Bridging the Gap Between Two Economies
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Each of us is a knowledge worker and a learning champion in this knowledge economy. We all have a role to play in turning the Public Service into a “Learning Public Service for Quality Service Delivery”. Let us pursue this ideal by using the Service Delivery Review as a facility for sharing our experiences, successes, mistakes and methodologies and for growing our own intellectual capital.

We belong, we care, we serve
Among the many major issues that President Thabo Mbeki focused on when he delivered his State of the Nation address recently was the need for the country to nurture the Second Economy in order to help the State fulfil its developmental role.

"Success in the growth of our economy should be measured not merely in terms of the returns that accrue to investors or the job opportunities to those with skills. Rather, it should also manifest in the extent to which the marginalised in the wilderness of the Second Economy are included and are at least afforded sustainable livelihoods. South Africa belongs to them too, and none of us can in good conscience claim to be at ease before this becomes and is seen to become a reality," he said.

In a real show of commitment towards fulfilling its developmental mandate, government has over the past nine months embarked on putting the Expanded Public Works Programme into operation. The benefits have been manifold as the effort towards poverty alleviation began to register its impact.

For example, to date government has spent over R1.5 billion, created over 76 000 job opportunities and begun to afford thousands of those enrolled, with the skills that will stand them in good stead as they leave the programme.

As the president noted, the major challenge now is to assist those in the Second Economy to access economic opportunities. A major communication campaign will be embarked upon explaining to those in need how they can access economic opportunities.

In addition, numerous interventions will be embarked upon to give this campaign teeth. These are:

- the Early Childhood Development programme, based on community participation, having ensured a common approach among all three spheres of government;
- increasing the numbers of community health workers, having harmonised training standards and increased resources allocated to the programme;
- the more extensive use of labour intensive methods of construction targeting housing, schools, clinics, sports facilities, community centres and the services infrastructure.

Clearly, these are ambitious projects. They also come at a time when the public service edifice itself is repositioning itself to better grapple with the challenges that are facing it, to better enhance service delivery and improve the quality of life of the citizens.

As Khaya Ngema, of the DPSA, notes in his article "Revitalising Public Service Delivery" published elsewhere in this journal: "At inception, the democratic state in 1994 inherited 18 different administrations with disparate systems, processes, regulations, cultures, and with no deliberate focus on providing equitable, quality services to all South Africans. Accordingly, since 1994 the public service has witnessed an unprecedented process of rationalisation, amalgamation and restructuring."

To further facilitate effective leadership of the public service, government has completed a review of skills and levels of competence within the Senior Management Service. But in addition to this, plans are afoot to fill gaps, in the public service, where they exist.

It is against this background, therefore, that issues of rationalisation and repositioning of the public service to better fulfil its developmental mandate, form the core of issues being discussed in the current edition of Service Delivery Review.
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The Conversations is indeed a rare opportunity for us to get together. The lack of integration between the various structures of government as well as, quite ironically, within the clusters and portfolios is a point of great concern as it has far reaching negative implications on service delivery. Telkom and the Post Office for instance belong to one portfolio; one is commercially driven while the other is run along service delivery lines. We owe it to the people of this country to rid the portfolio of such differences so that it can effectively fulfil its role of delivering services.

During the first Conversations in Parys, in the Free State, in December 2002 when the curtain was about to fall on our first decade of democracy we had to reflect on our past, that is, on how we did what, our successes and failures. The focus was on whether the state was properly set up to competently fulfil its functions.

That considered, now our main concern is whether we function in a coordinated and integrated way. Faced with all sorts of challenges and sometimes underperformance, one is tempted to put up the usual “lack of resources” outcry. While that may be true, we have to consider whether those resources at our disposal are optimally used.

Guy Peters in his monograph Managing Horizontal Government — the Politics of Coordination quite relevantly stated that:

“The administrative holy grail of coordination and horizontali-

ty is one of the perennial quests for the practitioners of govern-

ment from the time of the separation of government structures

into departments, ministries and analogue organisations there

have been complaints that one organisation does not know what

another is doing and that the programme are contradictory,

redundant or both. The fundamental problem of coordination

has been exacerbated by the growth of a structural elaboration

of modern government, but the coordination problem appears

endemic to all large organisations or collections of organisations

whether public or private.”

Let me now turn my attention to another important issue, i.e. the complex structural landscape of public service activity. The South African public sector has experienced significant structural changes over the past decade — firstly its arrangement into three spheres, and of course the division of the country into nine provinces. However, the state that the local sphere of government is in leaves much to be desired.

On the one hand, we need to acknowledge that significant
strides were made to simplify this sphere. Amongst other things, we can mention the reduction of the number of localities, considering the implications of aligning conditions of service across local government and between local and provincial and national or local government and the public service. We need a seamless government while conditions of service of officials across the sphere are realigned where people would consider themselves as being part of the public service rather than being part of a particular job in a narrow sense. On the other hand, whilst trying to advance greater integration there is simultaneously significant pressure to decentralise and to localise even further.

Then of course there is the whole issue of the many public entities in the country. Government is conducting an extensive review of public entities with numerous debates being thrown around. Topical issues in this regard include the role of public entities in development, corporate governance, the question of conditions of service, remuneration, whether collective bargaining should be governed more centrally if it has to, etc. Public entities, and of course public enterprises, undoubtedly play a very critical role in realising the policy and developmental agenda of the government. However, their role and impact have to be reviewed.

The service delivery loop also includes the private sector, and the non-governmental organisations. All these structures have a very significant role to play in building the developmental state and whether they would succeed in that depends largely on high-level coordination and integration.

Lack of coordination and integration amongst these structures leads to serious schisms. It is widely known that in public administration one’s turf has always been an important source of individual and organisational power. It is an imperative that government keeps the initiative to guard against this phenomenon. Government’s service delivery mandate requires well-established and sustainable partnerships that can work together.

Usually one does not support the tendency to uncritically transfer anything from anywhere, least of all from north to south. However, one has to be mindful of the critical gains that others have made elsewhere around these issues. After all it is about learning and being willing to experiment with new things to hopefully improve one’s situation. In their report published in 2001 on the challenge of integrated governance in a new institutional landscape, the Canadians list five important aspects worth sharing.

First off they acknowledge the existence of a broad range of structural solutions that can be applied to improve integration. The critical challenge is finding a viable solution for a particular task at a given time in its life cycle.

Secondly, although structural arrangements can either facilitate or impede initiatives for greater integration, the human factor is the primary determinant for successful integration. The Canadians acknowledge aspects such as solid leadership, team building, linking cultures, sharing responsibility and building trust as a critical combination of factors fundamental to their success. Also important is the question of attitudes. With their attitudes people can make it happen or destroy everything. This undoubtedly highlights the significance of the so-called softer issues in organisational development.

The third factor is about the importance of a shared framework that promotes shared goals and results that translate goodwill and teamwork interaction. Significantly, this serves to give shape and purpose to the endeavour of integrating activities.

The fourth factor emphasises the need for the accountability conundrum to be addressed. Performance evaluation systems that narrowly focus on the subunit objectives and mandates rather than against the overall societal goals that government has could be misleading and biased.

And last on the list is breaking away from isolationism. The momentum of integrating initiatives is not sustained naturally by a system that is accustomed to operating in vertical silos. Since 1999, government has committed itself politically and otherwise to consciously breaking out of silos. However, one has to acknowledge that we have barely scratched the surface. The natural tendency when faced with difficulties is for people to revert into the safety of their silos. We need knowledgeable leaders and champions that will successfully drive the processes. Also fundamental is a commitment to continuous learning and solid communication assisting in changing the social culture.

In conclusion, let me challenge you to strive to make a meaningful contribution to our national endeavour to think critically about these pertinent issues.

Just a short word about one of our esteemed colleagues who has sadly passed on. Those of us who were in Parys would remember Mr Gordon Draper. A dedicated colleague, politician, practitioner and academic of high standing, Gordon passed away shortly after he did some training in South Africa. Gordon was one of those very special people that would if he were part of us with his clarity of thought in a very decisive manner give expression to complex ideas. Gordon never spared the last atom in his energy in pursuing his noble ambition to find solutions to many challenges and problems we confront in this country and in the Commonwealth at large.

Our diversity as practitioners, academic, civil society etc. is conversely our advantage and strength. As a group, we will be able to generate a wealth of experience and valuable knowledge that will enrich the discussions and ultimately help government
During its election campaign in 2004, the African National Congress committed to halving poverty and unemployment by the year 2014. When the political party won the 2004 national elections with an overwhelming majority, the state was tasked with meeting this commitment. President Mbeki, in his opening address to the third democratic Parliament, outlined a programme of action detailing how government will meet commitments made in the election manifesto.

Senior managers of the public service are instrumental in driving the implementation of the programme outlined by the President; hence it was appropriate that a gathering of the senior management service (SMS) be convened to obtain clarity on the role of the state in the second decade of democracy. The theme of the conference for the SMS, which took place at the International Convention Centre in Cape Town from 20-22 September, was “Building a developmental state: bridging the gap between two economies: a public service response”.

Occurring at a pensive moment in the history of our country, where the democratic government’s performance over the past decade is under critical review, the conference sought to locate the responsibilities and actions of senior managers within government’s broader developmental agenda. Conference was addressed by a plethora of senior leadership including the Deputy President, Ministers and Premiers, creating a platform for the sharing of ideas and information on how to build a developmental state in the second decade of democracy and the role of SMS in pursuing that objective.

The three days were informative and demanding, providing a clear understanding of our socio-economic trajectory and highlighting the responsibility of civil servants in advancing that trajectory. Provincial and international case
studies were explored, emphasising that it is possible to manage our key developmental challenges and create a public service environment where people no longer feel humiliated and degraded but take pleasure in visiting a government office.

**Sketching the socio-economic trajectory**

Fundamental to understanding the role of the state, was the necessity to understand the character of the state. Members of the executive consistently characterised South Africa as a developmental, activist state, making it clear that the state has a responsibility to actively tackle poverty, joblessness and economic inequality.

Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel, in defining the role of the developmental state, referred to Sen’s definition in which removing poverty and tyranny was key. This definition included expanding economic opportunities, fighting social deprivation, and providing public facilities and services to the poor. Minister Moleketsi highlighted that development is about improving the quality of life, and about equity and justice.

The general message from all speakers was that the state had a duty to grow an economy, which modernised productive forces and redefined productive relations, including gender relations. The gaps brought about by distributive governance were recognised and the need for improved and strengthened inter-governmental relations was emphasised. It was further noted that the budget of a developmental state should balance addressing poverty and deprivation, and expanding economic opportunities for all citizens.

Mr Joel Netshitenzhe, head of GCIS, in his overview of government’s performance over the past decade, reported that much has been achieved, particularly with regard to creating macroeconomic stability and strengthening international relations, thereby providing a solid platform for economic growth. National Treasury statistics illustrated that the consistently expansionary budget has consistently expansionary budget has resulted in government spending almost R60 billion or about a fifth of the budget on direct transfers to households.

If indirect transfers to households such as free basic water and electricity, bus and train subsidies, health care, education and housing subsidies and land transfers are added, then spending amounts to almost 70% of the budget. Although the democratic government boasts many successes, the pace of delivery is not adequate and many gaps remain. The role of public servants in a developmental state needs to be redefined in order to meet government’s developmental objectives.

**The role of public servants**

Conference speakers accentuated that the programme for the next five years is demanding. The effective implementation of the programme required civil servants that are professional, skilled, adequately remunerated, but humble. Civil servants in a developmental state are servants of the people, champions of the poor and downtrodden and not self-serving individuals that seek only advancement on the career ladder. “The poor are our masters,” said Minister of Social Development, Dr Zola Skweyiya.

Speakers stressed that responses to the basic requests of the public must be creative and swift. They stated that senior managers have a responsibility to ensure that the quality of service given to the poor is commensurate with the money spent and more. Failure to translate the noble ideas of the developmental state into action and poor management of human and other resources should be regarded as failing the poor.

Speakers also noted that addressing the gap between the first and second economies is not purely a socio-economic issue; it also has a human factor. They appealed that public servants never lose sight of our people and their dreams. The importance of caring, interested and responsive managers that embraced the spirit of Batho Pele and the need to complement our skills with the necessary values and attitudes were emphasised. Conference called for civil servants to be developmental activists and champions of people-centered development. Poverty and deprivation was pinned as the enemy; skills, professionalism and humility were identified as the key weapons.

**Conclusion**

The resources dedicated to the conference were resources well applied. Whilst the extent to which the messages that were conveyed at conference will be assimilated is an individual choice, conference provided a solid framework from which senior managers can operate. It remains imperative, however, that the public holds government accountable. Public servants are servants of the people. By monitoring the implementation of government’s programme of action and reporting poor delivery and corruption, we will all contribute to building an effective developmental state.
Deputy President Urges Senior Public Service Managers to make Batho Pele work

It is an honour and privilege for me to interact with our country’s senior managers from various government departments this evening. Only a few months ago, President Mbeki outlined a Programme of Action with very tight delivery deadlines, which gave many Public Service senior managers sleepless nights. The programme outlines very clearly that the main focus of government in this second decade of freedom, is to accelerate the pace of service delivery, eradicate poverty and create jobs through interventions in the second economy.

For government to meet these strategic objectives, there is a need for the Public Service to function more smoothly. Your conference is therefore crucial as it provides an opportunity for our senior managers to review progress and chart the way forward with regards to executing their responsibility of implementing the Programme of Action.

There are a number of issues that are important to members of the Senior Management Service. Key among these is the issue of the transformation of the public sector, not only in terms of race, gender or disability, but also regarding the manner in which services are delivered to the public. Through the Batho Pele programme, government began an important process of changing focus and attitudes, to make public servants regard members of the public as key customers who deserve excellent, efficient and courteous service.

You are aware that one of the weaknesses identified in the Ten Year Review was the poor involvement of senior managers in the monitoring and implementation of the Batho Pele principles. We trust that you have already worked out plans for correcting this oversight, as we rely on you as senior managers to ensure that the entire public service incorporates Batho Pele in daily work.

We also rely on you to ensure that members of the public are aware of these principles for information on what type of service they are entitled to and how to demand redress if they have been treated unfairly. Therefore, constant internal monitoring and evaluation is important, as we need to know how well or how
badly we are doing, proactively from our own assessment, and not only through the media or public complaints.

There are a number of easy yardsticks we could use in assessing ourselves. For example, in clinics and hospitals, are all South Africans treated with respect and courtesy by medical professionals and administrative staff who are wearing name tags that make them easily identifiable? At other service departments such as police services, home affairs, schools, social development and welfare offices, municipal offices, are citizens received politely, their enquiries dealt with respectfully and with great speed?

We would know we have a transformed civil service if members of the public no longer feel humiliated or degraded when dealing with public servants, and when they look forward to visiting a government office instead of resenting this necessity.

Previous Senior Management Service conferences have dealt with the crucial issues of ensuring that government moves beyond policy formulations to effective implementation. Last year’s conference also dealt with the issue of integrating government services in the form of Multi Purpose Community Centres (MPCCs). These centres are among the most innovative programmes this government has introduced, and makes practical our vision of bringing government to the people.

The challenge in this aspect is to ensure that all our MPCCs are fully functional, and that all the key government departments which are supposed to constitute them are actually participating in them.

Coupled with this is the issue of Community Development Workers. We are heartened by the progress that has been made so far to ensure that we utilise these officials in delivering services to the people. We appreciate the role that senior managers are playing to realise this goal.

Ladies and gentlemen, as government we have realised that government alone cannot meet all the objectives we have around service delivery, job creation and poverty eradication, hence we encourage Public Private Partnerships. We welcome the participation of big business in helping us meet our objectives.

We urge senior managers to play their role in exploring new partnerships between government and business, for the betterment of the lives of the people we serve.

This conference takes place in the midst of the dispute around wages in the public service, which is in the process of being resolved. As government we regard public servants as a vital component of government and our most valuable resource. That is why we have always been keen to find a solution, and we hope for a speedy resolution of this matter so that we can all return to performing our tasks of serving the public without distraction.

Ministers, director generals, senior managers, I cannot finish this address without acknowledging the dedication and hard work of many public service senior managers. Many of you work long hours daily, seven days a week if needs be, in order to meet the deadlines to improve access to a better life for all.

We congratulate you on this commitment, especially as we are aware of the strain it puts on your family lives. We also thank your families for putting up with such demanding schedules. We hope that sooner than later we will pass this difficult phase of seeking to urgently improve the lives of our people who have suffered for so long. We will then be able to leave our desks at 4.30pm each day, and go home to relax, not to continue working until the early hours of the morning!

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish you all a successful conference, as you deliberate around the crucial issues that face our country.
It is fitting that the proposed dialogue and deliberations in this year’s SMS conference be rooted in the perspective that the state as understood a developmental state, is an important vehicle for bridging the divide between the two economies.

In recent years there has been much debate about the role of the state in society. Neo-liberal opinion would have us believe that the state must not interfere with the workings of the market, that the market has a tendency towards self-correcting “equilibrium” and that the operation of the market produces the best results for society as a whole. In his address to the Progressive Governance Conference in London in July last year, President Thabo Mbeki challenged these assumptions:

“Capital has no soul ... the life imperative of capital is profit maximisation ... Thus ‘the market’ becomes the great leveler, the cold, dispassionate and undiscriminating instrument for the achievement of the goal of human equality, giving an equal possibility to all to succeed or fail. The neo-liberal/conservative political ideology therefore proposes that the market must be given free reign to operate as it will.”

President Mbeki added that “the poor do not present themselves as an appropriate object of attention by capital, whose inner logic is the maximisation of profit”. Clearly then, capital, left to its own devices, will ignore the poor. The inequalities in our society will not be corrected by the operation of the market. The inclination of the market will rather be to make inequality more pronounced by increasing the divide between the rich and the poor. It is only the state that can intervene to ensure that poverty and inequality are addressed.

Inequality in our country is epitomised by the phenomenon of two economies. The first economy is modern, produces the bulk of our country’s wealth and is integrated with the global economy. The Second Economy is characterised by underdevelopment, contributes little to the GDP and incorporates the poorest of our urban and rural poor. It is structural-
ly disconnected from both the first and global economies and is incapable of self-generated growth and development.

The Second Economy is the product of a “peculiar form of capitalism” inherited from the apartheid era, which “turned the African majority into a landless, propertyless, disenfranchised, unskilled labouring class”. This state of affairs has been exacerbated by the fact that the economy has since the 1980s needed fewer and fewer unskilled workers. Therefore “this reservoir of cheap labour now overflows with the unemployed, the indigent, the old and the very young”. Add to this the phenomenon of massive migration from rural to urban areas, which means that poverty is no longer confined to the rural areas.

In its assumption of power, government has undertaken to normalise this situation and turn South Africa into a developmental state. The concept of the developmental state is not new. It is enshrined in our Constitution — which makes it not the creation of this government but an imperative from the society for current and future generations. The obligation of building the developmental state is thus also not only a matter of choice or of government policy, it is a value that society has established, and an expectation that the whole of society holds regarding its public administration system.

Naturally, people hold different perspectives on what the developmental state really stands for, particularly at a deeper level. However, in my mind there seems to be some consensus that a developmental state simply implies a state that has the capacity to intervene in society and the economy to secure the “common good”. What constitutes this “common good” makes up the actual mandate that those in government have, according to our Manifesto, been given an overwhelming responsibility to implement.

Within the ANC we also have a wealth of policy to draw on. In “The State, Property Relations and Social Transformation”, the developmental state is specifically defined in the tradition of the liberation movement.

The developmental state should be seen as an enabler of growth, employment, human resource development and social upliftment, amongst others.

“Development is about improving quality of life; it is about equity and justice.” The RDP document defines development in terms of a growing economy in which redistribution is a critical element. It includes the preservation and development of human resources in the form of skills-training, job-creation and the provision of education, health services, infrastructure, an adequate social security system, and so on. It is also about democracy and popular participation.

