The role of M&E in the social sector is particularly important, as Noyoo and Mamphiswana (2003) have argued that practitioners need feedback on the impact of their work, and conducting M&E with communities also contributes to transparency and accountability, something that did not happen under apartheid. He highlighted that the sector faced challenges as it moved towards transition, many of which related to re-establishing a new identity. The future of this sector has been a subject of review, given the changed scenarios posed by funding, which is now channelled directly to government, rather that the NGO sector (Lee and Buntman, 1989).

Despite this qualification, it is necessary to examine what public participation practices have been used, what research has been conducted by and with civics, and how this has been used to provide probity from the civics of government performance. A further argument as to why CME is important, is that the effectiveness of the developmental State, which claims to be pro-poor and interventionist, can only be made when there is empirical evidence of people benefitting from government policy. NGOs act as intermediaries and support the link in grassroots development (Carroll, 1989). It has also been demonstrated that the non-profit sector plays a critical role in supporting development in South Africa (Dangor, 1987). There are also strong arguments made as to why civil society, rooted within a democracy, can support development (Mamphiswana, 1999). Due to their rootedness, civil society has been shown to support development in South Africa[1].

The commitment to engage citizens on government performance stems from the ruling party commitment to participatory democracy, which is contained in the main policy document of the ruling party (ANC, 2007). There has been a translation of this vision into policy, with government policy highlighting the role expected of citizens in ensuring that governance is transparent and service delivery effective[2]. Despite being 15 years into democracy, the commitment has not translated into a vibrant civil society, which engages regularly and productively with government on its performance. This may be due to historic reasons, the main being that civil society capacity in the form of a critical citizenry is uneven, due to geographic and other reasons. This involves listening to the voices of citizens, amplified through civics, and this chapter provides perspectives on what the commentary has been on government policy as it relates to the DSD, the key policy instrument being that of social grants. The perspective becomes more pertinent given the decrease in public confidence in

1 *Ibid*

2 The Social Welfare policies contain reference to the importance of citizens in ensuring that policy is delivered effectively. Avenues are provided for redress by the department, with citizens encouraged at a policy level to be involved in monitoring service delivery.

the State since democracy, and the acknowledged breakdown of local government by research undertaken by the Government (Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA, 2009). The matter even warranted attention in the speech of the Minister in the Budget Vote address of the relevant Minister (Shiceka, 22 April 2010). This situation points to an obvious disjuncture between what is professed in policy and politically and what is experienced by citizens, with several calls being made to civil society and M&E sector to share their expertise with government to improve the situation (Mgijima, 2009).

Evident from this report and an acknowledgment that there is a crisis in local governance, questions need to be asked about why the situation has deteriorated to a crisis point in the first place, and what has happened to civil society formations to pre-empt the situation. The issue of corruption around the social grants, for example (noted in chapter 6 under the discussion on the role of Parliament in improving probity), and the management attention given to it (noted in chapter 7), indicates that there remains governance challenges on this key policy. Insight into the challenges will come from assessing the work of civics, and examining whether this has been filtered into the decision-making of the DSD. .

It should be pointed out that the interaction between the DSD and civil society is not confined to the policy formulation or policy appraisal process. There is also the well-known registration process which the DSD manages, and questions must be asked about the value added by the DSD working on this, and whether it is appropriately located. The chapter also looks at DSD-civic engagement, to get a sense of the commitments to implementing government policy on the matter, against the backdrop of the ANC manifesto on citizenship. The interaction has not been static, as Mamphiswana (2004) has demonstrated, there has been a transformation in the relationship since democracy, with the advocacy role being often replaced by contractual ones, and which has implications for oversight. In assessing the impact of CME, one would get a sense of whether the public participation practices (which includes direct engagement between the DSD and citizens) has been effective, in that the insights generated at these meetings have been taken seriously and used to improve performance.

8.2 CHAPTER ORGANISATION AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter will discuss citizens within the discourse of good governance, by following the logic used in the previous two M&E perspective chapters. The chapter commences with a theoretical overview of civics and considers their importance in terms of promoting good governance, and its relationship to M&E and accountability. The chapter then looks at

specific work undertaken by civics in relation to DSD policy, and examines the related question of what the DSD commitment is to civics and how and what the different interaction relationships are. The purpose of this is to illustrate that there may be different forms of civic-government interaction, but the critical question is which of these contributes to enhancing service delivery. Infused in the discussion is a historic narrative of how civics have gone through transition, and how their roles have changed with a consideration of what this means for their ability to conduct oversight and exercise probity.

It should be noted that CME also involves a consideration of public participation practices, most of which were found to be government led. The frequency and form of these is another avenue through which government receives feedback on its performance, and this does point to a commitment to engaging citizens on services that they receive.

This chapter draws on a multitude of sources, including expert interviews, documentary reviews, undertakes a meta-evaluation of some of the assessments by civics or where civics were consulted, and also looks at evaluations of public participation practices of the DSD. Internet searches and interviews with persons working in M&E and the NGOs have also been conducted. The assessment is conducted against the backdrop of evidence of large-scale corruption around the social grants, and debates about its role in bringing about economic sustainability.

8.3 THE ROLE OF CIVICS IN PROVIDING OVERSIGHT

Civics help improve the citizen-government interface by bridging the communication and capacity gap that exists particularly in poor communities, and their perspective on performance is critical as it answers the outcome question, and relates to whether the quality of life of citizens improves due to the various forms of oversight. It is a particularly important question politically, and the developmental State is ultimately judged not only on the quality of regulatory compliance but on whether this leads to improved service delivery and improvements in the quality of life.

Globally, it is recognised that citizens must engage in the performance of government, and non-profits (defined herein as civics) provide this avenue (Mathison *et al*, 2008). As a category civics includes groupings that are outside of government, and which have the space to be critical and advocate for changes based on legitimacy and expertise (Bhorat and Kanbur, 2006). Importantly, civics provide legal assistance to marginalised communities and are thus able to amplify and direct marginalised voices to decision-makers, thus bridging the

gap between disempowered individuals, communities and government (Community Law Centre, 2002). This would occur when civics critique policy or challenge government by acting on behalf of citizens. This may be related to matters relating to being treated unfairly around accessing social grants, which is the main area where civics in the social sector have mobilised to support communities. Many cases have been taken up by organisations such as the Legal Resources Centre and the Black Sash, to name a few that work in the advocacy and support area.

In South Africa, most civics are referred to as NPOs, which includes non-governmental, community based, faith based, civil society and public benefit organisations. Most of these would fall under the South African Non-Government Organisation Coalition (SANGOCO), an umbrella body for civics in the country. For purposes of this assessment, civics would also include those research institutions which evaluate social policy, such as the Centre for Civil Society Research, the CASE and the International Poverty Centre at the University of Western Cape.

The main characteristics of an NPO[3] is that they should be voluntary (no laws force them to exist), and are independent (they are controlled by the people who have formed them). They generally work to improve the lives of people and society, and engage in research and innovation, public education, advocacy and lobbying. They operate in a domain where they can be critical of government, as they should be sufficiently detached and independent and can potentially be a strong oversight force. This is an ideal, however, and the research by Mamphiswana shows how the NGO sector changed with transition, and its role in M&E, found that whilst they were strong on advocacy, there was little M&E capacity developed, and it was not clear what their basis for advocacy was. He goes on to argue that with transition, NGOs have in many instances lost their independence, as they undertake work on behalf of government and this contractual relationship affects their ability to be objective[4].

Civics often work in coalitions, and in terms of engaging government on its performance, have been active when it comes to commenting on policies related to social grants. Civics have worked with organised labour, the main being the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU, 2002), to make submissions on how to better implement and target these grants. Therefore, what is generated from the civics sector has been a thorough critique of social policy, reflecting voices from the academic, research, NPO and organised labour

[3] The Nonprofit Organisations Act, 71 of 1997 placed requirements n the sector to register, purportedly to make them more efficient and be able to secure funds more easily.

[4] Personal interview with the author on his doctoral thesis, as it relates to this finding.

sectors. As community rooted perspectives, the voice of civics on these matters bears a legitimacy and credibility, as the perspectives on performance are outside of government, and tend to be more objective. Government evaluations would always be looked upon by civil society with a degree of scepticism.

In light of the service delivery crisis faced, the question that must be asked is where the civics been, and whether they have been sufficiently active to predict the problems and use their positions to direct marginalised voices and engage decision-makers. Many civics claims that they have and do raise performance issues, but do not receive adequate recognition by government, and thus cannot be held responsible when citizens engage in protest action, outside the normal democratic processes. A further contextual factor facing civics, and which may have altered their focus is that due to funding constraints, many civics now operate as service providers or contractors to government, rather than advocates for the citizens they represent. This changed relationship has implications for oversight (DSD, 2009)

8.4 CITIZENS WITHIN THE DISCOURSE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

In line with the central argument of this thesis that M&E contributes to good governance, it is important to reflect on how citizens are considered within international definitions of governance. The brief review below, illustrates that citizens are generally not privileged within good governance definitions, with the focus being more on what government must do, than on what is expected of citizens to achieve sound governance. Whilst it is acknowledged that government sets the enabling legislation for good governance and must create the space for citizens to exercise their oversight role, the bias of definitions of good governance towards government institutions means that citizens can become passive recipients of government services. It could lead to a situation where government leads even in the how and when citizens can M&E its performance, which means that agendas are also predetermined by government.

The OECD (2005: 10) points out that citizens are demanding greater accountability and transparency of their governments, and avenues must be opened for this to be expressed. The literature indicates that the modalities for such expression may be government initiated, which in mature democracies includes on-line and other types of citizen surveys of services[5]. In South Africa the majority of the population do not have the know-how or resources, there is more of a reliance on civics to act on their behalf, and protect their rights. In the context of

[5] In the Canadian and British Public Services, citizens' report cards are used to solicit feedback on how services are perceived.

the DSD, where most of the beneficiaries are poor and marginalised, civics are expected to act decisively to support citizens.

In the World Bank definition of governance by Kaufmann *et al* (1999), civic issues appear in only one of its 6 dimensions, that being "voice and accountability, which includes civil liberties and political stability". It is not a stand-alone indicator, but correctly recognises the importance of the enabling environment in helping citizens prosper. Weiss (2000) in defining governance mentions the issue of citizens in the context of responsive-government, which suggests that there must be a close interface between citizens and government, and which in turn requires effective public participation mechanisms. The responsiveness question is relevant to South Africa, as the main critique levelled against government has been slow service delivery, and an inability of citizens to access decision-makers when they face problems[6].

The NEPAD seeks better governance, and has mentioned the role of citizens, but indirectly with it according the role of accountability to the political structures, such as Parliament. This assumes of course, that Parliament is able to effectively exercise its accountability role as the representative of citizens. In chapter 6, a critique was provided of how the South African Parliament has worked, and where it was shown that whilst there was voice, in that results were made public, this was not followed by accountability or responsiveness.[7]

Having considered how some of the international definitions of good governance view citizens the discussion now focuses on what this means for M&E, and how it relates to questions of accountability and utility.

8.5 CIVICS AND M&E

Consistent with the perspective approach of this thesis, the concept of civics is expanded upon. The terms below have been derived from the researcher`s engagement with the sector and the literature relating to its operations. CME relates to concepts and terms associated with:

[6] The President of the country has repeatedly instructed public officials to timeously attend to complaints, before they escalate to crisis proportions. Many civics criticise government for failing to respond to matters brought to their attention.

[7] Voice and accountability and responsive-government are part of the NEPAD definition of good governance.

Individual and social empowerment, democratic expression, social activism, media freedom, critical engagement, political expression, political oversight, service delivery, client/citizen satisfaction surveys, empowering, grassroots, activist, engaging, critical, anti-establishment, freedom protecting, rights protecting, mobilising, holding to account, supporting the marginalised, talking truth to power, preventing abuse, highlighting corruption, advocacy, mobilising, relevance seeking, rights instituting.

Constructed from literature and researcher observations.

As the language suggests, this is different from the connotations for the other M&E perspectives, which largely resonated with the language of accountability and managerialism. In such cases the focus is on objective criteria, standards and the practice largely driven by compliance imperatives, either to internal or external bodies. CME examines performance from the lens of citizens, with the M&E imperative focusing on the social outcomes and impact of the work of the government. Civics should advance the goals of the developmental State by providing credible M&E which informs and compels key decision-makers to act. There have been studies which suggest that NGOs are well placed to promote participatory M&E, which this study has argued when looking at the different types of M&E, is empowering (Booth *et al*, 1998). Clearly, there is strong intermediary role played by civics, and this has been recognised in terms of policy. The objective information often used by civics in their oversight should get "converted by civics" into political outputs that advocate for change and which ought to at both the theoretical and practical level, bring about accountability. The connotations are enjoined by the issue of social change, as it relates to issues of human rights, voice, accountability and empowerment.

There are considerations when using civics to hold government to account, and these relate to the question of purpose and methods. Given that the intent of CME is about effecting social change, this political purpose aligns with the arguments made by House (2004), who sees M&E as needing to serve a primary purpose. This is apart from M&E also contributing to democracy, as already mentioned. There is thus a strong political dimension when citizens get involved in commenting on government performance, and this is reflected in political-citizen forums such as *Izimbizos*[8], where elected representatives engage directly with citizens. The tools that are used to capture citizen perspectives on performance would include citizen satisfaction surveys, inspections and site visits, and in general methods that

[8] Meaning meetings with communities.

are citizen friendly and participative. The subjective views of citizens, considered as lived experiences, will constitute the truth about service delivery, and in this sense qualitative methodologies would apply. Constructivist techniques, whereby case studies and narratives are used, would be applicable, as the lived experiences of citizens would be considered the truth.

In looking at civics, it was found that whilst their advocacy role was established, due to the transitional pressures since democracy many now operate as service providers to government. This means that their ability to be critical may be reduced. This is consistent with what was found by Mamphiswana who traced how the roles changed over time. He found that in the pre-1994 period, there was no formal M&E practice, but NGOs needed to demonstrate this commitment post-1994, when they had to demonstrate their effectiveness, as a part of securing funding. The focus tended to be on questions of efficiency, effectiveness an optimal use of resources, unlike the pre-1994 period where it was on the quality of services. In his review of M&E within the NGO sector, he shows that there were active attempts to institutionalise M&E within the sector, and attempts to own the process, as there were often negative perceptions about M&E which was perceived as being externally driven. M&E also helped the NGOs to be transparent and accountable, not only to funding sources, but the communities they served.

The M&E approaches used by civics would not favour an imposition of performance standards by experts, but rather prefer an engagement with citizens which allows them to determine what the drivers of citizens satisfaction are, before these are used for assessments[9]. There would be what is termed bottom-up approaches, which are particularly favoured in South Africa, given the rejection of the approach of imposition followed by the apartheid government. The empowerment methods offered by Fetterman (1996) would be important, but the context needs to be considered as these techniques are time consuming and costly, and can lead to disillusionment, as Vestman and Conner (2006) argue, when they state that evaluation can only empower if used expeditiously and alters the manner in which citizens engage with government. This means that tools are as good as the political drivers for such engagement, and one needs to also consider the capacity of communities themselves to engage in such evaluative processes, which can be time consuming and

[9] Interviews were conducted with two senior managers from the PSC whose research responsibility is to monitor and evaluate the extent to which citizen experience service delivery. These interviewees have sound experience in methodologies that assess citizen satisfaction. Interviews conducted: 14 February 2010.

demanding[10]. The PSC has produced a toolkit on public participation, which it offered to departments to use, but in the last 5 years there has been minimal uptake. This probably reflects recognition by government of how difficult this form of engagement is, and a preference to steer away from these engagements. It has been suggested by opposition political parties, organised labour and the NGO sector and research institutes that that there has been a more fundamental disconnect between citizens and government, which probably explains the breakdown of local government and the service delivery protests[11].

