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Improving the Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity Building of the Office of the Premier in the Eastern Cape

by

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2015
Declaration

I, Antonio Khulile September, hereby declare that the work in this Dissertation is my own original work, all sources used or referred to have been documented and recognised and this Dissertation has not previously, in its entirety or in part, been submitted at any other recognised university or educational institution for a degree.

Signature: .................................................................................................................................

Date: .................................................................................................................................
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Abstract

The study focuses on improving the monitoring and evaluation capacity building of the Office of the Premier in the Eastern Cape. The main objectives of the study were:

- To assess the strategic location and integration of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) into other management processes and systems.
- To develop improved data collection, management and assessment capacity options for accurate reporting by the M&E Unit.
- To assess the current competency framework for M&E practitioners in the Office of the Premier of the Eastern Cape.
- To develop considerations for an improved integrated M&E capacity building strategy for the M&E Unit of the OTP, and for the Eastern Cape Province, in general.
- To develop an improved M&E skills plan for M&E practitioners.
- To develop findings and recommendations on the development of a capacity building plan for the M&E Unit of the OTP.

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection and analysis. The main findings of this study were that, firstly, the Office of the Premier (OTP) M&E unit has the greatest challenge in the area of capacitating and resourcing hence they are unable to conduct evaluations. Some of the key identified skills were lack of evaluation research, statistics, and knowledge and information management skills. Also the non-existence of an M&E capacity strategy and plan resulted in the underperforming of the unit in this area. Secondly, the unit has a high vacancy rate that impacts negatively on their performance of achieving set targets. Thirdly, it transpired that the unit has been hampered by the lack of retaining, promoting and attracting trained and experienced practitioners. Finally, the inaccurate location of and integration of M&E into other management processes and systems delays the processes of decision-making by top management to adopt and effectively execute an M&E framework.
Table of Contents

Declaration ......................................................................................................................................... ii
Acknowledgements ......................................................................................................................... iii
Abstract ........................................................................................................................................... iv
List of tables ...................................................................................................................................... viii
List of figures ..................................................................................................................................... viii
List of appendices ............................................................................................................................ ix
List of acronyms ............................................................................................................................... ix

CHAPTER ONE .......................................................................................................................... 1

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY ........................................................................................................ 1

1.1 Introduction .................................................................................................................................. 1
1.2 Problem statement ....................................................................................................................... 3
1.3 Research questions ....................................................................................................................... 3
1.3.1 Primary research question ..................................................................................................... 3
1.3.2 Secondary research questions ............................................................................................... 3
1.4 Research objectives ..................................................................................................................... 3
1.5 Research design and methodology ............................................................................................ 4
1.6 Sampling design and techniques ............................................................................................... 6
1.7 Data collection methods ............................................................................................................. 7
1.8 Structure of the dissertation ....................................................................................................... 8
1.9 Key concepts ............................................................................................................................... 9
1.10 Conclusion ................................................................................................................................ 11

CHAPTER TWO ....................................................................................................................... 13

CORE LITERATURE OVERVIEW OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING .......... 13

2.1 Introduction ................................................................................................................................ 13
2.2 Nature and role of M&E in governance ...................................................................................... 13
2.2.1 Organisational performance-improvement strategy ............................................................ 15
2.2.2 Policies and procedures ......................................................................................................... 16
## CHAPTER FOUR  MONITORING AND EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE 53

4.1 Introduction ........................................................................................................................................... 53

4.2 Provincial Growth Development Plan (PGDP) assessment ................................................................. 53

4.3 StratMaster (M&E electronic system) ................................................................................................. 55

4.4 Service Delivery Acceleration Plan (SDAP) .......................................................................................... 56

4.5 Planning and M&E Indaba ..................................................................................................................... 58

4.6 The ECPG response to the National Outcomes Approach ................................................................. 59

4.7 Ongoing interventions ......................................................................................................................... 60

4.8 ECPG M&E challenges ......................................................................................................................... 61

4.9 Strategic location and integration of M&E into other management processes and systems .......... 63

4.9.1 Structural and organisational alignment for M&E systems ............................................................. 64

4.9.2 Monitoring developments, evaluating performance and making corrective adjustments ............ 68

4.9.3 Human capacity-building and technical support for the M&E system............................................ 70

4.10 Access and use of information to improve results .............................................................................. 75

4.11 Conclusion ........................................................................................................................................... 77

## CHAPTER FIVE SUMMARY AND ASSESSMENT OF INTERVIEW FINDINGS 80

5.1 Introduction ......................................................................................................................................... 80

5.2 Interviews and questionnaires (refer to Appendix 2) ......................................................................... 80

5.3 Data analysis and interpretation ......................................................................................................... 81

5.4 Findings of the qualitative study ......................................................................................................... 82

5.4.1 Required skills necessary for effective and efficient implementing of an M&E system ................. 82

5.4.2 The current capacity of the M&E unit in the OTP of the EC ............................................................ 83

5.5 Findings of the quantitative study ....................................................................................................... 85

5.5.1 Analysis of questionnaire responses ............................................................................................... 85

5.6 Proposed structure for the M&E unit of the OTP ............................................................................... 109

5.7 Conclusion ......................................................................................................................................... 112
CHAPTER SIX ......................................................................................................................... 114

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ............................................................................. 114

6.1 Introduction .................................................................................................................... 114

6.2 Cross-cutting issues .................................................................................................... 120

6.3 Recommendations ..................................................................................................... 124

6.4 Limitations of the study ............................................................................................. 130

6.5 Areas for further research ......................................................................................... 131

6.6 Conclusion ............................................................................................................... 132

Appendices ......................................................................................................................... 134

References ........................................................................................................................ 140

List of tables

Table 1: OTP 12 employee response results ....................................................................... 85

List of figures

Figure 1: Current M&E structure of the office of the OTP ..................................................... 50

Figure 4: Strategic location and integration of M&E into other management processes and systems ......................................................................................................................... 88

Figure 5: M&E Capacity and resourcing ............................................................................. 89
Figure 6: Data management and assessment ................................................................. 90
Figure 7: Evaluation Research conducted ..................................................................... 91
Figure 8: Learning & Skill Development ....................................................................... 91
Figure 9: Proposed Structure for M&E unit of the OTP .................................................. 111

List of appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire covering letter .................................................................. 134
Appendix 2: Questionnaire .......................................................................................... 135
Appendix 3: Focus Group Discussions ......................................................................... 139

List of acronyms

AGSA Auditor General of South Africa
AOPOs Audit of Predetermined Objectives
APPs Annual Performance Plan’s
CBC Cabinet Budget Committee
CDWs Community Development Workers
CRDP Comprehensive Rural Development Programme
DBSA Development Bank of South Africa
DDG Deputy Director General
EC Eastern Cape
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECM&amp;R</td>
<td>Eastern Cape Monitoring and Reporting</td>
</tr>
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<td>ECPG</td>
<td>Eastern Cape Provincial Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXCO</td>
<td>Executive Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSD</td>
<td>Front Line Service Delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G&amp;A</td>
<td>Governance &amp; Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS</td>
<td>Geography Information System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWM&amp;ES</td>
<td>Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIPPs</td>
<td>High Impact Priority Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOD</td>
<td>Head of Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>HRD</td>
<td>Human Resource Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDP</td>
<td>Integrated Development Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDPs</td>
<td>Integrated Development Plan’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEG</td>
<td>Independent Evaluation Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IYM</td>
<td>In-Year Monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;R</td>
<td>Monitoring and Reporting</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>MFDR</td>
<td>Managing for Development Results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTSF</td>
<td>Medium Term Strategic Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTP</td>
<td>Office of the Premier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PALAMA</td>
<td>Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCAS</td>
<td>Policy Coordination and Advisory Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCMT</td>
<td>Provincial Coordination and Monitoring Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCMU</td>
<td>Planning, Coordinating and Monitoring Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGDP</td>
<td>Provincial Growth Development Plan</td>
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<td>PGDS</td>
<td>Provincial Growth and Development Strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>PM&amp;E</td>
<td>Performance Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<td>PM&amp;ETT</td>
<td>Performance Monitoring &amp; Evaluation Task Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMETTT</td>
<td>Provincial Planning and M&amp;E Technical Task Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>POA</td>
<td>Programme of Action</td>
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<td>PPPs</td>
<td>Public Private Partnerships</td>
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<td>PSC</td>
<td>Public Service Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSF</td>
<td>Provincial Strategic Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>PWM&amp;E</td>
<td>Provincial-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAMDI</td>
<td>South African Management Development Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>SASQAF</td>
<td>South African Statistics Qualification Association Framework</td>
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<td>SDAP</td>
<td>Service Delivery Acceleration Plan</td>
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<td>SMS</td>
<td>Senior Management Staff</td>
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CHAPTER ONE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.1 Introduction

In 2005 the South African Presidency established the Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation System (GWM&ES), which requires the provincial spheres of government to have a populated Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) structure with skilled M&E practitioners, in order to implement this policy effectively. The Office of the Premier (OTP) in the Eastern Cape (EC) was then tasked to develop the EC Provincial M&E system aligned to the GWM&ES, and to roll it out to various departments and municipalities within the province.

This was aimed at improving coordination, tracking service delivery and evaluating the impact of services delivered to the EC communities. Despite this mandate, the OTP in the EC seems to lack the necessary M&E capacity to carry out this task, as since 2007 the province has been operating without an approved Provincial-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System (PWM&E) (Presidency 2008).

The province has not yet established an integrated M&E system that could act as a guide for areas where M&E is necessary, as well as using an M&E structure to guide the commissioning of different programme evaluations, to lead to a stronger evaluation capability in the province. There is also a lack of an integrated data collection plan set for all the evaluations that need to be conducted for the provincial priority programmes.

Furthermore, it is evident that a culture of M&E is lacking, as M&E is not integrated into the standard management practices. The absence of integrated M&E tools for managers in the province, a different understanding of M&E, insufficient knowledge and development of M&E skills by senior managers, decision-makers and political employees in the departments, public entities and municipalities; all hamper the effective functioning of the M&E system.

M&E capacity also seems to be very low within the OTP, departments, public entities and municipalities, since in the OTP the critical positions of General Manager M&E has been vacant for more than a year. Other departments, municipalities and entities do not have a specific person dedicated for M&E. This seriously affects the implementation of the M&E
system in the province. The M&E directorates in some departments are at a managerial and assistant-managerial level, which do not allow them to participate in any decision-making meetings. Hence, it is important to improve the organisational structure and human capacity, in order to improve M&E results, and to be able to influence decision-making and policy changes.

One of the important factors likely to constitute a major stumbling block to the effective implementation of M&E programmes is the lack of human capacity – both in terms of quantity and quality of the public service, and especially at the managerial level. The high M&E vacancy rate at most levels of the public service and the inability to fill senior management posts could also affect the implementation of a satisfactory M&E system.

The shortage of skilled M&E personnel in the OTP, and the province in general, could be one of the reasons for the obstruction of the effective institutionalisation and implementation of the M&E system by the OTP, as well as in provincial government departments and municipalities in the EC. Improvement in M&E capacity building could be a key element implemented to ensure effective development of the M&E system, the rolling out of the system into all sectors, credible reports, and the effective use of M&E findings for decision-making purposes (M&E Indaba report 2008:34).

The shortage of professionals and technical M&E staff in the province also affects the proper institutionalisation of the system at different levels of government, in order to have a synchronised reporting system with credible evidence-based information and reports (Cloete 2009:4). The other challenge is the limited involvement in the M&E processes by communities and other stakeholders – resulting in the questionable integrity of the produced data. The lack of use of information for policy development and change, planning, budgeting, and for improvements in the provincial priority projects could also affect any M&E system in the province.

Dissemination of information to stakeholders, and insufficient use of the data produced by Statistics South Africa to inform planning, including budgeting and decision-making at all levels of government also poses a challenge for an institutionalised M&E system. Currently, the OTP does not have an electronic M&E system to access the data produced by different
municipalities, and to be able to analyse such data, using an electronic data-analysis system (such as National Software Statistics).

This research focused on the development of appropriate strategies for improving the capacity of the current M&E unit in the OTP – with a special focus on organisational and human capacity building. The development of these strategies would enable the OTP to fulfill its mandate as a coordinating department with other provincial government departments. Its objective is to ensure the effective and efficient execution of M&E capacity building by all departments in the province (PGDP 1996:54).

1.2 Problem statement
There is currently a lack of M&E capacity in the OTP in the EC. The study attempted to develop strategies to improve the capacity building of M&E units by the OTP in the EC.

1.3 Research questions

1.3.1 Primary research question
How can the capacity of the M&E unit in the OTP in the EC Province be improved?

1.3.2 Secondary research questions
- What are current good practices for effective and efficient implementation of public sector M&E systems?
- What is the current capacity of the M&E unit in the OTP of the EC?
- Where should the M&E unit be strategically located for it to be integrated into other management processes and systems?
- How is M&E data collected, managed and assessed for credible reporting?
- How does capacity building of the M&E unit in the EC in general and in the OTP in particular currently take place?
- How could the capacity of the M&E unit in the OTP be improved?

1.4 Research objectives
This research diagnosed the reasons for the poor implementation of M&E systems in the OTP. It also analysed and assessed the capacity of the M&E unit in the OTP and thereby established the impact that the shortage of skilled M&E practitioners is having on the institutionalisation of the M&E system. The main assumption underlying the research is that
by improving the M&E capacity in terms of organisational structure and human capacity, the M&E practitioners would be able to improve their self-esteem, self-confidence, reporting, and performance in general, with regard to the implementation of the M&E system. Furthermore, it is envisaged that this would help to accelerate service delivery, accountability, and also to improve the economic and social needs of society. Therefore, the research focused on the following specific research objectives in this regard:

- To assess the strategic location and integration of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) into other management processes and systems.
- To develop improved data collection, management and assessment capacity options for accurate reporting by the M&E Unit.
- To assess the current competency framework for M&E practitioners in the OTP of the EC.
- To develop considerations for an improved integrated M&E capacity building strategy for the M&E Unit of the OTP, and for the ECP, in general.
- To develop an improved M&E skills plan for M&E practitioners.
- To develop findings and recommendations on the development of a capacity building plan for the M&E Unit of the OTP.

1.5 Research design and methodology

To improve the implementation of the M&E system and the organisational capacity of the M&E unit, the evaluation of M&E capacity building programmes is unavoidable. This exercise would determine the extent to which the capacity building policy has been implemented and the impact thereof on the policy in enhancing the performance of the M&E unit of the OTP.

Brynard (in Cloete & Wissink 2000:177) emphasises that implementation needs to be clearly defined in order for it to be suitable for a particular context. Cloete and de Coning (2012: 137) defined this as the conversion of mainly physical and financial resources into concrete service-delivery outputs in the form of facilities and services, or into other concrete outputs aimed at achieving policy objectives. The research therefore considered the activities that have been planned to execute M&E capacity building programmes, and outlined their successes, failures and activities that are ongoing for building the capacity of an M&E unit.
The study identified the people who are responsible for driving M&E, and those whose seats are at the Executive level of the province, in order to influence and advise the Premier and the legislature on policy decisions, with specific reference to the GWM&ES. The study used a qualitative research design and used both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect and analyse the data. The research used both primary and secondary documents and empirical data for this evaluation and employed a triangulation approach. According to Leedy (1997:26), “a triangulation method is a process of utilising multiple data-collection methods, data sources and analyses to check the validity and reliability of [the] findings”.

The primary documents that were assessed consisted of M&E reports, service-delivery reports, human resource training reports, the M&E unit’s financial report, the HR Recruitment Plan and the Recruitment Plan and Report. The secondary documents consisted of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the Provincial Growth and Development Plan, the Policy Framework for GWM&ES, the Presidential M&E status report, the Public-Service Commission report on the implementation and institutionalisation of the M&E system, the OTP’s Strategic Plans, the annual performance plan, the Provincial M&E System, the International M&E reports.

Qualitative analysis, as a method for assessing secondary data is aimed at probing the research questions via a historical perspective on the M&E by the OTP. These documents were collected from the Human Resource Development unit to assess how much had been spent on the M&E capacity building programme since 2005. It also attempted to ascertain how many people had been trained; which accredited service providers had been used; and for which areas of focus in M&E they had been trained.

Scriven (1991:139) defined evaluation as “the process of identifying relevant standards of merit, worth, or standards; and some investigation of the performance of evaluands (the objects of evaluation) on these standards, and the integration of the results to achieve an overall judgment of merit or worth of the evaluand”. Kusek and Rist (2004:12) support this view by saying that evaluation is “the systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, programme, or policy, including its design, implementation, and results – with the aim of determining the relevance and fulfilment of [the] objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability”. The importance of this approach for
organisational evaluation was critical, since it analysed M&E reports that were produced by the OTP, in order to verify some of the questions asked from the study, and how they were reporting on outcome and impact evaluations since the intervention; and also to assess the credibility and quality of their reports. This is important in terms of comparing their performance before the intervention with that after the intervention – in order to determine the impact of training. The study analysed the documents on M&E annual reports, internal documents, M&E Indaba resolutions, and service-delivery reports developed by the M&E unit.

1.6 Sampling design and techniques
The primary empirical data collection for this evaluation focused on the questionnaires with 12 respondent managers in the OTP and Policy M&E unit, the Director General, the Deputy Director General, two General Managers, four Senior Managers and four M&E managers in the OTP.

Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2007:132) differentiate between two methods of sampling: probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling ensures that the elements selected for a sample accurately resemble the parameters of the population from which they were selected. Non-probability sampling refers to any kind of sampling where the selection of elements is not determined by the statistical principle of randomness (Terre Blanche, et al., 2007:139).

The study has utilised a non-probability sampling method to select eight top management members out of 24 members from three different programmes of the OTP of the EC and four M&E managers. Therefore, a total of 12 members participated in this research. The three programmes that are represented in the sampling of the eight members are Policy Monitoring and Governance, Administration and Support and IDOLS. Each programme is represented by top management, who are influential in decision-making and who occupy seats at the executive committee of the OTP. The 12 members are senior managers from the M&E unit at the level of the Deputy Director General (M&E), General Manager (M&E) and senior manager in the office of the DDG (M&E) responsible for the development and implementation of policies and resolutions taken at executive level.
The researcher selected the sample based on knowledge of the population and considering the objectives of the research study (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:166). The respondents were selected according to their knowledge of and involvement in the activities that the study focused on. Recorded interviews were used for three key executive members, who are responsible for the implementation of the M&E capacity building, and other members were given questionnaires on a five-point scale ranging from less than average, average and better than average.

1.7 Data collection methods

It is clear from the research questions that the study requires different data collection methods, in order to realise the objectives of this research. Methodological triangulation was applied in this process of data collection. Terre Blanche et al (2007:380) define methodological triangulation as the use of multiple methods to study a single problem, looking for convergent evidence from different sources, such as interviewing, participant observation, surveying, and a review of the documentary resources.

The study has also analysed secondary data. Neuman (2011:333) explains that secondary data constitutes a special case of existing statistics; it is the re-analysis of a previously collected survey, or other data originally gathered by others. The difference between primary data and secondary data is that it focuses on analysing – rather than on the collection of data.

The study analysed different government legislative and policy frameworks that advocate the execution of M&E capacity building of both organisational structure and human capacity. Some of the relevant documents that were analysed were the GWM&E framework, the Draft-Evaluation framework, the Human-development strategy, the Skills Development Act, the departmental recruitment and retention strategy, and the strategic plan for M&E journal articles. The secondary information from the M&E unit training report was analysed to assess the personal information of M&E practitioners, covering years of experience in the unit, M&E training attended, and their individual educational levels.
The study also analysed journal articles and assessed and compared how other countries strengthen their M&E units, the role of M&E in strengthening governance, and how they institutionalised their M&E systems.

Triangulation was achieved by comparing the information from the 12 respondents with the documentary and focus group discussions with unit managers, and then assessing the findings. The findings of the report were then consolidated and disseminated to the relevant stakeholders before the final report in order to share the information and to develop a sense of ownership. It also allowed inputs on the recommendations for the final research report, to strengthen the M&E capacity in the OTP, and to present the report to the Provincial Research Committee.

1.8 Structure of the dissertation
This minor research dissertation is divided into five chapters.

Chapter One: Research methodology
The focus of the first chapter is to give an overview of the research topic, its background, and to outline the research problem. It also discusses the research questions to be used to address the problem; it presents the objectives of the study, and the importance of the study is also highlighted. This chapter further summarises in more detail the methodology and tools used to collect the data for the study and the analytical methods used. It also summarises the data collected and outlines the approach to be used to disseminate the information acquired to the stakeholders and the beneficiaries.

Chapter Two: Core literature review of M&E capacity building
This chapter summarises the current state of knowledge on building the M&E capacity in public-sector agencies. It further discusses international best practices and theories of building M&E capacity.

Chapter Three: National M&E capacity building in South Africa
This chapter unpacks the history of M&E in South Africa and further outlines its current state. It elaborates on the M&E achievements, strengths, weaknesses and challenges.
Chapter Four: M&E capacity building in the EC Province
This chapter outlines the achievements made by the OTP M&E unit, the mechanisms applied, the approaches used to execute M&E systems and lessons learnt that could be implemented in other government departments. The literature further analyses the approach employed by the OTP in building M&E capacity in terms of the required standards for an efficient and effective M&E unit.

Chapter Five: Analysis and assessment of research findings
The results of the findings will be presented and critically assessed in this chapter.

Chapter Six: Conclusion and recommendations
Conclusions are drawn from the research findings and assessment; and clear recommendations are outlined for the best strategies and methods to improve the current situation.

1.9 Key concepts
Since M&E capacity building programmes are the fundamental foci of this study, the following key concepts are first outlined.

Accountability refers to “the obligations of partners to act, according to clearly defined responsibilities, roles and performance expectations, often with respect to the prudent use of resources. For evaluators, it connotes the responsibility to provide accurate, fair and credible monitoring reports and performance assessments” (Patton, 1999:56).

Benchmark “A reference point or standard against which performance or achievements can be assessed” (Mackay 2007:138).

Effectiveness “examines the level to which the development intervention’s objectives were realized, or could be expected to be attained – by considering their relative significance” (Kusek and Rist 2004:23).

Efficiency is defined as: “A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time etc.) are converted to outputs” (Cloete 2006:28).
Evaluation “is a time-bound and periodic exercise that seeks to provide credible and useful information to answer specific questions, to guide decision-making by staff, managers and policy-makers. Evaluations may assess [the] relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Impact evaluations examine whether underlying theories and assumptions were valid, what worked, what did not [work] – and why not. Evaluation can also be used to extract cross-cutting lessons from operating-unit experiences, and determining the need for modifications to strategic results framework” (Kusek and Rist, 2004:32).

Institutional development impact: “The extent to which an intervention improves or weakens the ability of a country or region to make more efficient, equitable, and sustainable use of its human, financial and natural resources” (Mackay 2007:140).

Lesson learned: “Generalisations based on evaluation experiences with projects, programs or policies that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations. Frequently, lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect performance, outcome, and impact” (Mackay 2007:140).

Monitoring “involves collecting, analyzing, and reporting data on inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts, as well as external factors, in a way that supports effective management. Monitoring aims to provide managers, decision-makers and other stakeholders with regular feedback on progress in implementation, results and early indicators of problems that need to be corrected. It usually reports on actual performance against what was planned or expected” (Kusek and Rist, 2004:30).

Monitoring and Evaluation system “is a set of organisational structures, management processes, standards, strategies, plans, indicators, information systems, reporting lines and accountability relationships, which [would] enable national and provincial departments, municipalities, and other institutions to discharge their M&E functions effectively. In addition to these formal managerial elements, [there] are the organisational culture, capacity and other enabling conditions, which will determine whether the feedback from the M&E function influences the organisational decision-making, learning and service delivery” (Presidency 2007:44).
Participatory evaluation: “Evaluation method in which representatives of agencies and stakeholders (including beneficiaries) work together in designing, carrying out and interpreting an evaluation” (Mackay 2007:141).

Partners: “The individuals and/or organisations that collaborate to achieve mutually agreed upon objectives. Partners in this case include governments, civil society, non-government organisations, universities, M&E professional and business organisations, multilateral organisations, private companies, etc.” (Mackay 2007: 141).

Recommendations: “Proposals aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, quality, or efficiency of a development intervention; at redesigning the objectives; and/or at the relocation of resources. Recommendations should be linked to Conclusions” (Mackay 2007:142).