“A developmental state should be founded on the principles of democracy, justice and an abiding culture of human rights — conditions which afford people not only the right to benefit from the activities of the state, but also to take active part in improving their lives...”

In its third term of democracy, government has outlined an ambitious set of programmes aimed at increasing employment, reducing poverty and equality, and improving the quality of life of the citizens.

These, including detailed targets and timeframes, were announced by the President in his State of the Nation Address in May. Collectively, all these outputs have been consolidated into a Programme of Action for Government and can be viewed on the Government website.

Government is, as a result of this information, subjected to enormous pressure to deliver. We are required to openly account for our performance. I take this as a positive pressure, which will improve government efficiency and spur us on to even greater achievements.

To strengthen the first economy we are raising the rate of investment for job creation through infrastructure development. We are facilitating broad-based Black Economic Empowerment which also benefits communities, workers and small businesses.

In a recent article on affirmative action, Loyiso Mabhane quotes former US President Lyndon Johnson, who said, “There is nothing as unequal as the equal treatment of unequals.” It is for this reason that the Constitution of South Africa includes “measures to protect or advance persons, or categories of persons” who have been “disadvantaged by unfair discrimination”, as part and parcel of the right to equality.

Left to its own devices the market cannot be trusted to promote the advance-ment and empowerment of those previously disadvantaged by racism. The developmental state must take proactive
steps to correct the imbalances of the past.

What duties does this impose on the senior management service?

Clearly, all managers procure and appoint staff, to varying degrees. Therefore they have a duty to put these principles into practice in their everyday work, especially by building in criteria for evaluation that will promote the advancement of the previously disadvantaged in society.

To boost the second economy government is creating one million jobs through the Expanded Public Works Programme over the next five years. At the same time we are retaining and strengthening the welfare safety net to address the poverty and inequality in our society.

However, may I emphasise that these interventions in society and in the economy are not intended to turn citizens into passive recipients of benefits and services. Citizens of a state that is on a developmental path have a responsibility to take active part in improving their own lives and realising their full potential, as the Constitution requires.

The developmental state should be seen as an enabler of growth, employment, human resource development and social upliftment, amongst others.

The “People’s Contract”, which is embodied in the ANC Manifesto, contains our undertakings to the people for the next five years. We aim to unite all of society in partnership around our development initiatives. An important element of the realisation of the People’s Contract is citizen participation in governance and service delivery.

I would like to cite a number of initiatives that are designed to ensure that the people of this country are jointly engaged in our efforts to improve the lives of the poor. First to come to mind is the Imbizo programme that President Mbeki has initiated to ensure that the country’s top leadership hears about the concerns of ordinary people in South Africa. A strict account is kept of the requests and complaints that are made by citizens. Managers in the public service have a responsibility to follow these up swiftly, to ensure the credibility of the forum and government as a whole.

That is why we make a concerted effort at the level of local government to ensure that there are numerous avenues of participation for ordinary people. All managers should be reflecting on their area of work and determining what partnerships are required, with the private sector, or civil society, or other spheres of government.

Government must be informed of the needs of the people, and the people must be given an opportunity to take an active part in improving their lives and realising their full potential.

Another way that government has sought to strengthen its linkage communities is to establish a cadre of community development workers. Their task is to gather information on the citizens’ needs and channel it to line function departments and the municipalities so that appropriate services can be delivered where they are most needed. The CDWs will also provide information on those government services that are readily available.

The President’s Imbizos have revealed that a significant percentage of the people in poor urban and rural communities are not even aware of the services and benefits that are entitled to as citizens. The CDWs would act as facilitators to ensure that government is accessible to the people; and that government is properly informed about the needs on the ground.

CDWs are unique public servants in that they will be expected to engage with government departments and municipalities. Managers in the public service must respond to requests from CDWs, to ensure that the intelligence gathered from the citizens is incorporated into government’s delivery efforts.

To deliver on the People’s Contract we must have a public service that adheres to the principles of Batho Pele. Cabinet has recently adopted a set of cost-free measures to facilitate the mainstreaming and revitalisation of Batho Pele. Part of this programme involves extending Batho Pele to local government where actual service delivery is taking place.

The call from the public is for counters to be staffed during lunch hours, which for many working people is the only available time in the day to visit government offices. This of course means that officials must take their breaks before or after the ordinary lunch hour. These are commonsense approaches that can make a big difference in the way that the public experiences public service delivery.

These solutions fall within the realm of devolved management responsibility. Every manager should be a problem-solver.

We are asking departments to improve the signage inside and outside their offices, providing key information on services, hours of business and other vital information. We are also asking all departments to ensure that public servants on the front line wear name-tags at all times while on duty. There is no doubt that this will sharpen performance, as the public will have a name to add to a complaint of poor service. These measures have been introduced primarily for the positive impact they make on the public rather than to police public servants.

However, public servants need to be professional in managing “service-user relations”. Records should be kept on the number of cases attended to per day, the number of complaints received and how soon these were attended to. This information will shed some light on the kinds of complaints and queries we receive and most importantly how these are solved.

An agreement has been reached with members of the national and provincial executives and Public Service Commissioners to visit service delivery centres, to talk to people in the queues, to gauge the level of satisfaction regarding service delivery and report accordingly.

However, this is not done to police public servants. Members of the Senior Management Service would also have to spend some time in service delivery centres and institutions, not as inspectors but as co-workers. This would expose them, as drafters of policies in central and line departments, to the realities associated
Government, must reap the rewards of a transformed system, with capable SMS officials who have appropriate levels of authority. With the authority that comes with being a member of the SMS, should be the recognition that managing goes beyond “attending meetings and conferences” and “sighing the submissions” of middle managers. The SMS must demonstrate real value and not just be an added — and may I add, costly — layer in the bureaucracy. Many will agree with the argument that many members of the SMS are merely “penpushers” who add very little or no real value to the work of those in the frontline of delivery.

Some people might argue that government can possibly afford to trim down its layer of management without any damage as much of the real work is done by people at the level of Deputy Director and lower. Many managers would obviously disagree with this perspective and refute that with a long list of areas where they add value.

Nevertheless, it is not me you have to convince, it is the larger public and the junior officials involved in direct delivery because it is they who are often most sceptical as regards the real value of senior managers in government. As you well know, scepticism cannot be changed by arguments; it is best changed by demonstration.

For this, the value of having an SMS layer has to be experienced consistently at the point of delivery and not just in meetings and on paper. We must guard against the temptation of believing that the people who speak the loudest at meetings and conferences, or those who generate papers, are capable and adding value. Real value, as you all know, is best demonstrated in the form of active delivery in more houses, better health, excellent education and a growing economy.

As we focus on this challenge to the SMS, we need to be mindful that at the end of our conferences there should be a link between the deliberations that have taken place here and active delivery. This conference, excluding direct conference and accommodation charges, will cost over R2 million. This, just for the time of senior officials attending the conference. We therefore need to demonstrate value-add after the conference through our findings and resolutions.

I have been emphasising the need for value-add on the part of the Senior Management Service because the Senior Management Service is not an entitlement. It is an opportunity to serve the people, using skills of leadership and management, of policy and implementation for the benefit of all South Africans. While the developmental state must have the capacity to intervene in society, we as agents of the state must also have the will to intervene to make a difference in people’s lives.

Our daily duty should be to build a bridge between the divide that separates the first and second economies.

Our objective is a state founded on the principles of democracy, justice and an abiding culture of human rights, where citizens not only benefit from state interventions in their interest, but are also empowered to take an active part in improving their own lives and realising their full potential.
Budgeting Challenges in the Developmental State

In the history of a nation, very few people get to be part of the process of defining the development path of the country at its birth. I cannot think of a more exciting time to be a civil servant, to be a senior manager in a public service making a meaningful impact on the lives of our people.

This privilege, however, comes with huge responsibility and equally huge expectations. You (as senior managers gathered here) carry the hopes and dreams of a nation. You stand at the coalface of a struggle that is immense, challenging and fraught with difficulties. For this reason, the responsibility you bear goes far beyond what senior civil servants in most countries have to contend with.

Your job is not an easy one. The people of South Africa expect nothing but the best performance from their civil servants. They expect you to deliver on the promises and policies we politicians make, the policies that they have voted for in their millions. I’m sure, for all of you, this challenge is a daunting one.

Budgeting in a developmental state

Before going on to talk about the challenges faced in budgeting in a developmental state, perhaps we need to establish what a developmental state actually is. Do we all share one understanding of what a developmental state is? Do we all have one view of the developmental mandate of this government? Are we galvanized by a single vision for our country? And, if we have that single vision, is it underpinned by a common set of values?

The idea of the developmental state is most closely associated with Chalmers Johnson and his seminal analysis of Japan’s very rapid, highly successful postwar reconstruction and re-industrialisation.

Johnson’s central contention was that Japan’s quite remarkable and historically unparalleled industrial renaissance was neither a fluke nor inevitable, but a consequence of the efforts of a developmental state. A developmental state was one that was determined to influence the direction and pace of economic develop-
ment by directly intervening in the development process, rather than relying on the uncoordinated influence of market forces to allocate resources. The developmental state took upon itself the task of establishing substantive social and economic goals with which to guide the process of development and social mobilisation. The most important of these goals, in Japan's case, of course was the reconstruction of its industrial capacity, a process made easier by widespread consensus about the importance of industrial development.

However, in the latter half of the 20th century, the concept of the developmental state evolved. Patrick Heller, director of Brown's Development Studies Programme, defines the developmental state as one that has been able to manage the delicate balance between growth and social development.

Amartya Sen, in his book *Development as Freedom*, says, "Development can be seen ... as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy". He goes on to say, "Development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or over-activity of repressive states."

In defining our concept of a developmental state, Sen's concept of removing poverty and tyranny is key; expanding economic opportunities and fighting social deprivation is critical and providing public facilities and services to the poor is paramount. Fundamentally, in a developmental state, civil servants are servants of the people, champions of the poor and downtrodden. To the senior manager in the public service, poverty and social deprivation are the enemy, the forces of reaction and elitism are the nemesis.

**Being a senior civil servant in a developmental state**

In most developing countries, the senior civil service becomes a self-serving elite, interested only in their own welfare, their own empowerment and their own bank balances. Because of the huge income inequality in many developing countries, senior civil servants become part of the elite. They are well educated, have access to economic opportunities, receive a remuneration many times greater than the average income in the country and become an obstacle to change in society. Let me state unequivocally that public service is a calling and a responsibility — it is a choice exercised. We choose to serve and accept that we will be comfortable or, we enter the private sector in pursuit of wealth. We cannot do both!

In a developmental state, the civil servant is professional, skilled, adequately rewarded but humble. Humility towards the poor is the greatest attribute of a civil servant. A leader who best espoused these values as civil servants is also one of our continent’s most accomplished civil servants.

Julius Nyerere, the former president of Tanzania, better known as Mwalimu, or “teacher” to those not familiar with Swahili, embodied the values and character of a humble civil servant, always striving to serve the poor, always trying to change the conditions of those excluded from the economic opportunities of the elite. In fact Minister Fraser-Moleketi, we should introduce an award for the senior manager who best embodies the spirit of a developmental state, and it should be called the Julius Nyerere award.

**The budget of a developmental state**

If the task of a developmental state is to fight poverty and expand economic opportunities for the poor, then the budget of a developmental state must reflect this in every respect. In my 2004 Budget speech, I quoted Joseph Schumpeter who said that the “public finances are one of the best starting points for an investigation of society. The spirit of a people, its cultural level, its social structure, the deeds its policy may prepare — all this and more, is written in its fiscal history.”

The budget must tell a story of the values a society eschews. The two main thrusts of the budget of a developmental state must be how much the state spends fighting poverty and deprivation and how much of the country’s resources go towards expanding the economic opportunities of all its citizens.
those without matric R1373 a month. Those with matric paid R4504 a month, while degree earners paid an average of R12692 a month. People with a tertiary education earned R967 a month. In South Africa, those with unskilled work earned just R2554 a month and skilled people earned an average of R8906 a month in formal employment. People in the informal sector and street traders earned an average of R2002. Skilled people earned R2554 a month while unskilled people earned just R2002. One should make the point that the rate of return to education for a society is massive.

Improving the health profile of a nation is a major contribution to their ability to get an education, earn an income and invest in assets for their children. A poor health profile means that people spend time and money on curative means as opposed to working or investing in assets. For many, economic opportunities are limited because they live in dormitory suburbs with few work opportunities, or worse still, in former homeland areas where enterprises are either small or non-existent. Access to business areas and more specifically work opportunities are a major "unfreedom" as Sen would put it. Providing public transport that is safe and affordable to poor communities is a key ingredient in expanding economic opportunities.

Similarly, our road network, electricity grid, water systems, telecommunications network, even radio and news networks, are all elements of a system to broaden economic opportunities. The criminal justice system plays a role in protecting the property rights of all citizens, but has the even more important role of protecting the poor and vulnerable from criminal elements in our midst. Protecting the assets of everyone is important, but for the people with very little, protecting their assets, their hard earned investments in modest household possessions is fundamental to ensuring the well-being of the poor.

Now that I have outlined how almost every element in our budget is designed either to raise the living standards of the poor directly, or indirectly through the provision of services, or is designed to expand economic opportunities for the poor, let me go one level deeper. Let me start with education. While we have achieved much in improving access to education for all children, even the poorest, and we have dramatically altered the spending pattern in favour of poor children, we must admit that one rand spent educating a child in the leafy Johannesburg suburbs does not buy the same amount of quality education as one rand spent in Alexandra or Mitchells Plain. To put it bluntly, the quality of education, and therefore the economic opportunities that education buys in the suburbs, is far greater than in the townships or in the former homelands.

Why is this?

While poor and rich kids do not start school at the same level of education, we, as senior civil servants and political principals, must admit that the quality of teaching and learning materials in suburban schools is vastly better than in township schools. While a significant proportion of human capital is transferred from parents, and the physical condition of schools is a factor in determining outcomes, the quality of teaching is probably the single biggest contributing factor towards quality education. The management of our schools, the school districts, the management of procurement for textbooks and learning materials, the management of teacher appointments, of disciplinary hearings, are all elements of a system to improve the management of our schools, our systems. They are all elements of a system to improve the quality of teaching and learning materials in schools, thereby improving economic opportunities.

In many areas of public service delivery, the quality of service received by the poor is not good enough relative to the money we spend. This, in most instances, is a management failure. It is a failure of our management systems and of our managers. It is our collective failure.

If we are to translate the noble ideals of all its citizens. The budget of a developmental state must balance these two main pillars. If one dominates, then the outcome is likely to be a reinforcement of poverty in the long term.

In the direct assault on poverty, our budget shows one of the most extensive anti-poverty strategies in the developing world. We spend almost R60 billion, or about a fifth of our budget, on direct transfers to households. These transfers include old age, disability and child grants, unemployment insurance payments, payments to victims of road accidents and occupational injuries.

In total, almost nine million people, almost all of whom are poor, receive direct transfers from Government. If we add to this amount the indirect transfers to households such as free basic water and electricity, bus and train subsidies, health care, education and housing subsidies, water systems and land transfers, we are now talking about almost 70% of our budget. Except for education and health, the beneficiaries of all the other items I’ve listed are poor households. While not all education and health spending goes to the poor, pro-poor funding policies in these two areas means that we have one of the most pro-poor budgets in the world.

What areas of spending expand economic opportunities for the poor?

Here, our biggest investment is the education system. The main way in which people improve their living standards is through improving their education, getting a job and investing in assets such as housing and furniture. In South Africa, getting a good education is the difference between a life of comfort and a life of struggle.

Highly skilled people in South Africa earned an average of R8906 a month in 2002. Skilled people earned R2554 a month and unskilled people earned just R67 a month. People with a tertiary degree earned an average of R12692 a month, those with matrix R4908 while those without matrix R1373 a month. The rates of return to education for a society are massive.

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of our developmental state, our management of our human and other resources must improve. The challenges of budgeting in a developmental state do not stop at the need to get money to the school in Cofimvaba. The challenge is to ensure that the money is translated into qualified teachers, school books, water, electricity and sports equipment.

The challenge even goes further. It is to ensure that education that is relevant and of a high quality gets to the children in the school in Cofimvaba. This is indeed a tough challenge.

In investing in expanding economic opportunities, we also have to be mindful that we must invest both in the long-term ability of societies to work, proper and invest and more immediate means of raising economic growth and employment. Often, investments in education and skills development take generations to yield an impact. We also have to focus on the shorter-term measures to boost growth. This requires careful regulation of markets, investment in roads, ports and rail systems, research and development and expanding energy capacity. One of the criticisms of our present budget framework is that we have not focused sufficiently on ensuring that our state enterprises are efficient, that our markets are functioning without being burdened by red tape, that we have the ports to take the goods we make, roads that link the places of production with markets.

In yielding to Patrick Heller’s call to manage the delicate balance between growth and social development, my worry is that at the present time, we are strong on social development, strong on long-term human development, but weak on investing in economic growth in the medium term.

One of the key strategic decisions we need to take in budgeting over the next few years will be to improve the balance in our present budget structure, moving resources towards investing in economic growth and fostering the type of growth that can increase employment. It is not about either/or. The challenge of budgeting is not about all on social grants or all on road building, it is not about just spending on education versus spending all our money on fixing the ports. It is about managing this delicate balance.

Conclusion

You as senior civil servants have a critical role to play in translating financial resources into real inputs. You have the task of ensuring that these real inputs lead to better quality education, an improved health profile and in the final instance, genuine empowerment of people to lift themselves out of poverty.

Please remember that your enemy is poverty and deprivation, that your key weapon is your skill and professionalism and that your modus operandi is your humility. You are, with us, custodians of a value system that defines our objective as demonstrating every single day that we are a caring democracy.
Towards a South African Developmental State: Challenges Ahead

Dr ZST Skweyiya, Minister of Social Development, focuses on government’s efforts of moving South Africa from a fragmented and incoherent social security system to an integrated national system that improves the protection of the most vulnerable people in our society.

I have decided, in view of the schedule, to structure this presentation as a case study. I do this with some reservations as you are all aware that the national social security agency is not only a work in progress, but also an institution that will be in its infancy for the next two or three years.

The Ten Year Review correctly indicates that, “It is possible to argue that the success or failure of government in achieving its developmental objectives will largely be determined by the appropriateness of the institutional framework that it creates.” In this regard, I hope this case study on the social security agency has a bearing on the subsequent discussions on constitutional evolutions and the macro organisation of the state.

Background to the case study

Firstly, it should be noted that the establishment of the agency was a response to Constitutional imperatives. A fundamental purpose of the Constitution is to improve the quality of life of all our people, especially the most vulnerable. Socio-economic rights, including the right of access to social security, are at the heart of this purpose. The Constitution therefore imposes an obligation on the State to take reasonable measures to ensure the progressive realisation of the right of access to social security within available resources.

Concomitantly, the Constitution also enjoins government to ensure that services are provided to all in an equitable and dignified manner.

I expect that students of public management will be interrogating the case study on the significance, ramifications, and impact of the establishment of the social security agency for years to come. By establishing the national security agency government is giving effect to the recommendation by the Chikane Commission of 1996 that called for the establishment of a nationally-organised social security system.

The South African Social Security Agency marks the culmination of the
government’s efforts of moving South Africa from a fragmented and incoherent social security system, to an integrated national system that improves the protection of the most vulnerable people in our society. The fragmented spheres of jurisdiction and institutional arrangements that we had in the past created loopholes for fraudulent practices and led to parallel lines of accountability for performance management.

It is not a coincidence that this problem has been particularly acute in certain provinces. There continues to be wide differentials in the capabilities of the various provinces to provide social development services. This uneven development is the rationale for an asymmetrical policy approach and a staggered implementation programme. Some of the key decision points for analysis in this case study on the national social security agency are these questions of asymmetric policy and staggered implementation.