It is thus not surprising that the researcher found very few instances of civics using M&E to hold government to account, in the manner in which they engage on a sustained basis with communities, and use these results to effect change. Civics were more active when it came to forming coalitions to take policy forward, or in conducting issue based research, a point confirmed by Mamphiswana's (2004) study of the NGO transition in South Africa.

8.6 CIVICS WITHIN THE M&E ACCOUNTABILITY CHAIN

Civics are a part of the accountability chain, in so far as they have the space to articulate concerns to key decision-makers, bureaucratically and politically. In terms of the former, there is generally a stakeholder engagement strategy which departments have developed to allow for feedback in the course of its work. Civics, due to their ability to work in coalitions, and their location within political formations, also have the space to directly engage politicians on government performance. The main outputs of civics in terms of promoting good governance are:

a) Highlighting corruption, which they escalate either as organisations or coalitions to oversight bodies
b) Serving as the voice for the poor and marginalised
c) Highlighting poor performance directly with the media
d) Engaging in issue-based research and making policy submissions
e) Supporting marginalised communities and individuals to access rights, such as grants
f) Documenting evidence of performance within communities, based on their proximity to citizens themselves

[10] The PSC has recognised the labour intensive nature of conducting such reviews, which often lead to disillusionment as change does not follow investigation.
[11] This may be gleaned from the media, Parliamentary questions around service delivery, and observations made by organised labour and the NGO sector.

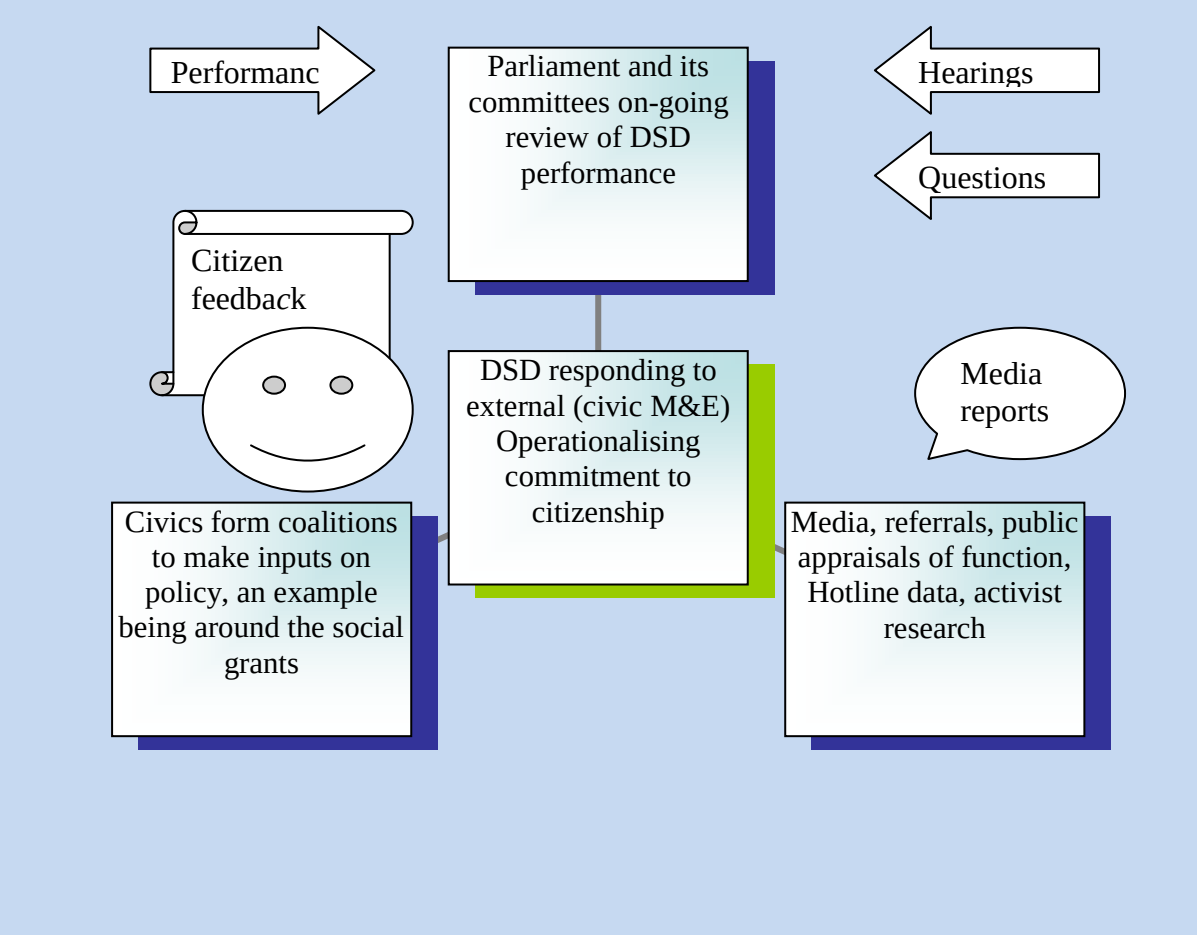
g) Using Parliamentary, public-submission processes, to make inputs

From the above, it can be seen that civics are able to exert influence, and are able to act in many diverse ways to achieve their outcomes. A key role would be around research, which is where they contribute to research, commission research, or use research findings to advocate policy change. NGOs, CBOs and organised labour were particularly active in the process of reviewing the social grants of the DSD, such as the Basic Income Grant (BIG) and the Child Support Grant (CSG). Their inputs improved implementation and led to policy reviews.

Of importance, given the location of civics, is that poor service delivery can also be engaged with through the parliamentary and other democratic processes, including engaging with the media, to exert pressure on the political leadership to account for poor service delivery. They may do so through their coalition networks, such as the SANGOCO, by individually presenting experiences at public forums, as was done during the 2nd Biennial SAMEA Conference and by participating in commissioned research. Other opportunities for getting their voice heard include using political parties to raise issues in Parliament and engaging with the media. SANGOCO emerged in 1995 to coordinate NGO input into government policy and ensure that the rich traditions of civil society, forged in the resistance to apartheid, continue to serve the people of South Africa. SANGOCO is the largest single umbrella body of NGOs in the Southern African region, and considers all issues relating to South Africa's development. Recent developments suggest that it is not as effective as it should be due in part to the funding crisis and capacity constraints.

The Figure below describes Parliament at the apex of the accountability chain, and depicts some of the political/administrative interface that drives the accountability framework. In a constitutional democracy one could reasonably assume that an effective Parliament, whilst operating largely as an organ of State, also provides an opportunity for ordinary citizens to be able to raise issues (through, for example, making policy and other submissions). Some NGOs in South Africa have used this process very effectively, such as the Black Sash and Legal Resources Centre. Some of the public participation processes used by Parliament to give notion to the “People`s Parliament”, are public hearings and submissions and “Parliament meets the people” processes. Civics often prepare the submissions that are made at such forums.

Figure 8.1: Civics within the Accountability Structure of Parliament



Parliament is a key point in the accountability chain, and that it uses multiple sources of information to exercise its oversight. In an effective Parliament one would also expect a form of CME, where citizens can also make submissions on how they receive services, and which should be a critical consideration of government. Administratively, the Ministry also deals with the media and complaints from the public, and in general manages the public/departmental interface.[12] The media[13] has demonstrated vigilance over the DSD and often amplifies issues raised in Parliament, which it feeds into the public space and helps highlight performance issues.

The citizens are the ultimate beneficiaries of services, and when they are dissatisfied with

[12] An assessment of the Organogram and budget of the DSD indicates that the Ministry is well-located and resourced to address its political obligations. The media function also works closely with the Ministry.

[13] The media has remained critical of government, and most of the headlines relate to government maladministration.

the services that they receive, they often complain to civics, which in turn use the space afforded to them to seek answers. However, as mentioned many NPOs currently do not serve as monitors of government; they are contracted to the DSD to deliver services, and whilst they possess the intimate knowledge of communities, it is not evident that they engage in M&E for empowerment purposes. Therefore, whilst there are commitments to public participation, assessments of the extent to which this takes place indicate that it is uneven, but generally limited (Engagement with M&E officers at the DSD training, 13 November 2009).

The Table below expands upon the discussion by elaborating upon the processes and products from civics, and makes a brief introductory comment on the modalities used for holding the DSD to account. A summary of the civics is presented below which amplifies the processes and products and modalities for holding the DSD to account.

Table 8.1: Advancement by civics of good governance

CONTRIBUTIONS TO M&E	*PROCESSES*	*CONTRIBUTION TO IMPROVED PERFORMANCE*
Civics use parliamentary and other processes to highlight performance issues	Through the public hearings processes civics make inputs, which must be considered by multi-party committees. The perspectives of civics helps to validate other observations made by such committees when they engage with information from mandatory oversight bodies.	Insights from civics enter the public domain through parliamentary processes, and this focuses attention on problematic performance areas, for example, social grants.
Non-government organisations and coalitions, not contracted	Formal recognition of the sector by the DSD, briefings on progress and obligation by the DSD to consult with sector on policy development.	Regular meetings with sector representatives and Ministry and department.
Not for profit sector, contracted to DSD (NPOs)	Required to be registered as NPOs, but many may also contract to the DSD as service providers.	Ability to be critical of DSD by using channels of engagement.

Having sketched how civics contribute to M&E and good governance, it is necessary to describe the relationship between the developmental State and civics, before examining the research outputs of civics.

8.7 THE DEVELOPMENTAL STATE AND CIVICS

The ability of civics to be effective is dependent upon the policy environment, resources available for oversight and political will. South Africa, as a Constitutional democracy, has entrenched several rights around transparency and accountability, with the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles for public administration and the *Batho Pele* principles providing the normative benchmark for performance, as previously discussed. The developmental State requires feedback from civics, which are best placed to comment on service delivery, in order to better manage government. This means that civics must be taken seriously, as they represent critical views of the poor and marginalised citizens which government purports to be serious about. In practice, it means that civics should be able to act independently, by having resources at their disposal to produce research and engage in oversight, and their views on policy and performance matters must be taken seriously by the developmental State.

A part of the developmental State is having and using oversight structures effectively and this includes Parliament. This thesis has commented on the effectiveness of Parliament in terms of how it reacts to performance information. A further question would be to consider how civics have used the space afforded to them, either through parliamentary or extra-parliamentary processes, to perform M&E of government programmes. This chapter will look at how policy issues under the purview of the DSD have been considered by civics, and assess whether their role in such assessment has been significant enough to contribute to better governance.

The ANC in its strategy and tactics document[14] clearly outlines the role expected of citizens, either individually or represented. In drawing on the character of the national democratic revolution it emphasis issues of human rights, and calls for government to continually involve people in policy formulation and implementation. It states that as part of democratisation and governance, it shall strengthen relations between government and civil society, including non-government and community-based organisations, and promote their role in the process of transformation. Furthermore, there is an emphasis on meeting social needs. There is a commitment to being people-centred, people-driven and gender-sensitive, which is based on five pillars, two of which relate to citizens again; namely to “to lead people in the tasks of social transformation” and “deepen democracy and culture of human rights and mobilise people to take an active part in changing their lives for the better”.

[14] African National Congress. 2007. Strategy and tactics of the ANC, Building a national democratic Society. As adopted by the 52nd National Conference of the ANC, 16-20 December 2007, Polokwane, Limpopo

The commitment to being people-centred was echoed in 2007, at the Polokwane conference[15], where building a national democratic society was again emphasised. A document was adopted which critically reviewed advancements and challenges, and which pointed out to issues of weakness in the State machinery in delivering services. There is a strong political mandate and direction that there needs to be greater citizen involvement, to hold government to account. The developmental State, in this context as the enactor of political direction, has put in place policies and mechanisms to give effect to this commitment, and which will be assessed based on evidence considered in this thesis.

The developmental State professes to be pro-poor and interventionist (Salojee, 2007; Levin, 2004b) when it talks about being citizen-centric, it assumes that there is the quality of public participation to ensure that there is good governance. The Constitutional values for good governance cite public participation as being an element of good governance. All this points to the political commitment mentioned above, being taken forward into policy. However, whilst there have been many pronouncements to the effect that citizens will be involved in matters of government, with even mechanisms being put in place to support these practices, evidence from oversight bodies and civics themselves shows that this is often not the case.

The Annual State of the Public Service reports by the PSC have lamented the lack of implementation of citizen forums,[16] all of which point to a Public Service that has not genuinely engaged its citizens, and which may account for the effect of public interest and a breakdown, in particular of local government. Public participation practices have been limited.[17] Questions are now asked about why the democratic intent of participatory government has not been met, and even more serious questions are asked about whether the accountability system is in fact working. This problem has been candidly recognised by the Minister for Performance Monitoring, when he stated that "the problems have been diagnosed, yet there has not been a follow-through in solutions. Something is wrong with the system of accountability" (Chabane, 2009: 3). When a statement such as this is made by a person holding such office, it is a serious indictment of how M&E is viewed, and questions have been asked about the efficacy of oversight over the past 15 years.

Sentiments have also been expressed in public platforms, such as at the 2nd Biennial SAMEA Conference held in August 2009, where the Chairperson of the PSC called upon

[15] *Ibid.*
[16] Public Service Commission. 2005. Citizen`s Forum Toolkit. Republic of South Africa.
[17] Public Service Commission. 2008i. Assessment of Public participation Practice in the Public Service. Republic of South Africa.

civil society to assist by helping to get results used. The lack of public engagement translates into poor performance across many sectors[18]. Had there been more active civics, ensuring that accountability considerations are at all times heeded, the publically acknowledged crisis in terms of corruption, insecurity and inefficiency and joblessness would probably not have occurred. It therefore follows that examining civics in terms of what they can and have done is an essential part of understanding the CME-good governance link.

Bringing citizens through civics back into the centre of government has probably come about more due to the crisis faced by government, than a genuine effort to create a citizen-centric government. A feature of the new administration has been a heightened approach towards engaging citizens in helping government achieve its aims and objectives. This has been most pronounced in the attention given to local government[19], where it has been recognised that at the critical citizen-service delivery interface serious challenges exist, and which have rendered promises of better service delivery void. The commitment to a more direct engagement with citizens can also be seen with, amongst others, the installation of a Presidential Hotline, the direct intervention by national government in dysfunctional municipalities, and a general prioritisation of local government, and by implication citizen-centric approaches. Several assessments by the PSC, the HSRC and the Development Bank of Southern Africa have found that the past decade has been a period of intense planning and policy activity, with inadequate translation into implementation capacity. There has been very little consultation with communities themselves.[20] The service delivery protests that have characterised the last two years, coupled with reports of rampant corruption which have directly affected service delivery, has probably informed the new administration approach of wanting to engage more vigorously with citizens.