Sustainability: “The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time” (Mackay 2007:143).

1.10 Conclusion
The research will benefit the OTP and the provincial government of the EC since the OTP M&E unit is responsible for building M&E capacity in the EC province. The assumption is that by strengthening the M&E capacity of the OTP unit it will be able to employ different M&E methods in addressing M&E challenges and improve the performance of governance. The findings of the study will assist policy decision-makers in making informed M&E capacity building policies and strategies that can be employed through effective M&E in accelerating service delivery in the province.

Identification and outlining of the research problem through investigative strategic research questions, followed by aims and objectives are key areas of focus that the study needs to respond to. This chapter also outlines the research designs and methodology and data collection tools to be employed for the attainment of credible results and the success of this research programme. The following chapter outlines the current state of knowledge on building the M&E capacity in public-sector agencies. It further discusses the nature and the role of M&E in good governance, strengthening of private public partnerships to accelerate
the building of M&E capacity, good practice requirements for M&E institutionalisation, international best practices and theories of building M&E capacity. Strengthening M&E for improving good governance can be used to enhance transparency and accountability, formulate budget requests, inform operational decisions, accelerate service delivery and restore public confidence and trust in its government.
CHAPTER TWO

CORE LITERATURE OVERVIEW OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING

2.1 Introduction
This chapter reviews the current state of knowledge for building public sector institutional M&E capacity. It outlines the important role of effective implementation of an M&E system in improving good governance. It also identifies tools or methods required to strengthen the sustainability and institutionalisation of M&E systems. It further elaborates the importance of basing the improvement of M&E capacity on participatory and empowerment theories for both structural and human capacity building. The literature discusses the M&E international best practice employed by different countries for effective functioning of M&E units.

2.2 Nature and role of M&E in good governance
According to Rhodes (2000:36) good governance is defined as a set of values and principles which promote elements of transparency and accountability. In support of this definition the M&E is employed as a tool to ensure that governance goes beyond the legal authority by ensuring that different forms of validation, verification of information and judgement of activities are employed in order to achieve values of good governance.

The M&E frameworks and GWM&ES are developed to guide government institutions as an effective approach which if employed correctly can be used to enhance performance of government institutions. Aligned to the M&E approach the effective implementation of M&E improves transparency and accountability using evidence based information to develop credible reports. The developed credible reports are tabled and presented to stakeholders and made available to the public and thus promote good governance.

The development of credible reports with evidence based information also becomes useful for decision-making during policy development and reviews. The developed improved policies are implemented to enhance the performance of government institutions and the lives of the citizens. The process of accountability and transparency affords all stakeholders the opportunity to engage the reports and interact with decision-makers during consultative
processes. This process is aimed at ensuring that communities feel part of decision-making and monitoring and reporting on the implementation of government policies as voters. The involvement of different stakeholders during M&E processes strengthens accountability in communities and citizens and this promotes good governance.

The ability of government institutions to meet the set standards of performance as prescribed in the South African Constitution of 1996 for public administration and achievement of outcomes through good governance depends on effective M&E systems. The emphasis of using M&E to ensure sustainable development through good governance has been promoted by Cloete (2005) and government needs M&E to meet obligations such as the realisation of National Development Plan (NDP) goals.

The culture of M&E that is promoted for the South African context when assessing good governance is orientated towards empowering, promoting learning and serving a transformational purpose. It also promotes transparency and accountability around performance, and helps to promote alignment between the state and citizens through public participation programmes supporting the expedition of good governance.

Organisational culture plays an important role in strengthening the M&E organisational structure and the performance of the M&E unit. Consequently, a negative M&E organisational culture with respect to data management and information would make it difficult for an M&E system to be functional and effective (Gorgens and Kusek 2009:70). “Culture is the pattern of basic assumptions a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to adapt both to its external and internal environment” (Casio 2010:123).

Robbinson (2003:89) defines organisational culture as a system of shared meaning held by company members, setting it apart from other companies. Also upon closely investigating the concept, the key characteristics of organisational culture are innovation and risk-taking, attention to detail, outcome orientation, people orientation, team-building, aggressiveness and stability.
Wood, Zeffane, Fromholtz and Fitzgerald (2006:12) suggest that organisational culture could be embedded and transmitted through mechanisms, such as formal statements of the organisational philosophy, and by way of the materials used for recruitment, selection, socialisation of new employees and promotion criteria.

Louw and Venter (2008:17) define values as a set of principles that guide and influence the behaviour of a company’s workforce. Others suggest that organisational values should reflect a fair balance between ethical and moral values, on the one hand, and business performance values, on the other. Values represent a basic conviction that a specific model of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence (Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt 2003:24). It was further argued that values are essential in organisational alignment for M&E systems, as they lay a solid basis for the understanding of employees’ attitudes and motivation. Values also shape an individual’s perceptions, and there is a strong belief that individuals join organisations with their own preconceived ideas of what is right and wrong.

Howe (2006:38) takes this view further, and maintains that values create the culture of an organisation; and they should reflect how people act towards and interact with the organisation. This view is supported by Thompson, et al. (2010:25) that once values are formally adopted by an organisation, they must be institutionalised in the form of organisational policies and day-to-day practices.

Nobody should be above values, as they should apply to everybody equally in the organisation, regardless of rank. Although the employees may not be directly responsible for the execution of re-engineering, through living the organisational values, they contribute to the overall performance of the M&E unit, the implementation of its M&E framework in the OTP and strengthening of good governance.

2.2.1 Organisational performance-improvement strategy
Thompson et al. (2010:104) maintain that putting together capable management teams is key in building organisational structure. Supporting this view Cascio (2010:65) points out that research shows that planning for CEO succession should be part and parcel of the way the company is managed. However, with government, executive positions are deployment
positions from the ruling party; hence, in the EC the current Director General is a former MEC, and was the caretaker Premier for eight months before being deployed to his current position.

Thompson et al. (2010: 105) further say that best performing organisations ensure a link between human-resource development activities and directly with business strategy; and they constantly enquire what business issues each developmental activity is designed to address. Consequently, people development is becoming an important part of the assessment of executive performance.

Because of its good public image and label as one of the best departments, the OTP should be able to recruit suitable candidates. Linking to its M&E structure, the OTP approach to recruiting and its policy is to hire employees for their attitude, and to train them for the acquisition of skills. The following aspects have been taken into account in restoring the organisational performance.

2.2.2 Policies and procedures
Robbins et al. (2003:167) hold the view that human resource policies and practices, such as employee selection, training and development, performance management, as well as employee relations all have a huge bearing on an organisation’s ability to retain highly skilled and valuable staff members. Thompson et al. (2010: 359) further advise that policies and practices have an overwhelming potential to either facilitate, or to inhibit, good strategy execution.

They further propose that organisations should not change policies and procedures just for the sake of changing them when adopting new strategies, but should rather adopt an approach of carefully reviewing the current policies, and proactively revising and discarding unwanted ones. Amongst some of the key policies that have been employed by the OTP, in helping the organisation to execute its M&E system, is to deal with the people-management aspects of recruiting and hiring, training and development, promotion, compensation, management style and employee relations.
The last stage of this organisational alignment strategic management process, according to Thompson et al. (2010:234), is when the organisation monitors the developments, evaluates the organisation’s progress, and makes corrective adjustments. This information would feed back to the strategy formulation. For instance, in this stage, the evaluation of whether the chosen strategy was implemented, according to what was planned, what were the challenges, evaluating whether the vision is still relevant, and if not, effecting the necessary strategic changes.

Candler (1962, cited by Stacy, 1993:61) argues that generally the appropriate structure follows from the strategy that an organisation is pursuing and that organisational structures display typical patterns of development or life-cycles. He further argues that to implement strategies which they have formulated, M&E managers would have to ensure that their information and control systems are adequate to cope with the flow of information that implementation requires, and to further provide appropriate control mechanisms to enable managers to monitor the outcomes of the strategy implementation, and to do something if those outcomes are not in accordance with the strategy.

Gorgens and Kusek (2009:72) suggest that the M&E unit should be suitably placed in the planning stage, in order to work closely with planning and budget functions. They also advise that evaluation should be separated from monitoring, and should have its own evaluation unit, because of its functions. However, M&E units – in terms of a hierarchy – within departments should be situated at an appropriate level to ensure that M&E is taken seriously by all stakeholders concerned. Buy-in from political principals and officials, in both local and provincial government, is essential for ensuring a successful M&E system in the province.

2.2.3 Strengthening public private partnership to improve M&E capacity
The South African citizens and communities were deprived access to educational and other government developmental programmes, as a result of political, economic and historical challenges. This has resulted in many communities during the apartheid years lacking the knowledge required to evaluate public service-delivery programmes. However, even in the current democratic South Africa, there are communities which are experiencing the same challenges. The OTP participation in capacitating the communities by forging partnerships to enable them to participate in the M&E of services provided by government is minimal, as a
result they are unable to hold the officials accountable. Strong M&E capacity by partners will enable them to participate effectively in decision-making, policy reviews, municipal IDPs, and to evaluate the impact of the government programmes (Thornhill, 2004:74).

One of the most important aspects that the OTP has engaged in is the building of Public-Private Partnerships, to support the building of M&E human capacity, as well as participating in the actual implementation of an M&E system in the province. Private Public Partnerships (PPPs) are used for accelerating service delivery, as supporting forums, as part of the mechanism that may be recommended by the M&E unit.

Fourie (2001:59) stated that the global trend to use PPPs enhances service delivery by utilising the expertise in the M&E field from different sectors, as well as the investment and management capacity of the private sector to develop tools for strengthening of M&E organisational structures to meet the required standards, and to be able to function effectively and efficiently in delivering its mandates. Kotze (2003:15) concurred that this approach promotes specialisation that significantly improves service delivery, as a consequence of the building of M&E capacity, as this project would be attended by experts and professionals in different M&E areas of specialisation.

The function of a private partner, and also of other stakeholders’ roles in the PPP procedure, is important. Therefore, the following procedure is implemented for the appointment of a task team to consider when building M&E partnerships in a PPP project form:

- Providing an overview of the stages the M&E unit intends to follow in the process of establishing PPPs for M&E capacity building.
- Identifying key internal positions, committees and external stakeholders involved in the various stages of the PPP, and a description of the roles and responsibilities of those involved in this process.
- Indicating the required decisions to be taken by administration at various stages of this process, and identifying the person who is empowered with M&E skills to make those decisions.
- Identifying the requirements for the involvement of non-governmental organisations, the public, and the electorate at various stages of building the capacity and implementing a sustainable M&E system for the OTP (Phago and Malan 2004:41).
Gorgens and Kusek (2009:92) support this idea, since they maintain that it is important for an M&E system to involve diverse people from different organisations to work together towards achieving a common goal.

They emphasised that a strong M&E partnership would enable the organisation to prepare one standard report through sharing the data collected from different sectors, and having one M&E report that would reflect on the progress of provincial priority programmes, national programmes, and MDGs. M&E partnerships with stakeholders from different sectors helps to mobilise technical and financial support for implementing the M&E system, and to reduce parallel reporting.

Kaul (1996:45) emphasised the necessity of accurate and unbiased reporting, since this strengthens the climate of openness and public accountability. However, information would be best suitable if it could be provided according to the particular needs of users of services at different times, which would be the most appropriate and useful to the users.

According to Lahey (2007:9), the notion of an M&E system implies that a capability within government should be created to both generate and use performance information that would assist in improving public sector management and governance. This would require trained analysts and data specialists to effectively collect and analyse the data, in order for non-technical public sector managers to make use of this credible information. Although these managers do not require any technical comprehension of M&E methods, it is important for them to understand and be empowered on how M&E information could help them in the management of their programmes and policy development.

Furthermore, capacity within government institutions and civil society organisations has to be built, to use M&E information as part of the normal process of business. This would require that governments and civil society stakeholders are clear about where and how M&E information could and would be used within government planning, policy or programme development, decision-making and budgeting. However, M&E information can effectively be used only if adequate incentives are built into the system. Government should also reinforce the need within the M&E unit and other organisations working in partnership with the OTP to create formal and informal mechanisms and forums for the reporting and sharing of
information. Therefore, government monitors the implementation of laws governing access to information and strengthens the capacity of managers, so that they are able to increase transparency and the potential for M&E information to be made available to media, civil society, and also to facilitate their participation in GWM&ESs (Mackay, 2010:48).

2.3 Good practice requirements for M&E institutionalisation

There is a growing number of countries that are working towards improving and institutionalising their M&E systems in order for their governments to be more effective and efficient in the implementation of policies and programmes. The effective systems will also enhance government performance and confidence of citizens in government by being transparent, providing feedback and improving accountability (Mackay 2007:1). Mackay (2007:1) also emphasised that M&E systems are used to measure the quantity, quality, and targeting of the goods, the outputs that the state provides and to measure the outcomes and impacts resulting from the inputs. Kusek and Rist (2004:25) identified 10 steps that can be employed to design, build and sustain a result based M&E system:

- Step 1: Conduct a readiness assessment to assess the institutionalisation capacity and political willingness to monitor and evaluate goals.
- Step 2: Agree on outcomes to monitor and evaluate
- Step 3: Select key indicators to monitor outcomes
- Step 4: Collect baseline data on indicators
- Step 5: Plan for improvement and select targets.
- Step 6: Monitor for results during implementation
- Step 7: Conduct formative, ongoing and summative evaluations where relevant
- Step 8: Report the findings to various users of information
- Step 9: Use the findings to inform future decisions
- Step 10: Sustain the M&E systems within the organisation through policies and procedures for M&E (Kusek and Rist 2004: 25).

According to Mackay (2007:53) to ensure effective institutionalisation of an M&E system government must employ the following lessons drawn from the World Bank:

- Substantive demand from the government is a prerequisite to successful institutionalisation.
• Incentives are an important part of demand side – better incentives will assist in ensuring that M&E information and findings are used for decision-making.
• Start with a diagnosis of what M&E functions currently exist to assess its current status and be able to strengthen the weak areas.
• Identify a powerful champion who has the political influence and is able to lobby for political buy-in and advocate for institutionalisation of M&E to all government departments and provide leadership on M&E to the Executive Management.
• Government departments should try not to over-engineer an M&E system.
• Build a reliable ministry data system to ensure that the raw data produced is verified for development of credible reports.
• Provide training in different M&E tools, methods, approaches and concepts.
• Develop an M&E system in a nonlinear, less predictable manner by ensuring that it is aligned with the strategic goals and objectives of the programme or project.
• Regular evaluation of an M&E system to assess its validity and reliability in different policies, programmes and projects (Mackay 2007:53).

Laguna (2011:25) stated that a successful M&E system takes more than mere political will. The technical hurdles take time to resolve; credible data systems need to be put in place and developed; M&E specialists need training; and managers throughout the system need educating on how and where M&E information would be used. This could be a lengthy and iterative process and one where continuous learning and improvement through oversight mechanisms is desirable.

According to UNEG (2011:34), the complete scope of uses for M&E information, such as knowledge-generation and improved management at a ministerial level are often not understood by senior officials. Some of these executive officials at the decision-making level are nevertheless ignorant. Training and orientation on M&E information has to place emphasis on the utility of M&E information to improve both accountability and management practices by enhancing knowledge at all spheres of government. Different government ministries encourage managers to give support for an M&E training framework, because of the benefits where it can be adopted and implemented.
2.4 Theoretical framework for building M&E capacity in public-sector agencies

According to Shadish, Cook and Leviton (1991:34) an evaluation theory tells when, where, and why a study identifies particular methods. It also makes suggestions about the sequence in which methods could be applied, how to combine methods, gives types of questions that can be answered better or less by a particular method and the benefits of applying particular methods over others. This study has employed participatory and empowerment approaches as guiding theories to address capacity gaps in the OTP. Cousins (1992:37) defined participation as “a process by which individuals or groups assume a new level of responsibility for decision making and action about goals, methods and resources in some realm of organized social activity of immediate concern to them, and through which they produce the new knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to play the improved roles”. Empowerment is defined as “…the use of evaluation concepts, techniques, and findings to foster improvement and self-determination” Fetterman (1996:5).

2.4.1 The participatory approach

King (1998:73) is concerned with designing and implementing evaluations in a collaborative manner with the stakeholders – for the purpose of increasing the likelihood that the information generated from the evaluation will be used. The interactive evaluation practice evaluator has three primary roles: decision-maker, actor, and reflective practitioner. These three evaluator roles “emphasise and reinforce the importance of the personal factor” (Patton, 1997:90) when conducting evaluations.

Most recently, King has become more attentive to building evaluation capacity through participation, as a means for ensuring ongoing evaluation use (King, 2002:38). Brunner and Guzman (1989:89) define participatory evaluation as an “education process that produces action-oriented knowledge and the role of the evaluator in this process as a methodological consultant, who is responsible for organizing and implementing the evaluation”. The definition advanced by Cousin and Earl (1992:246) for participatory evaluation was that it is “applied social research that involves a partnership between trained evaluation personnel and practice-based decision-makers, organization members with programme responsibility, or people with a vital interest in the program”.
Stakeholder participation has also been recognised as a crucial factor for bringing about change in developing educational performance monitoring systems (Henry, Dickey and Areson 1991:131). Bradley and Earl (1992:247) argued, however, that participatory evaluation models differ from other approaches, including aspects, such as the number of stakeholders and their role, and the function of the evaluator. Participatory evaluation is very involved, inclusive and practical (Bruner Foundation Guidebook, 2004:228). It is also maintained that participatory evaluation is undertaken to render judgements, to facilitate improvements, to generate knowledge and to provide outcomes and evaluation. Stufflebeam (1994) and Scriven (1967) argued that the primary function of an evaluator is to “assess worth” (Fetterman 1996:27).

Furthermore, in utilisation focused evaluation, the origins of evaluation capacity building include the multiple traditions of action-research, participatory evaluation, the concepts of organisational learning, and professional community (King and Lonnquist 1994: 127). In a Grounded Evaluation Framework, King and Volkov (2005:89) have identified three areas of focus: (1) The organisational context, including internal and external factors; (2) resources, including access to evaluation resources, and sources of support for evaluation in the organisation; and (3) structures, including an oversight mechanism, a formal evaluation plan, core evaluation principles in policies and procedures, infrastructure to support the evaluation process, purposeful socialisation, and a peer-learning structure.

Although there are other theories that are used in the M&E capacity building process this research will be guided by the fundamental principles of empowerment and participatory theories, since the focus is more on organisational structure and human capacity. Alkin (2004:340) discusses the key principles of participatory evaluation as follows:

- Professional evaluators play the role of methodological consultants and facilitators in the evaluation process. The intended beneficiaries of the intervention, together with the evaluators, decide when an evaluation should take place and what should be done with the results.
- Participatory evaluation is an educational process, whereby social groups produce action-oriented knowledge on their reality, and reach consensus about the action to be taken.
Participatory evaluation is also a learning process. Initially, the facilitators and professional evaluators might have to coach the other members of the team; but, as the project matures, the evaluator team becomes increasingly knowledgeable, efficient, and autonomous (Alkin 2004:267).

2.4.2 The empowerment approach

Empowerment evaluation is an evaluation approach that aims to increase the probability of achieving programme success by providing the stakeholders with the necessary tools for assessing the planning, implementation and self-evaluation of the programme, and mainstreaming evaluation as part of the planning and management of the programme/organisation. Fetterman and Wandersman (2005:28) add the following features to the evaluation practices, as training participants should conduct their own evaluations. For example, capacity building is done in an attempt to enable people to become more self-sufficient and less dependent on the external evaluators.

In empowerment evaluation, training is used to map out the terrain, highlighting the categories and concerns. It is also used in making preliminary assessments of programme components, while illustrating the need to establish goals, strategies to achieve these goals, and documentation to indicate or substantiate the progress (Fetterman 1996:63). Training is intended to be ongoing; and it serves as a self-reflective process, where the participants learn to identify when more tools are required to continue and develop the evaluation process. Evaluators are viewed as facilitators and coaches rather than judges; they provide guidance and direction, monitor and facilitate sessions, serve as useful sources of information, develop refresher sessions, resolve protocol issues; and more importantly, they ensure that people are in charge of their own efforts.

Empowerment evaluators believe that when stakeholders learn the basic steps and skills involved in conducting programme evaluation, they are in a better position to shape and improve their lives, and the lives of those who participate in their programmes. They are intended to simultaneously enhance stakeholders’ capacity to conduct evaluation, and to improve programme planning and implementation (Fetterman and Wandersman 2005:35). Therefore, by increasing stakeholder capacity to plan, implement, and monitor programme
activities, this would support the mainstreaming of evaluation and organisational learning (Barnette & Sanders, 2003:56).

Schneiderman (2003:34) defined organisational learning as the process of acquiring, applying, and mastering new tools and methods to improve processes. Argyris (1999:53) argued that in order for organisational learning to occur, organisations must do the following:

- Support learning, and not just be satisfied with “business as usual”;
- Value continuous quality improvement, and strive for ongoing improvement;
- Engage in systems thinking. This also involves enquiring into the systemic consequences of actions, rather than settling for short-term solutions that would provide a temporary quick-fix, but fail to address the underlying problems.
- Promote new knowledge for problem-solving (Fatterman and Wanderson 2005:36).

In addition, Preskill and Torres (1999:23) also emphasise that using data to inform decision-making, and developing a reflective culture within a programme encourages meaningful organisational learning. Furthermore, empowerment evaluation uses tools and practices that are specifically designed to meet programmes where they are at, and to facilitate motivation and skills that support the development of an organisational learning culture.

It is clear from the above discussion that alternative approaches, designs and methodologies can be selected to achieve M&E capacity, thereby building goals in the most effective and efficient way (Cloete 2006:38). According to Kusek and Rist (2004:46), evaluation-enablers could help by taking an inductive approach to determine the descriptive facts, figures and relationships that have been brought about by a specific policy project or programme. Evaluation developmental approaches or designs can also be mixed, depending on what is regarded as the most appropriate for a specific purpose.

2.5 Participation and empowerment in M&E human capacity building
In response to theories on which the M&E capacity building are based, Fetterman (1996:56) identified various facets of empowerment evaluation by asserting that training participants can conduct their own evaluations through effective capacity building. In empowerment evaluation, training is used to map out the categories and concerns. It is also used in making
preliminary assessments of programme components, while illustrating the need to establish goals, strategies to achieve goals, and documentation to indicate or substantiate progress.

King (2002:13) is concerned mostly with the use of the evaluation process and its results. Her emphasis is not only on use, but also on participation in the evaluation process as a means for increasing usage, and building internal programme evaluation capacity. The rationale for capacity building is that adults learn best by constructing personal meaning from their practice and that they can learn well in settings where they value the task to be completed (King and Stevenson 2002:23).

Structured evaluation-capacity building can be delivered in many different ways: formally and informally as a component of semester-long university or training institution programmes, or through workshops lasting a few days or weeks. One of the common evaluation capacity building approaches used is on-the-job training, where evaluation skills are learned as part of a package of work skills and mentoring. Kirkpatrick (1998:45) introduced classified scheme evaluations that depicted the following four levels: a) reaction to training, b) learning from training, c) the transfer of learned skills to the job, and d) the impact of training on organisational results. In addition, Kaufman, Keller and Wartkins (1996:16) proposed the addition of a fifth level, to assess the contributions that the organisation makes to society’s welfare.

According to Rowe (2001:79) human capacity development refers to the development of skills and the effective use of managerial, professional and technical staff and volunteers through training. This involves identifying the appropriate people to be trained, providing an effective learning environment for training and education, as well as in-service and field supervision for continued skills transfer. Gorgens and Kusek (2009:42) maintain that "(e)valuation-capacity building involves strengthening the ability and willingness to commission, conduct, understand, and use studies evaluating development projects, programs, or policies”.