Another point to be noted is that the establishment of the national social security agency was in recognition of the fact that over the previous six years we had succeeded in expanding the reach of our social security system, and the challenge now is to deliver high-quality services in a dignified manner. In addition to the issue of quality services, we also have to ensure that we reduce the substantial leakages from our social grant system by cutting down on the levels of fraud and corruption.

I also expect that the case study on the establishment of the South African Social Security Agency will also be used as an entry point to examine the progress we have made in the construction of a comprehensive system of social security in our country.

While significant progress has been achieved in extending basic social assistance, there is still outstanding work that needs to be done to ensure that we strengthen contributory arrangements for comprehensive social security. The most important elements of this work are the finalisation of negotiations between the National Treasury and the Department of Health on Social Health Insurance, and the development of an integrated implementation framework for Social Health Insurance and the Road Accident Fund.

In terms of government’s programme of action, these elements were scheduled to be completed by September 2004. Related to this, government as a whole needs to do more research work to improve our understanding of the composition, value and distribution of the benefits of the social wage. The creation of an enhanced knowledge base for the targeting of social policy will greatly improve our ability to address the challenges ahead.

The concept of a developmental state

Before outlining the case study on the National Social Security Agency, let’s briefly focus on the concept of a “developmental state”. First off, it has to be noted that different people give different meanings to the concept of a developmental state. This depends upon the specific historical conjuncture being considered and the particular ideological perspective adopted. In addition, underlying each of the meanings are the primary social forces and imperatives shaping public policy.

The adjective “developmental” focuses attention on processes rather than structures. Recalling Amartya Sen’s influential book Development as Freedom, the term “developmental state” highlights the ethical dimensions of economic and social policy. The theme of this conference can therefore be read as re-focusing our collective attention on issues of poverty and social justice.

In whichever way the term is used, I would assert that in all instances the developmental state is by definition open to criticism of its policies and programme, responsive to stakeholder interests, and especially attuned to the many weak voices speaking from the margins of social exclusion.

The establishment of the National Social Security Agency is an example of the developmental state acting in accordance with this mission with respect to a particularly important constituency — the poorest and most vulnerable members of our society.

Much work is currently being done to improve the reliability of government’s empirical knowledge about the depth and extent of poverty in our country. However, two statisticians should make all of
Agreement on an implementation plan concluded: African Social Security Agency.

ments of Social Development to the South
tance delivery from the provincial depart-
the shifting of the function of social assis-
This legislation provided the mandate for
work for the establishment of the agency.
The establishment of the South African
Social Security Agency Act, were passed
more than eight million beneficiaries.
Both the Social Assistance Act and the SA
Social Security Agency is a Cabinet and
The establishment of the National Social
Security Agency is a hugely important project that directly impacts on the delivery of vital services to citizens aimed primarily at addressing poverty. Further to this, government devotes a substantial proportion of its budget to this programme.

As can be imagined, such a major undertaking cannot be initiated or successfully concluded without the mobilisation and continued support of families and communities across the length and breadth of our country. It requires the buy-in and unwavering support of formations that embody and express the people’s will. Both individually and collectively, it requires from public servants at all levels of government trust, a commitment to Batho Pele and sustained effort. In sum, it requires political will and community participation.

The establishment of the National Social Security Agency was based on the caution expressed in the Ten Year Review Discussion Document: “Though economic policy processes have been sound, one of the key limitations in the implementation of economic policy has been the cost of institution building. Institutions such as some of the small business agencies, the National Development Agency, the Umsobomvu Fund, some of the SETAs, and many local government level economic agencies have taken a great deal of time to become effective. Some key lessons are that the cost of institution building should not be underestimated, and that, where possible, new tasks should be incorporated into the work existing successful agencies.”

On 1 April 2005, when we submit our progress report on the establishment of the agency, much of the analysis of the case will centre on decisions about process design, project management and institution building.

But the challenges ahead for the developmental state extend way beyond these narrow institutional matters.

As part of the process of creating the South African Social Security Agency, the Council of Social Development Ministers from the national and provincial spheres of government have committed themselves to the speedy restructuring of the provincial departments of Social Development. This restructuring is an opportunity for provinces to respond to community demands for the enhanced provision of social welfare services, sustainable livelihood interventions and programmes that mitigate the socio-economic impact of HIV and AIDS.

These services, interventions and programmes have to take into account demographic and macro social trends. For instance, the drop in the average size of households between 1996 and 2001 that resulted in the total number of households in our country that was three times larger than the rate of population growth.

One of our most important tasks during the current term of government is to better understand the interactions between these demographic and macro social trends and our various policy and programme interventions. We have to have a better understanding of how these interactions impact the seven composite index- es developed and used in government’s Ten Year Review (Infrastructure, Quality of Life, Political Participation, Economic Participation, Economic Preparedness, Safety and Security, and Social Inclusion).

This task requires a substantial increase in the capacity of government and academia to conduct social policy analysis,
research and monitoring. We also have to ensure that the resultant knowledge basis informs policy reviews, programme development and decision making.

Both within our country, in the SADC region and on the continent, a consensus is also forming about the parallel importance of having a social policy framework on par with and that articulates with macro economic policy. Under the auspices of the African Union an expert panel has begun work on formulating a comprehensive and coherent African social policy framework.

The challenge is to respond to the persistence of poverty and wide disparities in the quality of life, high levels of unemployment, the adverse social effects of market-based strategies of economic management, disintegration of the social fabric, misgivings about environmental degradation and pollution, and the instability wrought by ethnic tensions, civil strife and conflict.

The recently concluded Extraordinary Summit of the African Union on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Burkina Faso is further testimony to the parallel importance of having as social policy framework on a par with and that articulates with macro economic policy.

My purpose in sketching a case study on the establishment of the National Social Security Agency was to provide a common entry point and trajectory for the interrogation of the challenges facing the developmental state. Unfortunately, because case studies are analytical tools they do not in themselves provide closure on a particular subject. I would therefore like to use the organising principles of the ILO’s “Social Security of All” campaign to this end in an attempt to summarise some of the key issues raised.

**Social Security —**
A universal right for workers, their families and their communities.
An essential means for creating social cohesion.
An indispensable part of government social policy.
A powerful tool to prevent and alleviate poverty.
An instrument to achieve human dignity, equality and social justice.

... a basic human right •
Skills Requirements for a Developmental State: A focus on Key Role-Players

In considering the skills needs of a developmental state, I start with two propositions.

The first is that there are no universal skills needs, and that these depend on the stage of development, and the chosen trajectory of the state. Just as there are differences between nations, in this country there are stark differences between the various provincial growth and development strategies — with very different orientations in regard to economic and social development, and therefore also in regard to human development. This is a good thing.

Secondly, I hold that no skill is ever a permanent asset. Technologies change, and we have to as well. So whatever skills we do develop, the most important is the skill to apply what we have learnt to new contexts and situations. Lifelong learning is not a “nice to have”. It is an essential component of every working life, in the public service as much as in the commercial sphere.

These ideas may help to understand the situation in South Africa, where the most pervasive feature of every moment of life is indeed the existence of the two economies.

The public service is not immune to the divisions between these two economies, and many government services tend to be delivered in one of two modes. One is clean and efficient, uses new technologies and has the necessary resources, while others are dilapidated, uncared for and uncaring. Many public servants, including teachers, struggle hard under the limitations of their situations, and often make a huge difference, and we salute them. But in too many cases, they simply give up, and stay on with only payday in mind.

Your job, as managers, is to know the difference between those who are genuinely trying, but suffer a lack of capacity, and those who simply don’t care. You must do so because it is the former group who are deserving of so much more from all of you and your middle managers. From school principals to senior managers, I get letters of frustration at the poor treatment they receive from their...
supervisors, while just trying to make a difference in the lives of people. These people we must support in their work, even if only a word of encouragement, for they are like gold, and the people know it. The rest, we all know what should happen to them, although many managers seem remarkably loathe to take such action.

The point is that whatever skills we are able to develop, we do need to complement with the necessary values and attitudes. Without the will to provide a service, the knowledge and skills gained from the many training programmes we offer, are only self-serving, perhaps a route up the career ladder.

For our country, in the present stage of development, we need basic services of a high quality to be delivered to many who have never had these. But too many of our officials have learned only the skills of paper shuffling and meetings, and forgotten the value of government services to those who need them.

When I hear of school teachers excluding poor pupils from school because they had no uniform, I wonder what more skills are required. When nurses neglect patients, when pension clerks abuse the elderly, when senior managers are rude to their staff, I do not look for skills programmes, I plead for ethics courses, for a new value orientation. Nobody needs a skills programme to get to work on time!

Faced with these two economies, there is a real need for education in South Africa to respond to each of them. We do so firstly in a targeted manner, aiming to meet the differential needs of schools within the two economies. There can be no approach which simultaneously meets the needs of a large township secondary school, a suburban primary, and a one teacher farm school.

Quality initiatives are unapologetically aimed at schools of the second economy, and all our resourcing policies are aimed at shifting state funds from the wealthier schools, which draw on the first economy for additional fee income, towards the poor, which have no such support base.

However, we also have an obligation to strive towards an education which represents a fusion of the two economies, so that we are not locked into the two economies forever.

Schooling is never the magic bullet for healing all that is wrong, but it should certainly serve as a beacon for our future — a practical demonstration of the better world ahead.

Schools are a catalyst for social transformation, and can contribute to building the integrated, compassionate society we have defined in our Constitution. That is why I continue to be so encouraged when I get the all-too-rare opportunity to actually visit schools, especially the racially mixed primary schools where we have the “born frees” — the children born in and after 1994. Their freedom, though perhaps not fully understood, is certainly fully enjoyed, as they grow up together without prejudice, and with huge self-confidence.

HRD Strategy

Which brings us to the first building block of the national HRD Strategy: the provision of at least one pre-school year for all children. The benefits of this are internationally demonstrated, and the gains in combating the cycle of poverty are extraordinary. Poor children, with limited chances, can get the kind of start they need to reach beyond all expectations, and in so doing they benefit their country.

ECD is an investment in our collective future, and it is one of the cheapest we can make, with the greatest returns.

Adult literacy is also a key part of the foundation on which can build a functioning society. Some eight million South Africans are today unable to participate in social and economic processes because of their inability to read and write. This is a serious limitation on our ability to grow; no nation can reach for the stars while its poor are still stuck in the mud.

I recently committed my Ministry to a round table with all players in the literacy arena to map out a new roadmap for the complete eradication of illiteracy in our country.

Beyond basic education for children and adults, the focus of our attention must shift to the development of intermediate skills for the economy — the artisans, the trades, the technologists. Unlike some of the higher level manage-
When we look at the higher levels, these are the people who actually produce much of the wealth of our country — making and selling the goods we all need, or providing the practical services which keep the world turning.

Manufacturing is the largest growth sector in our economy, and desperately needs people who can fit, who can turn, who can weld. Of course, this is where the risk element is most profound, where changing technologies are most likely to impact and cause certain skills to become quickly redundant. Any skills programme must therefore go beyond the narrow bounds of the discipline, to develop a broader range of capacities.

Most of these intermediate skills are learnt at technical colleges, or else in the workplace, in collaboration with these colleges. We are glad to record that these institutions, now designated FET colleges, are finally on a turnaround path, and that they have shown a growth in enrolment for the first time in many years. The introduction of learnerships as a public administration programme which many such institutions offered are properly aligned towards the skills needs of the country, and remain fully responsive to these changing needs.

Our challenges for this sector are twofold. One is to ensure that these colleges have the necessary facilities and resources to train people for the 21st century, and the other is to ensure that the programmes offered are properly aligned towards the skills needs of the country, and remain fully responsive to these changing needs.

In each case, I must confess the challenges are profound. Many FET colleges have outdated equipment, and programmes (and the people who offer them) are often the same ones that were there 20 years ago, with little relevance for today’s world. As a result the skills learnt are often redundant before they even start work, and employers see little value in some of the qualifications offered.

One of the key elements of the HRD Strategy was building the capacity to understand the labour market better, and the need for specific skills, especially higher-level skills. I am pleased that the HSRC, together with the Inter-Departmental HRD Coordinating Committee, has been able to develop a list of scarce skills.

These are based in part on the skills plans developed by the respective SETAs, including the public service SETA, which are required to identify areas of scarcity in each economic sector.

For education, this listing of scarce skills is a critical factor in influencing the funding of education. We have two major levers which we can and do use to influence the direction of skills development: through the allocation of university subsidies, and the provision of bursaries through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS).

In each of these we are informed by national priorities and encourage institutions to respond to these as best they can. While never dismissing the importance and value of esoteric studies in the arts or sciences, we cannot pretend that economic pressures do not exist, and we are bound to balance these against the abstract pursuit of knowledge.

Freedom and autonomy are always bounded by responsibility. From the analysis of scarce skills, it is clear that we require skilling at all levels of the system. Managerial skills are certainly in short supply in the public sector, but there are also shortages at the intermediate or technical level, and even at the administrative level as well.

Despite the plethora of office management courses, secretarial seminars, and public administration programmes which we send our staff on regularly, we are still unable to find enough people who can file a document and retrieve it when required. This applies as much to the public service as the rest of the economy.

Finding a competent economist for the Department of Education is not easy, and we will probably land up recruiting someone from another department. In so doing, we will add to the syndrome that we see talented people in government move up the career ladder well before they really develop the necessary experience.

The very limited use of the scarce skills allowance may need to be reviewed to allow us to compete with the rest of the economy in regard to IT skills, legal services, and financial managers, and suchlike.

One of the issues that must remain a focus area is that of leadership in government. Not the old style bureaucratic management which we inherited, but a kind of leadership which embraces innovation and risk taking as an integral part of work.

In a recent interview, the Mayor of New York, who came into office from the business sector, said that the one difference between the public and private sectors was in the area of innovation. Innovation, he explained, means that you don’t really know how something will work out, but you do it anyway, having assessed all the risks.

In terms of the PFMA, this would be very difficult to justify in the public service, and SCOOPA would almost certainly want to hear from you. For me, this is regrettable and in many ways contradicts the very purpose of the PFMA which was to give accounting officers a greater sense of discretion to allow departments to use their funds most effectively to achieve their goals.

In education terms, this is outcomes based education — you achieve the objectives, and we don’t quiz you about how you got there, unless of course you overspent. But the message is very different, if you don’t comply, PFMA will get you!

We had a recent instance where the head of department in one province complained about the need for three quotes for any purchase. In a rural area, he said, there is only one store — the general dealer — and unless the school was expected to also get quotes from the nearest town, some 200km away, he was ready to approve any purchase from the general dealer for minor items — perhaps a new window or tap for the school.

I am not convinced the PFMA has taken sufficient account of these conditions of our developing nation, although it does appear that the provincial SCOOPA is sensitive and supportive of the HoD in this approach.

This limitation on innovation is regret-
table, since in this modern world things move fast, situations are dynamic and change quickly, and we cannot always be tied to rigid procedures.

We need effective protection against fraud and corruption, of course, but we may have over-emphasised this at the expense of some innovation, some risk-taking, which is always good for an organisation. I am not looking for loose cannons, but at least give me some sharpshooters among the ranks of the foot-soldiers, some guerrillas among the uniformed troops.

In a developmental state, it is these people who will take us forward, while the remainder may be inclined to just mark time and keep us where we are now.

And so, in conclusion, to the key role-players. For me, these must include the thousands of educational institutions, from ECD and ABET centres, through schools and colleges, to the universities, and their new counterparts, the universities of technology. I can only say that we will endeavor to ensure that each one of them strives to respond to the educational and skills needs of our developing nation.

But the most important players in the context of this conference must be the public servants themselves, who hold their own, and the country’s, future in their hands. They are in the best position to take advantage of the multiple opportunities the state offers to learn, to create learning organisations.

Not just workshops, seminars and courses, not even degree programmes, but the very real learning that can come from doing your jobs.

You are managing some of the biggest budgets in the country — far bigger than most big corporations; on a daily basis you are making policy and laws for 40 million people. These are real learning opportunities which must be exploited to the full. Bring in the bright young interns, nurture the youthful talent in your department, especially the women — you may be pleasantly surprised how able they are and what good ideas they have.

I wish you well in your conference, and in your endeavors to make this country work.
Improving Intergovernmental Relations: A Critique of the Macro-Organisation of the State and Possible Solutions

In this abridged version of his address to a recent Senior Managers Conference, Gauteng Premier Mbhazima Shilowa argues for the strengthening of the existing system of government, and further avers that the state should put more emphasis on enhancing the developmental needs of the South African populace.

The efficacy and appropriateness of the macro-organisational system of our state has been the subject of intense debate since the establishment of the new system of local government in the year 2000. The establishment of metropolitan municipalities, some of which control budgets that are far bigger than some of our provinces, has also given impetus to the debate.

Many opinions have been given both in and outside government about whether the current system of governance is suited to meet the developmental needs of our country. Some of the opinions were objective attempts to find solutions to some of the realities of our country while others were subjective and only served to promote political and ideological interests which have no relevance to our situation.

Those who believed in a minimalist state have been bold to call for a reduced role for national and provincial spheres on the pretext that they are far removed from service delivery. Discussion about our system of governance — whether it has worked, whether it needs to be changed or modified — should be driven by principles and informed by experience.

It must also be driven by a desire to find the best ways to improve the provision of services to the people and meet the developmental needs of our country. This should therefore not be treated merely as an academic debate. It must reach a conclusion which must help us to perfect our systems and improve the effectiveness of government across all spheres.

It is important that as we grapple with these issues we start by correctly identifying challenges or shortcomings of the current organisational system before we try to find solutions. If we do not correctly diagnose the problems and defects we will not be able to prescribe the correct remedies.

I am sure that as senior managers in the public service you have, in the course of your duties, identified the weaknesses and possible defects of the system. Your contribution to this debate is therefore crucially important.

Before we attempt to identify the problems let us look at the fundamentals. Our system of government is based on the principle of co-operative government and...
intergovernmental relations. Chapter three of the Constitution says: “In the
Republic, government is constituted as national, provincial and local spheres of
government which are distinctive, interdependent and interrelated.”

All the three spheres of government have both legislative and executive
authority. Their powers and functions have been stipulated in the Constitution.
The Constitution requires that all spheres of government must exercise their powers
and perform their functions in a manner that does not encroach on the geographic,
functional or institutional integrity of government in another sphere.

The Constitution also stipulates that the spheres of government must co-operate
with one another in mutual trust and good faith by:
• fostering friendly relations;
• assisting and supporting one another;
• informing one another of and consulting one another on matters of common
  interest;
• co-ordinating their actions and legislation with one another;
• adhering to agreed procedures; and
• avoiding legal proceedings against one another.

At the time of the multiparty negotiations, which set the principles and frame-
work within which the Constitution was based, there was intense debate about the
system of government that the democratic South Africa should have. Various
options were considered but at the end the current system was the consensus
position. The principles of co-operative government and intergovernmental rela-
tions are still correct and appropriate today.

Over the past 10 years we have built the state institutions at all three spheres of
government guided by the provisions of the Constitution. The government organi-
sational structures that we created have had time to develop and grow the neces-

sary capacity to exercise their powers and perform their functions.

Our assessment of how government has functioned over the past 10 years
reveals that there have been challenges and organisational weaknesses. The chal-
lenge and weaknesses can be summarised as:
• lack of capacity by some of our institutions to perform their functions;
• poor co-ordination and communication across spheres of government;
• lack of protocols governing the implement-
ation of joint projects and the provi-
sion of integrated services; and
• lack of formal intergovernmental rela-
tions institutional mechanisms.

During the first five years of democratic government, both the spheres of govern-
ment experienced what could be referred to as teething problems. During the first
few years many departments both at national and provincial level could not
spend significant portions of their allocated budgets. The implication was that
money that was allocated for social services and developmental projects, among
other things, had to be rolled over.