Questions must be asked about what happened to the vibrant role played by the civics, mainly NPOs, in the early days of democracy. During this period civics were active in the policy formulation process, mainly around the Green and White paper engagements. There was consultation, but it appears that in terms of *Batho Pele* this is uneven and even appears to have dissipated[21]. There is currently a weak capacity by citizens or civics to engage on performance results. The revised roles played by NPOs, many of whom now act as

[18] Presidency. 2010b. Measurable Performance and Accountable delivery. Developing the MTSF into outcomes with measurable outputs and optimal delivery. 7 January. Republic of South Africa.

[19] The department of Local Government has been restructured, and the new Minster has taken an approach which involves intense citizen participation.

[20] Public Service Commission. 2007c. Report on the Evaluation of the Implementation of the Batho Pele Principles of Consultation. Republic of South Africa.

[21] Public Service Commission. 2008f. Report on the Implementation of the Batho Pele Principle of Openness and Transparency in the Public Service. Republic of South Africa.

contractors to government, as opposed to M&E the performance of government and acting exclusively in the interest of citizens, may not be in the interest of service delivery. Most communities, without the support of civics, would not be in a position to critically engage with government when their rights are not being realised.

This section has examined the precedents for citizen engagement, by looking at the source of this commitment, which is the ANC Strategy and Tactics document. It has gone on to describe how this has been taken into the developmental State as a policy, and reflected on assessments which indicate that public participation in general has been weak. The next section explores why this is the case, by looking at how civics engage within the accountability chain.

8.8 THE RESEARCH AGENDA OF CIVICS AND CONSIDERATION OF ITS UTILITY

This section examines the research agenda of civics as it relates to the policies and performance of the DSD. It is an important body of reflection, and significant in that most of the research has involved civics, either in leading the studies or contributing to the assessment. As noted, the term includes those research institutions which also undertake social research meant to inform social policy. As this is a pivotal point of engagement, it is the first of the three relationships discussed, the others being around the registration process between the DSD and civics, and engagement through public participation practices.

The main output of civics to social policy comes from their participation in research, when they participate in, commission or use research findings. It was found that civics mobilise with partners on issues, and this has been apparent around the debates on grants; that being the BIG and CSG. By looking at a selection of studies on these areas, it is clear that civics have been active, by commenting on policy and its implementation.

In reviewing selected studies, of which there are over 300, it was found that the research processes were generally participatory when the research was undertaken by an NGO. An assessment of the methodologies used in the studies, reflect that the research questions were located within the existing debates on poverty alleviation, and in many cases drew on oversight work of other organisations. Given that any assessment of poverty must comment on impact, both quantitative and qualitative techniques were used. The studies used case studies, focus groups, household surveys; all of which generated views from actual beneficiaries on what they thought of the policy, and where they saw its challenges. The research processes can be considered as empowering and participatory, and it helps

communities to reflect on their own experiences, and does become an opportunity for reflection on the benefits accrued from government policy. The research reports, whilst containing findings and making recommendations, is not an end in itself, but a means by which critical engagement with stakeholders takes place. This can be seen in the effort put into debating the terms of reference for the studies, the use of reference groups to comment on the research progress, and the use of locally based fieldworkers, who speak local languages, in the studies. Whilst the studies were not individually assessed in terms of its merit with regards to methodology, it can be gleaned that there was a strong participatory aspect to the research, with an emphasis on qualitative techniques. The case studies and anecdotal information produced by the studies reflects a grounded perspective of how citizens view services, brought to the fore by socially relevant research as in the case of social grants.

Coalitions that have formed around social grants include labour movements, faith based organisations (South African Council for Churches, South African Catholics Bishops Conference, Diakonia Churches of South Africa), organisations with an interest in human rights (Black Sash, Community Law Centre of the University of Western Cape, National Association of Democratic Lawyers, Human Rights Research and Advocacy Project), research-based organisations, such as Co-operative for Research and Education, Foundation for Contemporary Research, South Africa, New Economics Evaluation, Community Law Centre, and civil society in general (SANGOCO). An important player in the coalitions is the Black Sash, which is one of the oldest human rights organisations in South Africa, and has a long history of assisting people with social grants. It has used its expertise to fight on behalf of citizens who feel that they have been denied the benefits, due to corruption or the incorrect application of the means tests. It has called for a universal, non-means-tested grant, based on its knowledge of what is happening on the ground (Black Sash, 2002).

Research into social grants is very much pivotal to whether the developmental State, through the policy instrument of cash transfers, has been interventionist and pro-poor, and helped to redress inequality. There has been much analysis of the impact of social grants, with the subject of cash transfers being related to broader development questions, such as the dependencies created, contribution of grants to poverty alleviation, and its sustainability. Indeed, the sustainability of paying out grants of the magnitude which the DSD does, at 70 billion Rands a year, has been reflected on by the former Finance Minister in his budget speeches in 2007 and 2008, and commented on in the PSC Poverty Dialogues held in 2007,

2008 and 2009[22]. The social grant system has also been the target of fraud and corruption, with over 2,000 officials found guilty of assisting in fraud. Clearly, there is a need for social grants to be properly administered, and research on it contributes to its good governance.

Specific studies and their consideration

Several studies have been commissioned on the implementation of the child support grant. Examples are studies undertaken by Goldblatt and Hall (2006), who have studied how the grant is implemented in four provinces, and looked at its relation to service delivery. Budlender and Woolard (2006) have examined the grant in relation to schooling and work. The child support grant and social security grants have been assessed in relation to questions of poverty alleviation (Bharat, 1995). It has also been reviewed on the extent to which it has contributed to social policy (Lund, 2008). A central question also addressed has been the relation between economic growth, poverty and inequality (Bhorat and van der Westhuizen, 2008). Other studies that have examined the application and impact of the grants are those by Makino (2004), who looked at how the grant has assisted in post-apartheid South Africa. Samson, *et al* (2004) provided an assessment of the overall impact of the grant on the development of the country. There have also been studies which look at how social grants is an example of addressing inequality and promoting inclusive development (Samson *et al*, 2005) address this aspect as a policy promoting inclusive development. As can been seen, much research has been conducted on the subject of social grants, and interviews with DSD personnel, past and present, indicate that it has been used to review policy.

A study on the uses, implementation and obstacles of the CSG was compiled and produced for the DSD[23], the SASSA and the United Nations Children`s Fund (UNICEF) by the CASE, an NGO which undertakes socially relevant research. The research was externally funded, and produced at a time when the CSG came under review, largely due to the impact of HIV/AIDS and the effect this has had on increasing the number of child-headed households.

[22] The Poverty Dialogues held by the PSC have brought together civics in the country to review the poverty alleviation programme, and participants at each of the dialogues have debated the viability and impact of the social grants.

[23] Department of Social Development. 2008c. Review of the Child Support Grant, Uses, Implementation and Obstacles. Produced for the Department of Social Development, the South African Social security Agency (SASSA) and the United nations Children`s Fund (UNICEF) by the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE), March 2008. Republic of South Africa.

The CSG is the State`s largest social assistance programme, in terms of the number of beneficiaries reached, with the primary objective to ensure that caregivers receive financial assistance in the form of a cash transfer to supplement, rather than replace household income. The study sought to look at the use of the grant within low-income areas, the recipient's experience of the application process and payment system, and the operational barriers that impact on the access to the grant. As an evaluation, the study provides an externally generated, and community based perspective on how the grant is received. A study of this nature is important for the good governance of the DSD, as it promotes transparency and accountability, and also forms the basis for organisational learning. The utility of this M&E study shows that M&E by civics does contribute towards good governance.

The study was important in that it brought in different views of persons involved in, or impacted upon by the grant, from SASSA officials to stakeholders, as well as recipients and non-recipients of the grant. It generated new demographic household data which was useful for planning purposes. The processes for generating data were valid, with due consideration of research techniques. An attempt was made to capture the lived experiences of beneficiaries, with a national household survey consisting of 2,675 respondents. A clearly thought out and legitimate process was used to implement the survey instrument. Local fieldworkers were recruited from the national database of CASE, and language and geographic considerations were taken into account in the sampling.

The study showed that the grant has had a positive impact on the lives of children in poor households in South Africa, and that it has helped in improving the nutritional status of children, with the related effect on educational attainment. The evaluation thus indicated that the intervention of the grant had a developmental outcome. The grant positively impacted on economic well-being, and addressed racially-based poverty. This is important information for addressing the stipulations of the MDGs, and contributes to the developmental State being able to reflect on its effectiveness based on evidence. In terms of seeking relevance, the study raised the issue of the extension of the age limit and the targeting mechanism, that is, the means test. It was found that due to geographic circumstances, many potentially eligible caregivers did not access the grant, which impacted of the effect of the grant. Due to poverty, the grant accounted for 40% of household income, and was a major source of income. In terms of accessing the grant, it was found that the process of obtaining documentation was a challenge, especially identity documents. Furthermore, the time and cost involved in travelling to apply for the grants was a problem. The problem of non-

biological parents accessing the grants was also a problem, and this study generated an important assessment on policy implementation.

The study has recommended a review of the application process, to make it simpler. This has included improving coordination, and ensuring that there are one-stop shops. Studies undertaken by the PSC, and interviews with officials at the DSD indicates that many of the recommendations of this study have been implemented, the main being that the eligibility age has been increased on a phased in basis (as announced by the Minister of Finance in the 2010 Budget Address). The use of mobiles has increased access to grants, and decreased processing times, and the use of bio-identification techniques has reduced fraud.

This study, probably because it was commissioned for the DSD, which participated actively on the steering group with the SASSA, has generated a sound understanding of how the CSG, and identified challenges which have been addressed. It is a clear case of where a civic, working with the department on a social relevant project, can generate new demographic and planning data, and a set of recommendations that impacts on policy and improves service delivery. This is an example of where a civic has contributed to good governance.

A study was undertaken through the Centre for Civil Society (Makino, 2004) which analysed the social security system in South Africa, and which looked specifically at the influences from organised labour and civil society, that have shaped this policy. It indicates the extent of collaboration between different role players in the country on a social policy, and the study reflects that inputs from organised labour and other civil society coalitions are taken seriously by government. The report draws on several research reports by civics on the subject, which indicates the extent to which social grants is a major policy issue, with its implementation monitored and its impact constantly being evaluated. The description of the processes by which civics work on coalitions to drive a policy position, indicate the importance of this policy to the overall question of how to promote development and alleviate poverty.

The study is interesting in that it demonstrates when and how role players converge on an issue. This included the NEDLAC and COSATU, and the research also brought in critical views from Parliament. The BIG Coalition is a loose coalition of various civil society organisations that call for the introduction of a BIG, and has included civil society organisations in general, with COSATU being the leader in the coalition. Pressure to have the BIG introduced came from COSATU, the South African Communist Party and the

SANGOCO. It included inputs from the Treatment Action Campaign and the Black Sash. The main recommendation made in 2001 was that the age of the CSG be increased to 18 years. The study revealed how coalitions forced government to change its policy, especially around the eligibility of the grant. Another instance cited of where an NGO actively supports the marginalised, is the Black Sash, which has offered people legal advice, with nearly half of its cases dealing with social grants (Black Sash, 2002). It has developed solid proposals regarding the administration of social grants.

The work done by these coalitions has been taken seriously, evident by the statement by the Minister of Social Development who voiced support for the principle of a universal income grant to ease poverty, although he questioned whether there were resources to implement it. This sentiment indicates that the then Minister considered the views on the matter by civics.

This research is relevant in that it shows the social compacts and influences that this has on improving governance. The study looked at the role of social security in the context of the poverty alleviation programme of government. It acknowledges the contribution of the different grants to reducing levels of inter-racial inequality, and traced the growth in the grant from 2001, describes how it has targeted different groups, and what it effect has been on alleviating poverty. The paper focuses on the debates on the BIG, and describes this grant in the international context and what the main issues of debate have been in terms of social assistance in post-apartheid South Africa. The programme is assessed in terms of the reconstruction and development programme, and a detailed chronology of events around the White Paper for Social Welfare is described.

The study showed that inputs from organised labour, in the form of COSATU, was taken seriously, with the critique by COSATU of the Draft White Paper in 1996, leading to COSATU being successful in having the State`s obligation made more explicit. In reviewing the White paper in 1995 COSATU criticised it for not stating what government would do, and due to its input, paragraphs were added to the White Paper in 1997. It was COSATU that thereafter set up research, based on the fact that 13,8 million people in the poorest 40% of communities did not have access to any form of assistance, as they did not qualify for any form of grant, as they did not have access to any member qualifying for unemployment insurance or social grants. The BIG was thus made in terms of the Presidential Job summit. In relation to the DSD, civics were involved in the People`s Budget Campaign, and supported the BIG. This came from mainline Christian organisations and the Black Sash, and pressure also came from the COSATU (2002) as well as the SANGOCO (1998). The research shows that there were coalitions formed to drive the BIG, with civics being central

to this. The policy did change due to inputs from civics, and this indicates that the work of civics on grants, and their oversight did have the effect of being used. The research generated by civics such as the Centre for Civil Society also contributed to the knowledge base on the poor, as new demographic data was generated, which is necessary for planning purposes. The inputs by civics helped to reconceptualise what was meant by income, with the DSD using a means test that focused on personal income, as opposed to household income. Furthermore, the study helped to explain what was meant by the term household, which in the context of caregivers, is different from the traditional definitions. This has helped in evidence based policy-making. The recommendation by civics that the grant be extended to 18 years has been implemented on a phased basis. This recommendation comes from an appreciation of poverty conditions, and a need to address the problem in a practical manner.

A study was commissioned by the DSD to look at the uses of the CSG, as well as its implementation and obstacles (Delany*, et al,* 2008). It was a joint undertaking between the DSD, SASSA and UNICEF, led by CASE. This is an example of a partnership around research, which sought to provide new information for policy-making. Another aspect that has been monitored, which have social consequences, has been that of the socio-economic rights of children in South Africa (Streak and Coetzee, 2004).

A study by Williams (2007) also looked at the social and economic impacts of South Africa`s CSG, and found that the grant had a positive effect on living standards. The generation of this research was informed by the Black Sash, which would have brought in key insights from communities. There have also been studies on the use and effectiveness of social grants in South Africa (Nevas *et al*, 2009). The study looked at the effectiveness of social grants in South Africa, and how recipients use their grants. This was undertaken by the Economic Policy Research Unit and the Programme for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies, and used qualitative inquiry built on a number of urban and rural case studies, which looked at the larger context of decision-making. The study reviewed the effects of the grant, and focused on case transfers to the elderly, children and the disabled. It then looked at the effect of the grant, and looked at its use, and finally examined the policy implications of the findings. Further reviews on the impact of the Child Support Grant were done by Budlender and Woolard (2006), where the relation of the grant to schooling and work was examined.

The key policy implications were than the grant was economically and socially empowering, with a recommendation that it be scaled up to increase eligibility. The study makes recommendations on how to increase the coverage, and make it more accessible, which is an implementation problem. This study showed that social grants have had a positive effect

on livelihoods and development in South Africa. However, when research comes from outside the civil society formations, such as research institutions with an economic policy inclination, the situation tends to be different, as in the case of a study undertaken by the Development Policy Research Unit at the University of Cape Town that argues against the expansion of the social welfare system. This study did not concur with the general sentiment that grants are effective, but rather argued against their expansion, stating that the expansion of the social security provisioning has a negative effect on the expenditure and education and health impacted negatively (Pauw and Mncube, 2007).