M&E skills are likely to be needed for other aspects of the M&E strategy, to coordinate and to ensure equality. Initiatives to build the first set of skills should be integrated into the institution’s overall skills-development strategy. Arrangements for the provision of specialist
M&E skills should be explicitly referred to in the institution’s strategic plan. According to Gorgens and Kusek (2009:47) capacity building should ensure that the users of M&E data have to understand how to integrate M&E functions within their areas of responsibility, and how to respond to M&E findings. They also emphasised the following aspects that need to be considered in capacitating M&E personnel:

- **M&E managers in the public sector should be able to set up M&E systems, manage those systems, and produce the results required from them.**
- **M&E users should be able to assess information collected through the M&E process, and use this information as a tool for taking managerial action, and to improve future interventions through the planning process.**
- **M&E managers and practitioners should be able to link various related components of M&E together, so that they form an integrated whole or system, and apply an evidence-based approach to gather and analyse data on the government’s activities.**
- **The M&E user should consider a range of interventions for building capacity on a short-, medium- and long-term basis. These should include training of existing staff, line management and M&E specialists.**
- **Training modalities could include external formal qualifications from higher education institutions, as well as in-house customised courses, on-the-job training and mentoring, structured skills transferred from academics, consultants and other external providers, the creation of internal M&E forums, and participation in external learning networks (Gorgens and Kusek 2009:47).**

To ensure that M&E adheres to the principles of methodological soundness, data and information management skills are important. To ensure that M&E is participative, inclusive and development oriented also makes communication and people’s skills essential. Other important skills are: data collection skills, statistical analysis, economic impact and econometric analysis, understanding of sector policies, and facilitation skills for participative M&E. A capacity building plan would need to compare existing capacity with what is required to implement the M&E system, in order to identify and focus on building the relevant skills that would enhance its performance when executing M&E systems (Presidency 2007:39).

According to Robbinson (2001:18) training should be more project-driven and less curriculum-based. This means that the Human Resource Development department must be
prepared to respond to needs as they arise. It means also that if a request comes for a training programme, the Human Resource Development (HRD) professional must ask probing questions to uncover the business need that drives the request. For the training effort to be successful and to have results, both the learning experience and the work environment must be examined and managed in a manner that would produce the desired results.

It is important to conduct a performance-effectiveness assessment, in order to identify gaps in the baseline of the existing skills. Rowe (2001:42) emphasised that once the gaps are identified in performance, it is important to determine the causes of such gaps. When conducting training for the performance approach, the programme should be positioned so that the maximum impact to the organisation is ensured. It is important to determine what training programmes will be offered to employees, by looking at the activities that will occur, and at the outcomes expected from the activities. M&E professionals are encouraged to measure the result of training and have to consider collecting the baseline, pre-training information when performing this activity.

### 2.6 Good international practices

Mackay (2007:1) pointed out that the World Bank’s Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) played a significant role in ensuring that they build capacity and strengthen the M&E systems of various countries. This has resulted in a growing number of countries working towards improving their performance by creating an M&E system, in order to enhance their service delivery, and to be able to track those factors that affect service delivery. However, in as much as these countries have developed and implemented best practices that have made M&E effective, they have also experienced challenges in building an improved M&E capacity for institutionalising M&E systems. The focus of the discussion in this chapter will be on the following identified countries: Chile, Colombia, Mali, the United Kingdom, Australia, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka and Canada that the South African Office of the Presidency used as benchmarks for its own system (Mackay 2007:57).
2.6.1 Chile
Mackay (2007:25) explains that a well-known success story in M&E capacity in the public sector is Chile. This country is often seen as one of the best examples of international M&E practices, since it has such a well-performing, home-grown M&E system. The Chilean case, as described by the Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank (2006:56) is impressive – not only for the rich list of types of M&E undertaken by the government, but for the generally high quality of the M&E work that has been undertaken – in particular the intensive utilisation of the M&E findings and information produced by the system. A World Bank evaluation of Chile’s M&E system in 2005 found that their evaluations are used by the internal Finance Ministry for decision-making around resource allocation, and to impose management and efficiency improvements in sector ministries and agencies. The Ministry of Finance closely monitors the extent of utilisation of the evaluation findings (Mackay 2007:42).

However, the Chilean use of M&E information or findings in the budget process has resulted in a low level of ownership and utilisation of this information by sector ministries and their agencies. It has been discovered that Chile is not spending enough on evaluations, and that there is an absence of incentives for ministries and agencies to conduct their own evaluations. The opportunity for the use of information in strategic planning, policy development and management and control also remains underutilised (Independent Evaluation Group 2006:72).

2.6.2 Colombia
The Colombian government successfully created and utilised a monitoring subsystem of government performance, linked to the presidential goals and the developmental goals of that country. The ministries and agencies of that country have utilised performance information to set their targets. The Colombian government also reports publicly on whether they have achieved the set performance standards; and in cases where they have not attained success, the managers must give an account to the public for not meeting the targets. According to Castro (2009:67) the Colombian M&E system (SINERGIA) has also built a partnership with a civil society organisation, in order to promote the implementation of the system, and also to create an independent body to scrutinise the results/data produced
by the system. This approach has helped that country to share information, and to learn from other countries how to transfer the necessary skills.

The Colombian government also promotes transparency, when conducting evaluations, in order to acquire credible results. Government uses the evaluation findings to influence its plans, decision-making and budget allocation. The challenge with the Colombian system is that their government does not rely on M&E information to influence the budget and planning by the minister of planning and the minister of finance (World Bank 1997:28).

There are several lessons that could be learned from the Chilean and Colombian systems in terms of organisational capacity. The Chilean system is integrated with the finance ministry, to ensure that the budget work is influenced by the findings. Whereas in Colombia, the M&E system works as a stand-alone function that has an influence on all government processes (ie, budgeting and planning departments), which shows that their system is well-integrated. In this case, both systems can be regarded as good systems because of their integrated approaches, and the use of findings on decision-making by key ministries in government for effective and improved service delivery.

2.6.3 Mali
With the Mali government, the planning process for the M&E system involves participants from different stakeholders (civil society, donors, regions, departments). These all play a vital role in discussion – to reach a common agreement on the outcomes to be achieved. Government puts more emphasis on evidence-based information in their regular monitoring of an evaluation. Political commitment plays a significant role in institutionalising the M&E system in the public sector, and for the sustainability of the system. The emphasis on strengthening partnerships’ coordination of technical and financial assistance plays a vital role in institutionalising the system (OECD and World Bank 2008:27).

In addition, other factors that had an effect on the effective execution of the M&E system were the lack of capacity for institutionalising the M&E system in Mali and the reviewing of impact and outcome indicators in order to monitor the Millennium Development Goals (MDG’s). The insufficient budget makes it difficult to conduct evaluations effectively and efficiently. The lack of capacity, especially in the number of statisticians makes it difficult to
analyse quantitative data for evaluations of different projects and government priorities (Mackay et al 2006:56).

2.6.4 Australia
The Australian M&E system is a highly regarded system that emphasises and utilises evaluation findings for policy-making and change, for budget analysis and budget decision-making by the Cabinet. It has also been found that the M&E unit is structured in such a way that the information produced can be utilised by line departments and agencies to improve their operations, plans, resource allocation decisions, and for the improvement of service delivery programmes (Australian National Audit Office 2001:43).

According to Mackay (2007:72), the Australian approach differs from that of Chile, as the line ministries in Chile do not play a role in evaluation, since the evaluations are conducted by external evaluators; and therefore, they are denied ownership of the evaluation programmes. Whereas, in the Australian system, they put more emphasis on having a clear understanding and knowledge of conducting their own evaluations, in order to own the process. However, the challenges that were identified in their system were the uneven quality of evaluations conducted internally, the lack of capacity to ensure that the evaluation is of the required and acceptable standard – due to the inadequacy of advanced evaluation training. The other critical challenge is in the lack of any regular collection of information, and the lack of feedback to the stakeholders.

2.6.5 United Kingdom
With the UK M&E system, the focus is more on outcomes, rather than on outputs. The government expects departments to report publicly twice a year on the number of evaluations as an input to budget decision-making, and a measuring tool to track progress, and to be accountable to the public for attaining the set outcomes. The system accommodates the budget and the expenditure plan for the three-year planning cycle and aligns that with its performance targets. In the UK, the National Audit Office, and its departments, makes use of the performance information from the M&E system to inform their internal plans (Mackay 2007:45).
2.6.6 Sri Lanka
The OECD Sourcebook (2008:23) assesses the institutionalisation of the M&E system by the Sri Lankan government. The government in Sri Lanka focuses on Managing for Development Results (MfDR), which puts more emphasis on outcomes and impact, and has shifted from inputs, activities and outputs. The key factors for their success include the institutionalisation of the system, which focuses on the result base, support and buy-in from the politicians, and top management level of government, in ensuring that the system is being implemented at all levels of government.

The Cabinet Ministers adopt and endorse the government policy on MfDR and ensure that this policy is led by a national department, and then cascaded down to different levels of government by change agents. This structural arrangement assists in facilitating the effective implementation of the M&E system. The MfDR is taken as the best approach that can be executed at national, sectoral, institutional and project level, in order to achieve the set outcomes and impacts. Government uses different methods for ensuring that the new approach, MfDR, is cascaded and integrated effectively within different levels of government.

The Sri Lankan government has, however, also been faced with critical challenges in disseminating their M&E findings to relevant stakeholders, who were part of the evaluation, in order to have inputs on the recommendations, and to own the process. The use of information by planning institutions and decision-makers to improve their project designs is also a challenge, because M&E institutions do not give feedback to the relevant departments on their results – in order to improve their performance (The OECD Sourcebook 2008:24).

2.6.7 Ethiopia
Capacity building for the M&E system in Ethiopia involves training in the utilisation of statistical information developed from census, surveys and administrative records. The Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia (2005:69) encourages the use of information and statistical data to inform any policy changes and decision-making. The emphasis of the Agency is on improvement of the quality of data through verification for accuracy, timelines, standards and data dissemination, in order to produce credible results.
The Central Statistical Agency promotes the storage of information; and it uses different technological methods to disseminate information. The M&E unit uses this information to report on the progress of government programmes, and for the achievement of MDGs. It is also important to note that the Central Statistical Agency encourages continuous capacity building in statistics, IT systems and the Geography Information System (GIS) for data analysis and for effective M&E. It has also been emphasised that there should be a strong linkage between the M&E system and the statistical data, in order to sustain the development of the country (Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia 2005:74).

2.6.8 Canada
Lahey (2010:29) pointed out that the Canadian government uses its internal evaluation units to conduct evaluation studies. Managers in these units are responsible for performance monitoring and reporting. He identified three groups that should be involved with M&E and be continuously receiving M&E training, to be up-to-date with new M&E developments:

- **Evaluators** require in-depth technical training that should encompass social science research methods, survey research, and other important training that could assist with improving their performance. On-the-job training for evaluators is also encouraged, in order to acquire M&E skills from experienced evaluators, as well as the required experience in this field.

- **Programme managers** do not need the same training; instead they should focus on the development of performance frameworks and the derivation of performance indicators. In addition, their training should also focus on the development of programme logic models and results chains, since the Canadian system is result-oriented.

- **Senior officials** also need less M&E training; however, they do need a crash-course in M&E, in order to understand the concepts, practices, benefits and required effort needed to build and implement a sustainable M&E system effectively and efficiently.

The Canadian government also encourages partnerships between the public sector, the private sector and other professional bodies that might contribute to strengthening the capacity of the M&E practitioners. The private sector plays an important role by offering training and development opportunities for M&E development. Professional associations assist in establishing professional networks for the sharing of information and
experiences in the field of M&E – at lower costs. As the result of these efforts over the last three years, the Canadian government has managed to establish a recognised set of competencies for evaluators, and further professionalising evaluation, by working in partnership with a professional association, the Canadian Evaluation Society (Lahey 2010:33).

2.7 Conclusion
The literature discusses the nature and role of M&E in good governance where it defines good governance as a set of values and principles that promote elements of transparency and accountability. In support of this definition the M&E is employed as a tool to ensure that governance goes beyond the legal authority by ensuring that different forms of validation, verificiation of information and judgement of activities are employed in order to achieve values of good governance (Rhodes 2000:34).

It is only through effective ongoing M&E capacity building that the M&E unit will be able to adapt to organisational demands, and to maintain its organisational excellence in institutionalising M&E systems in the OTP. The effective institutionalisation of M&E systems will also enhance government performance and confidence of citizens in government by being transparent, providing feedback and improving accountability. Equally important is a need for the OTP to consider benchmarking to other international countries on the best practices that can be employed to strengthen the M&E capacity in the province.

The study outlined the implementation of participatory and empowerment theories in building and strengthening the capacity of M&E in different countries such as Canada and Ethiopia. Having explored that option it is also crucial to align the best approach to be employed with the relevant theories hence in this regard the participatory and empowerment theories have been analysed. The theories assist in ensuring that the identified capacity building approach is sustainable and has the basis that informs structured processes to be followed during implementation.

M&E of capacity building requires a number of aspects that need to be considered; for example, resources, skills, leadership to champion M&E, political willingness and sustained commitment from M&E practitioners, and from the senior management of the OTP. The
critical areas that have been considered are the building of enough supply of human resource capacity for sustainability, effective and efficient implementation of the M&E system. It should also be considered that training does not take place in a vacuum; an organisational structure and organisational alignment for M&E systems is essential in ensuring that they recruit the required M&E skills, the location of M&E, the welfare of employees, and that organisational priorities should influence the type of M&E training programmes.

The theories identified in this regard also provide guidance on how to assess the performance of the implemented approach. They contribute in serving as a basis for making informed decisions by ensuring that data collected for empowerment of M&E practitioners is analysed critically and used to improve the M&E capacity building programme. Hence, the issue of evaluation in empowerment approach is critical for reviewing of the M&E capacity building improvement. Participation ensures the involvement of stakeholders in decision-making and beliefs in collective ideas and buy-in of the stakeholders. This approach ensures that all members in the M&E unit and the OTP executive members own the process of strengthening and executing of the OTP M&E capacity building programme.
CHAPTER THREE
NATIONAL MONITORING AND EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING IN SOUTH AFRICA

3.1 Introduction
The purpose of the study is to develop strategies to improve capacity building of the M&E unit by the OTP of the EC. The focus will be on both the human capacity and the organizational structure, in order to be able to institutionalise M&E systems effectively and efficiently. This chapter provides a brief summary and assessment of the history and need for M&E in South Africa. It further summarises the GWM&ES in SA and outlines the implementation of the M&E system in the EC province and provides the organisational structure that is expected to perform the recommended tasks by the Presidency for effective institutionalisation of an M&E system in the province.

Institutionalisation means that specific strategic objectives and business planning strategies are developed and that organisational units with specialised staff are appointed to conduct policy research, to provide technical assistance, to advise the government concerning policy-making, to assist with the translation of policies and laws into strategy and planning frameworks and that such units may also be involved with the M&E of policy activities (Cloete and de Coning 2012:252). The institutionalisation of M&E systems assists in ensuring that the technical capacity of practitioners to apply M&E tools, methods, approaches and concepts are continuously enhanced. It also helps to ensure that the M&E system is managed effectively.

3.2 Development of public sector M&E in South Africa
The third democratic term of government in the Republic of South Africa was characterised by a number of strategic initiatives that were aimed at dealing with the structural, economic and social challenges of poverty and underdevelopment. It was soon recognised that a critical success factor to ensuring that tangible results are achieved in these areas is the effective M&E and reporting on government policies, projects and programmes. In essence the adage “what gets measured, gets done” was endorsed. In the 2004 State of the Nation address the then President of the Republic emphasised the importance of M&E and
reporting in government, and expressed government’s commitment to carrying out the obligation arising from the “People’s Contract to Create Work and Fight Poverty”. The recognition of M&E as a national priority gained momentum in 2007 with the publication of the GWM&E framework by the Presidency (Presidency 2008:58).

Before 2005 M&E was not implemented systematically by the government, the focus was rather more on desktop monitoring for purposes of submitting quarterly, half-yearly and annual reports by departments. Cabinet took a resolution in 2005 to develop a systematic GWM&E to address this gap of effective and efficient M&E that is aligned to all levels of government and to be able to report on all government policies, programmes and projects. This has been done to improve accountability, improve governance and enable reporting on the progress made by the country in achieving MDGs by 2014.

In 2008, the Presidency accelerated its research and development of a GWM&E solution, culminating in the Discussion Paper on Performance Monitoring and Evaluation: Our Approach (Presidency 2009:76). With the beginning of the new electoral term and Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) in 2009/10, the national government cast its focus on strengthening governance processes with respect to deliberate planning and rigorous performance monitoring, reporting and evaluation, spanning all spheres of government. A results-based framework of measuring performance according to outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs - the National Outcomes Approach - was established as a result of these efforts. The National Outcomes Approach currently drives the M&E agenda in the country, and forms the backdrop against which the EC Provincial M&R Framework is designed.

In addressing these challenges, the national government therefore adopted an outcomes approach as first outlined in the “Green Position Paper on Improving Government Performance: Our Approach” (Presidency, September 2009:23). During his State of the Nation Address, the Honourable President Jacob Zuma stated that “the work of departments will be measured by outcomes, developed through our performance monitoring and evaluation system”. He also announced in the same speech that “government is building a performance-oriented state, by improving planning as well as performance monitoring and evaluation.” (Presidency, September 2009:24).
To this effect, the Presidency is leading a national planning process aimed at engendering and entrenching an approach to the delivery of services which is informed by a focus on the achievement of outcomes. It is intrinsically an approach that seeks to foster results through consistent monitoring, reporting and evaluation, and accordingly compels political leadership to formally account for the achievement of outcomes through Performance Agreements.

3.3 Summary of the emerging GWM&ES in South Africa

The office of the Presidency which is tasked to improve the functioning of an integrated GWM&ES established that proper alignment between different activities, line functions and spheres of government can make the system effective and efficient if it can be properly executed. It also emphasised that there should be a clear distinction between the roles played by different institutional stakeholders in which each stakeholder should be accountable for its functions to improve an effective GWM&ES. One of the functions of the office of Presidency was to develop measurable indicators which are linked to different sectors of government. The GWM&ES is supposed to receive quality data that has been verified from Statistics South Africa on progress to achieve the set indicators from each sector of government. This process is conducted in line with other spheres of government and it helps in ensuring that there is an alignment across all levels (Presidency 2009:30).

The GWM&ES is an emerging system in the South African government and therefore cannot be compared to other systems which are well institutionalised in developed countries. It is seen as a system that has been established through different documents produced by different publishers. Therefore it is necessary that the office of the Presidency develops a coherent system that can be institutionalised at various levels of government so that it can be assessed easily. It has been identified that there are still unclear issues on the legislation that forces the expected sectors of government to implement this GWM&ES as each department develops its own M&E system. It was picked out also that the focus of the framework talks only about the processes to be followed in structuring and implementation of the GWM&ES.

According to the office of the Presidency (Presidency 2009:34) there is no clear alignment at different structures of government that focuses on integrating an M&E system. As a result of this challenge there is no coherence in terms of reporting on information from local
government, provincial and national government. There is also a need for refinement of indicators that were developed by the office of the Presidency so that they can be systematically formulated and be aligned to other spheres of government. This will make it easy to track the progress of each indicator if they are well systematised. It has been realised that GWM&ES has gaps that can lead to delays in the execution of the system by all spheres of government. Lack of capacity in the office of the Presidency has been identified as one of the challenges that might delay the roll-out of the system to other spheres of government (Presidency 2009:34).

The GWM&ES is regarded as one of the complex systems that cannot be easily understood and executed in government policies, programmes and projects. It needs capacitated individuals who can unpack different elements of the system for it to be functional and implemented successfully. It has been clarified that there is a difference between complex and complicated. According to Glouberman and Zimmerman (2002:34) “complicated refers to success that requires high level of expertise in many specialized fields and complex-every situation is unique-previous success does not guarantee success”. The complexity approach plays a significant role in the policy system by providing relevant clarity that is required for implementation by government institutions compared to other approaches.

The GWM&ES is taken as the first correct action that the South African government has ever taken to improve the M&E of policies, programmes and projects in the country, to enable evidence-based information on the implementation of policies and enable informed decisions that are based on the credible data collected through this system. Although the system still has gaps it has been seen as one of the good systems if it can be well integrated and institutionalised at all levels in order to report in a systematic way on all government activities by different spheres of government and other sectors (Cloete 2009:4).

3.4 Implementation of the M&E system by the Office of the Presidency in South Africa

The national GWM&ES served as the mandatory point of departure for the development of the provincial M&E framework. Both the provincial and the national governments have adopted a results-based management approach to M&E, which is focused on the outcomes of organisational service delivery. This means that changes in the behaviour or
circumstances of targeted beneficiaries should be the primary units of measurement, rather than the number/type/form of services delivered.

In 2007, the Office of the Presidency developed a set of core indicators, which functioned as key indicators for the South African government. The development indicators were reviewed with the purpose of reducing their number to 76; and they were released in September 2009 by PCAS. This action was the manifestation of the focus of the Presidency on outcomes and impact, rather than on outputs. While implementation monitoring is important for performance management and accountability, an outcomes-based or results-based approach is a more accurate indication of whether government service delivery is creating a better life for all its citizens (Presidency 2007a:29).

In 2005, the Office of the Presidency developed an information-management system in the form of an electronic system that serves as a source for updated information on the implementation of a Programme of Action (POA). The system was reviewed in 2007 for an improved early-warning system, which would provide evidence on the operation and performance of government departments. Its application was on the functioning of indicators, focusing on a number of strategic management issues, examining budget, financial-management processes, assessing human resources management, and providing a measure of political and management leadership (M&E Indaba report 2008:18).

These learning networks were established to provide a platform for sharing information on success stories in the M&E environment, and to benchmark the best practices from the international community. In 2009, a new Ministry of Performance M&E structure was established, and placed in the Office of the Presidency with the key functions of coordinating, performance assessment, and data systems.

Therefore, the development of the populated M&E structure with skilled professionals would help to enable the practitioners to execute the mentioned tasks effectively and efficiently for the Office of the Presidency (M&E Indaba report 2008:49).
The Presidency (2008:21) believes that an institution would have to consider a range of intervention measures, in order to build capacity in the short-, medium- and long-term. These include:

- **Recruitment of appropriate specialist skills. This should include not only generic M&E skills, but also individuals with appropriate sector expertise.**
- **Training of existing staff: These should include both line management and M&E specialists. Training modalities can include external formal qualifications from higher education institutions, as well as in-house customized courses.**
- **On-the job training and mentoring.**
- **Structured skills transferred from academics, consultants and other external providers.**
- **Creation of internal M&E forums and participation in external learning networks** (Presidency 2008:22).

The capacity needed to implement M&E strategies is required at different levels: line managers need the generic M&E skills required by the framework from the Office of the Presidency, and performance evaluation specialists need such skills for managing programme performance information (Presidency 2008:36).

### 3.5 M&E in the Eastern Cape Provincial Government

In the ECPG, the articulation of a PGDS for the province around 2002/2003 led to the design of the Provincial Growth and Development Plan (PGDP) in 2004, which outlined a 10-year plan for growth and development in the province. A Planning, Coordinating and Monitoring Unit (PCMU) was then established to implement, coordinate and measure the progress of the PGDP. An M&E function was embedded within the organisational structure in order to lead this process. Its intention was to measure provincial programme performance and the degree of that performance against quantified objectives of the PGDP (PGDP Framework, June 2003:46). The expansion of this mandate since then also expanded the M&E function in the province, and a re-defining of the role that M&E should play in consolidating the measurement of performance of the province as a whole. The ECPG has, over the years, embarked on various efforts to analyse and address the provincial monitoring and reporting challenge and these details are outlined in the PGDP Review (2004-2014:35), the report on the Planning and M&E Indaba (2008:12) and the reports on the SDAP (2009:23).
3.5.1 Implementation of the Monitoring and Reporting Framework in the Eastern Cape Province

As an autonomous sphere of government, the EC aligned itself to this national GWM&ES approach and began to radically alter its thinking about planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting. One of the key challenges in the province is strengthening the public service in order to meet the service delivery objectives and strategic priorities. For this reason, EXCO has agreed that the OTP must operate in the context of the National Outcomes approach in measuring its performance and achieving service delivery results for the beneficiaries of government programmes. In January 2010 Cabinet adopted and approved 12 priority outcomes which were translated from five priorities of the African National Congress (ANC) manifesto. The purpose of adopting the new outcomes approach was to enhance the performance of the state. According to Public Service Commission News (February/March 2012:14) the outcomes approach focuses on promoting inter–governmental coordination, improving integrated planning, budgeting and strengthening of M&E. Through an effective M&E system government will be able to conduct outcomes and impact evaluation and use analysed results and reports to inform policy decision-making. The prioritised 12 outcomes that were also used for signing of performance agreements by ministers in order to hold them accountable are:

- Education: quality basic education
- Health: a long and healthy life for all South Africans
- Safety: all people in South Africa are and feel safe
- Employment: decent employment through inclusive economic growth
- Skills: skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path
- Infrastructure: an efficient, competitive and responsive economic infrastructure network
- Rural: vibrant, equitable, sustainable rural communities contributing towards food security for all
- Human settlements: sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life
- Local government: responsive, accountable, effective and efficient local government system
- Environment: protect and enhance our environmental assets and natural resources
- Internal and external relations: create a better South Africa, a better Africa and a better world
- Public service: an efficient, effective and development oriented Public Service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship (PSC News February/March 2012:14).