The reasons for the failure to spend allocated resources were mainly lack of
capacity to implement programmes and poor programme management skills. In
some instances, where capacity existed at national level, such capacity would be
lacking at provincial level, where most of the programmes had to be implemented.

The National Public Works Programme was one of the projects that typified
this problem. Money that was allo-
cated for the programme was rolled over because there was no capacity to imple-
ment the programme at provincial and local level.

Provinces, because they were a completely new creation as compared with the
national sphere of government, expe-
rienced more problems in their formation stages. Some of the provinces inherited
the old apartheid created Bantustans and homeland administrations. Some of the
provinces had to start building institutions from scratch. Some of our provinces
failed to administer the social security sys-
tem, resulting in many of our people who
are eligible for social security grants not
receiving their grants.

The failure by government to spend
money allocated for the alleviation of
poverty meant that the poorest of the poor
would continue to live under conditions
of abject poverty even though the govern-
ment had allocated resources to help them
out of that situation. Local government
encountered more problems and difficul-
ties compared to the provincial and
national spheres of government. Due to the complexities in the munici-
pal government structures and the fact that most of the municipalities were
designed along racial lines it took much longer to create non-racial and democrati-
cal local government structures. The current municipal structures system only
came into existence in the year 2000.

During the early stages of government, communication and co-ordination across
spheres of government was not sufficient to enhance intergovernmental relations.
This has improved during the second term of government with the introduc-
tion of a number of forums such as the Presidential Co-ordinating Council and
intergovernmental forums in all provinces. While these forums have
improved contact and communication among the executive arms across spheres of
government there remains a challenge of co-ordination of activities and projects
implementation among the three spheres of government.

An example that comes to mind is the implementation of the urban and rural
development projects. While these proj-
ects are by design and conceptualisation joint projects involving all three spheres of
government, the practical reality has been that provinces and municipalities often find themselves carrying the financial
burden for implementation of the projects. In some areas, no work has been
done since local and provincial govern-
ments rely heavily on the initiatives of
national government.

This problem could be attributed in part to lack of protocols governing joint
planning, funding and implementation of integrated development projects and services that involves all three spheres of
government.

In Gauteng we have often raised the issue of indigent policies with municipal-
ities. Different municipalities use different formulae to determine who of their
residents should be placed on their indigent programme. It is possible to find a
household that qualifies to be on the indi-
genent policy in one municipality and find
that another household in a different municipality with exactly the same cir-
cumstances not qualifying because of the different policies used to determine the
need. This means that some of our people who should be receiving help from gov-
ernment are not receiving it because of lack of a common approach to the indi-
genent policy. This is happening in all the other provinces.

It is easy for people who are observing from a distance to use these and many other challenges that face our govern-
ment system to argue for its complete change. These challenges can be easily overcome if we improve our intergovern-
mental relations.

Important steps have already been taken to address all the challenges that face our government system. In June the
Extended Cabinet Workshop on Inter-
governmental Relations made important decisions which will take us forward.

There is now broad agreement by all spheres of government on the Inter-gov-
ernmental Relations Framework Bill. The proposed law will provide clarity and
certainty regarding intergovernmental relations at executive level of government.

It will create formal institutional mecha-
nisms that will ensure regular and ongo-
ing communication and co-ordination across all spheres of government.

Improved intergovernmental relations
must result in seamless government for the country. As the Bill suggests, our intergovern-
mental relations must assist government to:

• Set, execute and monitor key develop-
ment priorities for the country regard-
ing the creation of work, fighting
poverty and reinforcing national pride, given the relative autonomy of provin-
cial and local government in key areas of social delivery;

• Consult another sphere on policy or
actions that it must implement or that
affect it before a decision is taken and to
give due regard to its views and cir-
cumstances;

• Manage service delivery in ways that
are efficient, accessible to beneficiaries, responsive to the needs of our commu-
nities, and that result in integrated and sustainable service provision —
despite jurisdictional boundaries and
with due regard to unequal capacities;

• Forge strong, flexible goal-directed
partnerships, that can unlock the cre-
ativity and energy of collaboration and
partnership without weakening per-
formance and accountability;

• Empower communities to participate
in processes of governance whilst
inspiring and supporting communities
to become self-reliant;

• Plan and to act within the framework of
domestic and global conditions,
within available budgetary constraints and
to account for performance in
terms of existing legislation; and

• Resolve disputes without recourse to
court action. The proposed law will
certainly contribute to strengthening of
intergovernmental relations in our
country. It will help us to forge stronger
forms of collaboration and partnerships
across spheres of government.

Another matter that is closely related to the issue of intergovernmental relations is
the allocation of powers and functions. Our experience in the past 10 years has
shown that there are functions that are currently performed by national and
provincial spheres which could be best performed by the local sphere of govern-
ment.

It is also probable that certain powers and functions that currently reside at national
government could be best exer-
cized at provincial and local government levels. This is not an argument for the devolution of
powers and functions to provincial and local governments, but more an argu-
ment for the need to examine whether or not the existing allocation of powers and
functions is appropriate.

As we know, the Constitution provides for the assignment of national and propor-
tional powers and functions to the local sphere of government. This provi-
sion is premised on the principle that if a function can be best performed by local
government such function can be assigned to local government.

A study is being undertaken at nation-
al level to determine which powers and functions can be reassigned from national
to the provincial and local spheres of gov-
ernment. In Gauteng, we are also under-
taking such a study, especially since three of the country’s six metropolitan municipalities are found in the province.

A question has to be asked: If municipalities can establish municipal police departments and courts, why can’t they get involved in primary healthcare and education for example? But when we do decide to devolve powers we should understand that funds must follow functions.

Sometimes we are unfair to criticise local government. If you look at the issue of the provision of free basic amounts of water and electricity you will find that municipalities are able to provide these services except in areas where electricity is supplied to residents directly by Eskom. In this situation most of the residents for whom the policy was designed are not benefiting from it, not because local government is failing to implement it but because a state-owned enterprise is not playing its role.

The issue of the appropriateness of the macro-organisational system of our state should also be linked to the discussion and process towards the creation of a single public service. This will appropriately locate the role of the senior management corps of local government within the broad civil service.

When we have a single public service it will be easy to deploy and redeploy people across all spheres of government depending on the need for the skills they possess. This deployment and redeployment must not just be limited to the lower rank staff. It must include senior managers.

Let me conclude by dispelling one myth that strong local government poses a threat to the existence of provincial government. I should know better that this cannot be true because three of the six metropolitan municipalities are located in Gauteng. We have been working very well with all the metropolitan municipalities and districts, pooling our resources and knowledge to focus on the priorities of the province. Achieving co-operation and collaboration between provincial and local government requires more than just adherence to the constitution and legislation. It requires political maturity and respect.

In Gauteng we have just demonstrated how such co-operation and collaboration between local government and the provincial government can be achieved. That is why we are now working with all municipalities towards building Gauteng as an integrated globally competitive economic region.

I wish to thank the organisers of this conference for giving me the opportunity to share with you my thoughts on this important topic. I hope that some of the mild thoughts I have will find expressions in the proposals that are being developed on the subject.

In some areas, no work has been done since local and provincial governments rely heavily on the initiatives of national government.
Taking Stock of the Constitutional Evolution Process

Advocate Vusi Pikoli, director general for Justice and Constitutional Development, in this shortened version of his address to a recent SMS conference, explains how the new constitution has impacted on the public service and how it touches the lives of ordinary South Africans.

The Constitution as a shining beacon of hope for transformation

It is no doubt a mammoth task to attempt to define the evolution of our constitutional processes today, but I will, as a proponent of the Constitution, touch on a few areas that have been the highlights of our first years of democracy.

When President Mbeki addressed the nation in 2001 he said: “Gradually, step by step, our country proceeds further away from its painful past. We, its citizens, who are very close to the coalface of change, may not easily see the steady transformation that informs all aspects of our national life.

“The past which I speak of is well known to all of us. It is a past of a racially divided country, of masters and servants, of racially inspired conflict and mistrust. It is a past of endemic and widespread poverty and gross imbalances in levels of development and the distribution of wealth, income and opportunity. It is a past of an economy that was immersed in a crisis that was destined to worsen. It is a past of the denial of freedom to the majority, gross violation of human rights and repression, of entrenched sexism, a past of high levels of crime, violence and corruption. It is a past of a South Africa isolated from the rest of Africa and the world, a pariah among the nations. It is away from this painful past that our country is progressing and must progress.”

The Constitution, a milestone in our legal history, a shining beacon of hope for the protection of human rights and the advancement of human liberty and dignity, exemplifies this revolutionary change that has taken place in the first decade of our democracy.

Both the Interim Constitution of 1993 and the final Constitution of 1996 provided the context in which major rationalisation and transformation needed to take place within the public service to align the public service with the structures and values defined by the new Constitution.

The massive extent of the rationalisation and transformation required, meant that in respect of several areas, an evolutionary approach would be adopted in order to achieve the constitutional ideal.

Hence the comprehensive transitional arrangements found in sections 236 and 237 of the Interim Constitution, that still remain in force under item 24 of Schedule 6 to the Constitution of 1996.

The Constitution therefore required in the early stages of our democracy that we began the process of rationalisation in the public service by passing new laws, setting up structures for, and providing for governance of, the public service, both as a whole and in respect of individual state departments.

The Constitution therefore determined...
the agenda for Government to build a non-racial, non-sexist and united democratic South Africa. It is the main legal source of Government’s mandate and serves as a blueprint for the transformation and the rebuilding of our society.

The transformation of the judiciary

In some respects, the transformation of the judiciary has been one of the most successful aspects of the implementation of the Constitution. However, much still remains to be done. The most important aspect relating to the transformation of the judiciary has been the evolutionary shift from parliamentary sovereignty to constitutionalism. This shift has directly changed the dynamics in as far as the independence of our judiciary and its credibility amongst the citizens is concerned.

At the opening of the new Constitutional Court building at No 1 Constitutional Hill, our President reminded us that it is important to “reflect on the history of our judiciary, a history that is not so distant that we can view it merely as belonging to the past”. He went on quote Deputy Chief Justice, Pius Langa, who said the following at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission:

“The divisions and conflicts of our apartheid past have distorted the relationship between, on the one hand, institutions involved in the administration of justice, including the judiciary, and, on the other hand, significant sections of the South African community. This has to be set right now in order to ensure and to maintain a healthy democracy, which fully expouses the values of a new constitutional dispensation.

“I make a submission in the hope that the story of some of my personal experiences, perceptions and observations, shared as they are by thousands of citizens of this country who were similarly placed, might assist in bringing about a greater appreciation of how others were affected by the operation of the legal system during the period under review. I make this submission also because of my belief that the correction of this distortion, the restoration of complete trust, is not something which should simply be assumed because the country now has a new Constitution.

“A process needs to take place, a process which will not only liberate those members of the judiciary who have felt the alienation, but which will also reassure the formerly oppressed about the judiciary’s rededication to justice for all.”

The need for change in the judiciary is very important. In line with the vision espoused by Justice Langa, the Constitution paved the way for a complete overhaul of the court structures in our country. The Constitutional Court our apex Court, entrusted with the core responsibility of being the watchdog of the Constitution, has “already shown in its short life that it will strike down anything that runs counter to the spirit and letter of the Constitution”.

The Judicial Service Commission and the Magistrates Commission have also played a significant role in the creation of a single judiciary that is reflective of the demographics of this country.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Another milestone in the first decade of our democracy has been the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In the light of South Africa’s past atrocities it became very evident that we as a nation healing from the divisions of the past had to also deal effectively with the past. We owed it to the communities and our people.

It is within this context that the Constitution provided an historic bridge between the past of a deeply divided society characterised by strife, conflict, untold suffering and injustice, and a future founded on the recognition of human rights, democracy and peacefull co-existence and development opportunities for all. The pursuit of national unity, the well-being of all South African citizens and peace require reconciliation between the people of South Africa and the reconstruction of society.

Legislation

The Independent Institutions Supporting Constitutional Democracy, (Chapter 9 Institutions)

These are important institutions designed to play a very significant role in terms of promotion and building a culture of respect for human rights, the promotion of gender equality, ensuring the proper conduct of state affairs and sound financial management in the public service.

These institutions have played a crucial role in the past 10 years in terms of strengthening our constitutional democracy. They have worked with Government where necessary to improve the quality of lives of our people and they have been vocal when they felt government was deviating from its mandate or failing to fulfil its mandate in terms of service delivery. The Independent Electoral Commission, in particular, is commended for its outstanding work in ensuring free and fair electoral processes.

The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act No 4 of 2000

During the first decade of democracy, Government promoted key pieces of legislation central to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, the purpose being to speed up the transformation process and deepen our constitutional democracy. In order to address the legacy of a deeply divided State and the glaring socio-economic inequalities, the Constitution envisaged the promulgation of the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act No 4 of 2000 which was passed by Parliament.

The purpose of the Act is the progressive eradication of current systemic discrimination which is a legacy of previously legalised discrimination, thereby transforming South Africa into a country which is based on respect for the dignity and equal worth of all human beings. It will achieve this by preventing and prohibiting unfair discrimination; providing remedies for the victims of unfair discrimination and persons whose right to equality is infringed and addressing and eliminating the imbalances and inequalities particularly in terms of race, gender and disability.

The Promotion of Administrative Justice in the Public Interest Act No 3 of 2000

In order to promote an efficient adminis-
The Constitution requires South Africa not only to be a constitutional democracy but also to be an open society. At the centre of the apartheid system was the culture of secrecy and non-disclosure of information. It was for this reason that the Constitution required the passing of the Promotion of Access to Information Act No 2 of 2000.

The Act, in general, aims at the promotion of transparency, accountability and effective governance of all public and private bodies. It also aims to ensure that everyone will be empowered and educated to understand their rights in terms of the Act, and the functions and operations of the public bodies to ensure that everyone is in a position to effectively scrutinise and participate in decision-making by public bodies that affect their rights.

The successful implementation of these important pieces of constitutionally mandated legislation is of paramount importance to the success of our transformation agenda. These pieces of constitutionally mandated legislation require the commitment of public servants to the constitutional imperatives of building a non-racial, non-sexist, open and democratic society.

The Constitution also provides that public administration must be governed by democratic values and principles enshrined in the Constitution and that public administration must be development-oriented.

In order to transform the type of public service that we inherited from the apartheid government, the Constitution required that legislation be passed to determine the structure and functioning of a public service and also required it to loyalty execute the lawful policies of the government of the day.

The passing of the Public Service Act was a milestone in this regard. Today we pride ourselves in the transformed and transforming public service workforce that is committed to our constitutional imperatives.

In this regard the Public Service Commission established by section 196 of the Constitution has played a critical role in promoting basic values and principles governing the public administration.

The challenges of bridging the gap between the two economies

Turning to the topic of this third Annual Conference for Senior Management Service, “Bridging the gap between the two economies: A Public Service Response”, it becomes critically important to identify the challenges posed by the second economy, and as our President referred to it in his State of the Nation Address on 6 February 2004, “which constitutes the structural manifestation of poverty, underdevelopment and marginalisation in our country”.

The President’s directive then was that we must move vigorously to implement all the programmes on which we have agreed to ensure that we extricate all our people from the social conditions that spell loss of human dignity.

As pointed out in the Government’s Ten-Year Review Report, the Constitutional Court has already in a number of cases sought to interpret Government’s constitutional obligations to progressively realise the socio-economic rights contained in sections 24, 26, 27 and 29(1) of the Constitution. The Constitutional Court has reaffirmed in many of these cases that Government is obliged to promote the progressive realisation of these rights through the effective and efficient use of available resources.

In this regard the majority of Government’s programmes are aimed at the realisation of socio-economic rights within limited available resources of the State. Mindful of the importance of the implications of these judgments for the State and our constitutional imperatives in terms of socio-economic rights, we must now be ready and resolve in this second economy to tackle the challenges relating to the realisation of socio-economic rights and ensuring a better life for all our people.

Before I conclude I would like to take this opportunity in recognising our First Woman Minister for Justice and Constitutional Development, Ms BS Mahamba. The appointment of my Minister and many other female ministers and deputy ministers in the Cabinet, the highest executive body in the land, is an expression of our commitment that advancing the rights of women as enshrined in our Constitution is an important priority on the agenda for transformation. We will continue to follow the example set by the President.

Conclusion

Laws alone cannot bridge the gap between our deeply divided past and the current realities that we face, as a Public Service dedicated to serving the public in pursuance of the principles of Retho Pele, The onus is upon us to look introspectively at how we as public servants can make a difference in the lives of our people. We must change our attitudes and behaviour in keeping with the values of a Constitution respected by the world, to make this an efficient and effective Public Service that makes our President proud to lead.

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Before I conclude I would like to take this opportunity in recognising our First Woman Minister for Justice and Constitutional Development, Ms BS Mahamba. The appointment of my Minister and many other female ministers and deputy ministers in the Cabinet, the highest executive body in the land, is an expression of our commitment that advancing the rights of women as enshrined in our Constitution is an important priority on the agenda for transformation. We will continue to follow the example set by the President.

Conclusion

Laws alone cannot bridge the gap between our deeply divided past and the current realities that we face, as a Public Service dedicated to serving the public in pursuance of the principles of Retho Pele, The onus is upon us to look introspectively at how we as public servants can make a difference in the lives of our people. We must change our attitudes and behaviour in keeping with the values of a Constitution respected by the world, to make this an efficient and effective Public Service that makes our President proud to lead.
Deepening Professionalism in the Public Service

According to Webster’s Third New International Dictionary, professionalism means, “A calling requiring specialised knowledge and often long and intensive preparation including instruction in skills and methods as well as in the scientific, historical, or scholarly principles underlying such skills and methods, maintained by force of organisation or concerted opinion, high standards of achievement and conduct.” From this definition one can rightfully conclude that the criteria for professionalism involve technical competence and personal behaviour.

Competency Framework for senior managers

The introduction of the SMS Competency Framework is a major step in ensuring that the Public Service achieves its objective of establishing a professional Public Service. They say: the fish rots from the head. Therefore, focusing on the senior management, which is the head of the Public Service, will prevent the rot from setting in, infecting the entire public service.

The SMS Competency Framework will assist in ensuring a consistent approach to human performance throughout the Public Service. The SMS Competency Framework consists of a set of 11 generic competencies that communicate what is expected of senior managers. In addition, this Framework seeks to establish a shared understanding of critical success factors for performance in the Senior Management Service. The Public Service Regulations, 2001 defines competence as “…the blend of knowledge, skills, behaviour and attitude that a person can apply in the work environment, which indicates a person’s ability to meet the requirements of a specific post.”

The 11 competencies that are viewed as being critical for high performance in the senior manager’s role are:

1. Strategic Capability and Leadership — Must be able to provide a vision, set the direction for the organisation and inspire others in order to deliver on the organisational mandate.
2. Programme and Project Management
Elected governments, whatever their political make-up, are entitled to expect loyalty and dedication from senior managers.

Ethics and conduct for senior managers

It is expected of senior managers in the Public Service to display and uphold the highest standards of professional ethics as defined in Section 195(1)(a) of the Constitution. Senior managers must understand and uphold the key values and principles that guide them in their interaction with their superiors, peers, subordinates, and members of the public.

Responsiveness and impartiality

- Elected governments, whatever their political make-up, are entitled to expect loyalty and dedication from senior managers.
- Senior managers are expected to carry out decisions and implement programmes promptly, conscientiously and effectively, and provide advice, which represents the facts accurately, is impartial and maintains a high standard of professional integrity.
- Senior managers must have the ability to interpret the priorities and goals of government. They should be able to render free and frank advice and to draw attention to any unforeseen implications or unintended consequences.

Accountability

Accountability is fundamental to good governance and is one of the essential elements of ethical administration. The perceptions of the public on the state of governance and administration are to a large extent determined by whether government and administration are seen to account for its actions.