The above indicates that civil society, or civics, do engage on policy matters, and have through this generated insight into the impact of social policy, and also offered the DSD practical solutions on how to improve its implementation. Thus, CME does contribute towards good governance, and there is evidence that the voices are heard, and policy revised in line with citizen aspirations.

8.9 THE DSD AND ITS PRACTICE OF CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

This section serves to foreground the context within which civics at the DSD operate, by commenting on the historic relationship that civics have had with communities, and explaining why this is important in driving the DSD programme. It then assesses what political and administrative leadership commitments have been made to civics, and how these have been operationalised in terms OF specific programmes within the DSD. Prior to citing *how* and *what* civics have done to M&E the DSD, the three relationships between the DSD and civics are categorised, as these bear on the M&E question, and more specifically the issue of independence. The independence issue becomes important given the evolution of government-civics relationships in South Africa, which when historically located was one of advocacy and support for communities, against government, but with democracy transformed in the main to be that of service providers to government. Noting these relationships and what the implications are for oversight are thus important.

Apart from the DSD engages with civics which it contracts to perform research, or when it participates in civic led research, it also interacts with civics (this being NGOs) through the registration process which it manages for the country (an administrative relationship), and through contracting civics to deliver services on behalf of the DSD (a contractual relationship).

Whilst all relationships are important, the most critical one in terms of whether civic oversight at the DSD improves governance, relates to the research contribution made by civics. This has been demonstrated to be the case it meta-evaluation conducted above. It is important to also look at what the political and administrative commitments have been to demonstrating a commitment to civic engagement.

The nature of the DSD (see chapter 4) is such that it must involve civics, and there has been engagement since 1994 between the DSD and the sector. This took place initially during the policy formulation process, when most civics were aligned to the democratic movement and were legitimate voices for communities. Shortly after democracy in 1994, civics played an active part in policy formulation, during which time the policy-making processes were very participatory. Much of the leadership from civics was absorbed into key positions in government, which contributed to the loss of expertise and experience from civics over time, as many were absorbed into key government positions. An assessment of the career paths of some of the key management at the DSD indicates that many of them have emerged from the civic sector[24].

The researcher reviewed the early policy documents and archives (minutes and other publications) of the DSD, where policy options were being discussed during the Green and White paper processes[25]. It was found that most of the civics were represented, and expressed their views strongly, at these engagements. This is in line with the Strategy and Tactics document of the ANC, which has guided policy formulation and government approach, the importance of civics, working in social pacts, is emphasised. The engagement between the civics and the DSD is contained within its key policy document, where it sets out why it supports the notion of engaging in developmental social welfare[26]. The DSD has implemented a strategy and programme to engage with civics, which has evolved over the years and which can be seen it its mission statement which supports partnerships, where it "commits to working together with organs of state, defined as civil society, business and academia and the international community (DSD, Annual Report, 2009: 11). The policy and programmes of the DSD relate to the civics, which also deal with issues of poverty, unemployment, globalisation, the environment, address gender inequality, HIV/AIDS

[24] The Minister for Social Development and many of the top management of the department have activist backgrounds.

[25] Civic organisations were represented in most of the deliberations around the policy of the DSD, especially those relating to the social grants and safety nets.

[26] Republic of South Africa. 1997. White Paper for Social Welfare Principles, guidelines and recommendations, proposed policies and programmes for developmental social welfare in South Africa. Notice 1108 of 1997. Pretoria: Government Printer.

syndrome and human rights violations. The DSD policy reflects a pro-civic sentiment, given that its mandate relates to supporting and empowering people, resonates with the developmental State. Therefore, an effective DSD in relation to the civics would reflect in part the extent to which the developmental State is successful, and whether political commitment is met in the form of relevant and targeted social services.

Some of the challenges faced by government with regards to civics are how to engage with the sector in a manner that is not controlling, whilst ensuring that as government, through the registration and contracting processes, it is able to expand private charitable support and make the sector more self-sufficient[27]. The relationship question is thus a complex one, as there is a necessary oversight that the DSD must exercise over NPOs, given the NPO Act and the requirement for registration. However, this process must not be construed as control of a sector, whose identify is based on being self-sufficient, critical of and outside of government. As a representative of the poor and marginalised, it cannot be viewed as an extension of government; which is a real danger when a contractual relationship replaces an advocacy one. This has serious implications for the propensity of such civics to exercise oversight. As a critical stakeholder of the DSD, civics should possess the capacity and propensity to exercise oversight over the DSD, irrespective of whether the relationship has evolved over time, and whether now, due to economic reasons, many civics have become beholden to government for their sustainability. This aspect is critically commented on in terms of two studies commissioned by the DSD, which looks at the impact of the NPO registration process.

The civics have played a significant role in the transformation of the country, as shown by Dangor (1987). However, the question that must be asked at this juncture, is whether the new State-civic relationships, evident in an administrative and contractual relationship, have eroded the independence of civics, and whether they are still a major oversight force as they were prior to and soon after democracy? Evidence of whether civics can monitor and evaluate the DSD will be inferred by considering specific studies they have undertaken, and examining whether this has influenced social policy and service delivery.

The intent to engage with civil society has been consistently expressed by the Minister and DG of the DSD in various policy documents. Although in 2009 the department had a change in Minister, the new Minister continued where her predecessor left off by stating that “during the past 15 years the department created partnerships with other institutions and civil society

[27] Department of Social Development. 2006b. Information Sharing Manual for the NPOs. Republic of South Africa.

organisations...in the fight against poverty...a major outcome has been the provision of comprehensive, integrated and quality social development services"[28] . This commitment may also be seen in the more formal policy and review documents of the department, such as the Strategic Plans, the Annual Reports[29] and the Budget Vote Speeches[30] and accompanying publications. The Annual Report in particular contains strong reference of the need to and commitment on part of the DSD to engage the NPOs, and build vibrant partnerships. The Annual Report of 2009[31] shows how the department has now developed to the point where there is now a Branch (the highest level of internal organisational units) dedicated to enhance matters relating to community development and outreach, termed Branch: Community Development and Branch Welfare Services. Within this Branch there are functional areas falling under Chief Directorates responsible for community development, HIV/AIDS and the NPOs and partnerships. As a programme of the department, it professes to create an enabling environment for the delivery and accessibility of integrated social welfare services in partnerships with all relevant stakeholders.

In addition to what is contained in the Annual Reports of the DSD, the researcher appraised various speeches made by the Minister for Social Development[32] since 2000, and also reviewed questions[33] asked of him in this regard through the Parliamentary processes (see chapter 5). The purpose of the review was to establish whether there was a consistent political commitment to civil society engagement. It was found that there was such a commitment, and the Minister was generally complimentary about the contribution of civil society towards supporting the programme of government. An assessment of the DSD website[34] also reflects this sentiment, with the aspects of registrations clearly visible and easy to navigate.

An appraisal was made of how this happened in practice, and the former DG of the department, who worked with the former Minister in the early stages of the department, confirmed that much time was dedicated to pursuing relationships with civics. Importantly, she attested to the fact that current policy has been shaped through civic-departmental

[28] Department of Social Development. 2009a. Annual Report for the financial year 2008/9. Republic of South Africa.
[29] Annual Reports form 2004-2009 were examined to trace the evolution of this intent, which is most pronounced in that there is Branch dedicated to the function.
[30] Budget Vote Speeches from 2004-2009 were assessed, to examine the extent to which NPOs were referred to.
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] An assessment was made of all public speeches by the Minister from 2004-2009, most of which have been posted on the DSD website, and are also accessible from the Communications Directorate of the DSD.
[33] The researcher reviewed the Parliamentary questions and addresses by the Minister of Social Development. The data is commented on in Chapter 5, where Parliament is considered under mandatory M&E.
[34] Accessible through http://www.dsd.gov.za

engagements (Personal interview, former DG of DSD, 13 January 2010). Interviews were also held with different managers on the subject, and whilst many indicated that the current relationship was largely a contractual one[35], with civics a part of the service delivery mechanism of the department, their role was seen a pivotal. They stated that the policy of the department reflected community sentiments, which were brought in by civics. Examples which were cited related to areas of home-based care, HIV/AIDS and orphanages. A review of the Annual Reports of the DSD has found that in almost all programme areas, the counterpart has been some form of civic organisation.

The departments have made a strong commitment to community development, evident most clearly in the Minister's foreword which indicates that "during the past 15 years the department has created partnerships with other institutions and civil society....towards the provision of an integrated, comprehensive and quality social development services"[36]. The sentiment has been reinforced by reference to the Community Works Programme and the partnership with the Kwanda Programme, which is a social mobilisation, multimedia development communication platform to showcase integrated government programmes[37]. When such political commitment to the sector is made, it indicates recognition of it and suggests that a relationship exists. The utterances of the Minister and DG on the matter reflect a commitment to promoting civics. The question is what this relationship means when it comes to oversight and delivering effective services.

The review of practice indicates that there was good performance when it came to management of stakeholder liaison and the NPO registration process, both of which are described and commented critically upon.

8.9.1 The management of stakeholder liaison

The DSD has a strategy for managing stakeholder liaison, and has either received and acknowledged inputs, or made requests for written comments on policy matters from specific stakeholders, clients and beneficiaries. The latter refers to issues relating to HIV/AIDS and Drug prevention, to name a few. The function for stakeholder liaison is effectively managed, and reviews of the DSD by the PSC[38] indicate that the system for receiving public comment works effectively. It was also found that complaints receive immediate attention, and a

[35] Interviews were undertaken with 3 managers on the subject at the DSD, November 2009.
[36] Department of Social Development. 2008a. Annual Report 2007/8. Republic of South Africa.
[37] *Ibid.*
[38] The 2008/9 review of the DSD, undertaken by the PSC Transversal M&E system, indicates that the public participation processes, in terms of the above, works effectively.

database is readily available to attest to good performance in this area. The Annual Report and other management meeting minutes indicate that this aspect receives the required attention. The engagement with relevant managers revealed that there was sufficient outreach taking place, and a system in place for managing public contributions, which was assessed, and found to be fully functional and up to date.

Some of the modalities mentioned as evidence of the department`s commitment to engaging citizens includes outreach programmes, *Izimbizo* and unannounced visits by the Minister. There were clear objectives for public participation for the DSD, which included: communication about the service rendered, develop the programme of services, strengthen partnerships with civil society and promote healthy customer relations. Public comments were received for the following content areas: the establishment of Early Childhood Development Centres, 24 hour call centres, multi-purpose community centres, strengthening of ward communities and unannounced visits by the Minister. In considering inputs, it was found that the DSD acknowledges 100% of the inputs received, with follow-up taking place in all cases considered. The research showed that all inputs were solicited and how they were considered. An example of drawing in civil society to offer advice, is around the CDA, a body set up with public sector stakeholders, to advise the Minister on how to address the drug problem.

Included in stakeholder liaison, would be the responses to the NACH. This is because the DSD has purported itself as responsive, and one would expect it to also respond to cases referred to it by the PSC from the NACH. It would be useful to examine other contributions to the debate on how effective the DSD has been in promoting public participation. Whilst public participation practices do not constitute civic oversight *per se*, they do intimate the extent to which the department is serious about engaging its key stakeholders and clients.

The DSD has been subject to two assessments by the PSC, which relate to the question of public participation, which are one of the good governance indicators, in 2001/2 and 2007/8. The same standards were used for both assessments, which are that *a policy is in place for public participation, and inputs are responded to and used.* The assessment improved from 2001/2 to 2007/8, from 80 to 100%. The 2001/2 assessment showed that the consulting process was still being formalised. The 2007/8 assessment found that the DSD still did not have a formal policy in place, but a draft departmental guideline, with a pocket handbook envisaged[39]. This has subsequently been finalised. The 2007/8 review found that, whilst

[39] *Ibid.*

there was no policy in place, officials were aware of the broad steps for consultation. The PSC assessment found that the draft guideline[40] was used, and that there were sufficient opportunities for open dialogue between the DSD and citizens.

8.9.2 Management of the registration of NPOs

The main engagement between civics and the DSD has been through the registration process. This section briefly describes what this entails, and what the professed benefits are, and then cites an impact assessment that was commissioned by the DSD which indicates that the reality has not met the ideals as set out.

The DSD registers NPOs in terms of the NPO Act, and conveys a series of benefits for registration. In listing the benefits of registration, the DSD states that registration would improve the credibility of the sector, as the NPO can account to a public office, organisations are brought into the formal system, the sector is helped to get organised, and there is a benefit in terms of tax incentives and funding opportunities. The Directorate can only register an organisation that has a constitution or any other founding document. It was found, however, that the process has been circumvented[41], with many private companies converting themselves into NPOs, and potentially getting tax benefits they would not ordinarily be eligible for. This defeats the purpose of registration.

A further benefit conveyed to NPOs who register, is the promise of information sharing and understanding of departmental programmes and strategies. It links to the question of pro-active communication and is a positive contribution to transparency. It is an important function in that unless the programmes of the DSD are known and understood by this key sector, it is less likely to be successful. In terms of delivering through partnerships, an objective is also to seek partnerships for specific programmes with key stakeholders, for example, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs, Women's Groups, Business, Labour, Traditional Leaders, and Youth formations.

The DSD reports on progress through the Annual Report. The DG has identified this aspect of DSD-civic relationship as important, in that he chose to comment on the 12% increase in NPO registrations over the previous year, bringing it to 56,237, citing that 14,207 applicants were received of which 6,819 met the requirements. He states that as more NPOs comply

[40] Department of Social Development. 2007f. Draft Public Participation Programme. Unpublished.
[41] Interviews were undertaken with two service providers on their experience with the NPO registration process.

with the law, the efforts to create a more accountable and robust civil society will gain force (DSD, 2009:7).

The NPO Act provides for a voluntary registration facility for NPOs. In terms of the NPO Act, there are requirements for registration[42], with each type of NPO having different requirements. With the NPO Act in place, NPOs can choose whether or not to register. They may fund raise, and fraud can be reported. If they are registered and found to be fraudulent, they can be deregistered. The registration process should contribute to increased accountability and transparency, and improve their governance from one man/woman situations, to where it is more democratic. There are also requirements for maintaining registration, with obligations placed upon the organisation in terms of record keeping, submitting reports (financial statements, auditor's report, narrative report) and dealing with appeals. There are currently over 70,000 NPOs on the DSD database, and the support provided in terms of documentation to build the capacity of NPOs, indicates that NPOs have been supported.

The NPOs can access this process by working through the DSD website, where there is a prominent link for NPOs, and which clarified which organisations can apply for NPO status. It includes organisations that have registered as Section 21 Companies under the Company Act 61 of 1973, Trusts that have registered with Master of the Supreme Court under the Trust Property Control Act 57 of 1988 and any other Voluntary Association that is not-for-profit. Different legislation affects the NPO sector, which includes several Acts[43]. When the sector acts as an employer, it is affected by most labour legislation[44], as are other employers. The DSD emphasises the need for NPOs to be legal entities, in that unless they are registered as such, may not be recognised by donors, and may not obtain property. The issue of donor support and coordination is important, more so that donor funding was channelled since democracy to the NT and government itself, rather than the NPOs, and this resulted in a funding crisis for many NPOs which were not seen as having the capacity to manage funds disbursed to them. The problem was compounded due to reports of irregularities in how some of the funds were managed, and this created negative public perceptions for many NGOs, especially from the international community which had traditionally been the main funders.