The EC M&R framework is therefore designed within the context of reporting against the 12 National Outcomes and is based on the principles that drive its implementation. This is reflected in the alignment of the provincial Programme of Action for each of the 12 National Outcomes, as well as a deliberate effort by provincial departments to align their Annual Performance Plans to the outputs and targets of this approach (Eastern Cape Monitoring and Reporting Framework 2012:41).

The main aim of the Eastern Cape Provincial Monitoring and Reporting Framework (EC M&R Framework) is to facilitate and coordinate the efforts of the ECPG in M&R of progress in the implementation of its key strategic priorities articulated in the electoral mandate in general, the Provincial Strategic Framework (PSF) and Programme of Action (POA) in particular.

The need to develop a continuous, well-functioning M&R system that yields accurate, objective and reliable information has currently been prioritised by the EC province. This means that the province focuses its scarce resources on developing and supporting an M&R system that serves as a conduit for information from provincial departments through to high level administrative and political structures of the province. Evaluation, as a specific discipline aimed at making value judgements about the success of service delivery, is factored in incrementally within the province, and has been applied during the 2010/11 financial year.

Adopting an outcomes-based approach to M&E, the province maintained a specific focus on the outcomes of service delivery, while simultaneously tracking key and strategic outputs, activities and inputs. Through the Eastern Cape Monitoring and Reporting Framework (2012:41), the Provincial Government focuses on tracking the implementation of its POA that is informed by the EXCO makgotla resolutions, the State of the Province Address and the provincial Policy Speeches. All departments are key partners in coordinating provincial M&R
and ensuring its success, and these partnerships are central to the design and implementation of this framework.

The benefits to line managers include more successful programmes and projects, as well as an understanding of their alignment to provincial and national priorities. Heads of Departments (HODs) are better able to advance their department’s mandate, better manage programme risk, and manage more credible accountability mechanisms (Discussion Paper on Performance Monitoring and Evaluation: Our Approach: Presidency 2009:26).

The objectives of the Eastern Cape Monitoring and Reporting Framework (2012:43) are:

1. To improve the quality of service delivery and governance in the province.
2. To enhance accountability on the implementation of the priorities and the programmes of the province.
3. To deepen the culture of M&R within the province;
4. To enhance government’s ability to communicate with citizens and key stakeholders; and to share information with them regarding key service delivery and related matters.

These objectives will be achieved through:

- Establishing mechanisms for monitoring the performance of service delivery and governance in the province;
- Improving the reporting capacity of the government by establishing a central repository of all summary M&R information generated in the province.

Monitoring is a mechanism of following up on the execution of the governance and service delivery agenda of the government as articulated in the POA. The POA of the EC has evolved over the last few years and is undisputed as a platform that informs the agenda of the departments of the provincial government. The effective monitoring and oversight over the implementation of the POA is a key challenge that is facing the centre of government.

The key elements of monitoring are:

(a) Engagements on the performance reports
(b) Visits to the sites of service delivery
(c) Engagements and feedback from citizens and stakeholders
Monitoring as a management and leadership function takes place within each department under the leadership of Programme Managers and HODs. The existing management meetings present an opportunity for being utilised as M&R engagements of the department. Monthly, in-year monitoring engagements in departments pay attention to financial and nonfinancial aspects. Management meetings, therefore, purposefully run to achieve these objectives. HODs ensure that at least one management meeting per quarter is fully dedicated to the task of reviewing performance for the preceding quarter as per the reporting requirements of the POA as outlined in this M&R framework, and confirming the planned activities of the next quarter.

The Executive Authorities of departments receive monthly and quarterly performance reports. The M&E units in departments play an advisory and support role to HODs and Programme Managers by designing the necessary tools and systems, consolidating and analysing the reports to ensure they meet the relevant standards and quality.

In addition to the constitutional role of monitoring and oversight by the OTP, the EXCO has established a Provincial Government monitoring and coordination mechanism called the Provincial Coordination and Monitoring Team (PCMT) which is chaired by the Director General and includes the HODs for Local Government & Traditional Affairs and Provincial Treasury, the Deputy Directors General in the OTP and the Executive Director of Eastern Cape Socio Economic Consultative Council (ECSECC). The core mandate of the PCMT is to engage with and consider quarterly performance reports of departments. The PCMT reports to EXCO regularly through the Cabinet Budget Committee. The focus of the PCMT is on the five to 10 service delivery and governance priorities of each department. In addition to this, the Premier holds one-on-one engagements with MECs with the objective of monitoring the execution of State of the Province Address (SOPA) and Policy Speech undertakings by the relevant departments (Eastern Cape Monitoring and Evaluation Framework 2012:45).

The Premier is leading an EXCO Outreach Programme which serves as a performance monitoring and feedback mechanism for service delivery and governance in the province.
Through this mechanism, the EXCO collectively engages with the local government leadership of a specific Metro or District, stakeholders and communities. In addition, the administrative leadership of the provincial government visits the sites of service delivery with an objective of providing solutions, and also engages with the district and municipal leadership within a culture change framework towards service delivery and Batho Pele. In addition to the EXCO Outreach Programme, the President conducts PM&E visits to the province with a focus on monitoring progress on the implementation of the priorities and key initiatives of the government. The EXCO Outreach and the PM&E visits also serve as a verification mechanism to the monthly and quarterly reports submitted by departments (Office of the Premier, Provincial Growth Development Plan (PGDP) 2004-2014:28).

Post the EXCO Outreach and the President’s PM&E visits, the OTP co-ordinates and monitors the follow-up implementation to the governance and service delivery matters needing attention. To achieve this objective, the OTP engages with departments on a monthly and quarterly basis and reports to EXCO. Engagements and feedback in the District Mayors’ Forum, and the Premier’s Coordinating Forum also play an effective performance monitoring role.

The Presidency developed M&E guidelines for the Premier’s Offices; and this document was meant to address the complex M&E roles of coordinating government structures at all spheres. This, consequently, means that by developing the M&E systems for provinces requires the development of these three interrelated aspects concurrently: Concurrent functions of provincial governments; monitoring the goals of the PGDS and allowing information flows between the provincial and local spheres (Eastern Cape Monitoring and Evaluation Framework 2012:47).

3.5.2 Implementation of M&E by the OTP of the EC
The OTP has a pivotal role in providing coherent strategic leadership and coordination in provincial policy formulation and review, planning and overseeing service delivery planning and implementation in support of provincial and national priorities and plans. Therefore, effective M&E systems could contribute substantially to the achievement of the objectives of the OTP, and for reporting on provincial priorities and plans (Presidency 2008:49).
A number of critical political, global and public events have demanded that there should be a reflection on changing the public-sector environment, as a point of departure for the need of a renewed focus on centralised planning, M&E and reporting in the ECPG. Amongst these are the Polokwane resolutions, which included a reflection of the developmental state and the organisational and technical capacity required to make this a reality. New policy developments, including the Single Public Service, as well as the national reinforcement of certain priorities, such as poverty eradication, and a closure of the current MTSF and the beginning of a new term of office – in addition to the increasing needs for reporting and evidence to provide decision-making in this area (Planning and M&E Indaba 2008:15).

Public demands for better service delivery, and the demands for increased accountability have accelerated the need for improved evidence-based decision-making; and consequently, in response to these demands, government has reprioritised its programmes through continuous reviews and development guidelines for an integrated M&E system. In response to this, the OTP has prioritised the development of an integrated M&E system, as part of the provincial POA through the establishment of an M&E unit (Office of the Premier, PGDP 2004-2014:32).

The OTP has positioned itself as the centre of policy, planning, M&E and reporting in the province. M&E cuts across all Governance & Administration (G&A) priorities; hence, there was a need to have a functional M&E unit with capable personnel to drive this mandate. To address this, the three central departments of the EC province: the OTP, the Provincial Treasury, and the Department of Local Government and Traditional Affairs have increasingly worked together to improve planning, M&E in the Province, as well as departments’ capabilities of advancing their respective mandates (Planning and M&E Indaba 2008:23).

The OTP and Provincial Treasury then established new components dealing with M&E and strategic management, respectively. Also the budget form process, which had been initiated by Provincial Treasury as far back as 1999, recognises the need for better non-financial planning, reporting, M&E in support of the move towards performance-based budgeting.

M&E comprises of methods through which accountability is emphasised, thus enhancing the process of delivery. However, the OTP is faced with different challenges in instilling a culture
of M&E, in order to improve the implementation of the M&E system in the province. Furthermore, a culture of accountability for results is not completely entrenched in the OTP. This has resulted in many departments not always cooperating with the OTP, as M&E coordinating departments and others view M&E initiatives as a policing tool. It follows, therefore, that M&E practitioners will have to change their mindsets, attitudes, and be empowered, in order to achieve their M&E objectives by implementing M&E systems more effectively and efficiently (Office of the Premier, PGDP 2004-2014:47).

The OTP has made some strides in improving the organisational structure and human capacity of M&E in the province. This was done through the utilisation of different documents. For example, the world-renowned 10-step model for designing and building M&E systems in the public sector was used to design the monitoring component of the provincial M&E framework; while the approach to evaluations was developed following an analysis of the best-practice approaches of a number of developing and developed countries, as well as donor agencies (Kusek and Rist, 2004:63). The draft indicator framework, which is the rock of the provincial M&E system, was developed using the provincial POA (i.e. cluster POAs) and the existing PGDP indicators as points of departure. Extensive consultation sessions were held with PMETTT (Planning, M&E Technical Task Team) members on the conceptualisation of the framework. These sessions were also used to provide capacity building in M&E.

In addition, indicators relating to transversal issues were designed in consultation with the relevant stakeholders and consultants with specialised M&E skills. In the service-level agreement with consultants, there was a clause on skills transfer, in order for internal members to work with consultants and to learn from them (M&E Indaba report 2008:35).

The provincial M&E framework developed by the OTP is meant to assist the EC to improve coordination, track service delivery, and to evaluate the impact of service delivery. The framework is also aimed at defining clearly the elements and parameters for M&E, and to ensure that M&E efforts in the province are consolidated under one framework. The M&E framework explains the modular approach followed in creating a unified and standardised M&E system. It also recommends the intended flow of information to ensure that effective monitoring occurs at all levels of the administrative hierarchy; and lastly, it clearly defines the
role of evaluations, and the approach of the ECPG to evaluations (Planning and M&E Indaba 2008:23).

This framework is reinforced by the principle of development, and is incremental in its approach, with measurable milestones, illustrating the dynamic nature of the M&E system. This implies that, as the strategic focus of government changes from time to time, so must the M&E unit structure change, to be in line with the new changes; hence, there was a move to create a separate unit that focuses on evaluations, to track accomplishments or performance on the key policies and government priority programmes.

This would also require the improvement of skills by M&E practitioners in the OTP, and the recruitment of suitable skills to execute the tasks – by producing credible reports that may be used to influence policy changes and track the progress of the projects. Over time, and with the growing prioritisation of performance M&E across the Public Service as a whole, these reports have begun to hold far greater significance for governance and service delivery within the EC. The emphasis on the improvement of M&E capacity is born out of the elevation of M&E within the current MTS framework, and the subsequent introduction of a National “Outcomes-Based Approach to Performance Monitoring and Evaluation” (Office of the Premier, PGDP 2004-2014:17).

This new approach has permeated all of government and has caused the creation of a new department within the presidency, mandated with the responsibility of coordinating the implementation of the new “Outcomes-Based Approach” across government. The new department of performance M&E also has the responsibility of building capacity across the country. As a result of this new approach, all the OTPs of the provinces were also required to strengthen their M&E units, in order to be able to improve the coordination, implementation and institutionalisation of M&E systems across the departments in their provinces (Planning and M&E Indaba 2008:23).
3.6 Current M&E structure of the OTP

Figure 1: Current M&E structure of the office of the OTP (Eastern Cape Monitoring and Evaluation Framework 2012:49)
The Office of the Premier of the Eastern Cape monitoring and evaluation unit is currently operating with the less capacitated structure and personnel that make it difficult to achieve all the expected outcomes on time. As a result of that the OTP M&E unit is underperforming and is operating without a General Manager who resigned in April 2015 and her post has not been filled yet. As much as there was a recommendation from the Office of the Presidency to populate the structure in order to meet the expected standard and expectation in line to GMWM&E Framework and twelve outcomes, this has not been done yet. Instead the OTP M&E unit specialist are resining without being replaced. The structure does not have project managers and assistant managers to provide support to the specialist so as to be able to reach out in all government public entities and municipalities in their oversight role. The structure does not have statisticians and data collectors for conducting verifications and assisting in developing credible reports and enable to make an informed decision making with accurate data and statistics for planning and budgeting purposes. The structure does not have information and knowledge management personnel to record and keep their information for future references that may serve as baseline in during their planning sessions.

3.7 Conclusion

Government’s major challenge is the effective and efficient implementation of policies in all spheres. Hence, it was crucial for government to develop a GWM&E framework with the aim of ensuring that it monitors the implementation of government programmes and projects. The intention was to ensure that this tool provides managers and decision-makers with regular feedbacks and indicates on time when there are deviations from the planned programmes through regular M&R. Evaluation focuses on the outcome and the impact of effective implementation of policies and programmes of government aiming at accelerating service delivery. However, the research has discovered that little impact is made by government and the OTP in ensuring that the GWM&E framework is effectively executed in the province and the country in general. The fundamental challenge outlined is the adoption of the policy for it to be a legal document that can be enforced in all
departments and units in the EC province. Hence a structural arrangement in the OTP is affected by the role the M&E should play and where it should be structurally located and what other functions it should have.

The current organogram is a clear indication that the M&E unit does not have adequate capacity and that there is limited understanding of the important role that it should play in the province. The additional recommended sections of knowledge management, data collection and management and evaluation could have a pivotal role in the M&E unit. The identified skills will assist the unit in developing credible reports with evidence-based information and to develop evaluation reports that can be used for policy review by decision-makers. Evaluations will also assess the impact of policies and programmes in improving the lives of the citizens.
CHAPTER FOUR
MONITORING AND EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

4.1 Introduction
The OTP plays an important role in building and strengthening M&E capacity in the EC province. The OTP M&E unit assesses the implementation of the PGDP and ensures that the findings are used to inform the decision making process on the review of the PGDP to enhance planning in the province. The M&E unit has also been tasked to develop an M&E framework for the province and support government departments in developing their departmental M&E frameworks. Effective implementation of an M&E system could contribute to achieving good results for the implementation of government priority programmes and the POA. This chapter summarises and assesses the impact of the OTP M&E unit in the province since its establishment.

It also outlines the achievements made by the OTP M&E unit, the mechanisms applied, the approaches used to execute M&E systems and lessons learnt that could be implemented in other government departments. The chapter further analyses the approach employed by the OTP in building M&E capacity in terms of the required standards for an efficient and effective M&E unit. It further explains the strengths and weaknesses of M&E and the need for better M&E capacity building. Different stages are outlined with the relevant assumptions, limitations and recommendations to be employed by the OTP, in order to strengthen the M&E capacity.

4.2 Provincial Growth Development Plan (PGDP) assessment
The PGDP assessment, concluded in 2008 by the provincial government, identified that key weaknesses of PGDP implementation were poor alignment and the weak ability of departments to translate plans into well-costed operational outcomes. Furthermore, the effective implementation of the PGDP hinged on the utilisation of M&E information to effectively measure the extent
to which the results of the PGDP are being achieved, and to take corrective action where necessary. A robust performance M&E system that could provide such decision-making support should be facilitated by a rigorous planning framework, focusing on a results-based approach to M&E. Strong linkages were therefore found between M&E challenges and the absence of appropriate institutional arrangements to support the implementation of the PGDP (Office of the Premier EC, PGDP 2004-2014:19).

The OTP has also improved the credibility of its data by ensuring that all districts have Community Development Workers (CDWs) who are responsible for the verification of collected data. CDWs are allocated to and work in communities, and are supervised by M&E practitioners with competency in data analysis, so that they are able to physically verify the progress of projects within communities, and can assure the credibility of collected data.

The Performance Monitoring & Evaluation Task Team (PM&ETT) provides training for CDWs around different areas of monitoring tools and techniques, in order to enhance their capacity and strengthen the implementation of the M&E system.

The OTP appointed M&E personnel at district level in the EC, in order to enhance the institutionalisation of the M&E system. These officers provide support to the M&E office by monitoring and addressing service delivery challenges immediately when they arise at district level – before they are referred to the OTP. Through its M&E system, the M&E unit in the OTP has had engagements with municipalities, in order to ensure that municipal IDPs are credible and aligned with the PGDS, as well as the five-year Strategic Agenda of Local Government (Presidency 2008:29).

According to the Presidency (2008:30), it is important to note that the OTP is coordinating and working closely with provincial Treasury, provincial departments and local government, in order to monitor the performance of municipalities. These departments, led by the OTP, have developed a
comprehensive reporting template, which is geared towards monitoring both financial and non-financial performance.

This is seen as a good practice, since it prevents the duplication of reporting and improves the credibility of information by having one responsible department (OTP) that verifies data and consolidates the information from various departments, and disseminates the information to the stakeholders before the final adoption of the consolidated report for further inputs whenever necessary.

The OTP M&E unit has also established a Provincial M&E Task Team comprising different sectors for the sharing of information and capacity building through different M&E workshops, and seminars organised by this organisation for its members, in order to enhance their M&E performance in their work-places. The M&E unit developed provincial indicators for priority programmes and projects to be measured against.

The emergence of the Audit of Performance Information, or the Audit of Predetermined Objectives (AOPOs), as part of the overall audit opinion and report of the Auditor General of South Africa (AGSA), as part of the legislated public sector audit framework, has intensified the focus on M&E within the public sector. If there was previously any doubt about the need for ensuring better and more effective M&E in the ECPG, recent advances in the policy and strategic agenda of government have served to emphatically establish the M&E function as the core of a more accountable, effective and efficient public service (Office of the Premier PGDP 2004-2014:36).

4.3 StratMaster (M&E electronic system)

With the establishment of the M&E unit in the OTP in April 2005, a process was undertaken to seek to develop a province-wide strategic planning and reporting system that would be aligned to the broader GWM&ES. The efforts of the then called Internal Software Development Team culminated in the production of a system which was later presented to key stakeholders in November 2005. The system (known as StratMaster) was a scalable open
source solution that could be implemented across the entire province free from costly licensing fees. The system had the following three specific objectives:

- Presentation of accurate and reliable information on progress in the implementation of departmental programmes, goals and objectives;
- Presentation of information on the outcomes achieved by departmental programmes; and
- Continually improving the quality of M&E in the province (M&E Indaba report 2008:27).

Various support systems were implemented to ensure that the functionality of the system was enhanced. These included hiring and training of data capturers whose role was to upload plans onto the system. Joint Application Development (JAD) sessions were also held to afford end-users an opportunity to influence the outlook of the system towards their needs. In addition, plans were analysed for credibility before being uploaded. Going forward, there is a need to comprehensively audit the system, including how the “input” and “end-user” ends can be balanced, how the system can be made more flexible to accommodate new information as well as to determine the kind of human capacity needed to drive the system towards optimal functionality.

4.4 Service Delivery Acceleration Plan (SDAP)

Towards the end of 2008 the ECPG embarked on a six-month service delivery turn-around programme that would build on and accelerate government’s programme of fundamental social transformation. The success of the programme was built on the strong central coordination of planning, M&R on the SDAP, and included the following key interventions:

- Rigorous analysis of the SDAPs of departments to ensure alignment with the priorities of government and selected credibility criteria (project plan design, financial viability, capacity to deliver and risk management).
- Deployment of technical support to identified departments.
- Monthly monitoring of the implementation of the intervention plans.
On 26 August 2008, the Provincial EXCO Lekgotla clearly set the agenda for speeding up service delivery in the EC, with a clear and unambiguous focus on centralised planning, and enhanced M&R laying a solid platform in this regard. Furthermore, mechanisms and capabilities were recommended to drive the agenda for accelerating service delivery in key areas, amongst these lines of reporting and accountability. A management strategy was conceptualised, which included five components, one of which was centralised planning, coordination and monitoring. The OTP was the lead department in this regard, where, together with Provincial Treasury, it facilitated the “sifting and vetting” (rigorous analysis) of the provincial SDAP. The OTP also led the development of an M&R system on these plans, which ran parallel to a process of generating long-term options for developing a robust system of centrally coordinating planning and performance M&E in the province – the basis of the EC M&R framework (Eastern Cape Monitoring and Reporting Framework 2012:53).

The model of centrally coordinating planning and M&R through the implementation of the provincial SDAP from October 2008 to March 2009 surpassed expectations in terms of the commitment of departments to reporting and accounting to an overarching task team, and ultimately to the Cabinet Budget Committee (CBC) and EXCO. The approach of rigorously scrutinising departmental plans, with the subsequent oversight and monitoring of implementation, had a significant impact on the overall achievement of targets set within the various project plans, and essentially ‘piloted’ the management framework towards the central coordination of planning, M&R in the province. Moreover, this was strengthened by the strong partnership between the OTP and Provincial Treasury throughout the intervention (PGDP 2004-2014:29).

Public demands for better service delivery and the demands for increased accountability also accelerated the need for improved evidence-based decision-making, and therefore the ECPG prioritised response to these demands through the continuous review and development of guidelines for
integrated planning, M&R. In response to this, the ECPG prioritised the strengthening of integrated planning and M&E as part of the provincial governance and administration POA.

4.5 Planning and M&E Indaba

On 30-31 October 2008, the first Provincial Planning, M&E Indaba was convened at Fish River Sun, the main aim being the development of a framework aimed at improving provincial government planning, monitoring, reporting and evaluation. This was in response to concerted calls by a variety of provincial stakeholders and key decision-makers to address key deficiencies in planning and M&E. The objectives of the Indaba were:

i. To improve integrated service delivery through the better alignment of national, provincial and local government planning processes and outputs (Strategic, Annual Performance and Integrated Development Plans), within the context of the PGDP and other key service delivery priorities.

ii. To improve the ability of provincial stakeholders (including departments and municipalities) to monitor and report on service delivery and performance.

iii. To improve the capability for evaluations in the province (Planning and M&E Indaba 2008:20).

The Indaba noted and discussed a number of issues pertinent to planning, M&E, including the following:

- The need to ensure that the Indaba emerged with clear proposals and plans on how best planning, resource allocation, implementation, and M&E can be improved;
- The need to ensure greater and more strategic coherence between the plans of spheres and institutions of government, with the PGDP at the centre;
- The need to ensure that lessons from the SDAP are mainstreamed in order to inform future planning and implementation processes;
• The need to make a thorough assessment of the planning, coordination and monitoring capacity of government, as part of a deliberate effort, led by the OTP, to build capacity throughout all levels of government;
• The need to ensure that HODs, Municipal Managers and CEOs, prioritise their planning, M&R responsibilities;
• The need to base plans and budgets on strategic priorities as well as compliance with existing legislation governing planning;
• The need to continue to seek ways of aligning inter-sphere planning, M&E, including the alignment of planning frameworks such as the PGDP and IDPs, in order to enhance the impact of service delivery.

As a result of the Indaba, specific resolutions were taken around these issues, and an implementation plan was compiled. This EC M&R Framework is one of the responses to the priority actions that were raised in this implementation plan (Eastern Cape Monitoring and Reporting Framework 2012:32).