Senior managers provide services on behalf of government to all client groups and individuals in a greater variety of circumstances and in so doing (i) they must adhere to the law and policies of government and not pursue their own interest, (ii) they are accountable for the quality of their dealings, and (iii) they are required to deal equitably, fairly and responsively with all individuals and groups.

Senior managers are further required to be frank, open and cooperative with other bodies established under legislation such as the Public Service Commission, Portfolio Committees, and the Auditor General.

Leadership

Senior managers must provide leadership in the area of ethics and “walk the talk”. They should treat all people with whom they interact fairly, with courtesy and sensitivity, taking pride in any service they provide.

Communication

Effective communication is vital in planning, organising and carrying out the activities of government. How the senior manager communicates is often as important as what she/he communicates. While words are important, gestures and body signals, serve to either reinforce or contradict messages you want to send. Public servants may only communicate with the media if they are permitted to do so in terms of the departmental policy. Public servants may also not release information to public without the necessary authority.

Senior managers are expected, where possible, to try and resolve complaints internally, without resorting to public comment or criticism. Senior managers who make public comments in their private capacity must make it clear that they act in their personal capacity.

Management of misconduct

An ethical culture cannot develop in an environment where there are no effec-
tive mechanism for detection, investigation and institution of discipline.

Prompt and decisive disciplinary action should be seen as a means of reinforcing high standards. Senior managers must report any unethical behaviour or wrongdoing by other officials.

Confidentiality of official information
Senior managers must not disclose any official information to any persons unless they are acting: (a) in the course of their official duty, (b) with express authority of their department, (c) for other lawful purpose. They should also not misuse information gained in their official capacity in seeking to take advantage for personal reasons. They should further take care to maintain the integrity and security of official documents/information for which they are responsible. Every attempt should be made to avoid leaks.

It is also important for senior managers to act and advise with honesty and integrity in all aspects of official duties. If a senior manager believes an aspect of policy or administration may have unforeseen consequences or otherwise requires review, it should be brought to the attention of the head of department or the executing authority.

Financial and other private interests (disclosure)
Chapter 3 of the Public Service Regulations prescribe that all senior managers must disclose their financial interests on an annual basis. Financial interests may take the form of shares, directorships or property, which have the potential of conflict with official duties.

Senior managers should not allow themselves to be improperly influenced by personal relationships. They should recuse themselves from any decision where there might be a conflict between their personal relationships/interests and the public interest.

Senior managers may accept unsolicited gifts or moderate acts of hospitality. Accepting such gifts or benefits is a matter of judgment for individual concerned. In such instances they must be satisfied that their position will not in any way be compromised by acceptance. Any gift and hospitality with a value exceeding R150 must be disclosed. In addition, no senior manager must solicit or accept any bribe or other improper inducement.

Political participation
Senior managers should be aware of the potential for conflict of interest and must not take part in any political activity when on duty or on official premises.

They must further not attend in their official capacity outside conferences or functions convened by or under the aegis of a party political organisation.

Section 36 of the Public Service Act, 1994 provides that a public servant may not be a member and serve on the management of a lawful political party or may attend public political meetings, but may not preside or speak in such a meeting. A public servant may also not draw up or publish any writing or deliver a public speech to promote or prejudice the interest of any political party.

Outside employment
Public servants must not, without approval, undertake remunerative work outside their official duties or use office equipment for such work. Senior managers should not seek to engage in outside employment if that employment will place them in conflict with their official duties or is likely to affect their efficiency in the performance of their official duties.

Labour relations
In performing their duties, senior managers must ensure equity in employment processes and manage staff fairly. They must also ensure that the workplace is free from discrimination and harassment. They should avoid acting in a way that could be seen to be unreasonable or could be construed as unlawful discrimination.

Senior managers should deal with complaints and grievances in a prompt and fair manner. It is the responsibility of senior managers to ensure that the conduct of staff does not undermine service delivery of a department. Misconduct must therefore be dealt with and not overlooked or swept under the carpet.

Senior managers should defend their departments in labour disputes of their staff members. In instances where staff members participate in industrial or protest action, senior managers must give the necessary mandate for entering into an agreement. In instances where the matter has financial implications, they must also ensure that the necessary funds are available.

Intellectual property
Government or the department retains the copyright of work produced by a senior manager during her/his employment.

Conclusion
The professional association will assist in shaping the professionalisation of the Senior Management Service it is guided by the constitution that derives its cue from a quest to build the SMS competencies and promotion of the professional ethics and conduct expected of the senior managers.
How National and Provincial Spheres of Government can work towards fulfilling their Constitutional Mandate

After 10 years of this government’s ascension to power, our people have every reason to celebrate the fruits of democracy in South Africa, particularly in the area of heritage.

The first part of this input addresses the challenges of the second economy, within the context of the local sphere of government. In the second part of the input, the intergovernmental relationship of local government to provincial and national government is examined. The third part focuses on the obligation on the other two spheres to support municipalities. Fourthly, we examine the regulatory framework, principles and procedures governing the assignment of additional functions to municipalities.

The challenges of the second economy within the context of local government

As you will be aware, South Africa’s socio-economic dualism has been analysed extensively in a report co-ordinated and compiled by the Presidency on the Ten Years of Democracy. According to this report, the first economy is at the cutting edge, globally integrated and has the capacity to export primary commodities, services and manufactured goods. In contrast, the second economy exists at the edges, consisting of large numbers of the unemployed and the “unemployable” and does not benefit from progress in the first economy.

Not far from this Waterfront precinct, which depicts features of the first economy, are farm areas, townships and informal settlements that are a reflection of some characteristics of the second economy. The names of some of these townships and settlements tell a story —Kwalanga (sun and light), eNyanga (moon), eGugulethu (our pride), eKhayelitsha (new home), eBarcelona, eBoystown, eEurope, eJoe Slovo, eKanana (Canan), eLusaka, eNewrest and KwaVukuzenzele (rise and do it yourself).

These areas are situated along the N2 on the Settlers Way Freeway.

If we had time, we could talk about many other townships and rural villages whose people are trapped in similar conditions. Despite these conditions, which are a result of our apartheid past, our people have a resolve to strengthen the social contract with government. This contract is based on the creation of a better life for all.

It is clear that municipalities no longer...
only have a task of basic local administration; they are required to play an important role in the country’s struggle against poverty and underdevelopment. The Constitution and Government policy have identified a developmental role for municipalities that puts the local sphere of government in the foreground of a national effort to redress the political, social and economic wrongs of apartheid. Indeed the contribution of municipalities in this effort will over time prove to be a decisive one.

In 2004, many of our 284 municipalities were able to shoulder their responsibilities but not all could do so without the support of national and provincial government.

Municipalities have undergone a process of amalgamation and rationalisation, with transitional structures from 1994 to 2000. It was only in December 2000 that municipalities were established within the new system of local government.

The current term of municipalities will end in December 2005. It is also within this context that on 20 September 2004, the Department of Provincial and Local Government, together with the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) convened a preparatory conference for the next local government elections. During this conference, stakeholders included the Independent Electoral Commission, the South African Local Government Association, Members of Parliament, representatives of Traditional Leaders, municipal mayors and councilors. These stakeholders confirmed a Programme of Action for the next 15 months that will ensure that we have successful elections.

Indeed, having established municipalities to the levels where they are today, it is clear that for the next five years every effort must be made to direct government support to the consolidation of local government such as clean water, adequate sanitation, food security and appropriate shelter.

For example, in Khayelitsha, Cape Town, according to Statistics South Africa, approximately 64.4% of households who live in informal dwellings as compared to the national average of 15.6%. A similar pattern exists in other areas such as Motherwell (Eastern Cape) where 61.3% of households live in informal dwellings, 41.8% in Inanda (KwaZulu-Natal) and 30.9% in Alexandra (Gauteng).

At the same time, in areas such as these, the levels of unemployment place additional pressure on the viability of municipalities and their capacity to deliver services at the expected standards and norms. It is clear that we in the public service have to be more practical in addressing these challenges and recognise that government has pronounced extensively on policies, strategies and mechanisms that should guide implementation.

These pronouncements include the micro-economic reform strategy (MERS), the governments’ commitment to the resolutions of the Growth and Development Summit (GDS) as well as the Government-wide Programme of Action that was announced by our President in his State of the Nation Address in May 2009.

The place of local government within the intergovernmental system

I would like to briefly sketch the institutional basis for local government and its place in the intergovernmental system.

A municipal council is elected, is accountable to its electorate, and is the final decision-maker on a defined range of matters in terms of the Constitution and legislation. The council is constitutionally endowed with legislative and executive powers for its areas of competency, such as raising its own revenue through rates, taxes, or charging user fees for certain services.

To this end, a municipality determines its own budget, adopts a strategic plan linked to its budget, takes full responsibility for performing its functions and accounts for overall performance. As you will be aware the own revenue component is very important because currently, out of the total transfers to the three spheres, national government receives approximately 57%, provincial government receives approximately 35% and local government receives approximately 5%.

With regard to intergovernmental relations, a substantial body of policy and legislation has been enacted since 1996 with municipalities including the Organised Local Government Act (1996); the Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations Act (1997); the Local Government White Paper (1998); the Municipal Structures Act (1998); the Municipal Demarcation Act (1998); the Municipal Systems Act (2000); the Municipal Finance Management Act (2003); the Municipal Property Rates Act (2004); the Traditional Leadership Framework Act; and the Division of Revenue Act (2004).

At the same time, the Constitution allocates functional areas of competence to municipalities (as listed in Parts B of Schedules 4 and 5). These include the provision of services such as municipal infrastructure, water and sanitation, municipal health services, transport and street lighting and electricity distribution. All of these functions are subject to national regulation but for each function, a municipality has the authority to exer-
Engaging and supporting municipalities

When we deliberate on issues of municipal budgets, we should always be mindful of the fact that one municipality as compared to another may have a weaker economic base, depending on its specific geographic, social and economic circumstances. This municipality may generate less revenue for public consumption or investment, be more dependent on revenue transfers from the national focus, and will confront challenges as it seeks to extend service provision to previously disadvantaged sectors of our population that are uniquely its own.

As a result, actual historical inequalities and the reality of asymmetrical development are factors of profound consequence when we design programmes whose implementation requires effective municipalities. We must therefore do everything in our power to support municipalities throughout the country to become sustainable institutions.

The basic policy frameworks are in place. The task that we have as the entire public service is to do two things: skills and effort to implement the programme of government in these localities, nearer to our people and where it matters most.

For us colleagues located in national or provincial departments, this means that in the first instance we need to have an understanding and an appreciation of the service delivery backlogs that face local municipalities because of our past. Secondly, we need to have an understanding of the available policy instruments and institutional mechanisms that have been designed to address these backlogs, particularly after ten years of democracy.

Thirdly, we need to ensure that individually and collectively in our departments we are able to practically engage and support municipalities as they strive to meet the objectives of government.

I hope you will agree with me that the development path of government is not advanced by those who are quick to point to a litany of problems in municipalities and do not, with the same amount of vigour, go out of their way to play their role to support these institutions as clearly articulated in our Constitution.

I challenge you today, colleagues and representatives of provincial and national departments, to carefully read our Constitution, once again, particularly Section 154. It states that national and provincial government must “by legislative and other measures support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their own affairs, to exercise their powers and to perform their functions”.

How can you support and strengthen municipalities if you do not practically build this capacity together with these institutions? You must demonstrate this support in practical terms, having an understanding of the daily realities that face these municipalities and the commitment that government has with our people. Municipalities depend on the support of the other two spheres of government to perform their own functions.

The IDP process was an iterative one and was undertaken through the following phases:

• Analysis;
• Development of strategies;
• Identification of projects;
• Integration of programmes, sector alignment and establishment of a sustainability framework;
• Public comment and council approval; and
• Implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

During the implementation of the IDP, partnerships have strengthened between Ugu and some of the national and provincial departments. Together with some state-owned enterprises, the departments have mobilised support and technical and financial resources for the municipality. The departments of Water Affairs and Forestry, Public Works, Agriculture,
The issue of assignments is currently receiving close attention as we propose improvements in our system of intergovernmental relations.

Conclusion
In conclusion, the challenges of the second economy, especially within the context of local municipalities will not be resolved through support alone. Many challenges can be successfully addressed if municipalities are able to engage directly with the other two spheres.

Some will require dedicated support and engagement over a long period of time as we consolidate effective local governance systems.

As the leadership of the Public Service in this country we have a duty to provide government policy, full and unswerving support to local government. This we undertake, not as an ad hoc task but as an expression of our core business and a commitment to service our people right there at the coalface of service delivery.

Our human resource development programmes within government and initiatives by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), as well as the South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI) must address these challenges. The human resource development programmes must give serious attention to building the capacity of our senior management.

Assigning additional responsibilities to municipalities
Beyond the discussion on IDP processes I would like to briefly discuss the issues of assigning powers and functions.

The Constitution permits national and provincial government to assign to a municipality additional powers and functions, including under certain circumstances and with the agreement of a municipality, the administration of a function in Parts A of Schedules 4 and 5. In other words, the Constitution provides for evolutionary decentralisation. The power or function concerned in all cases has its origin in a piece of legislation.

The assignment provisions are complex and beyond the scope of this paper. What is important for our purposes today is to bring to the attention of the leadership of the public service the body of detailed regulation that governs this form of intergovernmental relations.

I am bringing this matter to your attention particularly because the assignment of additional functions to municipalities at this stage in our history, should be approached with prudence and a great deal of circumspection. Assignment has lasting implications for municipal stability and service provision, and should not be regarded as a solution to service delivery challenges or undertaken for reasons of administrative convenience.

At the same time, when properly executed, assignment of functions to the local sphere can create possibilities for improved service delivery.


Practice shows that assignment processes can be well executed, as we have done in the past 10 years. However, we still have some few unfortunate instances where the assignment process is inconsistent with policy. The consequences of these actions could result in municipalities being placed in a compromising situation where they are expected to perform functions without being allocated the necessary financial resources. Funds must follow functions.

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How Technology Improves Government’s Performance in a Developmental State

The challenge for government to bridge the gap between the two economies in the country has over the past 10 years proven to be enormous. Over the past 10 years, both the public and private sectors have made commendable efforts to make government and government services accessible to all citizens and to narrow the growing gulf between those sectors of the society that have and those that do not. However, the vast difference in the living conditions of South Africans remains an alarming reminder of the enormity of the problems of inequitable allocation of resources still prevalent.

In its effort to solve these problems, government has had to break away from the obsolete ways of delivering service. Instead, it had to opt for more innovative strategies to overcome some of the impeding challenges, e.g. geographical ones. As a result, government has become the biggest consumer of information and communication technology in the country.

The implications of this are self-evident to those charged with driving strategy in a developmental state. Amid the excitement brought about by Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as one of the most viable solutions to our numerous service delivery problems, decision makers in government are gradually awakening to some new challenges that literacy can no longer be defined in terms of the mere ability to read and write.

Literacy now includes the ability to use technology both from the point of view of being able to use it to deliver the services to the community and being able to access those services using technology. In the new service delivery environment, people cannot claim competence in the discharge of their responsibility if they willfully con-
continue to stand on the wrong side of the
digital divide. The digital divide is the
gap that exists in opportunities available
to those with limited access to technology.
It is the divide between technology “haves” and technology “have-nots”.
The 21st century senior managers in
government are expected to use informa-
tion and communication technology to
empower those who, through misfortune
and circumstances and not by choice, find
themselves on the other side of a growing
digital divide, i.e. those who are disadvan-
taged by geography, race, gender and dis-
ability or by income.
Managers should be mindful of the
dangers of over reliance on ICT as a
means to an end. ICT should be viewed
as an enabler whose accessibility by the
community should form the priority in
developing government policy targets —
i.e. how people can best use the technolo-
gy for socio-economic development in a
sustainable manner.
SITA’s mandate
The mandate that SITA (State
Information Technology Agency) carries
is to enable the public service to improve
service delivery to the public through the
provision of information technology,
information systems and related prod-
ucts. Furthermore, SITA has a major
challenge of encouraging the greater
Cellular
communication has
played an important
role in addressing
universal
communication
service and universal
access through both
its commercial
services as well as its
licence obligations.
majority of citizens to participate in economic activities. This involves undertaking relevant research and supporting initiatives that support training and skills transfer for those who have yet to explore the benefits of ICT.

In accordance with this mandate, SITA is required to lead in such areas as the achievement of economies of scale, interoperability within the government environment, the launch of a bona fide e-Government, the broadening of the skills base, and securing of environments. It is a tough but achievable mandate that, if successfully carried out, would eventually enable the public service to broaden and enhance the ability of South Africans to proactively participate in the country's economy.

SITA upholds the notion that technology adapted to local conditions and coupled with education and training can serve as a key mechanism to help bridge the gap between the two economies.

**A little bit of history**

The correlation between ICT, ICT growth and the developmental state is not new. It was most famously captured in the December 1984 Maitland Report prepared by the Independent Commission for Worldwide Telecommunications Development. The Maitland report highlighted the inequalities in telecommunications resources between developed and developing countries. What is important, is that it also exposed the existence of a direct correlation between the availability of and access to telecommunications infrastructure and the countries’ condition and growth.

The report also features an ambitious goal, that by the 21st century everyone should be within easy reach of a telephone. While three years into the 21st century there are now globally over 1.13 billion fixed telephone lines and over 3.16 billion mobile phones, not everyone is within easy reach of a phone as promised. Rather contradictory but the rapid development of technology globally further exacerbates this challenge.

When Maitland’s report was compiled plain old telephone services, often called (POTS) were the state of the art technology of the day. Many drastic changes have taken place and lately people have moved on to awesome news services (pans) that cover broadcasting and IT services as well. What Maitland in his report calls the "missing link" can therefore be characterised as the lack of just of telecommunications but also of ICT infrastructure.

The effect of this missing link is found to be a serious impediment to economic growth. My argument is that the perpetuation of the digital divide and the subsequent failure to minimise the cleavages of the last few years could have grave consequences for South Africa in terms of the economy it develops. This would further have adverse consequences on its ability to compete globally based on the business environment it creates and the skills it produces.

**Context and statistics**

Extrapolating from Maitland’s missing link theory the missing link exists not only between South Africa and the more technologically developed countries but also within South Africa itself.

In 1994 the new government inherited the highest teledensity in Africa, which in 1996 was 10%. Conversely, judged against middle-income countries this was low. Added to that, the teledensity was also very racially skewed. About nine in every 10 (89%) of white households, 77% of Asian households, 43% of coloured and 11% of black household had a telephone.

A decade later, penetration is still skewed and teledensity is at approximately 10.6%, up from 10% based on the 2001 South African Census. It is 11.4% based on the Telkom 2002 figures. As at 2002, Telkom had rolled out approximately 2.7 million additional lines, bringing the total number of fixed lines excluding pay phones to 4.9 million.

An analysis of data from the 2001 census shows that 7.6% of black households, 12.1% of coloured households, 22.1% of Asian households and 31% of white households have access to a telephone only, a cellphone only or a telephone and a cellular telephone in their dwelling. These figures cannot be compared directly with the results of the previous census due to the different in the questions posed and the approach used for information seeking.

However what remains relevant is that the skewing racial distribution of telecommunications services and access still exists. While figures about access to computers, the internet and other ICT components that are critical to the communication revolution are not available, you can be assured that the skew is more bewildering.

**The cellular market**

The cellphone is very important as a tool of communication. This is convincingly corroborated by the growth in connections that has been so phenomenal. From a total number of 535 000 cellular phone users in 1995, the number of subscribers in South Africa has now increased to approximately 12 million.

Cellular communication has played an important role in addressing universal communication service and universal access through both its commercial services as well as its licence obligations. This was made possible because the technology deployed has the ability to cover the country more comprehensively at a lower cost because of its mobility. Added to this was the introduction of a prepaid service that has proven to be a great attraction to low-income users.