[42] There are specific requirements for registration.

[43] The relevant Acts are the Companies Act 61 of 1973 (for section 21 Companies), Trust Property Control Act, Act 57 of 1988 (for Trusts), Non Profit Organisations Act, 71 of 1997 (for Voluntary Associations)

[44] The applicable act is the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995, Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997, Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998

The DSD provides model constitutions, and provides applicants with Codes of Good Practice which it has developed for the sector[45]. These codes were assessed in terms of how they promote good governance, and it was found to provide useful information to the NPOs on leadership and management, fundraising and resource mobilisation and roles and responsibilities of donors and sponsors, as well as an extensive reference list. They help NPOs understand why they need to improve upon their management, and in the sub-section, "what motivates donors to give". It suggests that NPOs must realign to attract funding, with the Donor Bill of Rights highlighting the issue of accountability and obligations[46]

The NPO sector is now like any other sector and should adhere to good governance principles. The DSD approach in getting NPOs to register has been an attempt to bring about this regulation, in order "to maintain the standards" (according to the DSD objectives for the NPOs). However, the Act seeks to maintain the independence of NPOs, and calls upon government to intervene only when necessary. There should be no undue pressure upon NPOs (Boulle, 1997). From the above, it can be noted that the DSD has set itself up to provide a one-stop shop for NPOs, and promises through its registration process, that NPOs will benefit from information provision, managerial support and networking opportunities to improve their funding prospects. The main modality through which this coordination was expected to take place is through an NPO Directorate, which is meant to create an enabling environment for NPOs to flourish and set and maintain adequate standards of governance, accountability and transparency.

However, the process of registration appears to have been circumnavigated. Many companies have managed to register as NPOs, simply by conforming to the requirements for registration. There is a view from such groupings that their registration process does not cater for differences in entities, and the main motivation for registering is not to get the managerial support promised, but to get a better tax status and use this to source funds. This was stated in a personal interview with a person who registered his company to access the grant, and was dissatisfied, which reinforces a finding in the impact assessment of NPOs that was commissioned by the DSD.

[45] This is issued in terms of section 6(1) (b) (I) of the NPO Act 1997. Copyright (c) 2001, DSD, Directorate: NPO

[46] Department of Social Development. 2006d. Nonprofit Organisations Information Sharing Training manual. Republic of South Africa.

A critical assessment commissioned by the DSD was that of the impact of the NPO Act[47]. The assessment may be considered as authoritative, in that it was commissioned and undertaken by an independent, credible group, the work of which was overseen by a broad-based reference group, comprising key sectors which have an interest in or have worked with NPOs, such as the Legal Resources Centre[48]. This is an important assessment, with strong civic voices within it, and as such authoritative. An assessment was made of the state of the NPO registration in 2009[49], which appraised whether the NPO act had:

a) Created an enabling environment: establishing an administrative and regulatory framework within which NPOs can conduct their affairs.
b) Encouraged NPOs to maintain standards of governance, transparency and accountability, and to improve those standards.
c) Created an environment within which the public may have access to information concerning registered organisations.

The impact assessment found that whilst the Act brought about a much greater drawing in of the sector, with government involvement having increased significantly, however, it was found that resources and implementation capacity were lacking, and that the finances allocated were grossly insignificant in proportion to the size of the sector being addressed. A further assessment drawn on by this study by Wyngaard (2003) showed that although it was well intentioned, it is complex to implement. The sector is large and vibrant, making it difficult to co-ordinate effectively.

The assessment found that whilst there was some impact when it came to the administrative element (noting the large number of registrations). It found that the requirements for registration were onerous, and the one-size approach for all did not seem to work. The complexity on the ground was difficult to reduce into a bureaucratic process, with many NPOs seeing it as a compliance burden. It found that there was a general lack of capacity within NPOs to manage their affairs and deliver quality services. In general, there were poor standards of financial reporting. There was suspicion on the part of NPOs towards how grants were made, and these processes were perceived as not being sufficiently transparent and accountable. The lack of national communication strategies meant that the systems did

[47] Department of Social Development. 2005b. Assessment of the NPO Act. Republic of South Africa.
[48] An NGO which offers legal support to poor communities, and which has been pivotal in protecting the rights of vulnerable people, especially during forced removals under apartheid rule.
[49] Department of Social Development. 2009b. Impact Assessment of the Not for Profit Organisations. Republic of South Africa.

not talk to each other, and this could lead to potential corruption when it came to the awarding of grants.

It was shown that the NPO sector does not exert any significant influence over the governance of the DSD, and its role in policy formulation is limited. The question than needs to be asked is whether this is best located within the DSD, and whether what is largely an administrative process is not better located within another department. The impact assessment undertaken has stated that the role of the DSD remains that of registration administrator. There are many questions posed as to whether the goals set out have been successful, and whether the forms of support provided does in fact enhance the effectiveness of NPOs. The registration process can be located elsewhere and the DSD should rather not engage with the sector administratively, as this potentially impacts on the ability of the sector to be critical of DSD performance.

8.10 CONCLUSIONS

This final perspective chapter began by stating that good governance is an amalgam of many attributes, and its realisation is supported by M&E. It has been shown in chapters 6 and 7 that M&E pressures from above (mandatory) and within (persuasive) help sharpen management, as it directs attention to performance. However, it was stated that these forms of M&E, whilst important, are limited in that they tend to focus more on managerial than service delivery issues. In this regard, it has been argued that the developmental State can best be informed of how effective it is if citizens experience services positively. The voices of citizens with regards to their experiences have been made known in some of the work undertaken by the MME bodies, in particular the work of the PSC around its measurement of the quality of governance. It has been shown that there has also been reporting on aspects of citizen engagement in the Annual Reports, and even Parliament offers avenues for public submissions to be made. However, these are partial impressions of how citizens experience government, and what one hopes is a more grounded perspective of service delivery. This chapter has argued that such a perspective is best obtained from civics (which for purposes of this assessment includes relevant research institutions) when they conduct M&E.

This thesis has argued that the contribution of M&E to good governance must include grounded perspectives on performance, most of which come from civics and citizens themselves. It has stated that one of the ways this can be done is by looking at CME, as reflected in the work of civics and public participation practices, is critical to building the picture of the utilisation of findings and to improve governance and performance. The

chapter has indicated the role played by civics as intermediaries, in reflecting community sentiment and thus contributing to the policy formulation. It has also noted that since civics are active within communities, they are able to reflect community sentiment, and any research that involves civics provides grounded perspectives on performance. A meta-evaluation of research undertaken around social grants, the main policy instrument for addressing poverty of the DSD, has indicated that the insights have been taken up by government, and helped to improve its implementation. The studies undertaken by civics, and which were assessed in this chapter, most of which were commissioned or supported by the DSD, was critical of performance and does reflect a sentiment of an organisation willing to learn and listen. There was also evidence that the DSD acted on these assessments, which indicates utility of CME. This shows utilisation and supports that argument that M&E contributes to good governance.

The ANC (2009) party political manifesto has spoken of a people-centred government, which means that the form of interaction between the DSD and communities should be open and transparent, and allow for feedback on performance and action thereupon. M&E was also a part of the reconstruction and development programme of the ANC, which needed information to inform it of its progress (ANC, 1994). It was found that whilst the DSD has a stakeholder liaison strategy, this was not fully effective, although there was evidence of *Izimbizo* being used to draw in communities to engage in performance. It was also found that the response rate to cases referred to the DSD from the PSC Hotline was very low, which is not reflective of a responsive and people centred government. Thus when it came to public participation the situation was uneven, and all avenues available for citizens to engage government do not work as well as promised. The low feedback rate to cases related to the DSD, via the NACH, is a concern, and indicates a problem in the accountability mechanism.

It was found that whilst the DSD has invested resources into the registration process, the benefits have not been as tangible, as evident from a DSD commissioned study on the process. This is essentially an administrative activity and questions need to be asked about whether the registration process is best located within the DSD and whether it should not be moved elsewhere. The DSD-civic engagement could take a better form than being administrative, which will be assisted if the DSD relinquishes this function.

Chapter 9

Summary and Conclusions

9.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a high level summation of the key findings emanating from this research, by reflecting on the research overall question and proposition, which is that M&E contributes to good governance. The study produced three conceptually coherent, but interrelated, M&E perspective chapters, each of which interrogates the proposition that M&E *does* produce good governance. It set out to examine what the contributions of each M&E perspective have been, in terms of improving levels of transparency around performance and ensuring accountability through usage. The line of sight which M&E produces for decision-makers, by drawing attention to good governance norms and actual against envisaged plans, comes about when different streams of performance data are tabled at different levels. Whilst the purpose of different types of M&E may vary, the underlying intention is to produce credible M&E data that helps maintain the line of sight, and is used to improve service delivery.

The introduction of this thesis has contextualised the importance of the subject and explained its relevance to generating knowledge and insights to advance public administration and M&E. As a new area, the operation of M&E in a developing country context, is of practitioner and policy-maker interest because M&E serves many purposes, all of which contribute to promoting good governance. It has produced the first grounded study of how M&E works in South Africa, by considering why, where and how M&E enters the decision-making value chain, in pursuit of better decision-making. The analysis has been supported by pertinent insights from persons involved in the exercise at the highest levels of government and Parliament, researcher observation made possible by the advantageous position held by the researcher professionally, and his engagement with the M&E and development community internationally over 15 years. The research approach has brought in voices that are critical to the commentary on the M&E-good governance relationship, and as such this study is a major contribution to the field.

The research has commented on the evolution of M&E in the country and internationally, by examining historical precedents. Of relevance to South Africa is the fact that M&E bolsters oversight and potentially prevents the country from regressing into an unaccountable past,

and helps through its work and events, to link the governance discourses domestically with those internationally. South Africa is a signatory to many good governance accords, such as the MDGs and a participant in the APRM. Support for the work of M&E associations, locally and internationally, has advanced the M&E and good governance debates and demonstrated a commitment to promote transparency and accountability. The study thus proceeded from this platform of commitment and understanding, to assess via the three M&E perspectives how M&E has contributed to good governance in the DSD. Through the assessment, an analysis of the relationship between M&E and public administration, M&E and democracy, M&E and decision-making (including the accountability structures which includes Parliament), and M&E and civil society has been demonstrated. Each of the relationships seeks to operationalise good governance, by generating probity and information to improve performance in different areas.

The critical question posed is what has been the effect of 15 years of policy aligned to good governance prescripts, and what have been the strengths and weaknesses of the oversight infrastructure. In answering this question, the research has argued that M&E is not a stand-alone function performed only by some Units of, or within and outside of government; rather it is a form of scrutiny and probity which is contextually informed, and undertaken by different agencies, operating at different levels, and for different purposes. In light of the expanded definition provided of M&E, a multitude of M&E influences are considered as it influences the performance of the DSD. The three directional M&E forces; above (the MME bodies), within (departmental M&E) and outside (civil society M&E) have each been evaluated in terms of how they influence management practice of the DSD. The common questions asked in each instance are whether the M&E activity has contributed to good governance, by enhancing performance transparency. More importantly, in considering use, the question of whether it has improved accountability and utility is more critical. By examining how M&E is considered and valued, insights into M&E utility have been obtained.

Underpinning the debates around M&E utility, is what contribution better performance information has made to the policies of the developmental State, which in implementing new policies and programmes, often without precedent, needs effective feedback. This implies that evidence about performance, drawn from M&E, is critical to steer practice and shape policy. The developmental State, through its DSD, which has been shown in chapter 4 to well reflect a mandate central to the developmental State itself, has been subject to M&E. The study has examined how M&E has worked in either holding the DSD accountable, or contributing to the quality of its decision-making around performance.

The chapter now revisits the conceptual framework which served as a backdrop to the study, and then proceeds to provide high level overviews of how the three M&E perspectives have operationalised M&E and good governance principles. It reflects on what has informed each of the perspective`s relationships, in terms of its purpose and outcomes. In all instances there is engagement between the evaluators and the recipients, and the quality of the engagement throughout this period is important as it is here that learning and value is added. Depending on whether users see the form of M&E as useful, its actual usage is affected. This is an important question addressed throughout, given that M&E is a priority activity, with high expectations placed on M&E institutions for improving governance. It is thus a politically relevant question that must be addressed.

9.2 REFLECTIONS ON THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework used for the study was based on two core areas; that of governance and M&E. The interrelatedness of these areas has been explained, in relation to the fact that the prerequisite for M&E and good governance is democracy, which is necessary for M&E practice, while M&E also contributes to democracy by raising levels of transparency and accountability. Throughout the conceptual framework the interplay between concepts relating to good governance, M&E, transparency, accountability and democracy is illustrated. This was deemed necessary given that there is a dynamic and mutually reinforcing relationship between M&E and good governance, with the study arguing that different forms of M&E work in concert to produce the outcome of good governance. The approach of delineating three M&E perspectives has been informed by observation of how M&E is executed in government. The creation of the conceptual categories has also been informed by the oversight process, constitutional obligations and historic circumstances of the country which have generated the institutions and oversight relationships that currently exist between differently placed M&E actors, and government. This is elaborated upon in the summaries of these perspective chapters which follow.

The evolution of M&E as a practice in South Africa was traced, and it was indicated that its use from around 2000 has been fortuitous in promoting democracy. It has thus built on the strong civic sentiment for transparency and accountability, and the engagements, termed watershed events for M&E, such as the M&E conferences, and the practice of oversight bodies and the media releasing regular performance information into the public domain, has created an M&E demand. A limitation though, is that the supply has come largely from M&E bodies, such as the AG and the PSC, with little evidence of the M&E of government from the

NPOs. One would have expected that the historic propensity of the NPOs, which possess the grounded experience of what citizen's experiences are, would have been carried through into the democratic era with them remaining active by promoting community M&E. This has been very limited, with the sector under immense funding challenges, and in most instances now acting as service providers for government. It will be indicated that empowerment evaluation is almost non-existent in South Africa.

The exploration of the good governance field has illustrated that a combination of globalisation, government collaboration and networking has integrated democracies into a community of public administration practice which privileges transparency and citizenry and which is also receptive to critical oversight. The country has rapidly incorporated international policy which relates to fighting corruption, ensuring transparency and accountability, protecting the institutions of democracy and the independence of the judiciary. It has protected media freedom and professed to commit to ensuring the efficient and effective delivery of services. The integration of South Africa into the global mainstream over the past 15 years has resulted in it being subject to ratings in these areas, and being compared to counterparts. It has also created an appreciation domestically of the importance of good governance ratings for investment and development. At the continental level, it was subject to the APRM, a milestone for transparency and accountability in a country on a continent which has generally not been receptive to such measures.