4.6 The ECPG response to the National Outcomes Approach

In her opening address to the Provincial Executive Council Lekgotla in February 2011, the Premier discussed the matter of monitoring, reporting and oversight, emphasising the importance at all times of reflecting on the progress that the province is making, addressing challenges when they arise and also to account on the tasks assigned to government. It was noted that, more often than not, M&E reports generated do not assist decision-making. This has a direct bearing on the state’s ability to act decisively in achieving the targets as expressed in the electoral mandate, to respond efficiently to service delivery blockages, and to be responsive to the needs of the citizens of the province. In fact, despite massive increases in successive budgets, in some areas service quality and standards have deteriorated. The pattern of poor quality outcomes despite large growth in real expenditure illustrated in the health and education sector on a national and provincial level is unfortunately repeated in some other delivery areas. She recommended that with a skilled and well capacitated M&E unit the province can develop credible reports (Eastern Cape Monitoring and Reporting Framework 2012:36).
4.7 Ongoing interventions
Since 2007 the M&E unit in the OTP produced various drafts of the MR&E frameworks. Due to the rapid developments in the M&E landscape, the finalisation of these frameworks could not be achieved. Despite the absence of the endorsed frameworks, work has continued in respect of implementing their various aspects—however, it is believed that the endorsement of these products are fundamental to a significant improvement in the implementation of the performance M&E functions in the province.

The functionality of M&E in the province has been assessed almost annually by the M&E unit in the OTP. These included an evaluation readiness assessment conducted throughout the provincial administration in order to assess the state of readiness of government departments and OTP public entities to undertake evaluations. These reports detailing the functionality of M&E in the province have also been submitted to the Public Service Commission (PSC) on a quarterly basis since 2010. Various departments and actors in the province have also conducted analyses of Annual Performance Plans (APPs) since 2006, as well as analyses of quarterly reports and POA reports from time to time.

The PMETTT was first established in 2007, and is constituted of officials responsible for planning and M&E across all provincial departments, at levels ranging from middle to executive management. Coordinated by the OTP, the focus of the PMETTT is to provide guidance, advice, coordination services and information-sharing on all planning and M&E issues in the province in the first instance, and nationally as a whole. The PMETTT is supported by most departments, and positive feedback is consistently received for the role that this forum plays in facilitating M&E information-sharing in the province.

The M&E unit has provided and solicited ongoing training (since 2007) for officials responsible for M&E in the province. Due to the competing demands of the M&E mandate, this kind of in-house training is not always possible. For this reason, training is often solicited from outside sources, and this has in the
past included the DBSA/World Bank initiative, SAMDI (now PALAMA), the Presidency and a variety of service providers.

Since 2006 various assessments have been conducted by the OTP on the M&E training needs in the province. In the 2010/11 financial year, the outcome of the readiness assessment conducted by the unit revealed that capacity constraints mainly still exist in the following areas:

- Developing provincial sector-specific outcomes-based M&E frameworks
- Logic modelling and indicator development
- Data collection, analysis and reporting

In order to fill these capacity gaps, the province provided training on the above-mentioned areas, and although all three areas have been addressed in this regard, ongoing training for all managers in these areas is recommended. Provincial government should prioritise training on performance reporting, specifically tailored for non-M&E officials throughout the entire senior management cohort of the ECPG.

4.8 ECPG M&E challenges

Provincial departments (and the relevant public entities) are primarily responsible for submitting monthly and quarterly In-Year Monitoring (IYM) Reports to National, Provincial Treasury and the OTP. Most of the data elements relating to quarterly reports to treasury are pre-determined sector indicators, many of which are at the output level. Departments in the EC province are also required to report to the three provincial clusters in the OTP (Governance and Administration, Social Transformation and Economic Development Clusters) on a quarterly basis in respect of their contribution to the POA.

The tracking of other emerging priorities, for which the OTP has been held responsible over the years, included the High Impact Priority Projects (HIPPs), the Apex priorities, the PGDP, the State of the Province Address (where these issues are not covered by the provincial POA) as well as
Izimbizo/Outreach Reports. Added to these are the reports due to the Presidency relating to marginalised and vulnerable groups in the province (youth, disabled, women, children and older persons), the Presidential Hotline, Public Management Watch reports to the DPSA, oversight reports to the Provincial Legislature, as well as other ad hoc reporting requirements from time to time. The Department of Local Government and Traditional Affairs has also been required to submit quarterly reports to the Presidency on provincial support and contributions to the Five-Year Local Government Strategic Agenda (Office of the Premier PGDP, 2004-2014:72).

Although already daunting, this is not an exhaustive list of the reporting requirements that departments are subjected to. This leads to a proliferation of reporting demands and requirements to provincial departments and public entities, which actually neutralises the value of reporting for purposes of performance management, accountability and reflection, towards improved service delivery. There is also no formal repository for storing and managing the information contained in reports, and the loss of such information often requires repeated attempts at obtaining information that had already been collected previously.

The OTP draws inferences from the quality of reports received from provincial departments, which require an understanding of routine data collection terminology, M&E terminology such as indicators, outputs, outcomes, targets and so forth, and discovered that there is weak capacity for M&R throughout the provincial government. This is reinforced by the analysis of APPs, which shows a distinct challenge in the crafting of performance indicators and target-setting. Some departments (such as the Department of Education) do not have a dedicated M&E function within their structures, and departments which do are either understaffed, or the structure does not adequately provide for the fulfillment of the M&E function. Most M&E staff experience challenges with reporting, and only manage to comply with the reporting requirements of the IYM process, the legislature and other “compliance” reports. In addition, departments are often challenged with numerous ad hoc requests for reports.
and information, which require similar information but in differing formats (Eastern Cape Monitoring and Reporting Framework 2012:40).

Although there are strides that the OTP has made since 2005 towards building capacity for the effective and efficient implementation of M&E, the processes are very slow.

As a result, many M&E practitioners who were empowered to establish the unit have left the OTP without being replaced. This has weakened the M&E unit, and the progress in lobbying for the adoption and execution of an M&E framework in the province is very slow and as a result the province has been working with a draft M&E framework since 2007. As a result of these challenges some of the M&E functions have been transferred to other units for example the Front Line Service Delivery (FSD) was first transferred to the Policy and Planning unit and later to the Service Delivery unit. This shows a clear indication of lack of capacity and alignment of functions with those in the OTP since this particular function was designed to be driven by the M&E unit.

4.9 Strategic location and integration of M&E into other management processes and systems

The GWM&E Policy Framework (Presidency 2007:35) is clear and explicit in relation to the integration and the strategic location of M&E within the department. According to the framework; “Effective M&E systems are built on good planning and budgeting systems and provide valuable feedback to those systems. How M&E processes relate to planning, budgeting, programme implementation, project management, financial management and reporting processes should be clearly defined. M&E roles and responsibilities should be embedded in job descriptions and performance agreements to link individual performance to the institutional M&E system”.

This enforces a number of critical assumptions on the role of the M&E unit in relation to both line and corporate services programmes within the department, and also suggests the need for the M&E function to be
appropriately located within the institutional, management and decision-making structures.

It also requires an important interface and collaboration with planning, given the dependency of strategic and programme planning on performance data being monitored and assessed on an ongoing basis (for example the role of baseline data and the identification of appropriate performance measures, such as programme performance indicators).

The strategic positioning of the M&E unit will also determine the capacity and functions of the unit required to drive the institutionalisation of the M&E system and in enhancing the performance results of the OTP.

4.9.1 Structural and organisational alignment for M&E systems
Currently, the OTP is undergoing a restructuring process, which has an impact on the functioning of different units, including the M&E unit. This has also created uncertainties for M&E unit staff members about their future, since the new structure accommodates only specialists appointed at senior management level. This leaves current managers and assistant managers, who have been working in this unit for more than five years, with no position in the M&E structure. This process has been underway for more than two years; and it has not yet been completed. The two newly appointed specialists – instead of the original eight – are currently overworked with different tasks. As a result of this delaying process, a new person-to-the post matching approach has been adopted to fast-track the re-engineering process.

However, the M&E unit has suffered in this process, as there are no employees with the required skills to perform the requisite M&E activities. This has resulted in the unit keeping its old M&E employees in the structure. A present culture comprising both old and new values now exists. As a result, confusion within the organisation exists in terms of understanding their role, and improving the M&E culture in the OTP. Furthermore, due to leadership change, the organisation has started to exhibit behavioural change. A survey
was conducted to assess factors that affect M&E readiness, and the organisational performance. Major problems that were identified during the survey included the non-existence of a working culture. Changes in corporate culture did not result in corresponding behavioural changes; and this has resulted in insufficient line management support for M&E performance.

The relationship between management and employees has subsequently deteriorated; and this has affected the positive attitude of staff towards management. Other additional factors discovered in the survey were:

- Staff feels excluded from the decisions.
- Messages are often mixed and confusing.
- Communication is either inappropriate or delayed.
- Management was perceived not to prioritise M&E, since it has been unable to fill vacancies created in the unit for more than a year. Instead, they deployed employees – without M&E knowledge – from other units to the M&E unit at senior management level.
- Lack of follow-up of performance reviews and inadequate performance information.

However, with government, executive positions are deployment positions from the ruling party; hence, in the EC the current Director General is a former MEC, and was the caretaker Premier for eight months before being deployed to his current position.

**Training and development**

The OTP does not rest on its laurels once the suitable M&E candidates are appointed to the organisation. New recruits are taken through a vigorous in-house programme aimed at inducting them into the OTP M&E culture and way of doing business. The in-house programme is followed by ongoing training initiatives for new and old employees, in order to be on the same level and understanding of the expected new goals and objectives.

**Learning and growth**

The OTP during the process of re-engineering invests in its employees, in order to create long-term growth and sustainability. The organisation rewards
excellent performance, as this contributes to staff motivation, job satisfaction, employee loyalty and productivity. Kaplan and Norton (1996:87) identified people, systems and organisational procedures, as the three principal sources from which growth and learning come, and the gaps identified from these following the application of a balanced scorecard that lead to the OTP having to invest in re-skilling their employees, in order to fit the new demands and culture of the organisation.

**Promotion**
The OTP M&E unit does not implement an upward mobility approach of appointing internally to give opportunity and continuity to skilled and experienced employees, who understand the M&E and the culture of the organisation. The OTP has embarked on the capacity building of their M&E practitioners for the past five years – with the assumption that when there are vacancies created at senior level they would be able to succeed their counterparts.

However, the analysis shows that they appointed candidates from outside the office, as their first preference. In consequence of this approach, many vacancies are not filled, since the identified M&E candidates decline the offer. The assumption is that internal promotion contributes in acknowledging the work that the internal employees have been doing, and this would build loyalty to the organisation. In addition, if internal employees are promoted, this will assist the M&E unit and the OTP in reducing costs. The successful candidates could receive a three-day class to help them deal effectively with the challenges of the new position differently from persons from other provinces, who first have to understand the culture of the organisation, which may take a month or two; and this could have a negative impact on their deliverables and the performance of the unit. This approach bodes well for employee engagement; and it makes a direct contribution to improved M&E performance and service delivery.
Employee relations
The organisation recognises employee innovations, and encourages employees' engagement and their inputs to the shaping of the M&E unit, in order for it to be functional, and to be acknowledged for its effective performance. This creates an opportunity for engaging on issues affecting the M&E unit collectively, and to offer an amicable solution that would assist in ensuring that M&E practitioners and senior management work collectively to achieve common objectives. The M&E unit senior management involves the practitioners during implementation stages, and only senior management participates in planning and during decision-making processes of the unit programmes. This process creates a tense relationship and unworkable environment between junior employees and management.

Management style
Managers managing the OTP M&E unit adopted a strategy that makes employees unable to express their views, or to be innovative and creative in executing their work in order to achieve their set targets. As a result of this challenge the M&E unit is always behind schedule in its projects. Managers are expected to spend time out of their offices, verify information provided by the departments, and interact with stakeholders from the districts. This approach assists in giving senior management a good insight into what challenges M&E officials and other ordinary workers are faced with on the ground, identify and improve the capacity gap thereby helping them to understand the core business of the M&E unit much better.

Team-building
Kriek and Viljoen (2003:204) define team-building as the method used most often to unlock the benefits of a team approach in organisations. Team-building addresses the procedures and actions of the team, in order to improve productivity or output. It improves personal and interpersonal relationships between members; and it aligns the team with its larger contextual setting. It is further explained that the organisation should consider undertaking the following processes when planning for team-building. A
diagnosis to ascertain the needs of the team is crucial when deciding on team-building.

The specific areas that the OTP team-building exercise addresses are:

- Personal and interpersonal relationships – emphasising individual growth and development (intrapersonal system). According to Kaplan and Norman (1996:115), excellent performance in this respect reflects a focus on staff motivation, professional development, job satisfaction, staff loyalty and productivity. Kaplan and Norton (1996:117) identified people, systems and organisational procedures, as the three principal sources from which growth and learning come, and the identified gaps would lead to businesses having to invest in re-skilling their employees.

Therefore, this approach assists the OTP M&E unit to rotate their employees during restructuring, and they can be re-skilled in different areas of M&E – for example: building evaluation capacity to create the dedicated unit in this area, in order to meet the needs of the organisation.

- Performance of the teams and alignment with the organisational goals.

A team-building exercise strengthens the team members with technical expertise required by the M&E unit, problem-solving and decision-making, in order to improve their performance and work towards achieving common goals as a team. This approach encourages OTP executive members to facilitate the institutionalisation and organisational alignment for an M&E system.

4.9.2 Monitoring developments, evaluating performance and making corrective adjustments

According to the Presidency (2008:19), M&E units should, therefore, be sufficiently close to the HOD and Director General, in order to ensure that M&E information is taken seriously. It is recommended that the M&E unit be represented at senior decision-making forums, in order to influence the use of
M&E by departments during their planning stages and at the decision-making processes of the province.

The M&E unit in the OTP has been elevated to the level of DDG because of its responsibility and accountability, while in some departments, a Director is the head of the unit. The OTP has reviewed the organisational structure and institutional placement of the M&E function, in order to ensure that the provincial M&E system is adequately supported to achieve better results (Presidency 2008:22).

Departments and public institutions were obliged to integrate M&E into their management functions, as an approach that is aimed at improving their performance – and, that of the organisation in general. The following criteria were employed:

- Ensure there is an M&E budget in all programmes and a plan over three-five-years, for which M&E will be undertaken; this would also allow the strengthening of organisational capacity of M&E units, and the outlining of the form of evaluation to be used.
- Engage National Treasury, to ensure that there is enough money allocated to support M&E in the OTP, as well as in the Department of PM&E.
- Ensure that the structures that are entrusted with the evaluation role acquire the required skills, to be able to carry out the task effectively and efficiently. The M&E unit needs to be populated, and to have specific skills dedicated to perform evaluation and other relevant tasks. These could be incorporated to assist in conducting evaluations, such as in the research and policy units.
- Ensure that the M&E unit influences the decision- and policy-making processes – to make use of evaluation findings in informing its planning, budgeting, and policy reviews (Presidency 2011:17).

In addition, since the M&E unit operates at a DDG level, it is able to be represented at top-management meetings, and to provide guidance by influencing the decision-making of the organisation, by making use of
evidence-based information reports and credible data. It is, therefore, influential in ensuring that fundamental decisions are taken at high level in improving the M&E capacity that will enable M&E units to function effectively and efficiently in driving the mandate. As a result of its influence the following decisions have been made:

- The OTP is in the process of developing and implementing an Annual Human Resources Development Strategy, and a succession plan. The OTP has identified and supported potential skills in other programmes. It has agreed to make available specialised and core competency skills to ensure the delivery of high quality M&E of government projects and policies, however the process has been delayed.

- The OTP has also implemented an organisational performance-management M&E system to promote a performance culture underpinned by an effective performance-management system, and best practice rewards, as well as an incentive programme.

The considerations above feed directly into organisational alignment for M&E systems, human capital, organisational culture, as well as processes and systems that would place the organisation in a position to perform fully on its mandate, thus supporting the need for its continued relevance and sustainability.

4.9.3 Human capacity-building and technical support for the M&E system
The need for training and development continues to be a top priority in the SA Public Service, as a result of the rapid changes in the economic, political and social environment – but, mostly in the work environment. Training efforts at OTP are fragmented, which results in the lack of value for money. A strategic framework is required, when building M&E human capacity, to be able to evaluate the immediate and medium-term training results and their impact on the performance of the unit in implementing the M&E system.

Therefore, the OTP has developed a needs-analysis and baseline data to determine the number of employees to be trained and the amount of money to
be used. This information is used as the basis, when developing an M&E training strategy. Other key considerations for the training framework include the following areas as their requirements:

- Who is to be trained? (What is the size of the target audience?)
- Where are they starting from? (The present level of performance)
- What is the desired outcome to be achieved? (The required level of performance).
- What is the training content? (What is necessary to move from the present to the required performance level?)
- How is training to be delivered, and by whom? (What is the appropriate delivery channel?) (Fourie 2004:47).

The primary purpose of training and development is to:

- Improve performance – training that is provided to enhance performance is based on the analysis of the indicators assigned to quality of service. Therefore, training should be aligned with the M&E strategic goals.
- Maintain performance – managers are aware of the environmental changes in the M&E unit however, the challenge is the lack of leadership in implementing the findings by the Presidency and the M&E Indaba resolutions. For example, the technological advancement that may be used to collect, and analyse data using SPSS/NSS and the integration of IT into government strategic programmes requires improved IT skills to maintain the performance and to ensure that the M&E is effective in the OTP. This would require the training of practitioners, in order to make an impact when implementing the M&E system.
- Prepare for new job challenges on higher levels – considering that there is a new trend of separating monitoring from evaluation – with the establishment of different units, in order to be more focused. Employees would normally prefer the organisation to provide opportunities for internal growth and career progression. This would also require information about vacancies and the required skills to
perform the new job, for example, skills required to conduct evaluations in the M&E unit.

- Management development - the top management of the OTP provides direction, in order to improve goal achievement and create a conducive working environment, which makes optimum use of human resources for the continuing growth of the organisation. However, this approach will be cascaded down to the individual development of M&E practitioners in the OTP and other government departments.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996, makes provision for the basic values and principles governing public administration. Section 195(1) of the Constitution, 1996, lists the following:

- "A high standard of professional ethics must be sustained;
- Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be sought;
- Public administration must be development-oriented; and
- Good human resource management and career development to augment human potential must be refined".

Furthermore, the National Skills Development Strategy promotes government priorities and policies for the training and development of public officials in South Africa. This is a result of the adopted legislation, such as the South African Qualifications Act, of 1995 (Act No 58 of 1995), the Skills Development Act, of 1998 (Act No 97 of 1998), and the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 (Act No 9 of 1999).

PALAMA is mandated to provide Public Service Training and Development that would ensure an increased capacity of service delivery and implementation of the initiatives of government, as determined by the national priorities.

According to the Presidency (2008:37) the OTP’s evaluation capacity needs to be beefed up, and possibly enhanced by the establishment of a dedicated Evaluation Directorate to coordinate evaluations concerning the PGDP, cluster and other transversal priorities of the EC province. Similar capacity
improvements for other departments/public entities and municipalities to coordinate their M&E should be facilitated. Gorgens and Kusek (2009:87) stated that organisations need to encourage their employees to undergo different M&E trainings, in order to be able to implement M&E tasks effectively.

The assumption is that capacitated employees would be able to improve the quality and credibility of M&E results. Therefore, considerable attention needs to be given to capacitating officials in local and provincial government departments on the technical and statistical dimensions of M&E and indicator development. Bamberger, Mabry and Rugh (2006:26) support this argument, by emphasising the evaluation capacity building of the technical capacity of evaluators to conduct evaluations and strengthen the capacity of users and stakeholders, to interpret and use the findings of evaluation. The training on ICT skills, such as GCIS and IT systems helps in strengthening the M&E system. In addition UNEG (2011:14), suggests that in building evaluation capacity, when it is non-existent, the focus will be on piloting, rather than on any immediate whole of government uptake.

The pilot evaluation capacity has been introduced slowly by starting with the influential ministries that are driving M&E in a particular country. This approach allows for more time for learning and adjusting, as well as the evaluation of human resources skills capacity building. As a result of this initiative new evaluators are mentored on good practice management techniques relevant to evaluations, the development of terms of reference, study designs and inception reports. Some of the efforts that are explored to assist in addressing the M&E skills gaps include the following:

- M&E training workshops delivered on site, and online;
- Lobbying for funding support to attend international training, for example IPEDT;
- Funding to support the development of a website to serve as a central source for evaluation tools, as well as for M&E information exchange;
• Training for the development of training materials on specific evaluation tool methods, for example, logic models, indicator development, surveys, focus groups, and interview methods;

• Attending of training on the development of training packages for managing the evaluation of evaluation planning, budgeting, terms-of-reference development, project planning and management skills, as well as evaluation reporting;

• Orientation training on M&E for senior managers of government departments, parliamentarians, civil society and private sector organisations, which are in partnership with the OTP (UNEG 2011:27).

Furthermore, according to the Presidency (2011:22), strides have been made in identifying and addressing the challenges encountered by government in conducting effective evaluations. Different steps that have been undertaken are discussed as follows:

• Sufficient technical capacity has been established in the Department of Performance M&E to support departments with their evaluation methodology and quality.

• Evaluations are outsourced to external evaluators, using an accredited panel.

• Donor funds use international evaluators to build capacity, and to expand the cadre of experienced evaluators beyond a narrow pool.

• PALAMA, universities and private consultants are used to facilitate short- and long-term courses. Funds are being sourced to assist in capacity development with a special focus on building black evaluators, since the experienced white researchers and M&E specialists are getting old – which could be a problem – when they retire, and also assistance in securing buy-in from senior managers who have a perception that M&E is a policing tool.

• International partnerships are being established with similar countries, for example, Mexico and Colombia, and international organisations (eg the World Bank).
These efforts are directly intended to enhance the capacity of the M&E, in order to be effective when implementing the M&E system with well-capacitated practitioners. The OTP M&E unit in 2008 conducted an M&E Indaba, with the aim of developing M&E capacity strategy, which would involve the capacity of M&E units of departments in the province. It was also aimed at lobbying for the buy-in of politicians and influencing of executive management of departments, as decision-makers in the province, in order to adopt the strategy and be able to endorse the budget for M&E capacity building programmes. It was assumed that the adoption and implementation of this strategy would strengthen the institutionalisation of M&E systems in the province.

Furthermore, an M&E Council/ Structure comprising government, the representatives of civil society, institutions of higher learning, StatsSA, the private sector, CBOs and NGOs has been set up in the Presidency, in order to guide and support M&E in the country. This approach also assists the institutions of higher learning, to develop programmes aimed at building M&E capacity in the country.

4.10 Access and use of information to improve results
The Promotion of Access to Information Act, No 2 of 2000, outlined its purpose to give effect to the constitutional right of access to information held by the state, and any information held by another person, and that is required for the exercise or protection of any rights. The two main outcomes of adherence to this Act are to:

- Foster a culture of transparency and accountability in public and private bodies.
- Actively promote a society, in which the people have effective access to information to enable them to protect their rights in a meaningful manner.

This Act indicates both the procedures for accessing information held by the state and any other private body; and it also provides grounds for the refusal of access to records.
It is the responsibility of the M&E unit to supply government with information to ensure that citizens receive full, accurate and up-to-date information about the government services to which they are entitled, and the spending of public funds on government projects for the acceleration of service delivery.

The OTP is in the process of establishing a knowledge and information-management section within the M&E unit, and to ensure that capacity is provided to implement these aspects in the short- and medium-term, to be able to improve the use of information by decision-makers and policy-developers through the collection of credible information (Presidency 2007a:21). The M&E unit in the Presidency encourages the dissemination of information by different sectors to their stakeholders after conducting evaluations, so that they can own the process and input on recommendations, where necessary.

Many organisations focus more on collecting data without putting any emphasis on using the information to influence their decisions during policy change and budgeting processes. Gorgens and Kusek (2009:90) support this idea, since “a good decision-maker is one who makes decisions properly, exhibits expertise, and uses generally accepted information”. This shows the importance of ensuring that the collected data should be verified, so that it cannot mislead the decisions that are based thereon.

Using the collected information helps the OTP and any other department to improve service delivery and its use of budget, and get support from the public. The OTP M&E unit conducts an audit of all evaluations done in the province, and ensures that the OTP M&E units are a central point for the sharing of information on evaluations undertaken – both internally by departments, and those outsourced. This process improves the coordination of information by the provincial M&E system.