The prepaid service is a classical example of how technology can be used as a tool to facilitate the bridging of the digital divide. Prepaid technology has proven to be a significant factor in the high take up of the cellular service in South Africa and internationally despite the fact that in terms of tariffs charged, it is often less affordable on a per minute or per send billing compared to a post paid.

It has some outstanding and unique features that attract the public to it as a means of accessing telecommunications services. This is particularly true as low-income users need more than low prices. One of its unique features is that it enables the users to control their spending. All it takes is a single sign-up without
Government services, increase connection development and use of ICT and its delivery to communities have become an integral part in the development of this developmental state. MEC project leaders we should be committed to working towards strengthening the country’s capacity to grow economically through policies that would empower the citizen to participate meaningfully in the growth of this developmental state. MEC Ramaphakana from Western Cape defines a developmental state as by nature:

- interventionistic, especially where there is market failure;
- enables citizens or organised groups to mobilise;
- is directive, namely providing a roadmap where necessary; and
- is supportive of the weak and vulnerable.

As Prof Levin correctly pointed out, there is actually nothing futuristic about IT capabilities. ICT is real and accounts for the digital yawning gap between “the haves” and “the have-nots”. This is seen internationally and within the nations of the world.

Speaking about the challenges of being a civil servant in a developmental state, Finance Minister Mr Trevor Manuel pointed out that the “unfreedom” of not knowing extends to the use of a computer. Senior managers in the public service are thus challenged to be change catalysts by firstly embracing transformation. Technology is the central point of the delivery of the developmental state.

Government has wholly embraced this challenge hence the proliferation of ICT devices in all national departments, provincial and local administrations.

Amongst other things, SITA was established primarily to facilitate the cost-effective provision of communication services has to give way to a recognition that in addition to connecting networks to networks we must look at connecting people to networks. A traditional emphasis on the role infrastructure plays in the delivery of services has to give way to a recognition that in addition to connecting networks to networks we must look at connecting people to networks. A traditional emphasis on the role infrastructure plays in the delivery of services has to give way to a recognition that in addition to connecting networks to networks we must look at connecting people to networks.

Conclusive remarks
While language and literacy had little impact on IT a few years ago, the growing importance of content places more emphasis on these two critical areas. The shift from narrow band to broadband services means that language and literacy have become an integral part in the development and use of ICT and its delivery to communities. Language websites with relevant local information on weather, business and community information are simple examples.

If Internet uptake is to increase in addition to the roll out of more PCs, local content will have to be promoted to address local development, training and educational requirements. This is important in developing e-Government strategies and policies geared to making South Africans e-citizens. In our rush to develop e-Government services, increase connection and ensure that South Africa is technologically advanced as other countries globally, it is important to ensure that our e-citizens are equipped with e-skills.

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Let’s consider some of these fundamental questions:
- In the role as a custodian of the public sector IT strategies, can SITA claim to have contributed significantly to the enhancement of the developmental state?
- How many senior government officers, accounting officers included, can claim judicious use of their ICT budgets?
- How many can claim optimal use of their resources in the services of Batho Pele?

These are fundamental questions that do not require speculative answers or to be reduced to mere rhetoric. Accordingly, we will have to agree to subject ourselves to a scientific measurement of our performance. Incorporating the management of ICT in the key performance areas of all senior civil servants and linking them to performance bonuses will cause no harm.
Summary of Key Issues: Building a Developmental State and Bridging the Gap between Two Economies

Chairperson, thank you for the opportunity to reflect on the outcome of the past three days. This task is a difficult one for two reasons. Firstly because it comes at the end of the conference when most of you are anxious to board your planes, and secondly because we’ve had so many inspiring presentations and informative debates that I may not do justice to all the issues raised.

Let me nevertheless attempt to summarise what struck me as the key messages emerging from our deliberations, remembering that a full report will be published on DPSA’s web site shortly.

Nature of the developmental state

In outlining the purpose of the conference, Dr Richard Levin, DG of DPSA, asked that we develop a common understanding of a developmental state and the role of senior management in bridging the gap between our two economies.

A number of speakers reminded us of the developmental challenges still facing us despite our achievements in the first decade of democracy. Minister Manuel spoke of these as the “sources of unfreedom” — poverty, unemployment, lack of education and violence. We remain one of the most unequal societies in the world, a situation that normal market forces will not remedy but will in fact exacerbate if left to its own devices. Drawing on minimum income data, Minister Skweyiya pointed out that at least 58% of our population, or around 17 million people, still live in poverty.

Dr Mkosana, acting DG of Labour, added that 72% of poor people live in rural areas and that most are female-led. Adding to this challenge is the pattern of migration that we experience from rural to urban areas and the increase in households due to the emergence of smaller families.

A developmental state therefore has the responsibility of fighting these sources of unfreedom and thereby closing the gap between the rich and the poor.

Role of senior management

So, what does this mean to you and me as members of senior management?

Minister Manuel asked us to remain humble and to espouse the same values as former President Julius Nyerere. Indeed, he suggested that we consider introducing a Julius Nyerere award. On a more
sobering note, he asked us to stop taking “mad” decisions, like filling our wardrobes with caps and golf shirts, not to wear caps during conferences, and he may have added, not to fall asleep during presentations.

Mr Ramatlakane spoke about the need for focusing on clear deliverables supportive of the weak and the vulnerable as opposed to arranging “feelgood” events.

Minister Fraser-Moleketi reminded us of the words of Lyndon B Johnson that there is nothing as unequal as the equal treatment of unequals.

She also asked us to turn around the perception that we as managers don’t know what’s happening at the coalface of service delivery, which includes not dreaming up excuses when our services are required where they are needed most.

We have been implored not to fall prey to self-serving behaviour. We have chosen a career in the Public Service not to enrich ourselves but to serve. We should take our cue from Premier Shilowa, who reminded us that he represents the “working class”.

Mr Alvin Rapea referred to the original objectives in establishing the Senior Management Service, which was to attract and retain a cadre of professional senior managers. Quoting from his dictionary, he said that professionalism represents both a high standard of achievement and exemplary personal conduct. From his own life experience he reminded us that a “fish rots from the head”. He referred us to the SMS Handbook for detailed guidance on the skills that we should develop and the values we should espouse.

Key issues

Coming to the key themes of the conference and the key issues raised. To me those that stand out are:

• The need to increase the impact of the State on the lives of the poor while increasing investment in long term economic growth. Speaker after speaker emphasised that we cannot hope to close the gaps if we maintain the same trajectory of delivery. We need to become more innovative in our approaches, even if it means moving out of our comfort zones and embracing new service delivery models. Perhaps our choices were best summarised by Mr Joel Netshitenze who referred to the four journeys that we could embark on — the Segud, Smaarait one, Dulisanang, Skedonk or Shosholoza. Clearly Shosholoza is the path we should choose, where all our people get on board and have a sense of belonging.

• Another cross-cutting theme that emerged was the need to revitalise the spirit of Batho Pele and putting it to work in our different departments. As Minister Pandor has so eloquently stated, our people need caring public servants who provide basic services of a high quality. This includes introducing simple things like wearing name tags and adapting our office hours to the needs of our clients.

• Mr Msimang and other speakers alluded to the powerful role that technology can play in bridging the digital divide — which requires all of us to embrace new technology and mobilise this to close the gaps.

• Building on the monitoring and evaluation system that is taking shape at national level, while drawing on the lessons learned by individual departments, has also been a key theme of this conference. I sensed a great deal of excitement and interest in the M & E system of the Presidency, emphasising that we should use this as a learning opportunity and improving our performance.

• Strengthening our human resource management; in particular developing our skills, performance management practices and basic administration.

• Balancing the need for financial and administrative regulation with the need for differentiation and innovation.

integration of state services, which has raised the need to establish a “single Public Service” with improved mobility of both functions and people between and across the different levels and organs of state.

• We heard a clarion call from the DG of Provincial and Local Government to support our colleagues at local government level, remembering that the new system of local government was only established in December 2000 and that municipalities have a key developmental role to play. Historical inequalities have a profound impact on municipalities’ access to resources and their capacity to deliver, which means that we should not be devolving functions indiscriminately.

• Another cross-cutting theme that emerged was the need to revitalise the spirit of Batho Pele and putting it to work in our different departments. As Minister Pandor has so eloquently stated, our people need caring public servants who provide basic services of a high quality. This includes introducing simple things like wearing name tags and adapting our office hours to the needs of our clients.
Case Study

Water Services: Taking South Africa into the Next Century

South Africa’s national water policy of 1997 and its supporting legislation, the National Water Act of 1998, are recognised internationally as being amongst the most progressive initiatives in the world today, in the global move towards sustainable development of water resources and achievement of equity in distribution of the benefits of resource utilisation.

This policy and legislation clearly establish a new kind of vision and a radically different way of conducting the business of water resource management that will take this country into the next century. It is understood that South Africa is taking the first bold steps along a path that may well provide a model for many other countries in the world to shift and adapt to the newer realities of managing scarce natural resources, in an environment which is uncertain and continually changing, influenced by global, regional and localized processes.

The policy and legislation are far more sophisticated and complex than anything which existed previously; the implications for the roles of government, civil society and professional service providers are profound, and are not yet clearly understood by all parties. The ultimate success of the new policy depends to a very great degree on our ability to understand the long term needs, and to build and deliver the capacity to sustain this new trajectory.

The development of policy at national or provincial levels is a process that requires a high level of integration, influenced as it is by political, economic, social, technical and ecological issues. Many people, particularly those in government agencies, who become involved in policy development processes are trained in one or other of these disciplines, but have not been formally trained or equipped with the basic competencies to manage high-level policy processes, instead finding their way by trial and error.

There is a high risk of good policy failing or being rewritten before its implementation reaches full maturity, due to a lack of people with the capacity and high-level skills to manage implementation processes. Yet policy development, implementation and review processes can be made much more effective, efficient and sustainable if there is better understanding of the overall public policy cycle.

Between 2002 and 2004, the Water Research Commission (WRC) supported a research project entitled “Consoli-
ation and transfer of knowledge and experience gained in the development of water and related policy in South Africa" (WRC project number K5/1299).

The project aimed to provide, through critical review and analysis, an understanding of where we in South Africa have come from and where we are going in terms of water policy, in order to support ongoing development and implementation throughout this and future policy cycles.

The objectives of this research project were to:
- capture and consolidate knowledge and experience gained in several recent policy developments and R&D processes related to sustainable water resources management;
- provide guidance for future leaders in how to establish and manage policy development and implementation processes; and
- provide guidelines for training and enhancing the capacity of people who are or will be responsible for policy development and implementation.

The members of the core project team have been closely involved in South Africa’s water policy development and implementation process since the early 1990s. Most of us came into the process from a technical perspective; few of us had any grounding or basic training in public policy and political contexts in which public policy is developed and implemented.

The opportunity afforded to us, and through us to other members of the water sector, to reflect back on a process which has at times extremely difficult and seemingly chaotic, has led to a much deeper understanding of the generic public policy process, in all its complexities.

Through this project, we have endeavoured to make this understanding explicit, so that it can be communicated more widely, to those who are still closely involved in ongoing policy development, implementation and review, as well as to the next generation of policymakers in the water sector.

Products and outcomes of the WRC research project include:
- Report on a critical review and assessment of the South African water policy process 1994-2003 (WRC report number TT232/04);
- A project synthesis report, due for release in early 2005 (WRC report number 1295/04);
- A series of issues papers published in various journals and collated on a cd with the synthesis report;
- A series of professional seminars, aimed at middle managers, on public policy in the water sector, which have now led to an annual event supported by the WRC.

Case Study

Two key learning points for public sector managers emerged from the research:
- the value and role of an internal communication and capacity building strategy which is fully integrated with the metapolicy cycle; and
- the value of opportunities for experienced practitioners and managers to reflect and structure knowledge so that it can be made available more easily to others around them.

With regard to the first point, the external consultation and communication...
related to the water policy development phase was remarkably strong and broad-based. Yet time, opportunities and resources for internal communication within the water sector, particularly of technical and legal concepts, were very limited during the policy development phase. In fact, no co-ordinated capacity building strategy for DWAF staff was initiated until well into the policy implementation phase, and a sector-wide, co-ordinated strategy, which includes government, key external agencies and service providers, still has not been formalised. This is of concern when the approaches to water resources management which are required by current policy and legislation are very different to those of the past.

Technical, social, economic, managerial and political competencies are urgently needed, that could have been emerging now if real effort and resources had been concentrated on communication and capacity building in parallel with the policy development phase, bringing people along with the policy rather than expecting them to catch up much later with what it means for them and for their daily work.

On the issue of reflection, a significant conclusion that we have drawn from this research project is that the value of opportunities to reflect and consolidate individual and collective learning cannot be over-estimated. In the South African water sector today, the real and pressing challenges of delivery of basic water and sanitation services to all, the underpinning of our industrial and agricultural foundations, and the protection of water resources for future sustainability, tend to be overwhelming and all-consuming.

Trying to do more with few people and limited resources, professionals in the water sector tend to miss or undervalue opportunities to take our own learning to higher levels through reflection and analysis. Yet this reflection and analysis allows us to do our own work better and enables others to learn from our successes and failures, so as to contribute to ongoing improvement in service delivery, economic activity and social development through sustainable utilisation and management of water resources.

Figure 1: Generic public policy process (adapted from De Coning, 1995)
Knowledge transfer and capacity building

The term “capacity building” is somewhat over-used in South Africa today, yet the importance of ensuring the capacity for implementation of new policy is readily recognised. For the public sector, capacity building generally refers to improvements in the ability of public sector organisations to perform appropriate tasks, either on their own or in co-operation with other organisations.

This capacity building involves a total (structural, functional and cultural) transformation of government in order to mobilise all available resources to achieve policy objectives.

We would like to add an emphasis on the importance of human competence or “capacity for informed action”. It is ultimately humans who make decisions, who foster new relationships and who change behaviour. Technologies, data, guidelines, procedures and regulations can only ever support human action, not define or determine such action.

Appropriate and sufficient knowledge, which essentially resides in people, is critical in the capacity equation. In the WRC project, and to serve the ultimate goal of building capacity and competence for policy processes in the water sector, we had to overcome three potential obstacles to the consolidation and transfer of knowledge. These were:

- Extraction and consolidation of knowledge that existed in the system;
- Packaging and transfer of that knowledge to new adopters; and
- Ensuring that new adopters have deep understanding as opposed to superficial awareness of key concepts.

Extract and consolidate knowledge that existed in the system

Just finding the people that played key roles in the water policy reform process was difficult enough. Many have since moved on to new jobs and new interests. Secondly, convincing these people to make time available for sharing their past experiences posed a challenge. Modern society tends to value action and not reflection, to the extent that reflection is not seen as a valid activity at work.

Middle and senior managers in the public service especially seem to be overloaded with administrative responsibilities. The urgencies of day-to-day operations and “firefighting” can draw attention and resources away from the strategic management of policy processes that, if properly addressed, could prevent or at least minimise the need for future firefighting. Much of the value of the research project thus lay in creating the space and time for senior practitioners to reflect on and share their experiences and knowledge.

Package and transfer consolidated knowledge to new adopters

A common knowledge transfer strategy is to “codify” or write down the knowledge that is tacitly possessed by people, i.e. to convert what we know into numbers, words and equations. In this explicit form, knowledge can relatively easily become part of organisational artefacts (tools, documents, procedures, etc.), and can be transferred and “owned” by organisations.

However, such explicit knowledge is stripped from its human context and strictly speaking does not represent true knowledge, but rather information. It becomes knowledge when an individual interprets and internalises the information. This knowledge may be latent until there is a specific call for it, upon which it will provide an individual with a “capacity for informed action”.

To the observer, such action can appear to be based on “gut feel” or intuition. In the collective, the value of this knowledge manifests, for example, in the efficiency with which established teams – such as project teams or sport teams – operate. There is an unwritten and unspoken code between members that allows such teams to achieve results that are not possible for beginner teams.

Collective efficiency does not come easily and is often the result of a long process based on a combination of peer and self-selection, getting to know each other intimately and developing trust. This point emphasises the importance of promoting continuity of team membership in all long-term initiatives. Yet we recognise that achieving continuity is particularly challenging in the public sector today, which is characterised by a very high turnover of staff at almost all levels.

Ensure that new adopters have deep
understanding as opposed to superficial awareness of key concepts

Compliance relates to understanding, and understanding relates to a deeper process of connecting and organising knowledge around important concepts. Such “conditioned” knowledge supports understanding as well as knowledge transfer to other contexts, rather than only the ability to remember.

To develop competence implies having a deep foundation of factual knowledge about a topic. The more deeply material under study is processed — for example, the more effort is used to make use of associations between the items to be learned and knowledge already in the memory — the better will be the later retrieval of the knowledge.

This has implications for capacity building, knowledge transfer and learning interventions in general. The experience gained through the WRC project seems to suggest that once-off seminars serve a limited purpose. Individuals need the time and space to apply what they have learned before they will truly understand it and can claim competence in the field.

A supportive organisational environment is also necessary for these individuals, one where top managers support the introduction and implementation of new concepts and knowledge by junior and middle managers.

Recommendations

A range of quite specific issues relating to capacity building, policy research and policy management has arisen from this research project, and these issues have been presented and explored in more detail in the relevant project reports and papers. Reflecting on the original objectives of this project, which were all aimed at improving the quality of the development and implementation of water and related policy in South Africa, we have made a number of general recommendations.

In addition, a number of research priorities have been identified and are also discussed in the project reports. The primary general recommendation is that the South African “water institution” (including government, external agencies, service providers, higher education institutions and interest groups) should rapidly establish and implement a strategy for ensuring that the core of capacity for strategic policy development and management is maintained, through the provision of appropriate institutional or organisational mechanisms as well as through building individual and collective capacity amongst professional practitioners at various appropriate levels.

The construction of stories, anecdotes or metaphor is a particularly useful technique for storing and sharing knowledge via the institutional lore. A “storytelling programme” for the water sector, that uses innovative techniques and mechanisms, would be a significant contribution to developing future leadership.

The creation of space for strategic conversations and storytelling is increasingly recognised as a good learning and knowledge sharing practice. Storytelling can involve learning at three different levels:

- The person receiving the story must implicitly and explicitly develop their own knowledge and understanding in order to hear and “package” the story;
- The person recording the story must be willing and able to integrate the new information, contained in the story, into their current knowledge in order to generate new, broader or deeper knowledge and competency.
- The next annual professional seminar on “Managing public policy in the water sector” will be held in Pretoria in April 2005. Contact Dr Heather MacKay at the Water Research Commission for more information. Tel: (012) 3300340 or email: heatherm@wrc.org.za

The contents of this article represent the views of the researchers, and do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Water Research Commission or the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry. Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.

References

The Monitoring and Evaluation Learning Workshop: A Synopsis

Bongani Matomela of the DPSA writes on the highlights from a Monitoring and Evaluation Learning Workshop held in Johannesburg, recently.

M is Kleinhout from the Presidency gave an overview of the proposed government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system. The framework that the Presidency has developed is a key instrument to ensure that there is no fragmentation in government, and is also key to measuring the Government’s Programme of Action.

It was, however, highlighted that the POA constitutes only a third of what government is doing, the other two-thirds is what government is doing on a daily basis. The main challenges are to ensure co-ordination with provincial M&E systems, and how to appropriately evaluate processes, outputs and outcomes. Key specialist skills like research, data/statistical analysis, policy analysis and report writing, are required to do this M&E in government.

The framework also explains the role of various levels of government and the central co-ordinating departments.

Stanley Anderson presented the M&E system that was developed for the Expanded Public Works Programme under the Department of Public Works. This contains clear indicators: job opportunity; person years of employment; government expenditure; person training days; demographic data; and project wage rate.

Both national government initiatives, that is the Presidency’s and Public Works’, face largely similar challenges. These include institutional arrangements and integration, particularly on the part of EPWP, reporting fatigue, capacity to do proper M&E, integration with other planning systems to address issues of duplication and overlap as well as defining levels to ensure proper evaluation.