At a more practical level, it was found that good governance definitions tend to privilege what government should do and less what citizens` responsibilities are to achieve the outcome of good governance. Admittedly, government acts on political mandates through democratic processes, and there is the assumption that citizen interests would be reflected in government policy and programmes. It was found that an operational definition of good governance does exist in South Africa, through the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles for public administration, and which is the M&E framework for a key M&E body in the country, the PSC. Recently, the Presidency has established a Ministry for Performance Management, which seeks to monitor the performance of the State according to twelve outcome areas. Attaining performance on these outcomes areas, most of which relate to socio-economic and democratic improvements, relies on good governance, the standards of which are the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles. There is thus a relationship between effective governance by departments, and the eventual attainment of the 12 outcomes that will be measured by the Presidency. This study focused on the currently operational MME bodies, as the Presidency system has not as yet delivered results on the outcomes areas. By describing the relationship between the values and principles and good governance, effected

through M&E, it becomes clear that an operational M&E system to test and promote good governance has been functional, and its work augmented by that of the NT and AG. The country thus has systems that can quantify performance across a range of good governance indicators, and show and compare performance trends, and thus make valid judgements about the state of different elements of governance in the delivery entities (departments) in the country.

In the discussion on good governance, the influence of M&E in promoting this has been examined, and various insights into how M&E supports democracy and learning, also a part of good governance was demonstrated. The issue of having a vibrant media, active civil society and effective parliamentary processes was also indicated as important elements for promoting good governance, largely because these created pressure points and demand for M&E results. The influence of globalisation as it impacts by transmitting normative values across space and into the imagination of ordinary citizens in all parts of the world creates an expectation from citizens of their own governments`` M&E with its communication about standards and norms, measures and performance.

The discussion on good governance has also reflected on what NPM, with its emphasis on measurement and managerial accountability, means for government and what the challenges have been. In the conceptual discussion, the role and expectation of the developmental State in terms of driving transformation, and being able to do so that an informed, evidence base, so as to improve its predictive capacity, has been discussed. In essence it was shown that for the developmental State to meet its various objectives requires M&E and part of the management tools and strategies of departments, is subscription to M&E, either by taking the work of mandatory bodies seriously, or by generating their own M&E expertise. There is thus a clear relationship between good governance and M&E, which serves a managerial utility function, which in South Africa also helps to consolidate and deepen democracy.

In relation to this case study, it was found that a major contribution of M&E was towards helping management to demarcate and focus on certain performance areas, especially when these areas were prescribed (MME). The case study revealed that the DSD performed well when it came to regulatory and compliance matters, which can be ascribed to an acceptance of the importance by the management echelon of the department to performance reporting obligations from the NT, AG and PSC. The result was that the DSD management aligned their practices towards areas addressed by these MME institutions, which has regularised DSD management practice, making it more transparent and accountable. The fact that

reports to and from these institutions is considered within management forums, is reflective that MME, apart from influencing management priorities of departments, also produces the content for learning, and thus adds value.

In examining the area of M&E, the key issue, apart from looking at methodology, has been a reflection on M&E purpose. The generally accepted outputs of M&E; enlightenment, accountability and learning were presented and debated as it contributes to new vistas of knowledge about public service transformation, and produces a framework by which accountability can be better exercised. The latter comes about when persuasive evidence by credible M&E bodies and others is served upon management and leadership of the country and its citizens, to create the conditions for greater probity of performance. In this regard the section examined the products and services of M&E, by looking at what is generated by which bodies, and what is expected of the bodies in terms of its use. The utility question addressed a key dilemma around M&E, which is that much performance information is generated and even tabled at structures such as Parliament, hence meeting the transparency obligation, but little causality can be discerned from the process in terms of its utility. It has been argued that production without use is very much like transparency without accountability, and the study has cautioned about using these terms interchangeably, wherein an automatic causality is presumed. It has been argued that one could have M&E, which is an activity and to an extent servant of management and democracy, but unless there is performance improvement emerging from use, there is a limitation. The section thus asserts that using M&E for learning is essential and that there must be an appreciation of the management culture, the decision-making trajectories, so as to assess whether M&E as an activity leads to good governance as an outcome.

In each of the M&E perspective chapters the users are considered, in order to get a sense of utility. This is not to claim that the production of performance information is not valuable in itself, but that when one is able to see how this information enters the decision-making terrain and changes behaviour, and leadership and management improves on its performance, will the benefit be regarded as more significant. This implies a bias towards utility over enlightenment, which in turn means that M&E practitioners must upfront consider and strategise on use. M&E is thus presented as serving a political purpose, which should resonate with the needs expressed by the political leadership of the country that M&E must improve state performance and enhance service delivery.

The implicit theory of change has been that there is sufficient policy and institutions that support good governance, and which exist to direct the developmental State to be

successful in its transformation efforts. The thrust for good governance has been set out in theory, to be carried out by independent M&E institutions, sound managerial practices, Parliament and strong civil society. There is the assumption that each of these bodies, working from above (MME), within (PME) and outside (CME) would through their individual and collective efforts ensure that there is transparency and accountability for performance, and thus produce the outcomes of good governance.

Within the context of a transforming country and Public Service it was established why M&E was also necessary for democratic and managerial reasons. On the question of managerialism, there has been a critical approach to this concept, which whilst appealing at the level of improving much needed efficiency in the Public Service sector, needs to be tempered with an understanding that some of the policy thrusts of the country do not work in practice. There may be conflict with some of the technical ideals and measures, and it is important to recognise less quantifiable, political achievements, which may fall outside a classic M&E measurement schema.

The conceptual framework focused attention on the "M&E for what purpose?" question. The researcher argued that in a context where there is a need for urgent social change, and where government has to deliver on mandates, there is a need for M&E to be effective. What constitutes effectiveness can be broad, and if one is looking at M&E uses, it has firstly to be about accountability, but at the same time deliver learning opportunities to improve capacity and enhance future practice. The transparency deliverable, which has taken the form of an impressive body of performance reports, has perhaps prevented a slip into the apartheid order of the past, as there is now relevant information about how the State functions.

The research suggests that there is a very political purpose for M&E in a transforming context, and that this required a particular evaluator orientation, leaning towards an advocacy, activist approach. The study did not examine individual M&E behaviour, but in looking at the M&E bodies, comments can be made about the extent to which they have achieved change, through their products and strategies. Important observations were made about the importance of context, and the fact that technically correct, but ungrounded evaluations could miss their audiences. The issue of whether independence means detachment, and what the importance of engagement is in actually getting results to work, was also assessed. In setting out the concepts and debates within these areas, the researcher was able to craft conceptual perspectives that allowed for three views of how M&E can and does contribute to good governance. The mixed-methods approach to the research allowed for a comprehensive investigation of the research questions, and helped to

address the knowledge gaps identified in chapter 1, and produce vignettes of M&E experiences in South Africa, as reflected through the M&E perspective chapters.

9.3 REFLECTING ON THE PERSPECTIVES

The M&E and good governance relationship has been assessed by delineating three conceptual focus areas, which have been defined based on their authority and location. These serve to define the dominant purpose of that form of M&E, which in turn influences the methods to exercise oversight. The connotative list provided for each perspective illustrates what the dominant thrust of a perspective is, and addresses the language repository of an area; accountability, learning, citizenship. The study recognised that the divisions were primarily conceptual, with much interconnectivity between them. It also recognised that the relationships both within and between the perspectives are dynamic, and can change over time. In gleaning out some of the overall observations, this section begins to answer some of the research objectives of the study.

9.4 MANDATORY M&E

The development of M&E for accountability purposes was found to be relatively advanced in the country, with the oversight institutions having developed significant capacity for regulatory M&E. The systems used by the NT, AG and PSC were implemented with a high degree of regularity and precision, and there is now a substantial body of historic performance information, largely related to the management of finances and adherence to the 9 Constitutional Values and Principles for public administration. These bodies drive compliance with regulation and prescript, which is implicitly regarded as the basis for good governance, as it is assumed that the policies stem from social and economic priorities that need to be addressed, and as such should support the developmental State in its transformation efforts. The basic act of complying with policy provisions in support of good governance indicators is the basis for the attainment for good governance. This thesis has shown that the MME bodies advance practices which comply with international good governance practices, and as such this form of M&E, with its emphasis on accountability, is an example of how a type for M&E promotes good governance.

MME has had a significant impact on the governance of the DSD case study, because as mentioned it has influenced management priorities and practices. The DSD is a department with an important political and social mandate, and redressing the legacy of apartheid by

improving socio-economic conditions of citizens is an urgent transformation question. It also manages a complex and extensive policy and commands a large budget. It is thus critically important that there be sufficient and effective oversight to this department, in order to ensure that its governance is exemplary. The work generated within the department from MME bodies contributes to this goal, as it focuses attention on how the mandate is translated into programmes and projects, whilst the requirement for quantifying performance introduces an important measurement bias. It has helped to provide a line of sight in the department, by impressing upon staff what their mandate is and constantly providing feedback on how well such a mandate is addressed. M&E in this instance, initiated largely by the pressure from MME, has had a positive effect on the management of the department. There would be serious ramifications if the budget of this department is not managed well, its objectives not realised, or corruption and fraud allowed undetected. In all of these instances M&E has provided the operational probity for early detection and correction. Therefore, a management team that responds to or uses M&E, as in the DSD, has a greater possibility of ensuring that the policies are government, in this case socio-economic and transformational, are realised.

The study found that the DSD performed relatively well when subject to the assessments of the MME institutions; there was thus good administrative compliance. The receipt of the coveted unqualified assessments by the AG for 4 years in a row, coupled with an increase in the results of several performance assessments undertaken by MME, such as the PSC, indicates that the DSD management shows a resolve to comply, and does take this form of oversight seriously. This result is understandable in that most of the DSD management indicated in a survey conducted as part of this study that they value these bodies, which they also state have influenced their own management priorities. However, the performance across all aspects of compliance was uneven, and when probing the responsiveness of the DSD to the very critical area of responding to cases referred to it from the NACH, it was found that performance was poor. This particular result is important, as responding to corruption allegations, which have been surfaced by citizens themselves, indicates how well the DSD manages corruption, which is also a key good governance indicator. Therefore all aspects relating to accountability need to be addressed, not only those relating to internally focused administrative compliance. Accountability to citizens in terms of improving service delivery should be an outcome from the application of successful MME, as it will indicate use and demonstrate that there has been M&E utilisation.

In describing the features of MME, it was found that the approach to oversight by these bodies has tended to be centralised, authoritarian, working on an approach that all

departments are the same and applying standardised instruments. However, it tended to lack context, which the literature indicates can be a problem. Regarding the issue of engagement, which has been mentioned as important for the entire M&E exercise, it was found that it is limited, although there has been room afforded to the department to comment after the fact. The institutions convey an impression that the instruments are valid and irreproachable, with them offering limited room for management engagement on the instruments or criteria. This is a shortcoming, and the narrow focus of the instruments of the AG and PSC means that service delivery indicators are more peripheral than central; there is an emphasis on the measurement of internal activity rather than external results.

An advantage of the approach to MME, however, was that it helped to develop a performance culture, by providing a basis for discussion on performance. This is a valuable part of good governance, as it improves understanding and better prepares users to make decisions on an informed basis. The outcome of MME on its own is not enough to produce good governance, and is reliant on other management processes and key players within the accountability framework, like Parliament. Parliament was found to be an important cog in the accountability chain, as it has the power to act on results. This is due to its multi-party nature, which should produce the checks and balances necessary in a democracy and curb the abuse of power. Another important factor is that the deliberations of Parliament are open to the media, which produces the levels of transparency that are a cornerstone of democracy, and necessary for good governance.

A key source of information for Parliament comes from M&E bodies, which whilst they have their own powers to sanction, are in many cases limited in that they only make recommendations to higher bodies, such as Parliament which can act. The structure within Parliament that does this is the portfolio committees, which should exercise rigorous oversight over departments. The study found that these structures have been weak in exercising oversight, with the quality of oversight in most instances involving very little interrogation of accountability documents such as the Annual Report, beyond the department led, power-point presentations. The study pointed to the fact that the party system produced a tacit system of non-criticism of departments, and was linked to issues of party loyalty, patronage and a lack of any real accountability between citizens and Parliament.

There has been a recent exception, which was unique enough to be reported on in the mainstream media, the SCOPA (Khan, 2010), and this may bode well for the future if such a practice is replicated by all of the committees of Parliament, and of course sustained. The

convention of parliamentary questions, another form of oversight, appears to have been eroded with many politicians not responding. For the first time this was addressed by the ruling party itself, when Ministers were given a deadline to respond (Hartley, 2010). The previous administration appeared to discourage critical oversight of departments and the executive, a form of quiet complacence probably motivated by political concerns, and a political culture dismissive of negative results.

In the assessment of Parliament, it was found that this institution is not performing optimally, and fails to give due attention to the work emanating from MME bodies, resulting in a gap between the production of evaluation and its use. Unless Parliament acts on assessments which it has itself commissioned, this cog in the accountability framework shall fail the MME institutions, by preventing them from achieving their full potential in producing good governance.

In should be pointed out that MME, which tends to be compliance focused, needs to move beyond simply meeting standards or regulations. These elements are important, but not an end in themselves. It was found that in the DSD whilst there was good compliance, there was not in all instances a translation of this into better performance, especially from the perspective of citizens. The low rate of feedback to the NACH is a cause of concern, and it appears that there has been a greater effort in meeting the requirements of MME bodies, than concerns about service delivery from citizens. It appears that efforts to address reported cases is inadequate, and it may be necessary as part of a contribution to good governance for one of the MME bodies to report on this dimension, in the same manner as financial compliance is reported upon. This will have the effect of directing public scrutiny to an area that is rooted in citizens' experience of service delivery, and thus encourage the department to be more outward, than upward focused. Overall, MME was found to provide the basis for other forms of M&E, and thus a critical part in that it gives authority to the process of oversight, and forms the basis for departments and civil society to also embrace M&E.

9.5 PERSUASIVE M&E

This M&E perspective was termed persuasive because there is no compulsion from managers to act on performance information generated, especially when it is from outside MME bodies. The internally produced M&E information tends to be but one of several streams of information which managers use in their decision-making. The perspective examined the management and decision-making infrastructure to assess the accountability

framework, in order to understand how M&E was perceived and valued within the DSD. Survey data, which compared the performance of the DSD on a range of issues with other cohorts, helped to indicate whether having an M&E function within the DSD increased the propensity and effectiveness of management in this institution, towards achieving better performance.

The perspective chapter provided an understanding of actual management practice in terms of how performance information is contemplated, and acted upon. The researcher over a three year period engaged in primary observations of key management processes, and also engaged with management asking them many questions related to oversight and its value. A pivotal element of this assessment was the department's M&E function, which was assessed in terms of how it was used, and how it (the M&E Directorate) saw its own value in directing management. The assessment had a strong perceptual dimension, and it was possible to establish whether having an M&E function in the DSD placed the department at any comparative advantage over those that did not. The value accorded by managers to oversight bodies would be indicative of how seriously issues of transparency and accountability are taken, and is important for M&E to contribute to good governance.

The DSD emerged as a department which valued the work of M&E bodies, evident from the perception survey and the generally positive results achieved by the department when it came to regulatory compliance. The serious limitation remains that of responding to cases referred to it from the PSC, in terms of corruption related information. Given the high vulnerability of the department to corruption, especially when it comes to social and other forms of grants, this lack of performance is concerning. It is also a key service delivery area, with grants being the main policy instrument for addressing poverty in the country. Thus whilst the department has "persuasive" information from M&E bodies and others on this aspect, choosing not to act, is a concern. It indicates that there was a selective response to oversight, and a key area, potentially huge in terms of its implications, does not receive adequate attention.