The M&E unit also includes the strategies of creating demand for M&E for its integrated M&E system, in order for sectors to make use of this system. In
addition, the ability of the OTP to conduct effective M&E would depend on the
credibility and the strength of the M&E unit within the provincial departments
and municipalities. According to the Presidency (2008:31), the OTP should
play a supporting role in leading improvement in the quality of data emanating
from departmental M&E systems and municipalities. The OTP should ensure
that the information collected by sectors is submitted on time and on the
correct reporting templates. The strengthening of the partnership between the
OTP and Stats SA around the South African Statistics Qualification
Association Framework (SASQAF) could play a significant role in ensuring the
improvement of data quality.

The OTP needs to develop a legislative framework with SASQAF for finding
approval, recognition and accreditation of the data collected by different
sectors, as official data. Therefore, this implies that there should be more
emphasis on empowering M&E practitioners with statistical tools and
methods, in order to analyse the data gathered by different departments and
sectors. This should help to improve their reporting, collecting and
administration of credible data for the effective development of attainable
indicators by the M&E unit in the OTP.

4.11 Conclusion
The implementation of M&E in the OTP is more focused on theory, there are
few practical results outlined as an achievement of effective implementation of
the M&E policy. What has been discovered is a lack of leadership and buy-in
from the executive that should enforce the institutionalisation of the M&E
system in the OTP. Hence the M&E unit employs a desktop (office based
monitoring of analysing reports via emails without being verified on the ground
for its credibility) method of monitoring and does not verify information
collected from the departments. This approach resulted in the OTP
developing reports that are not credible and without evidenced-based
information according to the M&E policy. The institution does not have the
capacity to drive critical areas in the GWM&E. As an example they do not
have information and knowledge management systems to ensure that the
reports are used to influence decisions and used for policy review. Lack of
evaluation and statistics skills was the cause of the OTP not conducting evaluations in the past two financial years.

The OTP plays a crucial role in promoting good governance, effective and efficient development of policies. Effective M&E becomes crucial in ensuring effective and efficient implementation of these policies. The OTP should be encouraged to ensure that it facilitates the adoption and institutionalisation of an M&E policy and systems. Benchmarks from other countries and learning good practices can be adopted for the EC.

It is imperative for the OTP to develop and implement M&E capacity building programme that will assist in ensuring that the province possesses necessary skills that could drive the sustainable M&E in the province. It is hoped that by adopting the continuous M&E learning approach the province can attain its objectives and facilitate further engagements on enhancing M&E capacity for performance improvement in the ECP.

Since the OTP does not have a clear approach in driving its M&E programmes it is advised that it should base its programmes on the guiding principles of participatory approach. The implementation of the following principles can assist the M&E unit to sustain its M&E policies and programmes:

- Participant focus and ownership – structures and processes are created to include those most frequently powerless or voiceless in programme design and implementation. The participatory process acknowledges human contributions and cultural knowledge.
- Negotiation – participants commit to work together to decide on the evaluation focus, how it should be conducted, how findings will be used and what action will result. Often the process requires addressing differences in point of view and conflicts.
- Learning – participants learn together to take corrective actions and improve programmes.
• Flexibility – uses creative methodologies to match the resources, needs and skills of participants (Larson and Svendsen 1997:4)
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY AND ASSESSMENT OF INTERVIEW FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction
This chapter reports on and discusses the interview findings of the study conducted at the M&E unit of the OTP of the EC. The study results entail data developed from the administered questionnaires from the employees; individual interviews of the selected senior management employees within the M&E programme unit; and the outcomes of the focus group discussion conducted with the M&E middle management and practitioners.

The interview data is presented and discussed for each subheading that seeks to track the capacity of the M&E unit in institutionalising the M&E system in the province. The additional information is derived from the focus group discussions with unit members and the secondary information analysed from documents developed by the unit, for example M&E Indaba resolutions, PMETTT workshop resolutions and APPs of the department. The results are discussed according to both qualitative and quantitative methods applied in the study. Findings are categorised under different subheadings of the questionnaires and are aligned to the research questions and objectives of the study. Findings for each subheading are summarised conclusively to inform the recommendations that are discussed in Chapter six of the study.

5.2 Interviews and questionnaires (refer to Appendix 2)
The researcher identified three executive managers for interviewing to give a better understanding of the factors affecting the poor implementation of M&E and the causes of inadequate M&E capacity in the OTP. A recorded face-to-face interview was conducted with the following selected senior government officials: The DG and two DDG.s.

Questionnaires were distributed to 12 government officials within the different units of the OTP. The questionnaires were constructed and then divided into four sets of questions with different subheadings. One questionnaire was
prepared to track the location of M&E in the OTP this information will assist in determining the structure of the unit. M&E capacity and resourcing, learning and skills development, questionnaires were used to assess information on the M&E organisational capacity, and human capacity of M&E practitioners. Data management and assessment, evaluation research questions were used to determine the capacity of the unit to perform the tasks. This was also used to determine the skills gap required to perform the allocated task in these areas and in order to make recommendations for improving performance in these areas. 24 questions were drawn and categorised into identified subheadings or themes, with a scale ranging from less than average, average, and better than average. Other analysis drawn from OTP documents was on evaluating the level of M&E implementation, the development, and the adoption of an M&E framework in the OTP.

The respondents were given one month to respond; and the questionnaires were administered through the office of the M&E manager; and the process of distribution and collection was conducted manually within the policy and governance programme. The researcher did not have any influence in the responses. The questionnaires were collected from the M&E manager, who was responsible for the distribution; and the data was managed and analysed using an Excel software program.

5.3 Data analysis and interpretation
This part outlines the process to be followed in analysing and interpreting the collected data from the study. The data analysis involved reading through the data repeatedly, and engaging in activities of breaking the data down (thematising and categorising) and building it up again in novel ways (elaborating and interpreting). Interpretive analysis is seen as a back-and-forth movement between the strange and the familiar, as well as between a number of other dimensions like description and interpretation, foreground and background, part and whole. Wessels (1999:406) supported this view by emphasising that various methods and techniques of data-collection results were dependent on the application of different types of datasets with different techniques of interpretation.
The collected data via interviews and in the form of a questionnaire was packaged into different themes and categories; and the differentiation of qualitative and quantitative data was taken into consideration during the process. The methods applied grouped quantitative data under one theme with different categories; and these were analysed using Excel, since they were converted into numbers. The data collected via the interviews and documentary analyses was regarded as qualitative information; and this was categorised into another theme. The information gathered through the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods was analysed; and comparisons were drawn between the different categories.

5.4 Findings of the qualitative study
Recorded focus group discussions were conducted with three senior managers, and a separate group of four managers of the OTP PM&E unit was convened. Both individual and focus group discussion was focused on the required skills necessary to implement an M&E system, the current capacity of the M&E unit of the OTP, the current processes employed for building M&E capacity, the recruitment process for filling of M&E positions, the prevailing approach of executing M&E in the OTP and hindrances to the successful implementation of the M&E framework. The respondents were also afforded an opportunity to make some suggestions on the best possible approach that can be employed to improve the situation.

The results of the qualitative discussions and remarks are presented below following the identified thematic areas.

5.4.1 Required skills necessary for effective and efficient implementing of an M&E system
This question generated diverse responses that are outlined below. The M&E managers were of the view that M&E practitioners lack required skills and suggested that an M&E practitioner should posses the following skills: Public administration, social science, IT, statistics, knowledge and information management, evaluation research and project management.
Regarding the key identified skills the importance of understanding the environment in which the M&E is applied was emphasised hence public administration skills are necessary. It also helps in outlining the processes and policies of government. IT skills are used for capturing data information on the Excel spreadsheet, writing reports, researching information, developing graphs and diagrams. Statistics are used for data management and analysis in order to produce accurate data for M&E reports. Knowledge and information management helps ensure that the gathered information and reports are recorded correctly for public use and for institutional memory. Research skills are used to acquire information by employing different methods to assist evaluation processes. Project management skills are crucial for monitoring of government programmes and projects by applying different project management tools to assess the execution of programmes. The respondents also reported that the current M&E practitioners do not possess all the required skills mentioned hence there is a capacity gap in the unit.

5.4.2 The current capacity of the M&E unit in the OTP of the EC

There are capacity constraints with regard to M&E data analysis and interpretation and evaluation at the OTP, and the M&E unit is understaffed. The current personnel in M&E units are highly qualified with tertiary qualifications ranging from undergraduate to Master’s degrees (for example BASoc Sc, BAdmin, HDE, BSc Management, BEd, Postgraduate Diploma in M&E, Master’s in Development Studies, MEd, PhD etc.). However, most of these qualifications are not M&E specific. The M&E unit has therefore taken the responsibility for capacitating their M&E personnel, by making use of the DBSA, PALAMA, PMETT, SAMEA programmes and other service providers that present short courses on Outcomes Based M&E.

Drawing inferences from the quality of reports developed by the unit which require the verification of information provided by the departments, it has been reported that the M&E from the OTP is performed only through desktop information and the M&E practitioners are office-bound. They are not allowed
to do the fieldwork for collection of data and verification of information. As a result of lack of skills to verify information and analysis of data, the unit produced incredible reports that lack evidence. The unit has also failed to implement the M&E Indaba resolution which encouraged the establishment of an evaluation unit. As a result the unit lacks evaluation capacity and is unable to report on this function. The unit has also failed to spend on the budget allocated for evaluations for the past three years since they do not have qualified personnel to conduct evaluations.

This impact on the department is attributed to the recent recruitment of an inexperienced evaluation specialist who did not have an interest and background in M&E and was the victim of person-to-post matching; he had been a senior manager in the internal auditing unit. He was again transferred from the position to the internal control unit, where he felt that his skills and experience could be better utilised and he would be able to make a meaningful contribution to the OTP. The OTP is now in the process of recruiting a suitable replacement candidate for this position.

Furthermore, this particular example is indicative of the impact of overlooking qualified and experienced members within the unit. As a result the OTP M&E unit has experienced a high staff turnover and vacancy rate. Similarly, the inability of the department to retain institutional memory and depth in skills and experience below the levels of middle and senior management in M&E will seriously hamstring the future mainstreaming and roll-out of the GWMR&E Frameworks.

The unit has a high vacancy rate that also impacts negatively onto its performance of achieving set targets. The unit filled only two M&R specialist positions out of five approved posts, and was also unable to fill three evaluation specialist positions. The five project manager positions identified to support different specialists are still vacant.
5.5 Findings of the quantitative study
5.5.1 Analysis of questionnaire responses
Presented hereunder in Table 1, are questionnaire results for respondent employees in the OTP. Results are also summarised in percentages for each statement or question. The results are categorised into different subheadings of the questionnaire in response to the objectives of the study.

Table 1: OTP 12 employee response results

| Strategic location & integration of M&E into other management processes and systems | PERFORMANCE |
|---|---|---|
| | Less than average | Average | Better than average |
| 1 | OTP performance M&E is facilitated by the M&E unit | 17% (2) | 17% (2) | 67% (8) |
| 2 | The M&E head is represented on the OTP top management | 67% (8) | 17% (2) | 17% (2) |
| 3 | The M&E unit works with the Strategic Planning Unit in facilitating the preparation of the department’s Strategic Plan AND Annual Planning | 17% (2) | 25% (3) | 58% (7) |
| 4 | The M&E unit is the primary source of performance data in the OTP. | 42% (5) | 25% (3) | 33% (4) |
| 5 | The M&E unit provides guidance in the development of performance measures. | 33% (4) | 33% (4) | 33% (4) |
| 6 | The M&E unit contributes significantly to the preparation of performance data for oversight reporting. | 17% (2) | 17% (2) | 67% (8) |
| 7 | Reporting on the POA is managed by the M&E unit. | 8% (1) | 25% (3) | 67% (8) |
## M&E capacity and resourcing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PERFORMANCE</th>
<th>Less than Average</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Better than Average</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Financial prioritisation is evident in the allocation of a separate budget within the departmental vote for the M&amp;E function.</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>67%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The M&amp;E unit is headed by an appropriately experienced and qualified person.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>M&amp;E staff has extensive experience in public sector M&amp;E.</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
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## Data management & data assessment

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PERFORMANCE</th>
<th>Less than average</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Better than average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>A dedicated indicator performance tracking data management system is managed by the M&amp;E unit.</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Data management is web-based within the OTP.</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The M&amp;E unit is managing a non-automated data management system.</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The M&amp;E unit is the sole custodian for the storage and management of data.</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The OTP M&amp;E unit houses all performance data.</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Relevant users within the OTP have easy access to the performance data.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Quarterly OTP performance assessment reports are provided to the DG and DDGs by the M&amp;E unit.</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>M&amp;E assessment reports include an analysis of programme performance, challenges and</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
</tr>
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remedial action to be taken by management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation research conducted</th>
<th>PERFORMANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less than Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>The departmental M&amp;E framework includes a dedicated focus on evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>The department does have an evaluation agenda distinct from other earmarked studies/research identified by the department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>The M&amp;E unit has a dedicated budget for evaluations within the department.</td>
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<th>Learning &amp; skills development</th>
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<td>22</td>
<td>The PMETTT integrated the representation of the M&amp;E unit</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>External M&amp;E learning opportunities/networks are attended by the M&amp;E staff</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Training on M&amp;E is provided to departmental non-M&amp;E staff by the M&amp;E unit</td>
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**SCORING – PERFORMANCE STANDARD**

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Figure 2: Strategic location and integration of M&E into other management processes and systems
Figure 3: M&E Capacity and resourcing
Figure 4: Data management and assessment

- A dedicated indicator performance tracking data management system is managed by the M&E unit.
- Data management is webbased within the OTP.
- The M&E unit is managing a non automated data management system.
- The M&E unit is the sole custodian for the storage and management of data.
- The OTP M&E unit house all performance data.
- Relevant users within the OTP can access to the performance data.
- Quarterly OTP performance assessment reports are provided to the Director General and Deputy Director Generals by the M&E unit.
- M&E assessment report include an analysis of programme performance, challenges and remedial action to be advanced by management.
Strategic location and integration of M&E into other management processes and systems, from numbers 1 to 7 of the Table

The survey data shows that monitoring and reporting remains a core function of almost all the units in the OTP with 84% of practitioners indicating this as an M&E function. However, only 34% of programme heads form part of departmental top management committees in the OTP. The top management in the OTP is formed by the D and DDGs of the programmes only. This poses a critical question in relation to the depth and frequency of departmental
performance reporting on the agenda of top management structures within the OTP programmes. Secondly, are management committees as decision-makers utilising the performance reports, and analyses of reports meant to be produced by M&E practitioners in the OTP in guiding decision-making?

Alternatively there might be infrequent or ad hoc assessments of monitoring data by management in programmes rather than a mainstreaming of performance assessment throughout the various reporting cycles such as Oversight Reports (i.e. to the Provincial Legislature) and Provincial Programme of Action Reports (i.e. to clusters, cabinet committees and Makgotla). The latter observation is drawn from the fact that 67% of respondents indicated an above average performance in reporting on both oversight and on the Provincial Programme of Action (POA reporting respectively, but fewer form part of decision-making structures where it would be expected that monitoring of results should be a priority. There is a need for better integration of M&E in leadership and decision-making structures of the OTP.

There is a need for better integration of M&E in leadership and decision-making structures of programme units. The units should try to influence the leadership to lobby for their buy-in and further facilitate a short M&E course for leadership to understand the crucial role played by the unit in the organisation and in the province in general.

Gorgens and Kusek (2009:98) further suggest three reasons for leadership buy-in:

- The results of the M&E capacity building process will need to be approved and implemented by top management of the organisation and they will be more inclined to do so if they are aware of the process.
- Employees of the organisation are more likely to participate in and be positive about organisational design processes that have been seen to be initiated and endorsed by senior management.
• Senior management needs to lead the M&E change management process if organisational design and M&E structure change is to be effectively implemented.

Different views on the correct placement of an M&E unit within the organisation have been explored. Certainly, the M&E function must work collaboratively with the planning and budget functions. If M&E is mandated primarily for accountability then the best place for the M&E function may be outside the primary organisation. In certain cases there may be a need to create a separate evaluation unit or function for operations research and a programme evaluation.

Once the OTP is able to locate the appropriate place and functions of the unit, HR planning and management will be essential in ensuring that it recruits and retains good quality M&E staff with appropriate skilled individuals. This requires responsive HR policies, systems and strategies and sound HR practices to retain good M&E quality staff. Ensure effective and efficient implementation of policies that seek to address the proper functioning of the OTP M&E unit and its capacity building programme.

The M&E unit collaborates in planning processes in the department, but more work is required to ensure that the policy unit works closely with the M&E and is able to access relevant information, collect and analyse data, use information for the development and review of government policies. It should also make sure that all programmes and units in the OTP are able to apply M&E systems to track and evaluate their performance.

**M&E capacity and resourcing, numbers 8 to 10 of the Table**

The OTP indicated that M&E is a priority based on the ring-fencing of financial resources. The OTP’s transversal M&E function is separately budgeted for within the department, however, its internal M&E function is not. 67% of respondents indicated that resourcing for the M&E function in the OTP was ring-fenced within the departmental budget.
However, as a particular example, it must be noted that the OTP has the greatest challenge in the area of capacitating and resourcing, indicating that there needs to be a significant focus on improving M&E capacity and resourcing within the department once the unit has recruited the new staff members.

Human capacity development of individuals refers to the development of skills and the effective use of managerial, professional and technical staff and volunteers. This involves identifying the appropriate people to be trained, providing an effective learning environment for training and education, in-service and field supervision for continued skills transfer, and long-term mentoring (Lamptey et al., 2001:56).

Develop a career and a turnover incentive to attract and retain M&E skills. It is therefore essential for the OTP in this regard to develop strategies aimed at ensuring that skilled staff responsible for M&E is prioritised when there are vacancies at different levels within the unit to ensure that some members are elevated and others remain in key positions. For example with the five positions advertised for M&E specialists in the new organogram not a single experienced M&E manager was promoted to the new positions hence some of the practitioners were frustrated and left the unit.

As a result of that the unit was left with the General Manager and administration officer with the few positions filled with the new staff. Some of the newly appointed staff could not even finish a year in their positions and left the province because they did not understand the culture and the environment of working in the rural province. As a result the M&E unit is left with unfilled M&E positions.

There is a need to sustain and strengthen the PMETTT workshops within the ECPG as the forum for advancing the PWM&E framework. However, developing capacity entails more than education and training and should not take place only in a workshop format for the following reasons:
i) Workshops take people away from their places of work and thus, from doing the things for which they are responsible; and

ii) Knowledge retention in workshops on only capacity development programmes is not very high (IEG 2007:76). Therefore, additional capacity development strategies need to be included in a Human Capacity Development Strategy and Plan.

There is a need to ensure training of non-M&E officials in M&R of performance information. Encourage the use of a competence-based approach to training to make provision for the possible establishment of a link between individual performance and M&E unit performance.

The GWM&E policy framework acknowledges the multi-disciplinary nature of M&E. It continues to identify some of the crucial skills and competencies required within the OTP M&E unit. To ensure that M&E adheres to the principle of methodological soundness, data and information management skills are important. To ensure that M&E is participative, inclusive and development oriented also makes communication and people skills essential. Crucial competences include data collection skills, statistical analysis, economic impact and econometric analysis, understanding of sector policies and implementation modalities, facilitation skills for participative M&E, data quality assurance, impact of poverty, gender and other aspects that will improve the performance of the M&E unit.

The trend analysed in the OTP indicates that the M&E unit is led by a competent experienced and educated departmental head, for example the current head is the former chairperson of the SA M&E Association. However, two specialists for performance M&R and evaluation still require experience and skills as they are new in the field of M&E and do not have qualifications in that area to successfully improve the technical capacity of the unit. Currently, all the OTP managers with strong M&E skills and adequate experience on M&E have been transferred to other units through the re-engineering process and some have left the department. Research findings indicate that the unit is left with new employees with a concomitant lack of
institutional memory and through the person-to-post matching it acquired an inexperienced M&E manager who does not have adequate skills and knowledge for the position.

A concerted effort is required to create opportunities, acknowledge the skills, experience and competent M&E staff for senior positions and for institutional memory. This along with the execution of the retention and attraction strategy for members who were trained, coached and mentored, and in whom the OTP has invested a lot of money for their M&E development, to comply with the Batho Pele principle of “value for money”. Experienced M&E staff will also help to build capacity of the other department’s M&E units and some members who are technically competent, will significantly improve the technical capability of M&E units within their departments.

Data management and data assessment
The survey data indicates that there is a direct relationship between the fact that 75% of respondents from different units in the OTP do not have an effective and centrally located repository for performance data, and accessibility to performance information. This is typically depicted in the often-cited challenge of not being able to efficiently retrieve monitoring data in “real-time”. In most instances key internal recipients or users of monitoring and performance data are reliant on individual programme managers or delegated officials, for progress.

This challenge related to the internal difficulties confronting M&E practitioners who themselves need to provide an analysis of monitoring data to the DG and DDGs of different programmes on a quarterly basis. M&E practitioners do not provide analysis reports to the OTP on the programme performance data provided from line functions, instead this function is performed by the Strategic Planning unit, since the M&E unit does not have the capacity. These reports require a detailed review and analysis of programme performance against indicators and targets. Often this requires data to be timeously accessible and easily located. Instead, data is not timeously available, and as there is no central repository for programme managers to
deposit their performance reports, reports are typically submitted via email or manually between line programmes, and to the strategic planning unit for analysis, and DDGs.

Similarly, when reports are to be submitted outside of the department to transversal monitoring agencies or departments such as, Treasury or National Departments, Cabinet and ANC Lekgotla, both reports and data are often sourced through direct requests from the M&E officials who may or may not be available at the time the report is needed.

The fact that the M&E unit is identified as the repository for such data is consistent with the standards of the GWM&E and is a positive observation. However, this data should be available electronically for various users internally, and external to the departments. Ideally, monitoring reports and performance data of the OTP should be accessible via the departmental website for external users, with more detailed operational data via the Intranet with access control for various users in the department.

Only 10% of OTP units indicated that they were responsible for the storage and management of departmental performance data which implies that monitoring data must be stored elsewhere by the department. This then compromises the role of the M&E unit as an undisputable repository for all monitoring data, information, products and support tools.

In the OTP it must be assumed therefore that performance and information resides with the individual programme managers, and is probably not archived and might only reside on an individual official’s laptop or hardcopy file. In this scenario there is often no backup for this data. Should these laptops and files be stolen or destroyed the department stands the risk of losing this data, which results in the risks outlined in the previous findings.

In terms of the Policy Framework for the GWM&E “the users of M&E data have to understand how to integrate M&E functions within their core areas of responsibility and how to respond and deal with M&E findings. This involves
being able to assess information, and use this information as a tool for decision making and improvement”. This refers to everyone in the public service in general and the Senior Management Staff (SMS) cohort in particular.

An absence of dedicated performance information and data management systems in the OTP has a negative impact on the quality and reliability of performance information. In terms of this criterion, the assessment identified the role of the M&E unit in the management of the system, where and how performance data is located within the department, and how accessible performance data is for users within the department. An analysis of this Table provides an indication of the availability and utilisation of existing data management systems for the tracking of performance information, which is being utilised by the M&E unit in the OTP.

From both the desktop analysis and the feedback received from M&E practitioners within this survey, it has been discovered that the OTP does not utilise an automated performance management information system. As a result the reports that are developed by the policy unit are not informed by the data and information collected by the M&E unit. Although these two units are in the same programme they are working in silos, the left side does not know the work of the right side. There is a misconception in the department that the M&E is a stand-alone discipline that does not have to integrate its work into the policy unit for decision-making and review of policies.

However, the unit had a StratMaster which constituted some form of dedicated system for the management of reporting and performance data, which is either in the format of MS Word and/or MS Excel and had little impact without a dedicated person and as such it collapsed without yielding the intended results. This was a clear indication of lack of capacity to effectively use this expensive tool, as such there was no value for money for buying the expensive system. However, in the absence of a reliable and efficient electronic data management system for capturing, reporting, archiving and analysis, performance cannot be effectively measured and communicated.
In the absence of an automated electronic data management system, the OTP is exposed to the following risks:

- Lack of effective and efficient data retrieval methods.
- No efficient audit tracking can be performed.
- Backing-up of data is not effective.
- Reporting is not current, accurate, reliable and easily accessed. Data relating to date to capture the information is not recorded, making it impossible to measure performance against a baseline and at points in time.