Other challenges that need to be dealt with include cluster co-ordination, the development of proper indicators and finding out, as EPWP for instance, attempts to, whether development impact can be attributed to what is being measured.

Althe van Rensburg, from the Premier’s Office in the Free State, made a presentation on their electronic web-based system which is probably the first of its kind in the country. It is a very good information hub and a tool to monitor the progress of projects being implemented, the nature and type of projects, value and who they involve, etc. It also has numerous validation and checks and balances to authenticate the information being captured.

However, like many innovative solutions, the initiative also faces challenges, chief of which is getting other departments to co-operate, thus emphasising the need for advocacy. Added to this are risks such as the movement of people around posts and the availability of time and other resources for such a big system.

A representative from the Premier’s Office in the Eastern Cape also made a presentation about the M&E system for the provincial growth and development plan (PGDP) in Eastern Cape. Though in its development stage and not yet fully implemented, it is nevertheless a well-thought out plan. It incorporates many M&E systems from various provincial departments and stakeholders. More importantly, it is a dual system in that it is a combination of a centralised and decentralised M&E.

The Development Bank of Southern Africa has also developed a good M&E model that operates almost independently from the daily operations of the Bank. One of its features is that all completed projects of the bank have to produce “lessons learned reports.” Monitoring and evaluation is characterised by actual site and project visits, and teams are drawn from various disciplines and practices. The bank model shows a strong emphasis on rigour, objectivity and reliability in doing operations evaluations. The bank offers a capacity building programme that can be recommended for the various provinces and departments.

Thulani Mahaso presented on the UNDP results-based M&E framework which is premised on a linear system that starts from identifying and measuring inputs and activities, and establishing how outputs contribute to the achievement of outcomes and ultimately impact. The UNDP views M&E as part of the programme management cycle. Accordingly, performance and results are measured ensuring that those lessons learnt are integrated in management decisions and future planning. UNDP offered to share its international best practice, and models, tools, report and forms.

The key feature of the two specialist institutions is that M&E is linked to the design, planning and future decision-making about programmes/projects.

Proposed Action Plan

- A nationwide M&E forum should be established to fill the gap between national initiatives and provinces. The forums would amongst other things engage the Presidency, Public Service Commission, etc to ensure consultation with and participation of provinces and other levels of government to create a platform for engagement. Membership for the forum based at national level should include provinces, premier’s offices, stakeholders and municipalities.
- Forums should also be set up at provincial levels and include municipalities.
- What is happening in provinces and departments should be analysed.
- Lessons learned in the workshop should be considered for possible adaption and application when needed.
- Inter-provincial sharing. There must be discussion forums and notification of activities/initiatives. DPSA to coordinate?
- Departments and provinces must tap into the resources of DBSA and UNDP for technical assistance and access to best practices.

In conclusion, members suggested that the forum meet again at the end of November 2004 to, amongst other things, structure terms of reference of the forum.
How Kimberley Hospital became a Model of Excellence

In this case study, Dr Anna Strabel focuses on the systematic transformation of a South African hospital from just an average institution to one that wins awards, and excels in service delivery, to the betterment of the quality of life of those who elicit aid and service from it.
The study highlights the steps taken by the KHC in this process and identifies those factors that were central to the revitalisation of the institution. It will also address some challenges to maintaining the impetus for change in the face of broader regulatory issues.

The case study will also highlight those characteristics that allow the KHC to continue changing and improving. In this way, useful lessons for other hospitals in South Africa are clarified, as well as important lessons for the thousands of other service delivery institutions across government.

The revitalisation process

The Kimberley Hospital Complex is located in Kimberley in the Northern Cape Province, and consists of Kimberley General Hospital, West End Psychiatric and TB Hospital (incorporated in 1997), and Kimberley Hospital Rehabilitation Centre (incorporated in 2001). The original Kimberley Hospital dates back to the discovery of diamonds in the late 1800s, and has in recent years experienced many problems in the delivery of quality health services to the Northern Cape, the largest province in South Africa, but the least populated.

Against this background, the new provincial department of health undertook to improve the provision of health services in the province. For this reason, the KHC embarked on a conscious effort to improve the quality of services at all levels. Its starting point was a focus on more effective management.

In 1999 a new Chief Executive Officer who was also a general manager, was appointed. There were other changes in the management team as well and, with a clear mandate from the provincial department of health, there was a concerted push to revitalise health services in the province with the KHC as the model.

During 2000, the CEO and senior management went on a study tour to Oxford Radcliffe Hospital in the United Kingdom to identify best practices in hospital management, and this visit resulted in a customised programme on re-engineering. The overall aim was to develop “a centre for health service excellence”. The reasoning was that improved service delivery and quality of care would be brought about with an improvement in the motivation and working conditions of all staff, and it follows that a key component of the whole revitalisation process has been to shift attitudes and increase motivation among staff.

At the core of the turnaround has been a management style that has involved an extensive consultation process with staff at all levels, different units as well as unions, to determine priorities and problems. Detailed strategic planning workshops were held, with a focus on creating a vision for the future, establishing an evidence-based quality health service, and enhancing capacity among managers.

The emphasis has been on streamlining processes, the development of clear procedural guidelines, and the introduction of an ongoing system of monitoring and evaluation, to identify and respond to problems. Quality assurance measures and clear disciplinary procedures were also established.

A system is also being introduced to track patients as they move through the hospital system, in order to identify bot-
Case Study

Achievements in re-engineering hospital services

The KHC has developed an innovative and refreshing approach to the delivery of public health services. Transformation of the hospital complex and its services has been multi-faceted and ongoing, and embraces an impressive range of initiatives and outcomes.

Starting at the most practical level, a key issue to address was the deteriorating physical conditions and staff morale common in most public hospital services. As such, the physical environment of the KHC was dramatically transformed. The appearance of the buildings and wards has improved: newly painted walls (a significant achievement unusual for employees of public hospital services. As a result, a satellite pharmacy to serve the hospital for 15 years.

Further evidence of the success of staff recruitment and retention is reflected in the fact that there have been no vacancies for medical doctors at the hospital for a number of years, nor were there any unfilled nursing posts in 2003, a remarkable situation in the context of chronic and extensive vacancies across public health facilities nationally.

In addition, the total number of doctors employed by the KHC has grown from 33 in 2000 to 138 in 2003, and the number of specialists from two in 2000 to 16 in 2003 — again, no mean achievement given the remoteness of Kimberley.

Another positive development has been the introduction of private beds for those patients who have medical aid or who can afford to pay for services. This was combined with an agreement that allows private doctors to refer their patients to the hospital. This initiative generates significant additional funds for the hospital, with a monthly income of over R1 million currently.

The success of this venture is also reflected in the growing numbers of patients making use of these facilities, with admissions growing from about 100 in April 2002 to around 600 in May 2004. An interesting feature of this service is that the quality of the general wards is in fact such that there is no visible distinction between the physical facilities in the 26 private wards and the public units. This is important in ensuring that non-paying indigent patients are given the same level of professional care as paying patients.

An improvement of which staff are especially proud has been the reduction in waiting time for patients at the hospital, so that the average waiting time in the Accident and Emergency Unit is now down to about 15 minutes, again a significant achievement compared to the service in many public health facilities around the country.

These reduced waiting times translate into more patients seen by doctors, as well as greater client satisfaction. Recent monitoring identified a waiting time bottleneck at the central hospital pharmacy. As a result, a satellite pharmacy to serve the...
specialist wards has just been opened, which will streamline patient movements through the hospital and also reduce waiting time for medication.

Another core component of the improved functioning of the hospital is the implementation of monitoring and evaluation processes at all levels. The detailed documentation and sharing of relevant information, as well as the quality assurance measures, regular customer satisfaction surveys, and evaluations by the provincial DoH provide ongoing feedback regarding the extent to which the KHC is meeting its goal of providing excellence in service delivery, and allows too for rapid responses by management to any problems.

The constant performance appraisal system of all staff not only provides regular feedback, but also allows for recognition in the form of monthly awards to staff, as well as a gala CEO Annual Awards event, which is externally sponsored. While the focus is on recognising and rewarding good performance, there is also no shirking from clamping down on disciplinary problems — so that “even doctors who transgress have been dismissed”.

A further feature of the revitalisation process of the KHC as a provincial public hospital has been the development of a number of significant partnerships with other government structures and the private sector, to enhance its health care delivery. The Oxford Radcliff Hospital’s twinning programme contributes significantly to the sharing of expertise, initially at managerial level mainly, but increasingly also in relation to clinical services.

Further evidence of the success of staff recruitment and retention is reflected in the fact that there have been no vacancies for medical doctors at the hospital for a number of years, nor were there any unfilled nursing posts in 2003.

Two isolation wards in the Intensive Care Unit have been opened; the hospital provides library services for both adults and children; braille controls have been introduced into some lifts; an internet kiosk for patients is about to be opened; and the hospital also has its own radio station. Increased security has led to both patients and staff feeling secure in the hospital complex and a marked reduction in theft of hospital equipment and personal possessions. “I feel safer here than in my own home,” said a general hospital worker, in service for the past 12 years.

Regarding the important issue of sustainability, the KHC re-engineering project has strong and close support from the
 provincial department of health. There is also clearly buy-in from senior structures within the hospital system, so that commitment seems secure.

Despite severe constraints, the complex has also been able to bring about significant savings financially, which has freed up funds for allocation to priority areas. Furthermore, it has entered into a range of partnerships that contribute to financial and other support for the project. The recent change in the position of CEO was carefully planned, so that momentum was not lost. In fact, given that the previous CEO is now Deputy Director General in the provincial DoH, and that the two meet on a daily basis, the sustainability of the KHC project seems assured.

As the revitalisation of the KHC was initially intended to serve as a model for the rest of the province, the extent to which the KHC provides an exciting example of how a government facility can be transformed to deliver high-quality health care to all its citizens. Given that all public service agencies have been tasked with transformation toward improved service delivery, and that this has in most instances proved to be a difficult or even daunting task, the identification of key ingredients in the revitalisation of the KHC, as well as a close consideration of challenges encountered in its implementation, is extremely important.

A central question to be addressed in understanding the restructuring process is what it was that facilitated and sustained the changes at the KHC. The revitalisation of hospital services has been recognised as a national priority in health service delivery, but has not easily been translated into effective turnarounds in many other provincial hospitals.

As described in the previous section, the hospital management has identified a number of core factors in the success of the project. First, there was the initial improving of infrastructure at every level in the hospital, from the upgrading of the condition of wards, to the provision of improved laundry and cleaning facilities and the acquisition of state-of-the-art medical equipment. This process continues as resources are made available and new needs identified. Second, the recognition and rewarding of staff performance remains a central goal of management, based as it is on the rationale that if employees are motivated through improved work conditions, they will deliver better services to hospital clients.

This process of staff motivation and retention continually throws up new challenges. Given the remoteness of the Northern Cape and its distance from the metropolitan hubs of the country, the extent to which staff have been attracted to and retained by the KHC is impressive. This has in large measure been the result of creative approaches to addressing the needs of staff.

Thus, community placement medical officers have been offered incentives to continue their work at the hospital, and 40 school leavers from the province are being sponsored to complete their training at the Free State Medical School. In addition, the loss of nursing staff recently...
to highly paid jobs overseas (a phenomenon not unique only to this province) resulted in a degree of demotivation and overload among remaining nurses. In response, the province has increased the number of positions in nurses training colleges, and the KHC has appointed around 600 auxiliary nurses to relieve some of their burden of existing nurses, as well as offering them the opportunity to train professionally.

In the light of such issues, it is clear that a major consideration for the KHC has been how to sustain the momentum achieved in initiating the project. The danger of stagnation, and even complacency, in response to the dramatic changes that have occurred is a danger that hospital and provincial management take seriously.

What is required at present seems to be a balancing of growth with consolidation. Thus, while new developments continue (for example, the recent opening of the Wellness Centre for staff, and the satellite pharmacy), a phase of stabilisation will increase opportunities for providing support in the transformation of services throughout other provincial health facilities. This will in turn throw up new challenges, as what has worked for the KHC will not necessarily be appropriate in other contexts.

Psychiatric and rehabilitation services, for example, will need to attend to different imperatives, given their emphasis on providing long-term residential care.

As the revitalisation of the KHC was initially intended to serve as a model for the rest of the province, the extent to which the turn-about here has been replicated elsewhere is a measure of its effectiveness and best practice status.

Another issue is the size of the province in relation to the provision of health services. The big distances and thinly scattered population mean that there are many areas where the number of people does not justify the building of health care centres. This flies in the face of the intention to provide health services from fixed facilities for all citizens of the province. Also, the burden of disease is increasing in the province, with the spread of HIV/AIDS, TB, malnutrition and other poverty-related diseases, so that there is a constant battle to meet health needs effectively and equitably. This is exacerbated by the constraints that result from the health rate of inflation being higher than general inflation, and the trend to transfer government spending from secondary and tertiary health services to primary health care.

Conclusion

The innovative and effective manner in which the Kimberley Hospital Complex has managed to transform its services is heartening evidence of what can be achieved in public health service provision. Its ability to respond creatively to new challenges, to consolidate what has been achieved, and expand the model in the province bodes well for the future of the revitalisation process.

Hopefully this case study also provides valuable indicators as to how innovation involves not only the development of new ideas, but also the openness and commitment to continually respond to evolving circumstances. The wide-ranging impact of management’s investment in its staff, its most important asset human resources, is also a key feature of the innovative organisational transformation that this model demonstrates.

Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge the valuable contributions of the following people and sources in the compiling of this case study:

- Dr H Shabbir, CEO of Kimberley Hospital Complex;
- Dr D Madyo, previous CEO of KHC, currently Deputy Director General, Northern Province Department of Health;
- Dr Olivier, Acting Medical Director, KHC;
- Sr Goeieman, Manager of Westend Psychiatric and TB Hospital;
- Dr Piotrowski, Psychiatrist, Westend Hospital;
- KHC Strategic Themes and Objectives, 2003;
- KHC Health Indicator Review, 2003; and

Article courtesy of the Centre of Public Service Innovation •
For policy specialists there is much to celebrate in South Africa. We are an open, expressive society, prone to deliberation and raucous debate. Such is the style of our democracy. We gain comfort from the stability of our constitutional rule; and we measure ourselves according to precepts of social justice rooted in a host of constitutional provisions. Still, our optimism is tempered by a profound sense of the poverty, inequality and sheer despair that persist in South African life. Allowing, indeed encouraging, such conflicting emotions to infuse our understanding of policy issues enables authentic analysis in the South African context. Then we will not shy away from complexity and contradiction. If we do, we miss the essence of policy learning. How often do we hear fellow citizens say, with a mixture of pride and frustration, “We have great policies, but we are struggling to carry them out”? Thus our problems lie in implementation, in delivery, it would appear. Well, yes and no. Policy rhetoric is undeniably important. Government should voice people’s social concerns and aspirations. Policy frameworks should be bold and innovative. Expectations should be raised. After all, policies that address the core concerns of people’s lives are not mere technicalities but harbingers of comfort and sources of self-esteem. To our detriment, however, we frequently confuse rhetoric with design. “Free education for all”, say, a slogan which can readily be translated into a policy framework, has not been designed properly as a policy unless and until we can ascertain with some certainty how, when, and under what circumstances it can be realised. Considerations of policy implementation should be integral to designing a policy. Hence it is a mistake to treat “implementation” as somehow different from, or consequential, to “policy”. Put differently, the mantra “great policies but struggle to carry them out” amounts to bad policies. In South Africa we fall into this trap time and time again. There are many reasons why, I believe. What is most relevant here, though, is that, sadly, this kind of inadequacy is perpetuated in learning at the tertiary level, often unwittingly. A conscious aim to crack the problem underpins the postgraduate programme in Policy and Development Studies on the Pietermaritzburg campus. We cannot claim resounding success, but we are making headway. The most important facet is simply investing in people themselves. The theme of capacity-building often recurs in developing countries. Financial resources always matter, of course, but in South Africa they are trumped by institutional weaknesses and the lack of appropriately endowed personnel. Many conversations I have had over the years with state officials and NGOs suggest that a shortage of skilled, imaginative, enterprising individuals rather than funds alone is thwarting
progress on many a policy front. Policy practitioners as a whole are scarce, let alone those properly equipped to conduct cogently designed exercises.

What is needed, then? The central attributes of a policy professional remain to identify, analyse and solve problems. This much is commonplace in policy education, where techniques in applied economics tend to be favoured. South African students lack confidence in quantitative methods generally, let alone in analytical reasoning of this persuasion. In compensation, though, our acutely attuned political environment renders other advantages.

Having the ability to read a situation, to know what is acceptable, and what not, coupled with a healthy feel for organisational dynamics, is a tangible and invaluable form of capital that a typical policy postgraduate possesses before he — and very often, she — sits into the opening class. You forego at your peril sound technique in some version of applied economics, but focusing relentlessly on such technique without due regard to political sensitivities or the desirability of fostering inclusivity or the desirability of fostering inclusive social practices is foolhardy.

Policy endeavour is inherently a social process. The ability to listen to others, to become empathetic to their issues, is crucial. Our prevailing participatory structures in governance seldom serve this purpose, which is relegated to a formal requirement in policy formulation. Listening meaningfully, immersing oneself in a variety of policy narratives, entails acquiring information as an essential preparatory measure. A hallmark of our democratic rule is the explosion of data. Using these sources thoroughly is a basic professional competency in policy education.

The sundry attributes and skills that constitute policy learning all depend on nurturing creativity, critical awareness and flexibility. Policy design should not be formulaic. It has to be more than tos and around ideas, talk, consult, legislate, coordinate, delegate, report. Such simple intricacy is a recipe for failure. And yet this is the orthodox approach to policy analysis, which can work in a land of plenty, but is inappropriate in style and content in African conditions. Our historical legacy, reflected in public administration, and our regional and global position, setting constraints but permitting room for manoeuvre, have to pervade how we conceptualise a policy education and shape how we pursue policy learning.

As our programme in Policy and Development Studies has evolved since its inception in 2000 the thoughts I have just sketched help us to identify our role on the academic stage and in the professional domain. We offer a ladder of qualifications, from Postgraduate Diploma, to Honours and coursework Master of Social Science degrees, to the Ph.D. Approximately 60 candidates are registered with us in any given year. They range from young graduates to mid-career professionals. Increasingly, we are attracting mature students from elsewhere in Africa, especially the southern and central regions, as well as the eastern seaboard, who are particularly interested in doctoral research directed at issues they face in their home countries.

A significant number of the recent graduates are emerging from the Public Policy Partnership (PPP), based in this region, in this university, and in the Western Cape, with its headquarters in Cape Town. The aim of PPP, an independent non-profit company funded by philanthropic foundations, is to produce accomplished graduates with Master’s degrees in public policy for public service in South Africa. Some 40 undergraduates are chosen each year for two successive winter programmes in policy education, followed by extensive postgraduate study, with an intervening 12 months spent in an internship with an approved partner, typically a government department or a NGO.

As academic, our curricula, pedagogy and areas of research have to be responsive to this stimulating and variegated array of policy learners. At the same time, the programme bears our imprint as to what we believe is best for policy education in our environment. While many features are noteworthy, perhaps two are paramount.

First, our emphasis is on generic aspects of policy studies, so that those who are attracted to different policy arenas, for instance, local government or education, are in constant discussion with one another. All the students oscillate between general explanation, drawn from the professional literature worldwide, and local cases, which we compile in collaboration with our classes. There is a dearth of suitably theoretical material; we are now seeking to remedy this by lending substance to what we ourselves have learnt in recent times.