The observation by the researcher of the manner, in which performance information was received and engaged with by the department, indicates an appreciation of M&E information. However, whilst the M&E function within the DSD is well located and capacitated, the absence of effective provincial M&E officers presents challenges when it comes to creating a broader M&E understanding across the country, and which is necessary given that the sites of service delivery are in fact at the local level. The lack of dedicated capacity at these levels means that the credibility of information provided to the national M&E office, by non-M&E

persons, is questionable. Efforts to train M&E officers at the local level are an encouraging development, but a more sustained approach to building M&E is required.

An important area is the extent to which evidence influences policy-making. Instances cited indicate that this is not the general practice, with some policies being devised outside research evidence, and drawn rather from political considerations. However, in considering the work generated from civics on the social grants, it was clear that management has been persuaded to alter its policy. Interviews indicate that M&E results were the basis for changing the policy approach. In these instances there is evidence of M&E contributing to learning and improvement.

Thus whilst the DSD has an effective management system, and has integrated its own M&E function into key decision-making meetings, more can be done. It has been found to take the work of the AG and PSC seriously, and many of its management priorities have been influenced by the priorities of these bodies. The area of developing the M&E function is important, in that unless there is a broader understanding of M&E, which requires greater levels of training and even the installation of M&E officers at other levels, where more intense M&E can take place at project level, the outputs of the DSD M&E will be limited. It currently is generally aggregated and meets the requirements of the National Office, and has not reached the point where it works with the service providers, mainly NPOs, to empower beneficiary communities to self-assess and engage on this basis more rigorously with government.

In this area of organisational learning stemming from M&E, a management infrastructure and decision-making trajectory exists. It was evident that when performance information is placed in the decision-making forums, it was acted upon. Good performance in terms of regulatory compliance probably indicates that in such instances it is taken seriously. A solid managerial leadership also appears to be in place and the M&E function has been supported. Thus M&E operating within the management of the DSD has contributed to increased transparency and accountability, which may be viewed as a part of organisational learning. In this instance there has also been a partial contribution to good governance. Therefore, in the DSD case study, it was shown that PME does work, but not to the same extent as MME, and this is linked to the actual effectiveness of the M&E Unit, which needs to be improved. The potential exists for a more integrated and effective M&E programme in the DSD, which is reliant on greater resources being allocated to the function, and greater recognition and integration of M&E into all tiers of DSD management.

9.6 CIVIC M&E

A critical M&E output should be to deepen democracy and bring about social change (Greene, 2006). It should also generate the kind of activities which bring about accountability for better service delivery, mainly from the perspective of citizens themselves. A key part of this is to ensure that broader civil society is involved in reviewing the performance of the DSD, as it provides end-user perspectives on service delivery, which is ultimately a key consideration. As a form of M&E, it contributes to good governance, especially if the insights from civics are considered by management to improve the performance of a department.

The thesis reviewed the work of civics, to establish whether they have contributed to performance improvement. In reviewing civics, which included political groupings and research institutions, it was found that much research was generated, largely around social grants, and this has helped in producing information for planning. It was also found that, in terms of the NPOs, the engagement between the DSD and the sector was largely administrative, and it is not clear what value this adds. Furthermore, whilst there have been public participation practices, these have been uneven. Overall, it was noted that the sector has produced research, and is well informed of the performance of the DSD. The sector has also used the avenue of public submissions, within the parliamentary processes, to make its views known, and evidence was provided of how certain coalitions were formed with civil society groupings to influence policy. It is important that the voluntary sector is afforded the space to participate in the decisions of government (Boulle, 1997).

The perspective indicated a particular form of engagement with communities, which may be regarded as empowering. It found, however, that the non-government organisation sector had evolved since democracy, and given that many were now in a contractual relationship with the DSD, they did not possess the basis or inclination to be critical. An assessment was cited which examined the NGO sector, and whilst this looked at the role played by the sector in M&E, and recognised that the sector saw M&E as important, there were challenges. Some NGOs were dominant, and supported beneficiaries (Black Sash), mainly in accessing social grants. This is important, and does indicate that there are NGOs that use their position to support service delivery, hopefully from an M&E basis.

Thus, CME contributes to good governance, largely due to the advocacy generated through its oversight over the work of government, but also due to the contribution to transparency. This is because the sector is able to engage more broadly and critically with aspects of government policy, with constituencies that are more political than bureaucratic. The sector

also manages to get media attention for this, as it tends to be biased towards the sensational and critical, and brings in alternative voices and perspectives, which is important for democratic enrichment. Therefore, in the case study, it was found that more can be done to support and improve CME, which is dependent on the DSD allocating more resources to CME. Ways need to be explored on how to link the DSD M&E function more effectively with local structures that support CME. The case study revealed that apart from a few NGOs which perform this task of capacitating communities, it is generally uneven and weak.

9.7 REVISITING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

a) *The nature of M&E in South Africa*

This study set out to describe what M&E looks like in South Africa. Its comparison to international practice was evidenced from the literature, where different types of practice were highlighted. In the South African government, M&E for accountability is strongest when it comes to the formal oversight institutions, that of the AG and PSC. With the processes of referral available to these institutions, they perform well, but along a narrowly defined set of indicators. The institution of Parliament has largely not been effective in holding departments or the executive to account, and the NPO sector has been transformed into becoming service providers. The public exercise of oversight is through the NACH, and the media plays a role in amplifying concerns, which then get taken up by institutions or the opposition parties in holding government to account.

M&E has produced high levels of transparency, especially from oversight bodies, and there are, for certain performance areas, high levels of monitoring. However, there are limited, contextually specific, diagnostic evaluations. In the M&E systems, there is an absence of emphasis on actual service delivery, and very little empowerment evaluations or consideration of citizen perspectives on the services they receive. The M&E bodies have largely adopted an approach of engaging departments only, through the formal structures, and are thus probably not seen as having an impact more broadly across society. The PSC has played a pivotal role in propelling M&E along and raising awareness about M&E. The capacity for conducting M&E is limited, and this needs to be attended to.

b) *The effectiveness of the developmental State to use M&E to support good governance*

In so far as the developmental State has developed policies and supported its oversight institutions, it has shown a commitment to good governance. If one were to consider the various initiatives to improve planning, public participation initiatives, and efforts to address corruption; the establishment of a Ministry, located at the apex of government, and dedicated to performance management is a significant milestone. The recent work on producing a set of outcomes indicators, which government has committed will be a publically accessible document (and the results thereof also made public) is a major contribution to transparency and accountability.

However, the evidence to date of the use made by the developmental State of M&E seems to suggest that it is uneven. The impact assessment of the PSC found that even parliamentarians, who are the principal clients of the PSC, did not know about its work. By extension, one can assume that there is an equally weak understanding of M&E generally by this constituency, which is concerning as it shows they do not appreciate the importance of evidence in their fundamental oversight positions.

The process that is generated when M&E is conducted, is in itself valuable, and does help to ensure that at least the adherence to policies is assessed. Thus one can conclude that the formal M&E bodies, coupled with the media, opposition political parties and pressure from citizens (in whatever form) have helped to highlight issues critical for a successful developmental State. These activities and processes, which ought to eventually feed into the different government structures, have helped to produce the effects important for good governance.

c) *Lessons learnt to date and how can the future implementation strategy of M&E be enhanced*

The country lacks an M&E policy, although the work of M&E has been continuing through the oversight bodies, which receive their mandate from the Constitution. The new Ministry responsible for M&E can add to M&E getting a profile, but what would be important is whether results, in terms of addressing a government acknowledged crisis in service delivery can be reversed. The accountability dimension will also remain important, and probably be dominant within the accountability-transparency-learning equation, largely because of the spread of government corruption, and the seemingly weak response to it.

A future M&E implementation strategy needs to be driven with more resolve, and not confined to the work of a few organisations. The engagement with civil society and even parliament on its historic poor performance in conducting oversight is needed. The issue of capacity building in M&E remains critical. Although M&E is viewed as a government priority, the relatively low number of government M&E practitioners who are members of professional bodies, or who have received exposure to M&E is concerning. It is equally concerning that many high level M&E posts are being created and filled by persons without any serious M&E capacity. This will negatively affect the performance of M&E units, and can result in the function then being disavowed by the managers it is supposed to support.

d) *The impact of M&E in promoting good governance in South Africa*

This thesis concludes that for the major indicators of good governance, M&E has helped produce the type of activities and effects which deepen democracy and lead to a more reflective management ethos. The most visible benefit has been the high levels of transparency, which has taken the form of performance information on key areas of government performance. The shift from transparency to accountability, however, has been uneven, and whilst it appears that at an intra-departmental level M&E has helped to sharpen management focus and meeting performance indicators, this has not been taken up with conviction by parliament. In fact, parliament has not demonstrated an ability to be an institution where action is taken, especially against perpetrators of corruption.

The area of citizen participation, which M&E institutions such as the PSC promotes, is likely to lose momentum, given that the impact of the reporting is extremely low (less than 30%). Coupled with the breakdown in service delivery, citizens may lose confidence in so-called powerful institutions, and resort to more informal, less socially acceptable practices of protests. It should be pointed out that all of the predictive information on this was available, yet there was leadership inaction. The blame therefore cannot be placed on the lack of M&E, but perhaps the efficacy of M&E, which may have developed into a managerial endorsing and inwardly looking activity, which missed the key deliverable of services to citizens.

The study thus concludes that M&E has increased transparency, and helped to deepen democracy as it has produced the information for engagement on performance of the State. It has been limited in taking on board citizens to date, and where it has assessed service delivery, the changes have been limited. Furthermore, there have been probably self-imposed limits to accountability or how far the oversight bodies have gone, and this has

meant that despite investment in the production of performance information, this has not been acted upon. Irrespective, M&E has helped in a long and difficult process to put in place systems which can be worked on, and which help to produce a performance discourse, which is a key contributor to good governance.

The study therefore supports the assertion that M&E contributes to good governance. The case study has served to illustrate the different perspective relationships, and showed where the strengths and weaknesses are for each of the forms of M&E. Overall, whilst MME is strong, well-responded to and brings about administrative compliance, it has not gone far enough in generating a more citizen oriented M&E, evident in the limited M&E of this type found within communities themselves. The case study has revealed that a key translator of findings into action, Parliament, whilst improving recently in the quality of its oversight, has generally not been effective in helping to support in a practical manner the large body of oversight work undertaken in the country. None of these qualifications, however, should detract from the fact that the research does prove that M&E does lead to good governance.

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ANNEXURES

The Director-General
Mr Vusi Madonsela
Department of Social Development

Dear Mr Madonsela

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVEWS WITH OFFICIALS IN YOUUR DEPARTMENT AS PART OF MY DOCTORAL RESEARCH

I am currently a doctoral student registered the University of Witwatersrand, and being supervised by Professor Richard Levin. My topic is the "The role of monitoring and evaluation in promoting good governance: A case study of the department of Social Development." I have selected your department as a case study due to the following reasons.

Publically available trend data indicates that your department is a good performer from the point of view of governance, in that you have had good assessments from the Auditor-general and the Public Service Commission, amongst others. Furthermore, you have an operative M&E function that appears to be working well in providing management with the necessary strategic support that result in your assessments being positive. Your department stands out as an example of good governance, based on my preliminary research of available reports.

I wish to understand some of the success factors for this, and would appreciative it if you could avail not more that 5 managers whom I could conduct interviews with. The interviews would not be longer that 30 minutes each, and all research codes around confidentiality will be followed. I would also like to hear what you, as leader of the department, see as the success factors.

I will make available my thesis to your departments and also be willing to do a presentation on it should you see this as desirable. As a part of my research I compare your departmental performance with that of the country, and the research gives clear insights into how well you compare.

I look forward to hearing from you on this request.

I can be contacted at the Public Service Commission, Office of the Deputy-Director General: Leadership and Management practices, (012) 352 1039, or 082 499 8108 or IndranN@opsc.gov.za

Your sincerely

Indran Naidoo
Doctoral student
7/10/08

Permission Granted 07/10/2008

ANNEXURE 2(a)

NON-DSD

CONFIDENTIAL
QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY ON M&E

PURPOSE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess your reactions to a series of statements on monitoring and evaluation (M&E). There is no right or wrong answer, and what is required is for me to get a sense of how you see issues from where you sit as a manager in the department. These questions will provide insights into how M&E is viewed, and what its role is in terms of promoting good governance. The questionnaire requires in most instances a cross (x) in the boxes provided.

It should not take you more than a few minutes to fill in.

Kindly email back to me, at IndranN@opsc.gov.za or fax to (012) 323 2875. I would appreciate the responses by **Wednesday 19 November 2008**.

You may also call me should you require any clarity on the questions, at 012-352 1039 or 082 499 8108.

Please feel free to provide answers to any of the questions in more detail.

ANNEXURE 2(a)

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 What is your post-level in the organisation? [ ]

1.2 Which management forums do you sit on?

Management Committee	
Executive Management	
Other (specify)	

1.3 Number of years in current position

> 2 yrs	2 – 4 yrs	5 – 6 yrs	7 – 8 yrs	9 -10 yrs	> 10 yrs (specify)

SECTION 2: PERCEPTIONS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E)

2.1. What in your opinion is "M&E?

_____

_____

SECTION 3: PERCEPTIONS OF VALUE ADDED BY OVERSIGHT INSTITUTIONS TO THE WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT

In this section I am assessing your views on the **mandatory reports that your department is obliged to submit to oversight bodies and institutions**. Please indicate **your level of agreemen**t with the following statements as per the codes in the table below:

CODES 1= Strongly Agree (SA); 2= Agree (A); 3= Neutral (N); 4= Disagree (D); 5= Strongly Disagree (SD)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
3.1 The monthly financial reports required from National Treasury help us to better manage our budgets					
3.2 The reports required from National Treasury do not add value to our work					
3.3 The work of the Auditor-General is important, as it promotes Accountability and Transparency in your department					
3.4 As a manager, I am fully aware of how the audit committee Functions					
3.5 The format of the annual report is useful in that it compels us to Develop internal systems to produce performance information around the key areas and helps to self-manage					
3.6 The reporting of financial misconduct cases to the PSC is useful and serves as a deterrent to staff within					

the department when it comes to committing fraud					
3.7 The submission of financial disclosure forms for SMS helps to manage conflicts of interest, and improves the ethical compliance of staff					
3.8 The submission of the Employment Equity plan to the Department of Labour is a useful monitoring measure, which helps to ensure that the department complies with all of the provisions and targets for sound HR management					
3.9 The submission of reports (like those mentioned above) to external oversight bodies helps to tighten the internal management processes in the department, and improve its own M&E capacity and capability					
3.10 There are too many reporting obligations imposed on the department, and this detracts from the department achieving its strategic objectives					

SECTION 4: EFFECTIVNESS OF M&E WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT

In this section I am assessing your views on how effective you see the M&E component of your department. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements as per the codes in the table below:

CODES
1= Strongly Agree (SA); 2= Agree (A); 3= Neutral (N); 4= Disagree (D); 5= Strongly Disagree (SD)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.1 The M&E function within my department is well located and adequately capacitated					
4.2 The M&E component adds value to my work as a manager, in that it produces useful management tools and information					
4.3 The M&E component is sufficiently integrated into the institutional management arrangements of the department to add value					
4.4 The M&E component has not managed to produce value to the management of the department					
4.5 The department takes M&E seriously, and sees M&E as a critical management tool					

SECTION 5: MANAGERIAL ROLE IN PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE

In this section I am assessing how you see your role as management in promoting good governance in your department

CODES
1= Strongly Agree (SA); 2= Agree (A); 3= Neutral (N); 4= Disagree (D); 5= Strongly Disagree (SD)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
5.1 Information management in the department contributes to transparency and accountability					
5.2 Managers exercise decisions in terms of prevailing legislation and regulation, and thus comply with the PAJA					
5.3 The department takes a proactive stance when it comes to engaging with external stakeholders					
5.4 The department sees M&E information as being necessary for accountability purposes					
5.5 The department sees M&E information as being useful for learning purposes					
5.6 The PS M&E System of the PSC, which was Implemented this year, produces useful management report					
5.7 As a manager, I feel a part of the management processes and feel that I can contribute to the good governance of the department					

SECTION 6: TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

6.1 Have you or your staff attended any M&E training sessions/ workshops in the past 7 years?

	Yes	No
Respondent		
Staff		

6.2 If yes, specify type of training received or workshop attended?

Examples will be project management, data management, reporting, etc.