This raises another more immediate compliance risk, one which the Auditor General and Public Service Commission consider in their AOPOs and M&E reports respectively. This relates to the continued noncompliance with the requirement for a leading department such as OTP to have effective systems for the storage and reporting of performance data and reports. The following are a few examples of AGSA’s typical ‘emphasis of matter’ raised with departments in the report on the AOPO in the province, which is a direct result of this particular finding:

- (Example 1): Reported performance measures not valid, accurate and complete as inadequate supporting source information was provided:
  - “For more than 60% of the performance measures that were material in nature relating to the school nutrition, registration and pass rates the validity, accuracy and completeness of the reported target could not be established as the relevant databases and mark sheets could not be provided for audit purposes…”

It is for this reason that the National Treasury Guidelines for Provincial Quarterly Performance Reporting outline the following recommendations in the identification and development of performance management systems in government: “A departmental performance management system, comprising automated and manual processes as necessary, should link the various information sources/systems to enable appropriate decisions to be made
about the agency’s performance, either as a whole or in part (e.g. program, subprogram, division, branch, business unit, cost centre).”

The Treasury Guideline continues to outline the functionality requirements which should typically inform the functions and user requirements for such a system in the departments. The Treasury makes the following contribution:

- “Without necessarily being too complex, sophisticated, or expensive, performance management systems should integrate information from the strategic and annual performance planning, resource management, and performance monitoring and evaluation processes to enable managers to determine whether program activities/services:
  - are achieving program objectives,
  - are improving, are competitive,
  - are worth retaining, or
  - can best be provided in an alternative way” (Auditor general report 2012:46).

This illustrates the point that these systems cannot be considered a ‘nice-to-have’, a non-essential enabler within the department’s information architecture. In fact this needs considerable attention in terms of its acquisition and implementation as institutional readiness in this regard is paramount, as many organisations quickly move towards the acquisition of such systems without considering capacity and the maintenance requirements in the long-term for the department. This further indicates that the lack of capacity in re-establishing and strengthening of this function within the OTP M&E unit may affect the performance and credibility of reports developed by the unit and the institution in general as this function acts as a hub of credible data for reporting.

Ultimately, M&R in the ECPG has largely been unable to function effectively, resulting in the inadequate tracking of progress against targets and the measurement of the outcomes. There has been no single central provincial framework to guide M&R, resulting that reporting against the achievement of
strategic priorities has therefore been haphazard and uncoordinated. Cases of duplication of reports, contradicting information, unreliable data and simply the non-existence of reports or information have been cited by many departments as the various expressions of this.

Repeated requests for reports containing similar information but in different formats are a key challenge often mentioned by departments, as is the unreliability of data. This is especially applicable to reporting on concurrent functions to the relevant national sectors, but is also applicable to the compliance reporting in adherence to Treasury requirements and the various accountability frameworks of government. An absence of dedicated performance information and data management systems in the Provincial Government has a negative impact on the quality and reliability of performance information. Furthermore, the absence of a central repository for performance data constrains the availability and access to performance information across the province (Eastern Cape M&R Framework 2012:31).

Furthermore, M&R is currently characterised by a focus on responding to the large number of regulatory and compliance frameworks at a provincial and national level. This neutralises the value of M&R to programme managers and HODs, since much time is spent on trying to ensure that all issues of compliance around reporting are adhered to rather than deriving the benefits of reflection on performance measurements.

In addition, according to the Presidency (2008:42) (OTP), in the research report, their focus is more on municipal M&R responsibilities – with very little attention being given to evaluation outcomes and the impact on service-delivery priority programmes. This is a result of the lack of evaluation personnel and capacity by the OTP. There is often a lack of understanding of municipal processes and systems within provincial government departments that are supposed to have integrated programmes with the municipalities. These challenges compromise the ability of the OTP to monitor the service-delivery progress of municipalities accurately, and to provide the necessary support.
Quality and the validity of the data being reported will remain problematic, as there is no mention of external/meta-evaluation in the system, or of who would work as independent verifiers of the data reported in key priority projects.

It has also been noticed that departments and municipalities are experiencing challenges in meeting the timeframes for reporting on their projects. This results in delays in completing the provincial M&E reports. Where evaluations of government service delivery have occurred, there appears to be no plan on the system that specifies the importance of releasing the results to the stakeholders or recommendations for further inputs by stakeholders – before it becomes a final report.

**Evaluation research**

The survey data and a review of the departmental Annual Performance Plan (APP) indicated that less than 10% of the departmental units in the OTP do not have a dedicated focus on evaluations research that is supposed to be championed by the M&E unit. However, it is apparent that a number of evaluation studies are under way within different units of the OTP. The planned evaluations for the last financial year 2013/14 could not be conducted in the OTP due to lack of evaluation capacity in the M&E unit and as a result the budgeted funding for this function was returned to Treasury.

Studies have shown that in the previous financial years 2012/13 evaluation studies such as those being undertaken jointly by the Department of Social Development and the OTP focused on a ‘clarificatory’ evaluation of the ‘Lubala Integrated Poverty Eradication Programme’ were transferred to the Service Delivery unit of the OTP because of lack of capacity of the M&E unit and are being rolled-out within the context of integrated service delivery such as poverty alleviation. This is significant if the province is seeking to measure the impact of multiple sector inputs contributing to a particular set of outcomes around an integrated development or service delivery programme such as the ‘War on Poverty’.
These approaches to evaluations should be encouraged and replicated across government. Programmes such as the ‘Comprehensive Rural Development Programme’ (CRDP) in the province should similarly see the OTP M&E unit taking centre stage in driving and championing these studies in partnership with the Department of Rural Development and Agriculture.

However, both these initiatives must be considered in the context firstly of capacitating the unit both in personnel and evaluation skills to effectively execute this function. Some programmes that are currently driven through their piloting phases and would therefore have a natural emphasis on evaluations, particularly ‘clarificatory’ approaches are being deployed with a focus on assessing elements of planning, such as the appropriateness of existing programme assumptions, baseline evaluations, the identified programme logic to be deployed and improved coordination of diverse sector contributions across government’s value chain.

In considering this there is a need to ensure that a more mainstreamed approach to evaluations is developed for all priority programmes within the OTP units and departments, especially in fostering an appropriate level of demand for more ‘summative’ approaches to evaluation such as studies aimed at measuring the impact of programmes on identified beneficiaries, across all programmes. It is therefore important for the OTP to identify and manage a dedicated evaluations agenda within the institution. This agenda should be clearly defined and ensure the alignment of planned evaluations across the entire life cycle of priority programmes.

This research and previous reports on the state of M&E in the province identify the need for a greater prioritisation of evaluations in the province. The overriding concern relates to the apparent over-emphasis on M&R within departments. In this situation the focus is on compliance with statutory reporting requirements instead of the demand for empirical data for improved evidence-based planning and greater efficiency and results in the implementation of government programmes.
In attempting to address this, the OTP is in the process of developing and consulting on the development of an Evaluation Framework which includes a particular focus on the location and contribution of evaluations. It is anticipated that this process will start to generate greater awareness of the value and benefits of evaluations amongst the key decision-makers in government, as this will start to receive greater attention as the implementation of the National Outcomes are to be measured.

Implementation and Resourcing of Evaluations requires greater collaborative and innovative approaches in the EC. Most units and programmes in the OTP do not have a dedicated budget to carry out the activities pertaining to evaluations. Only 25% (four) of respondents from programmes indicated that resourcing for evaluations was appropriately budgeted for within the department. Given the resource constraints within programmes, and the provincial administration as a whole, it is important that the M&E framework of the province promotes a more collaborative and integrated approach to the implementation of evaluations across the programmes. This will assist in mitigating the challenges of capacity and resourcing within individual programmes for evaluations.

Evaluations require greater prioritisation by OTP programme units. It is further concluded that implementation and resourcing of evaluations require a more collaborative and innovative approach in different programmes of the OTP. In this context the OTP should ensure that the PWMR&E framework is enabled through an overarching framework for evaluation in the ECPG, this in turn must identify a multi-year evaluations strategy and plan for the province. It is this plan that will set the evaluations agenda for the EC. Additionally, the role of external stakeholders should be considered. These could include institutions of higher education, independent and state funded evaluation and research agencies, which are all resourcing and conducting research in the province. The absence of such an integrated and coordinated approach, in collaboration with the Presidency, National Sector Departments, and external stakeholders has the potential of producing the following unintentional consequences:
• Individual departments and programmes might not be able to benefit from the existing interrelatedness of their programmes, and the opportunities this presents for joint and collaborative research between departments and across clusters. Opportunities in this regard relate to the following:
  o The sharing of skills, experience and institutional knowledge of M&E practitioners or researchers across programmes and departments.
  o A department and a programme with a limited or restricted evaluations capacity or resourcing could greatly benefit from partnering with better resourced and capacitated departments in implementing evaluations.

• Evaluations research remains costly and different OTP programmes will need to deploy scarce resources that are already over-stretched. The absence of a collaborative approach will only aggravate the current situation, as universities and state funded research institutions are already resourcing and conducting research within the province, although this can be better directed in support of improved service delivery.

• Evaluations conducted by departments could potentially not be aligned to national sector frameworks for evaluating the outcomes of the identified 12 Priority Outcomes of Government, and thereby impacting the usefulness and relevance of findings hence the fully capacitated M&E unit of the OTP should play its central role in supporting other departments in this regard.

The decision on what the focus should be of earmarked evaluations within an individual department might not be guided and informed by broader provincial-wide needs and considerations, these considerations might be informed by the following:

• The fact that evaluations provide insights into the impact of particular interventions (i.e. policies and programmes) by government means that the needs of various beneficiaries of the results of these studies might not all be the same. Therefore greater consultation is required on the
intended expectations of strategic leadership (i.e. HODs and MECs, Mayors, Municipal Managers at Cluster and Cabinet Committee level, Mayoral Forums,) in particular is important. This is important as the ultimate users of the results of evaluations must have ownership of both the process and the outcomes, as these decision-makers will be responsible for the utilisation of findings and recommendations in driving improvements in ensuring that the outcomes of government are ultimately realised.

M&E capacity appears very low in the OTP, departments, public entities and municipalities in terms of the annual reports from the OTP M&E unit. This may be the reason for the absence of guiding strategies/policies, the commissioning of evaluations, as well as responding adequately to evaluation recommendations. This spills over into information/knowledge-management, as well as the provision of credible information on projects, the implementation of priorities and service delivery (Presidency 2008:57).

Funding for evaluations also appears to be limited; and associated evaluation systems are very thinly spread across the province. Due to the lack of capacity, departments do not conduct impact evaluations; and lack of funds for M&E units in departments makes it difficult to commission evaluation by external evaluators. Therefore, from these challenges, it may be seen that there is still a lot of work that needs to be done in ensuring that the M&E system is properly institutionalised for the effective and efficient implementation of M&E systems in the province.

The M&E unit of the OTP needs to be reinforced, in order to be functional and to be able to execute the expected activities. However, despite these challenges, since 2008 the OTP has been conducting a series of M&E readiness assessments. These have included reports earmarked for the PSC, as well as internal reports intended to provide the provincial leadership with a better understanding of the state of M&E within the ECPG.
Learning and skills development

There is a need to sustain and strengthen the PMETTT within the ECPG as the forum for advancing the GWM&E framework. Learning and skills development is crucial to the sustainability of performance reporting. 50% of M&E unit officials indicated an above average attendance and participation in the PMETTT, whilst 50% of respondents also indicated a similar level of participation in other M&E fora, and attend external learning and development opportunities outside of the PMETTT network.

The OTP has made significant strides in the transferring of M&E skills and knowledge sharing through the PMETTT platform over the last three years. The forum has gained considerable recognition by most M&E practitioners, and the OTP attests to this when considering the attendance of M&E managers and practitioners from provincial, resident national departments within the province, as well as practitioners from district and local municipalities.

However, a deeper prioritisation and mainstreaming of the PMETTT is advisable. This would create an opportunity for the future roll-out of the Draft M&R framework that has been consulted across the province and which is awaiting approval by the cabinet. The PWM&E framework has already identified the need for a broader institutional framework for the advancement of M&E in the EC.

Only 13% of officials have indicated that they regularly provided training on M&E to non-M&E officials. The OTP should prioritise training on performance reporting, specifically tailored for non-M&E officials throughout the entire senior management cohort of the ECPG. It is advised that this also forms part of all SMS induction and orientation into the upper tier of the administration, regardless of how long the official has served in middle or lower tiers of the administration.

This is critical, not only for compliance but also as an essential component of building performance excellence and culture change within the public service.
A deeper appreciation and understanding of roles and responsibilities in this regard should be effectively communicated and mainstreamed throughout the organisation, as the management of performance information remains everyone's business in government and not only that of M&E practitioners.

In terms of the Policy Framework for the GWM&E, “the users of M&E data have to understand how to integrate M&E functions within their core areas of responsibility and how to respond and deal with M&E findings. This involves being able to assess information, and use this information as a tool for decision making and improvement”. This refers to everyone in the public service in general and the SMS cohort in particular.

There is a need to sustain and strengthen the PMETTT within the ECPG as the forum for advancing the PWM&E framework. There is a need to ensure training of non-M&E officials in M&R of performance information.

Currently, the M&E unit training activities for practitioners do not meet the real needs that affect the performance of the unit. Some of the challenges that face the M&E unit, and the OTP in general, are that officials in different units choose to attend inappropriate courses that are not specifically relevant to their immediate job, in order to improve their performance. The appointment of unaccredited and inexperienced training providers does not address real challenging skills gaps, as are currently being faced by the M&E practitioners; hence, the individual performance does not improve.

Lack of leadership to identify the required skills needs to be enhanced. Build partnerships with accredited institutions of higher learning in order to improve the capacitation of M&E practitioners of the OTP and other departments.

Skills can be identified as an area of knowledge that needs to be acquired to function effectively. Skills training can be seen as the process of enabling individuals to assume new roles and to implement systems effectively, in order to achieve positive performance outcomes (Harrison 1993:62). The OTP M&E unit should conduct a skills inventory to acquire information on employee
skills, education, performance evaluation and career preferences. This would assist in designing a skills development plan for the M&E unit and identifying employees’ preferences between PM&R and evaluation, in order to build their skills in preference areas that would assist in improving their performance, and the performance of the organisation in implementing its M&E system.

Fourie (2004:58) maintained that training and development have changed from being action-oriented to being results-oriented. The focus of training and development in the OTP should change from merely designing, developing and conducting training programmes to aligning individual learning needs and competency requirements of organisational strategy, and ensuring that individual and organisational performance are enhanced as a result.

5.6 Proposed structure for the M&E unit of the OTP

The study established that the M&E structure did not feature all the functions that could assist in the effective implementation and institutionalisation of an M&E system in the OTP and the province in general. The OTP also does not have an evaluation, information and knowledge management capacity which is crucial for planning and OTP institutional memory.

It was therefore suggested that the OTP should populate the M&E structure to accommodate the identified critical areas in line with the national approach. The adoption of the proposed structure below (Figure 7) will help to enhance the functioning of the unit and the development of credible reports. Monitoring in the structure is arranged according to different clusters in the province and will report the performance of each cluster. The evaluation function can be best utilised to evaluate identified government priority projects from critical clusters.

To perform this function requires specialised evaluation research and statistics skills. The knowledge and information management function supports the unit by packaging information and reports that can be used for policy reviews and developments.
The proposed M&E unit structure should also assist to establish a clear link between the vision, mission, and values of the OTP. Professionalism, recognition of excellence and accountability are some of the traits associated with an OTP that aspires to be recognised for its M&E services by all spheres of government, and prides itself on excellence. Furthermore, OTP values should reflect a fair balance between ethical and moral values, on the one hand, and business-performance related values on the other.
Figure 7: Proposed Structure for M&E unit of the OTP
5.7 Conclusion

It seems that the M&E practitioners in the OTP are aware of the challenges confronting the M&E unit and that top management is downplaying the gaps identified by researchers on different studies commissioned to improve the performance of M&E in the province. The respondents are sharing the same opinion of top management’s failure to implement M&E Indaba resolutions that seek to address the identified capacity gaps in the unit. Inadequate implementation of the GWM&E framework has an impact on the performance of the unit. The data collected in different themes in the study reflects a low percentage in the number of areas that serve as key bases for strong M&E systems in any organisation. The other critical area that needs attention is high vacancy rates and with some positions on the structure filled by unqualified and under-qualified employees with a lack of experience on the M&E function. The OTP’s current structure does not accommodate enough functions for effective implementation of M&E hence additional functions are proposed for the populated organogram.

The analysis of the study on implementation of M&E by the OTP also discovered a number of positive and negative factors regarding the M&E capacity of the M&E unit in the OTP. It further revealed that the lack of M&E capacity affects the implementation and institutionalisation of the M&E in the OTP and in the EC government departments in general since the OTP has a responsibility of building M&E capacity in the province.

The study recommended a participatory and empowerment approach for effective M&E capacity building. In line with the participatory approach the study revealed that the process of involving various stakeholders is very minimal hence there is little or no impact in the process of developed M&E skills. Lack of accountability regarding the process of empowering of skills and the effective utilisation of a skills budget to address the M&E gap could affect the interested partners, donors and the Treasury. The OTP is putting itself at risk of returning the unused budget for skills development. In an empowerment approach evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-
making process of both partners and donors. The study discovered that the OTP M&E unit does not have a data collection section to collect and verify data hence they develop incredible reports that do not have influence for decision-making and policy reviews. Conclusions and recommendations that are aimed at addressing the identified gaps are presented in the next chapter
CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction
This chapter responds to the problem statement of the study, research questions and objectives and summarises how each chapter tried to address the relevant questions and objectives. It further takes the previous analyses in Chapter 5 further by drawing conclusions that are informed by the findings through a brief discussion of the key findings of the study. The study further made recommendations on how to address the current situation for an improved M&E capacity building programme.

The study followed an approach that focused on the fundamental areas of M&E that hamper the effective functioning of the OTP M&E capacity building programme. The identified areas were the structural arrangement and the human capital and skills required to perform the functions in terms of the GWM&E framework. The study concludes by making recommendations on actions that should be undertaken to facilitate the M&E capacity building programme for the effective and efficient implementation of the GWM&E framework in the province.

Problem statement
There is currently a lack of M&E capacity in the OTP in the EC. The study attempted to develop strategies to improve the capacity building of M&E units by the OTP of the EC.

Research questions

Primary research question
How can the capacity of the M&E unit in the OTP in the EC Province be improved?
Secondary research questions

- What are current good practices for effective and efficient implementation of public sector M&E systems?
- What is the current capacity of the M&E unit in the OTP of the EC?
- Where should the M&E unit be strategically located for it to be integrated into other management processes and systems?
- How is M&E data collected, managed and assessed for credible reporting?
- How does capacity building of the M&E unit in the EC in general and in the OTP in particular currently take place?
- How could the capacity of the M&E unit in the OTP be improved?

Research objectives

The research focused on the following specific research objectives:

- To develop an improved data collection, management and assessment capacity for accurate reporting by the M&E unit.
- To assess the current competency framework for M&E practitioners in the OTP of the EC.
- To develop an improved, integrated M&E capacity building strategy for the M&E unit of the OTP and for the EC province, in general.
- To develop an improved M&E skills plan for M&E practitioners.
- To develop a capacity building plan for the M&E unit of the OTP.

The study tried to respond to the following research questions and objectives:

- The strategic location of the M&E unit.

Gorgens and Kusek (2009:72) suggested that the M&E unit should be suitably placed in the planning stage, in order to work closely with planning and budget functions. They also advise that evaluation should be separated from monitoring, and should have its own evaluation unit, because of its functions. However, M&E units – in terms of a hierarchy – within departments should be situated at an appropriate level to ensure that M&E is taken seriously by all stakeholders concerned. Buy-in from political principals and officials, in both local and provincial government, is essential for ensuring a successful M&E
system in the province. Amongst some of the key strategic policies and planning decisions that could be employed at this level, in helping the organisation to execute its M&E system, is to deal with the people-management aspects of recruiting and hiring of qualified M&E practitioners, M&E training and development, promotion, compensation, management style, employee relations and evaluation of policies.

- To develop an improved, integrated M&E capacity building strategy for the M&E unit of the OTP and for the EC province, in general.

M&E skills are likely to be needed for other aspects of the M&E strategy, to coordinate and to ensure equality. Initiatives to build the first set of skills should be integrated into the institution’s overall skills development strategy. Arrangements for the provision of specialist M&E skills should be explicitly referred to in the institution’s strategic plan. According to Gorgens and Kusek (2009:47) capacity building should ensure that the users of M&E data have to understand how to integrate M&E functions within their areas of responsibility, and how to respond to M&E findings. They also emphasised the following aspects that need to be considered in capacitating M&E personnel:

- M&E managers in the public sector should be able to set up M&E systems, manage those systems, and produce the results required from them.
- M&E users should be able to assess information collected through the M&E process, and use this information as a tool for taking managerial action, and to improve future interventions through the planning process.
- M&E managers and practitioners should be able to link various related components of M&E together, so that they form an integrated whole or system, and apply an evidence-based approach to gather and analyse data on the government activities.
- The M&E user should consider a range of interventions for building capacity on a short-, medium- and long-term basis. These should include training of existing staff, line management and M&E specialists.
Training modalities can include external formal qualifications from higher education institutions, as well as in-house customised courses, on-the-job training and mentoring, structured skills transferred from academics, consultants and other external providers, the creation of internal M&E forums, and participation in external learning networks.

In response to participatory and empowerment theories that are regarded as the bases of building the M&E capacity in the study, Fetterman (1996:56) identified various facets of empowerment evaluation by asserting that training participants can conduct their own evaluations through effective capacity building. In empowerment evaluation, training is used to map out the categories and concerns. It is also used in making preliminary assessments of programme components, while illustrating the need to establish goals, strategies to achieve goals, and documentation to indicate or substantiate progress.

King (2002:13) is concerned mostly with the use of the evaluation process and its results. Her emphasis is not only on use, but also on participation in the evaluation process as a means for increasing usage, and building internal programme evaluation capacity. The rationale for capacity building is that adults learn best by constructing personal meaning from their practice and that they can learn well in settings where they value the task to be completed (King and Stevenson 2002:23).

- To develop an improved data collection, management and assessment capacity for accurate reporting by the M&E unit.

A strong M&E partnership would enable the organisation to prepare one standard report through sharing the data collected from different sectors, and having one M&E report that would reflect on the progress of provincial priority programmes, national programmes, and MDGs. M&E partnerships with stakeholders from different sectors helps to mobilise technical and financial support for implementing the M&E system, and to reduce parallel reporting.
Kaul (1996:45) emphasised the necessity of accurate and unbiased reporting, since this strengthens the climate of openness and public accountability. However, information would be best suitable if it could be provided, according to the particular needs of users of services at different times, which would be that most appropriate and useful to the users.

According to Lahey (2007:9), the notion of an M&E system implies that a capability within government should be created to both generate and use performance information that would assist in improving public sector management and governance. This would require trained analysts and data specialists to effectively collect and analyse the data, in order for non-technical public sector managers to make use of this credible information. Although these managers do not require any technical comprehension of M&E methods, it is important for them to understand and be empowered on how M&E information could help them in the management of their programmes and policy development.

Furthermore, capacity within government institutions and civil society organisations has to be built, to use M&E information as part of the normal process of business. This would require that governments and civil society stakeholders are clear about where and how M&E information could and would be used within government planning, policy or programme development, decision-making and budgeting. However, M&E information can effectively be used only if adequate incentives are built into the system. Government should also reinforce the need within the M&E unit and other organisations working in partnership with the OTP to create formal and informal mechanisms and forums for the reporting and sharing of information. Therefore, government monitors the implementation of laws governing access to information and strengthens the capacity of managers, so that they are able to increase transparency and the potential for M&E information to be made available to media, civil society, and also to facilitate their participation in GWM&E systems (Mackay 2010:48).
The Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia (2005:69) encourages the use of information and statistical data to inform any policy changes and decision-making. The emphasis of the Agency is on improvement of the quality of data through verification for accuracy, timelines, standards and data dissemination, in order to produce credible results.

The Ethiopian Central Statistical Agency promotes the storage of information; and it uses different technological methods to disseminate information. The M&E unit uses this information to report on the progress of government programmes, and for the achievement of MDGs. It is also important to note that the Central Statistical Agency encourages continuous capacity building in statistics, IT systems and the Geography Information System (GIS) for data analysis and for effective M&E. It has also been emphasised that there should be a strong linkage between the M&E system and the statistical data, in order to sustain the development of the country (Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia 2005:74).

- To develop an improved M&E skills plan for M&E practitioners.

Lahey (2010:29) pointed out that the Canadian government uses its internal evaluation units to conduct evaluation studies. Managers in these units are responsible for performance M&R. He identified three groups that should be involved with M&E and be continuously receiving M&E training, to be updated with new M&E developments:

- **Evaluators** require in-depth technical training that should encompass social science research methods, survey research, and other important training that could assist with improving their performance. On-the-job training for evaluators is also encouraged, in order to acquire M&E skills from experienced evaluators, as well as the required experience in this field.

- **Programme managers** do not need the same training; instead they should focus on the development of performance frameworks and the derivation of performance indicators. In addition, their training should
also focus on the development of programme logic models and results chains, since the Canadian system is result-oriented.

- **Senior officials** also need less M&E training; however, they do need a crash-course in M&E, in order to understand the concepts, practices, benefits and required effort needed to build and implement a sustainable M&E system effectively and efficiently.

The Canadian government also encourages partnerships between the public sector, the private sector and other professional bodies that might contribute to strengthening the capacity of the M&E practitioners. The private sector plays an important role by offering training and development opportunities for M&E development. Professional associations assist in establishing professional networks for the sharing of information and experiences in the field of M&E – at lower costs. As the result of these efforts over the last three years, the Canadian government has managed to establish a recognised set of competencies for evaluators, and further professionalising evaluation, by working in partnership with a professional association, the Canadian Evaluation Society (Lahey 2010:33).

6.2 Cross-cutting issues

**Performance, building of M&E capacity and integration of M&E into management process**

M&E of capacity-building requires a number of aspects that need to be considered; for example, resources, skills, leadership to champion M&E, political willingness and sustained commitment from M&E practitioners, and from the senior management of the OTP. The critical areas that have been considered are the building of enough supply of human resource capacity for sustainability and effective and efficient implementation of the M&E system. It should also be considered that training does not take place in a vacuum; an organisational structure and organisational alignment for M&E systems is essential in ensuring that they recruit the required M&E skills, the location of M&E, the welfare of employees, and that organisational priorities should influence the type of M&E training programmes.
The nature and role of M&E in good governance is discussed as a set of values and principles which promote elements of transparency and accountability. In support of this definition the M&E is employed as a tool to ensure that governance goes beyond the legal authority by ensuring that different forms of validation, verification of information and judgement of activities are employed in order to achieve values of good governance (Rhodes 2000:34).

It is only through effective ongoing M&E capacity building that the M&E unit will be able to adapt to organisational demands, and to maintain its organisational excellence in institutionalising M&E systems in the OTP. The effective institutionalisation of M&E systems will also enhance government performance and the confidence of citizens in government by being transparent, providing feedback and improving accountability. Equally important is a need for the OTP to consider benchmarking to other international countries on the best practices that can be employed to strengthen the M&E capacity in the province.

The study outlined the implementation of participatory and empowerment theories in building and strengthening the capacity of M&E in different countries such as Canada and Ethiopia. Having explored that option it is also crucial to align the best approach to be employed with the relevant theories hence in this regard the participatory and empowerment theories have been analysed. The theories assist in ensuring that the identified capacity building approach is sustainable and has the basis that informs structured processes to be followed during implementation.

The theories identified in this regard also provide guidance on how to assess the performance of the implemented approach. They contribute in serving as the basis for making informed decisions by ensuring that data collected for empowerment of M&E practitioners is analysed critically and used to improve the M&E capacity building programme. Hence, the issue of evaluation in the empowerment approach is crucial for reviewing of the M&E capacity building improvement. Participatory theory ensures the involvement of stakeholders in
decision-making and believes in collective ideas and buy-in of the stakeholders. This approach ensures that all members in the M&E unit and OTP executive members own the process of strengthening and executing of the OTP M&E capacity building programme.

Government’s major challenge is the effective and efficient implementation of policies in all spheres. Hence, it was critical for government to develop a GWM&E framework with the aim of ensuring that it monitors the implementation of government programmes and projects. The intention was to ensure that this tool provides managers and decision-makers with regular feedback and indicates on time when there are deviations from the planned programmes through regular M&R. Evaluation focuses on the outcome and the impact of the effective implementation of policies and programmes of government aimed at accelerating service delivery. However, the research has discovered that there is little impact made by government and OTP in ensuring that the GWM&E framework is effectively applied in the province and the country in general. The fundamental challenges outlined are the adoption of the policy for it to be a legal document that can be enforced in all departments and units in the EC province. Hence a structural arrangement in the OTP is affected by what role the M&E should play and where it should be structurally located and what other functions it should have.

The current organogram is a clear indication that the M&E is not taken seriously and that there is limited understanding of the important role that it should play in the province. The additional recommended sections of knowledge management, data collection and management, and evaluation could play a pivotal role in the M&E unit. The identified skills will assist the unit in developing credible reports with evidence-based information and to develop evaluation reports that can be used for policy review by decision-makers. Evaluations will also assess the impact of policies and programmes in improving the lives of the citizens.
Implementation of M&E and resourcing

The implementation of M&E in the OTP is more focused on theory, there are few practical results outlined as an achievement of effective implementation of the M&E policy. What has been discovered is a lack of leadership and buy-in from the executive that should enforce the institutionalisation of an M&E system in the OTP. Hence the M&E unit employs a desktop method of monitoring and does not verify information collected from the departments. This approach resulted in the OTP developing incredible reports that are not evidenced-based according to the M&E policy. The institution does not have the capacity to drive critical areas in the GWM&E. As an example they do not have information and knowledge management systems to ensure that the reports are used to influence decisions and used for policy review. Lack of evaluation skills and statistics skills are the cause of the OTP not conducting evaluations in the past two financial years.

The OTP plays a critical role in promoting good governance and effective and efficient development of policies. Effective M&E becomes crucial in ensuring effective and efficient implementation of these policies. The OTP should be encouraged to ensure that it facilitates the adoption and institutionalisation of an M&E policy and systems. It should benchmark from other countries and learn good practices that can be adopted for effective implementation of M&E by the EC government.

M&E learning and skills development

A pragmatic study that was conducted in the OTP discovered a number of positive and negative factors regarding the M&E capacity of the M&E unit in the OTP. It further revealed that the lack of M&E capacity affects the implementation and institutionalisation of the M&E in the OTP and in the EC government departments in general since the OTP has the responsibility of building M&E capacity in the province.

It seems that the M&E practitioners in the OTP are aware of the challenges confronting the M&E unit and that top management is downplaying the gaps identified by researchers on different studies commissioned to improve the
performance of M&E in the province. The respondents are sharing the same opinion of top management’s failure to implement M&E Indaba resolutions that seek to address the identified capacity gaps in the unit. Inadequate implementation of the GWM&E framework has an impact on the performance of the unit. The data collected in different themes in the study reflects a low percentage in the number of areas that serve as key bases for a strong M&E system in any organisation. The other crucial area that needs attention is high vacancy rates and with some positions on the structure filled by unqualified and under-qualified employees with a lack of experience on the M&E function.

It is imperative for the OTP to develop and implement M&E capacity building programmes that will assist in ensuring that the province possesses the necessary skills that could drive the sustainable M&E in the province. It is hoped that by adopting the continuous M&E learning approach the province can attain its objectives and facilitate further engagements on enhancing M&E capacity for performance improvement in the EC Province.

6.3 Recommendations

**Strategic location and integration of M&E into other management processes and systems as analysed in Table 1 from numbers 1 to 7 in Chapter 5**

- The M&E unit should be placed at the highest position of the structure of the organisation and report directly to the DG of the province in the OTP. Its reports on provincial programmes are designed to support the decision-making for policy review by the Executive Management and EXCO of the province.
- OTP programmes and units need to develop and foster a greater internal demand for M&E, as a critical enabler for evidence-based decision-making.
- The OTP should ensure that all programmes and units have aligned the PMDS contracts for the SMS members with those of the
institutional performance scorecards located in the APP and the departmental operational plans.

- The products derived from M&E processes in programmes, such as reports and indicator data, need to be utilised more frequently and more consistently by the strategic and policy units during their planning processes.
- It is recommended that M&E practitioners should be playing a more significant role in the planning processes of programmes, as a critical element of planning remains the identification of programme performance indicators, and the constant assessment of the performance of programmes against set indicators and targets.

**M&E of human capacity and resourcing, refer to Table 1 analyses from numbers 8 to 10 in Chapter 5**

- OTP should prioritise training and skills development for M&E staff within the M&E and in other programmes, this would include training coordinated by the M&E unit in the OTP and PALAMA transversal training programmes coordinated by the skills and training unit in the OTP.
- One of the effective methods of stimulating demand for training, the M&E unit should ensure that they lobby a separate budget for M&E training courses since this has not been effected through the Performance Development Plans.
- Greater emphasis should be placed on mentorship and coaching focused on M&E practitioners, as an innovation in transferring skills and experience across the profession, and this can be done through the signing of memoranda of understanding between the OTP and identified institutions of higher learning offering the M&E programmes for example the University of Stellenbosch, Wits University, University of Johannesburg, etc.
- In-house training by the experienced M&E specialist should be encouraged.
• The technical M&E skills and capability of OTP practitioners needs to be harnessed through coaching, mentorship and inter-departmental collaboration.

• The M&E unit in the OTP needs to form partnerships with experienced institutions of higher learning that are offering M&E programmes to ensure that they apply on behalf of their employees since institutions have strict roles for admission.

• Ensure that commissioned service providers for evaluations are able to transfer skills by working closely with the internal M&E staff during the evaluation research.

• The M&E unit of the OTP programme needs to develop sufficient depth in the areas of skills, experience, and institutional memory by implementing a retention and attraction strategy.

• Establishing twinning arrangements and benchmarking with other provinces, national departments and international countries with M&E experience for exchange of knowledge, learning new skills on developing and implementing M&E systems and frameworks.

• To improve and address demand, the unit should advocate for the improvement of M&E interest by conducting career awareness campaigns for this particular field. Different career paths should also be outlined in the campaign for example information and knowledge management, statistics for data analysis, IT etc. This can be used to address the demand on human capital in the OTP. In the case of the Canadian government, in addressing the demand they hired 350 full-time evaluation professionals and moved them through departments while letting them build part of their careers as evaluators (Toulemonde 1998:155).

• Introduce mass training programmes to alter the supply–demand balance:
  a) Contracting trained staff to the organisation for a given period and requiring them to repay the cost of training if they break their contract.
b) Building institutional memory within the organisation by ensuring that every person who receives training is responsible for training at least one other person in the organisation and developing a structured handover process as part of this training.

c) Ensuring management and organisational commitment in identifying the right people to attend training, that is, the people who will actually use the skills to perform their jobs better (Gorgens and Kusek 2009:128).

- The OTP should recognise and acknowledge the developed internal talent by giving preferential treatment to trained OTP M&E personnel when there are new M&E vacancies.
- The OTP should continue to prioritise the PMETTT as a learning network within the ECPG, focused on Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluations.
- Provincial government should prioritise training on performance reporting, specifically tailored for non-M&E officials throughout the entire senior management cohort of the ECPG.
- All SMS members to be re-inducted into their reporting responsibilities, with all new members to undergo M&E orientation.
- Ensure the conducted M&E training is evaluated to assess its impact since this effort can improve human development of the M&E practitioners in the OTP. Therefore, evaluation should be part of the original training plan in order to ensure the effectiveness and the impact of training in enhancing the performance of the M&E unit.

- M&E capacity development is crucial for strengthening the performance of the OTP M&E unit and should be planned to ensure that the OTP appoints experienced accredited service providers for conducting its training. Monitoring human capacity development involves counting the number of training sessions and the number of trained people. A training data base could be used but is not essential. Evaluating human capacity development involves assessing the medium- to long-term results of capacity development efforts. Seek
leadership to help implement the action plan and monitor its results (Gorgens and Kusek 2009:134).

Data management and data assessment from numbers 11-18 of Table 1 in Chapter 5

- The OTP needs to develop a legislative framework with SASQAF for finding approval, recognition and accreditation of the data collected by different sectors, as official data. Therefore, this implies that there should be more emphasis on empowering M&E practitioners with statistical tools and methods, in order to analyse the data gathered by different departments and sectors. This should help to improve their reporting, collecting and administration of credible data for the effective development of attainable indicators by the M&E unit in the OTP.

- The OTP needs to prioritise performance information and data management systems within programme units and departments, with an emphasis on the implementation of an automated (web-based) system for the tracking of M&R of performance information.

- The OTP and Provincial Treasury should guide this process in the province, and investigate the feasibility and financial implications of such a system/s for the province.

- In addition to the recommendation above, the OTP M&E unit should ensure that all departmental monitoring and performance information, and reports are located in a suitably located central repository within the department, where information is readily accessible.

- The M&E unit should ensure that M&R information is suitably archived, and in compliance with government document management and archiving regulations.

- All performance information and data in the programmes should be replicated and backed-up, as part of a departmental disaster recovery plan.

- The OTP M&E structure should establish a separate unit within the M&E or responsible persons dedicated to lead and manage this function.
Evaluation research conducted from numbers 19 – 21 of Table 1 in Chapter 5

- The OTP should consider the mainstreaming of evaluations through encouraging the demand for studies such as the ‘Lobala War on Poverty Programme’, currently being coordinated between the OTP and the Department of Social Development.

- The OTP and Provincial Treasury should endeavour to ensure that a mainstreamed approach to evaluations is developed for all priority programmes within departments, especially in fostering an appropriate level of demand for more ‘summative’ approaches, which measure impact and programme attribution.

- The OTP should ensure that the PWMR&E framework is enabled through an overarching framework and a provincial agenda for evaluations research earmarked for the ECPG.

- Additionally, the role of external stakeholders should be considered to include their contribution to the roll-out of the provincial evaluations agenda in future.

- The OTP should be encouraged to integrate its evaluations agendas, which could be facilitated and co-resourced within a clustered approach.

- A separate evaluation section within the structure of the M&E programme unit must be established and be fully capacitated to drive evaluation activities across the province.

Learning and skills development from numbers 21-24 in Table 1 in Chapter 5

- It is imperative for the OTP M&E unit, to develop its M&E human capacity development strategy, which would involve the capacity of all senior management on M&E, because it cuts across all sections in the department.

- This would also require the Head of the unit to lobby for the buy-in of politicians and the influence of senior management, as decision-
makers in the province, in order to adopt the strategy and to endorse the budget for M&E capacity-building programmes. The implementation of this strategy would strengthen the institutionalisation of M&E systems in the province.

- The OTP should continue to prioritise the PMETTT as a learning network within the ECPG, focused on Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluations.
- Provincial government should prioritise training on performance reporting, specifically tailored for non-M&E officials throughout the entire senior management cohort of the ECPG.
- All SMS members to be re-inducted into their reporting responsibilities, with all new members to undergo an M&E orientation course.
- Ensure that all M&E unit members attend their training M&E programmes contracted to in their personal development plans in each financial year.
- Evaluate the performance of the training attended and performance of service providers.
- The M&E unit must ensure that all practitioners are trained in the following areas in order to strengthen their capacity: public administration or social science, developmental studies, basic IT skills, statistics, knowledge and information management, evaluation research and project management.
- Develop an informed M&E capacity building strategy and training plan for M&E performance improvement.

6.4 **Limitations of the study**

A few limitations that created challenges in the completion of the study have been identified; and these are:

- The delayed release of the department’s previous annual reports, strategic plans and other relevant documents requested for analysis.
- Inadequate technology to scan clear documents or sending a soft copy of the reports.
- A change of the DDG's position on the Policy and Governance unit which was helpful in providing information on the study with the aim of utilising the report results to improve the performance of the unit.

6.5 Areas for further research

This study exposed identified gaps that can be addressed to ensure the improvement of effective and efficient M&E capacity in the OTP and government departments in the province of the EC in general.

The Performance Management and Development System in the OTP should be critically reviewed to ensure it is operationally aligned to the goals and targets of the M&E programmes in the OTP. This review will also assist in ensuring effective implementation of the Personal Development plans aimed at addressing M&E capacity within the OTP.

Strengthen M&E partnerships, increase and improve communication, participation and shared accountability among stakeholders involved in M&E. Improved communication facilitates a coordinated approach to managing the M&E system and helps to create a joint vision that seeks to improve the M&E capacity in the EC province in general and the OTP in particular.

M&E partnerships enable the lead agency to coordinate the M&E, efforts of development partners, government agencies, civil society, and the private sector. M&E partnerships help to mobilise required technical and financial support for implementing the M&E system.

Generate a collective mindset, which takes into account a sense of urgency, M&E dialogues, collective ambition; career plans, controlled anxiety, commitment and motivation, openness for ensuring an organisational and M&E unit change to enable fast tracking the improvement of M&E capacity in the OTP. This can be realised in consultation with employees on the need for change, particularly in areas that are not adding value to the improvement of the M&E performance of the OTP. Focus the employees’ attention on the
value of improved M&E capacity to the entire organisation and the improvements that change will bring to the organisation’s performance.

Afford the employees an opportunity to input into the process and to express their concerns and frustrations in a transparent, workable environment where they are allowed space to freely raise their concerns, speak about the challenges experienced by the M&E unit and the required remedies to address the situation. Improve and strengthen effective communication on decisions made regarding all factors affecting the performance of M&E in the OTP.

An effective evaluation should be conducted for the M&E capacity building system employed by the OTP. The evaluations should focus on whether the M&E capacity building programme has realised its objectives after implementation. Implement, monitor and report on capacity, tracking and strengthening activities and progress.

6.6 Conclusion

The study has responded to the research objectives and problem statement by trying to develop different methods of addressing the M&E skills gap in the EC province. The research further proposed an M&E structure for effective and efficient implementation of M&E in the OTP and in the province in general. Based on the findings of the study it was suggested that the M&E unit should be suitably placed in the planning stage, in order to work closely with planning and budget functions. It was also advised that evaluation should be separated from monitoring, and should have its own evaluation unit, because of its functions.

Regarding the improvement of an M&E capacity strategy, it was revealed that initiatives to build the first set of skills should be integrated into the institution’s overall skills development strategy so that it could find expression in its strategic plans and be budgeted for in each financial year. Participatory and empowerment approaches identified served as the bases of building the M&E capacity in the study. It was outlined that in empowerment evaluation, training
is used to map out the categories and concerns. It is also used in making preliminary assessments of programme components, while illustrating the need to establish goals, strategies to achieve goals, and documentation to indicate or substantiate progress. In participatory theory, the evaluation process is regarded as a means for increasing usage, and building internal programme evaluation capacity. The rationale for capacity building is that adults learn best by constructing personal meaning from their practice and that they can learn well in settings where they value the task to be completed (King and Stevenson 2002:23). Participatory theory also ensures the involvement of stakeholders in decision-making and believes in collective ideas and buy-in of the stakeholders.

An effective M&E system can play a vital role in improving good governance by ensuring that it promotes a set of values and principles which supports elements of transparency and accountability. To further support the promotion of good governance the M&E is employed as a tool to ensure that governance goes beyond the legal authority by ensuring that different forms of validation, verification of information and judgement of activities are employed in order to achieve values of good governance. Hence the study concluded by identifying relevant skills such as research skills, statistics, information and knowledge management, data collection and management, as some of the crucial skills required to perform the M&E function effectively and efficiently.
Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire covering letter

30 May 2014
Dear Sir/ Madam

SUBJECT: COMPLETION OF A QUESTIONNARE (M&E CAPACITY STUDY)
I am a registered student for a Masters degree in Policy Evaluation with the University of Johannesburg. In order to complete the mentioned qualification, I am expected to conduct research and submit a mini-dissertation. My mini-dissertation is focusing on IMPROVING MONITORING AND EVALUATION - CAPACITY BUILDING OF THE OFFICE OF THE PREMIER IN THE EASTERN CAPE.

For the preceding purposes, I hereby enclose a questionnaire to be completed by yourself and return on or before the 30 July 2014, to the attention of Mr A. K. September, e-mail: kusta01@webmail.co.za.

Please note that any person who completes the questionnaire need not to reflect his or her name on the questionnaire.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated

Kind regards

…………………………….                                                         ………………….
A.K.September                                                                                   Date
Researcher
Appendix 2: Questionnaire

1. All questions must be answered
2. The questionnaire must be completed by the respondents using **BLACK**
   **BOLD** cross **X**
3. Questions require that you indicate in a three point scale (marked 1 to 3) the extent to which you score and the scores are given different colours on the table. **3= better than average (green), 2=average (yellow), 1=less than average (red)**
4. Questions are categorized into 5 different sub headings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Strategic location &amp; integration of M&amp;E into other management processes and systems</strong></th>
<th><strong>PERFORMANCE</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less than average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> OTP performance monitoring and evaluation is facilitated by the M&amp;E Unit</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> The M&amp;E head is represented on the OTP top management</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> The M&amp;E unit works with the Strategic Planning Unit in facilitating the preparation of the department’s Strategic Plan AND Annual Planning</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> The M&amp;E Unit is the primary source of performance data in the OTP.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong> The M&amp;E Unit provide guidance in the development of performance measures.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong> The M&amp;E Unit contributes significantly to the preparation of performance data for oversight reporting.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reporting on the Provincial Programme of Action (POA) is managed by the M&amp;E Unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M&amp;E capacity and resourcing</strong></td>
<td>PERFORMANCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Financial prioritisation is evident in the allocation of a separate budget within the departmental vote for the M&amp;E function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The M&amp;E Unit is headed by an appropriately experienced and qualified person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>M&amp;E staff have extensive experience in public sector monitoring and evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data Management &amp; Data assessment</strong></td>
<td>PERFORMANCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>A dedicated indicator performance tracking data management system is managed by the M&amp;E unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Data management is webased within the OTP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The M&amp;E unit is managing a non-automated data management system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The M&amp;E unit is the sole custodian for the storage and management of data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The OTP M&amp;E unit house all performance data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
16 Relevant users within the OTP can easy access to the performance data. | 1 | 2 | 3
17 Quarterly OTP performance assessment reports are provided to the Director General and Deputy Director Generals by the M&E unit. | 1 | 2 | 3
18 M&E assessment report include an analysis of programme performance, challenges and remedial action to be advanced by management. | 1 | 2 | 3

### Evaluation Research conducted

| | PERFORMANCE |
|---|---|---|
| | Less than | Average | Better than average |

19 The departmental M&E Framework includes a dedicated focus on evaluation. | 1 | 2 | 3
20 The department does have an evaluation agenda. Distinct from other earmarked studies/research identified by the department. | 1 | 2 | 3
21 The M&E unit has a dedicated budget for evaluations within the department. | 1 | 2 | 3

### Learning & Skill Development

| | PERFORMANCE |
|---|---|---|
| | Less than | Average | Better than average |

22 The Provincial planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Technical Task Team (PMETT) integrated the
<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>External M&amp;E learning opportunities/ networks/are attended by the M&amp;E staff</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Training on M&amp;E is provided to departmental non-M&amp;E staff by the M&amp;E Unit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SCORING – PERFORMANCE STANDARD**

- Better than average
- Average
- Less than average
Appendix 3: Focus Group Discussions

Start: Introduction
- Introductions, welcoming and acknowledgement of participants;
- Purpose of the session is explained;
- The duration of the discussion is confirmed;
- Ground rules are established and agreed upon

Body: open discussions on determined thematic areas
- What are the required skills for the effective and efficient implementation of M&E systems?
- What is the current capacity of the M&E unit in the Office of the Premier of the EC?
- How does the capacity building of the M&E unit currently take place in the Eastern Cape Province, in general, and in the Office of the Premier in particular?
- How could the M&E organizational structure in the Office of the Premier in the Eastern Cape be improved?

End: Conducting remarks
- Suggestions on what could be done to improve the M&E capacity by demonstrations in a practical way and drawings of the ideal M&E structure are entertained.
- Participants are thanked for making time for the recorded discussion

Pre- interview preparations
References


Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Indaba, October 2008: Office of the Premier Province of the Eastern Cape