_____

_____

6.3 What type of training do you think you and/ or your staff need for M&E?

_____

_____

SECTION 7: CHALLENGES

7.1 What do you think are the main challenges relating to M&E in your Department?

(Multiple responses – you can tick as many statements as applies as well as add if need be)

Inadequate human resource capacity/ people who trained in M&E	
Lack of funding/ resources for M&E	
Not viewed as a priority by senior government officials/ politicians	
M&E technology/ system to collect information easily and systematically not in place	
Inappropriate M&E implementation strategies	
Lack of training	
Identification of agreed on priority areas for M&E	
Lack of an effective communication strategy to inform policy development and planning	
Consultants trained in M&E that are available to assist	
Other (specify)	

7.2. What do you think are the main challenges relating to promoting M&E in South Africa generally?

(Multiple responses – you can tick as many statements as applies as well as add if need be)

Inadequate human resource capacity/ people who trained in M&E	
Lack of funding/ resources for M&E	
Not viewed as a priority by senior government officials/ politicians	
M&E technology/ system to collect information easily and systematically not in place	
Inappropriate M&E implementation strategies	
Lack of training	
Identification of agreed on priority areas for M&E	
Lack of an effective communication strategy to inform policy development and planning	
Consultants trained in M&E that are available to assist	
Other (specify)	

7.3 How can M&E be improved in the future? (Multiple responses – you can tick as many statements as applies as well as add if need be)

More regular reporting mechanisms	
Employ more staff who are trained and responsible for M&E information	
Have more training sessions	
Other specify	

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR VALUABLE TIME AND INSIGHTS.

Indran Naidoo (Researcher)
Other

Any other comments you may have, please include here.

DSD

CONFIDENTIAL
QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess your reactions to a series of statements on monitoring and evaluation (M&E). There is no right or wrong answer, and what is required is for me to get a sense of how you see issues from where you sit as a manager in the department. These questions will provide insights into how M&E is viewed, and what its role is in terms of promoting good governance. The questionnaire requires in most instances a cross (x) in the boxes provided.

It should not take you more than a few minutes to fill in.

Kindly email back to me, at IndranN@opsc.gov.za or fax to (012) 323 2875. I would appreciate the responses by Tuesday, 18 November 2008. As agreed with your DG, the findings of this survey will be made available to your Department. You may also call me should you require any clarity on the questions, at 012-352 1039 or 082 499 8108.

Please feel free to provide answers to any of the questions in more detail.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.2 What is your post-level in the organisation? [ ]

1.2 Which management forums do you sit on:

Management Committee	
Executive Management	
Other (specify)	

1.3 Number of years in current position

> 2 yrs	2 – 4 yrs	5 – 6 yrs	7 – 8 yrs	9 -10 yrs	> 10 yrs (specify)

SECTION 2: PERCEPTIONS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E)

2.1. What in your opinion is " M&E?

SECTION 3: PERCEPTIONS OF VALUE ADDED BY OVERSIGHT INSTITUTIONS TO THE WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT

In this section I am assessing your views on the **mandatory reports that your department is obliged to submit to oversight bodies and institutions**. Please indicate **your level of agreemen**t with the following statements as per the codes in the table below:

CODES
1= Strongly Agree (SA); 2= Agree (A); 3= Neutral (N); 4= Disagree (D); 5= Strongly Disagree (SD)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
3.1 The monthly financial reports required from National Treasury help us to better manage our budgets					
3.2 The reports required from National Treasury do not add value to our work					
3.3 The work of the Auditor-General is important, as it promotes Accountability and Transparency in the DSD					
3.4 As a manager, I am fully aware of how the audit committee Functions					
3.5 The format of the annual report is useful in that it compels us to Develop internal systems to produce performance information around the key areas and helps to self-manage					
3.6 The reporting of financial misconduct cases to the PSC is useful and serves as a deterrent to staff within the DSD when it comes to committing fraud					
3.7 The submission of financial disclosure forms for SMS helps to manage conflicts of interest, and improves the ethical compliance of staff					
3.8 The submission of the Employment Equity plan to the Department of Labour is a useful monitoring measure, which helps to ensure that the DSD complies with all of the provisions and targets for sound HR management					
3.9 The submission of reports (like those mentioned above) to external oversight bodies helps to tighten the internal management processes in the DSD, and improve its own M&E capacity and capability					
3.10There are too many reporting obligations imposed on the department, and this detracts from the DSD achieving its strategic objectives					

SECTION 4: EFFECTIVNESS OF M&E WITHIN THE DSD

In this section I am assessing your views on how effective you see the M&E component of your department. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements as per the codes in the table below:

CODES
1= Strongly Agree (SA); 2= Agree (A); 3= Neutral (N); 4= Disagree (D); 5= Strongly Disagree (SD)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.1 The M&E function within the DSD is well located and adequately capacitated					
4.2 The M&E component adds value to my work as a manager, in that it produces useful management tools and information					
4.3 The M&E component is sufficiently integrated into the					

institutional management arrangements of the DSD to add value					
4.4 The M&E component has not managed to produce value to the management of the DSD					
4.5 The DSD takes M&E seriously, and sees M&E as a critical management tool					

SECTION 5: MANAGERIAL ROLE IN PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE

In this section I am assessing how you see your role as management in promoting good governance in the DSD.

CODES
1= Strongly Agree (SA); 2= Agree (A); 3= Neutral (N); 4= Disagree (D); 5= Strongly Disagree (SD)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
5.1 Information management in the DSD contributes to transparency and accountability					
5.2 Managers exercise decisions in terms of prevailing legislation and regulation, and thus comply with the PAJA					
5.3 The DSD takes a proactive stance when it comes to engaging with external stakeholders					
5.4 The DSD sees M&E information as being necessary for accountability purposes					
5.5 The DSD sees M&E information as being useful for learning purposes					
5.6 The PS M&E System of the PSC, which was implemented this year, produced a useful management report					
5.7 As a manager, I feel a part of the management processes and feel that I can contribute to the good governance of the DSD					

SECTION 6: TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

6.1 Have you or your staff attended any M&E training sessions/ workshops in the past 7 years?

	Yes	No
Respondent		
Staff		

6.2 If yes, specify type of training received or workshop attended?

Examples will be project management, data management, reporting, etc.

_____

_____

6.3 What type of training do you think you and/ or your staff need for M&E?

_____

_____

SECTION 7: CHALLENGES

7.1 What do you think are the main challenges relating to M&E in your Department? (Multiple responses – you can tick as many statements as applies as well as add if need be)

Inadequate human resource capacity/ people who trained in M&E	
Lack of funding/ resources for M&E	
Not viewed as a priority by senior government officials/ politicians	
M&E technology/ system to collect information easily and systematically not in place	
Inappropriate M&E implementation strategies	
Lack of training	
Identification of agreed on priority areas for M&E	
Lack of an effective communication strategy to inform policy development and planning	
Consultants trained in M&E that are available to assist	
Other (specify)	

7.2. What do you think are the main challenges relating to promoting M&E in South African generally? (Multiple responses – you can tick as many statements as applies as well as add if need be)

Inadequate human resource capacity/ people who trained in M&E	
Lack of funding/ resources for M&E	
Not viewed as a priority by senior government officials/ politicians	
M&E technology/ system to collect information easily and systematically not in place	
Inappropriate M&E implementation strategies	
Lack of training	
Identification of agreed on priority areas for M&E	
Lack of an effective communication strategy to inform policy development and planning	
Consultants trained in M&E that are available to assist	
Other (specify)	

7.3 How can M&E be improved in the future? (Multiple responses – you can tick as many statements as applies as well as add if need be)

More regular reporting mechanisms	
Employ more staff who are trained and responsible for M&E information	
Have more training sessions	
Other specify	

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR VALUABLE TIME AND INSIGHTS.

Indran Naidoo (Researcher)
Other

Any other comments you may have, please include here.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

CONFIDENTIAL
QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY ON M&E

PURPOSE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess your reactions to a series of statements on monitoring and evaluation (M&E). There is no right or wrong answer, and what is required is for me to get a sense of how you see issues from where you sit as a manager in the department. These questions will provide insights into how M&E is viewed, and what its role is in terms of promoting good governance. The questionnaire requires in most instances a cross (x) in the boxes provided.

It should not take you more than a few minutes to fill in.

Kindly email back to me, at IndranN@opsc.gov.za or fax to (012) 323 2875. I would appreciate the responses by **Wednesday 19 November 2008**.

You may also call me should you require any clarity on the questions, at 012-352 1039 or 082 499 8108.

Please feel free to provide answers to any of the questions in more detail.

ANNEXURE 2(c)

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.3 What is your post-level in the organisation? [Director]

1.2 Which management forums do you sit on?

Management Committee	Budget from time to time
Executive Management	
Other (specify)	

1.3 Number of years in current position

> 2 yrs	2 – 4 yrs	5 – 6 yrs	7 – 8 yrs	9 -10 yrs	> 10 yrs (specify)
	X				

SECTION 2: PERCEPTIONS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E)

2.1. What in your opinion is "M&E?

Monitoring relates to compliance with set standards and evaluating puts a value to the compliance.

SECTION 3: PERCEPTIONS OF VALUE ADDED BY OVERSIGHT INSTITUTIONS TO THE WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT

In this section I am assessing your views on the **mandatory reports that your department is obliged to submit to oversight bodies and institutions**. Please indicate **your level of agreemen**t with the following statements as per the codes in the table below:

CODES
1= Strongly Agree (SA); 2= Agree (A); 3= Neutral (N); 4= Disagree (D); 5= Strongly Disagree (SD)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
3.1 The monthly financial reports required from National Treasury help us to better manage our budgets					
3.2 The reports required from National Treasury do not add value to our work					
3.3 The work of the Auditor-General is important, as it promotes Accountability and Transparency in your department					
3.4 As a manager, I am fully aware of how the audit committee Functions					
3.5 The format of the annual report is useful in that it compels us to Develop internal systems to produce performance information around the key areas and helps to self-manage					

3.6 The reporting of financial misconduct cases to the PSC is useful and serves as a deterrent to staff within the department when it comes to committing fraud					
3.7 The submission of financial disclosure forms for SMS helps to manage conflicts of interest, and improves the ethical compliance of staff					
3.8 The submission of the Employment Equity plan to the Department of Labour is a useful monitoring measure, which helps to ensure that the department complies with all of the provisions and targets for sound HR management					
3.9 The submission of reports (like those mentioned above) to external oversight bodies helps to tighten the internal management processes in the department, and improve its own M&E capacity and capability					
3.10There are too many reporting obligations imposed on the department, and this detracts from the department achieving its strategic objectives					

SECTION 4: EFFECTIVENESS OF M&E WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT

In this section I am assessing your views on how effective you see the M&E component of your department. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements as per the codes in the table below:

CODES
1= Strongly Agree (SA); 2= Agree (A); 3= Neutral (N); 4= Disagree (D); 5= Strongly Disagree (SD)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.1 The M&E function within my department is well located and adequately capacitated					
4.2 The M&E component adds value to my work as a manager, in that it produces useful management tools and information					
4.3 The M&E component is sufficiently integrated into the institutional management arrangements of the department to add value					
4.4 The M&E component has not managed to produce value to the management of the department					
4.5 The department takes M&E seriously, and sees M&E as a critical management tool					

SECTION 5: MANAGERIAL ROLE IN PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE

In this section I am assessing how you see your role as management in promoting good governance in your department

CODES
1= Strongly Agree (SA); 2= Agree (A); 3= Neutral (N); 4= Disagree (D); 5= Strongly Disagree (SD)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
5.1 Information management in the department contributes to transparency and accountability					
5.2 Managers exercise decisions in terms of prevailing legislation and regulation, and thus comply with the PAJA					
5.3 The department takes a proactive stance when it comes to engaging with external stakeholders					
5.4 The department sees M&E information as being necessary for accountability purposes					
5.5 The department sees M&E information as being useful for learning purposes					
5.6 The PS M&E System of the PSC, which was Implemented this year, produces useful management report					
5.7 As a manager, I feel a part of the management processes and feel that I can contribute to the good governance of the department					

SECTION 6: TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

6.1 Have you or your staff attended any M&E training sessions/ workshops in the past 7 years?

	Yes	No
Respondent		
Staff		

6.2 If yes, specify type of training received or workshop attended?

Examples will be project management, data management, reporting, etc.

_____

_____

6.3 What type of training do you think you and/ or your staff need for M&E?

_____

SECTION 7: CHALLENGES

7.1 What do you think are the main challenges relating to M&E in your Department?

(Multiple responses – you can tick as many statements as applies as well as add if need be)

Inadequate human resource capacity/ people who trained in M&E	
Lack of funding/ resources for M&E	
Not viewed as a priority by senior government officials/ politicians	
M&E technology/ system to collect information easily and systematically not in place	
Inappropriate M&E implementation strategies	
Lack of training	
Identification of agreed on priority areas for M&E	
Lack of an effective communication strategy to inform policy development and planning	
Consultants trained in M&E that are available to assist	
Other (specify)	

7.2 What do you think are the main challenges relating to promoting M&E in South Africa generally?

(Multiple responses – you can tick as many statements as applies as well as add if need be)

Inadequate human resource capacity/ people who trained in M&E	
Lack of funding/ resources for M&E	
Not viewed as a priority by senior government officials/ politicians	
M&E technology/ system to collect information easily and systematically not in place	
Inappropriate M&E implementation strategies	
Lack of training	
Identification of agreed on priority areas for M&E	
Lack of an effective communication strategy to inform policy development and planning	
Consultants trained in M&E that are available to assist	
Other (specify)	

7.3 How can M&E be improved in the future? (Multiple responses – you can tick as many statements as applies as well as add if need be)

More regular reporting mechanisms	
Employ more staff who are trained and responsible for M&E information	
Have more training sessions	
Other specify	

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR VALUABLE TIME AND INSIGHTS.

Indran Naidoo (Researcher)
Other

Any other comments you may have, please include here.

Questions to M&E staff of the Department of Social Development

Probe question	CD response	M&E Staff response
Appropriateness of location of M&E within the management hierarchy		
Support received for M&E from the Head of Department		
Support received for M&E from the management team of the Department		
Resources allocated to M&E		
Key forums where findings are presented		
Track implementation of recommendations, and what are the results of this		
Your views of the understanding that management has to M&E		