Secondly, for nearly a decade now we have led initiatives in service-learning as a means of experiential education, both in political science, and more latterly in policy studies per se. Why? Internships, we felt, properly devised, monitored, combining self-reflection and collective deliberation, would enable students to learn in an intimate way about democracy as it is unfolding. This wider thrust has narrowed progressively into detailed scrutiny of policy areas associated with public and civic organisations in the Msunduzi Municipality. Because policy endeavour is essentially an applied activity, would be practitioners need to comprehend for themselves the organisational complexity within which policy matters occur. Case studies can replicate these circumstances to some extent, but they obviously cannot convey the rhythms and nuances of policy life. In fact, it is precisely the abstract nature of such policy education that limits its worth, both as scholarship and as praxis.

Policy studies, interpreted as a multidisciplinary social science, is still in its infancy in South Africa. The South African government, recognising the urgency of policy research and management, relies on us in the universities to grasp the nettle. We have at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. We can be proud that participants have initiatives in service-learning as a means of experiential education, both in political science, and more latterly in policy studies per se. Why? Internships, we felt, properly devised, monitored, combining self-reflection and collective deliberation, would enable students to learn in an intimate way about democracy as it is unfolding. This wider thrust has narrowed progressively into detailed scrutiny of policy areas associated with public and civic organisations in the Msunduzi Municipality. Because policy endeavour is essentially an applied activity, would be practitioners need to comprehend for themselves the organisational complexity within which policy matters occur. Case studies can replicate these circumstances to some extent, but they obviously cannot convey the rhythms and nuances of policy life. In fact, it is precisely the abstract nature of such policy education that limits its worth, both as scholarship and as praxis.

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In this paper, I would like to argue in favour of citizen-centred integrated planning as a hallmark for development in a developmental state. I will draw from my experiences in parastatal organisations to better illustrate how lack of collaboration and subsequent duplication can result in non-delivery and wastage of resources. This would serve as a foundation for my subsequent reflections on forming partnerships across the sectoral divide.

An anecdote

Coming from Limpopo we had an unveiling of the tombstones of my ancestors and amongst the people that I invited were some friends from Johannesburg. The directions were clear until they had to turn left into Van Riebeeck from Thabo Mbeki Mokopane after which they would have to drive 50 kilometres to Moletlane village where I originally come from.

That was when the going got tough. To start with, there are about 23 villages in Moletlane and most of the people there share the surname Kekana and are related. To complicate matters, there happened to be three events during that weekend, a wedding, a funeral and of course the unveiling of the tombstones to which the Johannesburgers were invited. Instead, after enquiring they ended up at the wedding, a wrong event, which rightfully was hosted by people who, like me, were Kekana and secondly my relatives. Of great significance, true to African culture based on our relationship with the hosting family, the wedding was taking place at my home.

The anecdote illustrates clearly why an address is key to integrated development. It further indicates how impossible it is to talk about bridging the divide between the first and the second economy without integrating rural people in particular, and even townships. Does it make sense that today in Gugulethu in Cape Town one still finds listings such as NY1 or Native Yard 1, or NU1 (Native Unit) in Mdantsane in the Eastern Cape?

To me, after the birth certificate and the ID document what determines citizenship and the rights of citizens is an address. An individual’s address is key to development. We can talk about single location as a way of dealing with development in the rural areas. This, as far as I am concerned, is not enough as it simply originates from a notion that narrowly associ-
ates and restricts people in rural areas to a communal way of living. I would argue that like in urban areas, people in rural areas are naturally to some extent individualistic with particular rights. As a result, they need government to talk directly to them.

Telkom, for instance, talks about IP address. In the next 10 years we would confidently talk about giving citizens an IP address for them to receive e-government services.

Mapping projects
In the early 1990s, the South African Post Office received a mandate from government to roll-out at least five million addresses in various locations throughout the country, particularly in rural areas and townships that were not properly demarcated.

Eskom was also given another mandate to roll out electricity, particularly in rural areas.

The third project was that of Telkom. Telkom had to expand its telephone network to cover mostly rural areas.

Another mapping operation was conducted by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) to enable it to evenly distribute polling stations throughout the country for voting purposes.

When the Post Office was given a mandate to map out five million addresses, this was hailed as by far the most important project that would for the first time put an...
identity in the form of home addresses to individuals. However, a brief analysis of the projects highlights some fundamental challenges that resulted either in a total failure, in the case of the Post Office, to deliver on the mandate or other similarly complicated challenges.

For starters, all the projects were characterized by silo planning and development. Although there was a shared outcome—that is, a properly demarcated landscape with clearly defined and well-addressed locations—each one of them pursued their own way of planning and implementing.

Telkom has been using the global information system to identify and map up a place. As a result, they have managed to pool all the information about the entire place where it has rolled out all its services regardless of whether those services are working or not.

On the other hand, using a different system of coordinates, latitudes and longitudes, Eskom has on its databases detailed information about the locations that were fed with electricity.

The IEC, in rolling out the polling stations, uses the same system that is based on the American GPS system. The second challenge is about a fundamental planning flaw of not considering the prevailing material conditions. Three years after Telkom had successfully carried out its mandate to roll out services in the rural areas in particular and even in schools and clinics during that period of exclusivity there were disconnections. Amongst the many factors that were advanced as to why that was happening was affordability—after all people in rural areas are relatively poor. Unfortunately one fundamental factor was overlooked, that of the system that Telkom uses in generating billing.

Firstly, the system works on the basis that every client has an address to which a bill is to be sent. Each subscriber is obliged to pay or alternatively a disconnection takes place. The system is of course quite interestingly not mindful of the fact that the subscribers might not have received the bill, which was probably the case in many instances. Telkom could not integrate the delivery of telephone services and the need for them to have addresses. Compare this with the experience of Eskom. Eskom introduced the prepaid system which in a way eliminating the whole question of the addresses as people would go and buy those particular services.

The DOA’s initiative to consolidate the various databases. The need for a detailed and comprehensive central dataset on spatial information that can be used by various institutions for planning was long overdue. In 2004, the Department of Agriculture called for submissions from all the institutions that had datasets on spatial information. These were all collated and analysed to form the Spatial Data Infrastructure Act. This initiative by Agriculture is very significant, firstly because it was an attempt to reconcile confusing, duplicated, and incoherent efforts by various government institutions.

Secondly, it was an attempt to finally give identity and understand where the citizens of South Africa live. It is of fundamental importance that the public administrative system knows the whereabouts of the citizens to be able to service and communicate with them. The imbusos are to some extent quite informative but they happen occasionally. They need to be supplemented with other innovative ways. For instance, using an address, which would argue is at the center of integrated development, citizens can simply be informed by letters about whatever developments there are in the country. From a business point of view, we all know that an address is important for anyone who wants to open an account with any bank so that they can receive their monthly bills and other correspondence. Thus one could boldly add that an address is indispensable to successfully integrating the first and second economy.

Strategic partnerships

When Telkom and the Post Office broke up in 1991, Telkom came out the richer with most skilled workers. Subsequently, the Post Office needed help in the form of sound management, hence its entry into a strategic partnership with the New Zealand Post Office Services.

The Strategic Management Partnership (SMP) model

The strategic partnership model upon which this partnership between the South African Post Office (SAPO) and the New Zealand Post Office Services was based called for an initial rigorous process of identifying a suitable partner for the Post Office. According to the model, the partner joins the Post Office not on equity basis but solely to inject management skills and experience.

The SMP model failed because, firstly, the cultures of the two organizations had very little in common. Secondly, the leadership of the South African Post Office was scarcely prepared to relate to any other form of intervention. They were used to their own tried and tested hierarchical system of management and thus were less receptive to any alternative. As a result, the SMP could not work, thus forcing the government to intervene to save the Post Office.

Only last year after many years of struggle, to the credit of the new leadership of the Post Office, the organizations registered a profit.

The Strategic Equity Partnership (SEP) model

This involves Telkom in partnership with the Malaysians and the Americans. It was time-bound, destined to run over a certain number of years after which the partners would leave.

Has the partnership with them worked? First off, it has to be borne in mind that the failure of Telkom to sustain the telephone services in the rural areas and other townships cannot be laid at the partner’s doorstep as it was more of an internal matter. As regards the partnership model, Telkom benefited greatly in terms of technology with one of the best knockouts (central control system) in the world, skills transfer and capital injection.

In terms of foreign direct investment the Tintana consortium is by far still the single biggest injection that our economy
The SAA model

When SAA, like many other airlines such as Swiss Air, was in a downward spiral, government had to swiftly step in to save the national carrier by taking control of it. This was in defiance of the popular notion that governments in themselves are inefficient and that the private sector is the one that is more efficient and delivers a better service. There are a number of major world crises that clearly show how biased this perception is. One of them is the UK rail disaster where the handing over of a very essential service by government to the private sector led to its collapse.

This, however, should not be perceived as a downright discouragement of public entities to partner with the private sector. If anything some of the partnerships that I have highlighted in this paper prove that if pursued correctly partnerships do work.

The European Commission also has numerous guidelines on partnerships that enable development. In short one can pursue partial privatisation as a form of partnership, contracting out and what is called under-serviced area licenses.

**Five pillars of partnerships**

Numerous factors, which I call pillars, exist that if properly considered can ensure a vibrant and beneficial partnership. Of these only five that are regarded as most fundamental are discussed.

**Political leadership:** Political leadership is not made up only of those that have been elected but also people that are in public service administration. The success of any strategic partnership is contingent upon the availability of some kind of commitment from those who are in important senior positions. The assumption is that though the private sector and the public sector have a contribution to make they are equal partners. As a result, they need some kind of political leadership to give direction.

**Monitoring:** Partnerships need to be monitored. The public sector has to make it its fundamental responsibility to constantly monitor partnerships lest the whole arrangement is tipped over by the weight of one partner over another.

**Communicating with stakeholders:** Stakeholders, whether insignificant in terms of material gains and investments, are all strategic in a partnership. While keeping the strategic partners informed about proceedings, a conscious effort should also be made to obtain buy-in from the rest, particularly citizens.

**Getting the right partner on board:** Partners are identified in terms of their ability to fulfil their role in the partnerships. The underlying motives for partners to join a partnership are also significant. The private sector, for instance, is profit driven and will stay in a partnership as long as it satisfies that inclination. On the other hand, the public sector is by virtue of its mandate a public service deliverer. This profound difference is largely responsible for the significant tension faced by some partially privatised state-owned enterprises. They are torn between delivering shareholder value, serving public interest or delivering a particular service. This impasse needs to be resolved.

**Conclusion**

In this article we discussed the importance of an address as the single most basic element that is fundamental to integrated development, particularly as regards the individual citizen’s ability to access services. Following that, we also discussed partnerships, their fundamental role, as regards the ability of state-owned enterprises to successfully carry out their mandate. We concluded by looking at important factors as well as pitfalls that should be considered in building partnerships. These have all been discussed within the context of the developmental state.

In conclusion, therefore, it is important to bear in mind the importance of always promoting and protecting the legitimacy of the developmental state. The legitimacy of the developmental state rests on three fundamental factors.

Firstly, the developmental state has to be able to earn its leadership by acting responsively to the needs and requirements of communities or stakeholders.

Secondly, a developmental state must be able to intervene where necessary. Against the popular perception held around PPPs in favour of less interference by the state in favour of the private sector, I would argue that it is the precise responsibility of the developmental state to intervene and deal with problems of its citizens.

Lastly, the developmental state must have the capacity at an administrative level, institutional level and technical level to intervene. It should always maintain its stature of being strong and resolute, enjoying legitimacy, and most importantly being able to deliver and enter into strategic partnerships without compromising and being unduly influenced by a strong private sector.
Last year our country hosted numerous activities and events in celebration of 10 years of democracy and freedom. Among these was the Ten Year Review coordinated by the Presidency. The Review made a number of very important findings and recommendations, which all of us in government and other sectors must grapple very seriously with.

It argues that in a space of 10 years the country has undertaken some important measures to reverse the legacy of its colonial and apartheid past. However, much of the socio-economic content of this legacy is still very much with us, and constitutes a vexing challenge for the new democratic state. An important conclusion I wish to emphasise from the Review is that the advances of the past decade far supersede the weaknesses.

However, “if all the indicators of progress were to continue along the same trajectory, especially in respect of the dynamic of economic inclusion and exclusion, we could reach a point where the negatives start to overwhelm the positives. This could precipitate a vicious cycle of decline in all spheres” (Towards a Ten Year Review, GoSA, p102).

I regard this as a portent and a call to action by the Review. The challenge that the Review thrusts on us is that not only must we urgently and drastically improve in the areas in which we are not doing well, but also even in the areas where we are deemed successful, as it is simply not enough!

As we embark on these conversations we must always remind ourselves of the famous saying by Albert Einstein that “one definition of insanity is to do the same things we have always done, but expect a different result”.

The other point I want to emphasise from the Review is the observation that “the government’s successes occur more often in areas where it has significant control and its lack of immediate success occurs more often in those areas where it may only have indirect influence” (ibid, p75).

This observation is made across the sectors, but applies differently per sector. With respect to the Governance and Administration sector, this dichotomy
applies in the sense that the areas over which government has control/power (the institutions, practices, and procedures) have shown significant progress, while the areas where government has less direct influence, such as the behaviour of the civil servants in interaction with the public and civil society, have shown much slower progress.

I propose that we all need to reflect on the implications of this observed dichotomy between power and influence. This is a complexity we must grapple with. We must continue to focus on the outcomes we want in society and in public administration, even though many of the elements that go into making outcomes happen fall outside our control. Especially so if we characterise ourselves as a developmental state, since development is about integrated outcomes, not simply (departmental) outputs.

If we simply focus on outputs, it will tend to have the effect of killing the link between the problems we are attempting to solve in society and the strategies we choose to employ. It is in this sense that many argue that in large bureaucracies “structure drives strategy”, rather than the other way round.

The change management literature confirms the observation of the Review, in a sense that changing structures and procedures (or sending people for training!) is usually easier and frequent, whereas changing organisational culture (or behaviour at the coalface) and building deep, reliable and repeatable organisational capabilities is much, much more difficult. How often have we seen transformation efforts divert themselves from the need to change organisational culture and build institutionalised capabilities to becoming “measurable, time-bound and costed” projects focusing on “restructuring” and “training”?

The public service: the challenge of reform and transformation

At inception the democratic state in 1994 inherited 18 different administrations with disparate systems, processes, regulations, cultures, and with no deliberate focus on providing equitable, quality services to all South Africans. Accordingly, since 1994 the public service has witnessed an unprecedented process of rationalisation, amalgamation and restructuring.

This is more so with respect to the management of people in the public service, our most important resource. Important changes have taken place with respect to the management of people in the public service, including the extension of collective bargaining rights, the creation of a common payroll with a common grading...
system, backed by a standard job evaluation system, introducing a performance management culture and systems, building representivity, providing a special dispensation for senior managers and professionals, soon to be extended to middle managers, etc.

We sometimes make the mistake of relegating issues of managing people to HRM units, and somehow believe we can rake service delivery performance without people management. Well, it begins with raising the performance of individuals and teams, with proper supervision of these individuals and teams, with performance development and management, rewarding excellence, punishing poor performance, dealing swiftly and decisively with misconduct and ill-discipline, giving clear direction and leadership, recruiting and promoting on merit (which includes demonstrable potential), retaining and growing talented individuals, clear job descriptions and role definitions, proper management of leave, etc.

All these normal, boring people management functions are indispensable to raising the level of team and organizational performance in the public service. Doing these functions does not, in itself, guarantee excellent service delivery performance. But it is impossible to achieve service delivery excellence without them.

There have been other changes as well that have also been important. Abolishing the very prescriptive Staff Code by the much more flexible Public Service Regulations was a major step forward. The Public Finance Management Act and the accompanying Treasury Regulations later complemented this.

The combined impact of both these changes in the culture and practice of management, planning and reporting in the public service can never be overestimated. They were not just important reforms in the way the public service is managed, when fully and properly implemented they can be said to amount to a revolution in the management culture of the public service. This does not mean there are no further improvements to be made, especially in terms of removal of “red tape” in various processes.

We have also made important changes to the way IT is utilised and managed in the public service. It is easy to forget that we have just now emerged from the culture of typists pools as standard, to the current pervasiveness of desktops, laptops, internet, e-mail across the public service. The possibilities that IT offers in information and records management, as well as in the speed of internal communications and transactions, are massive indeed.

The manner in which service delivery is planned, monitored and reported still requires major improvements. A number of sectors have made major steps in setting norms and standards on the quality of services and products.

However, many of the set standards and norms simply do not get adhered to by some provinces, districts, or service delivery institutions. There are also, however, instances where such norms and standards simply do not take into account what is possible and affordable at the coalface.

Institutional instability, including at leadership level, also creates problems, resulting in what the Review refers to as “... the danger of [formal institutions of state] being in a permanent and debilitating state of flux” (ibid, p107). The saying that “a fish rots from the head” has been proven correct in almost every intervention we have undertaken. That is why the quality and attitude of the SMS and other operational managers is so important if we are to successfully transform the public service.

Also important here is how we manage service delivery institutions as critical links with the citizens, not just as dots in our organograms. Virtually all of the experience that citizen experience of government is through these service delivery institutions, be it hospitals, schools, social grants paypoints, police stations, home affairs service points, etc. Yet in many departments some of these service points are run-down, visibly dirty, have major shortages of staff, have shortages of equipment and vehicles, do not have proper signage and seating areas for citizens, have no rest areas for staff, struggle to provide clean reliable water, etc. In some instances these service points are not only poorly managed by their own managers, they are also unsupported by their district managers.

It is quite clear that as a public service we have not fully internalised the critical role that these service points play in the service delivery value chain. These service points are the “moment of truth” as far as citizens are concerned. Everything that happens at head offices, premier’s offices, DPSA etc. is irrelevant as far as the citizen is concerned, unless it contributes to making their experience at the service point more pleasant.

Unless what we do contributes directly or indirectly to the quality of the “moment of truth” of the citizens, as part of the service delivery value chain, the value we add will always be questioned. In what ways do the programmes and campaigns we run as DPSA, as premier’s offices, actually contribute to improving the experience of citizens at service points?

The difficult but very important issue of organisational culture has to be tackled directly if the citizen experience is to improve. We must here remind ourselves of the dichotomy of power and influence referred to earlier. A lot that becomes part of the culture of the organisation is embodied in the formal policies and procedures of the organisation, and how these get implemented.

A lot that becomes part of the culture is operationalized in values and norms articulated by the leadership of the organisation over time, and the extent to which their own behaviour supports the vision and values.

One of the big problems in the public service today, for instance, is that there tends to be no clear standards of the quality of service that is required, and no consequence to the failure to achieve that standard. This we must change, and change very quickly. A lot that becomes culture is shaped by the kinds of people the organisation recruits and promotes, how it relates to its stakeholders, and how it defines itself in relation to its peers and the rest of society.

The point we are making here is that while it is true that culture is difficult to manage, there are leverage points that
we can impact on, that can assist us to build an organisation where employees can say “we belong, we care, we serve”.

As we conclude ...

I have so far not mentioned the word Batho Pele directly. But I would hope that we could agree that all of the above has been about it. That is the logic that underlies the new Batho Pele Revitalisation Strategy. We propose that we must keep the big issues in focus and continue to act to change them, but at the same time we must identify the smaller issues that can be resolved here and now, and show visible progress to the citizens.

We also propose that we should maintain a balance between front office improvements and back office improvements. To improve the “moment of truth” of the citizens at the front office requires an optimally functioning value chain in which the back office and the front office are both effective and in alignment. So improving the back office is critical for Batho Pele, whether it entails improving procurement, fleet management, facilities management, records management, etc.

Lastly we propose that we should maintain a balance between “hard” systems and process changes with “soft” culture and capability changes. Again these changes should be in alignment with each other.

My whole argument is that Batho Pele is a living set of values, reforms and practices that cut across the whole organisation. Accordingly we should treat it as a living campaign. If it is a living campaign it will thrive most in an organisation where learning and growth is intrinsic. Thus we must intensify our effort to turn the public service into a learning organisation.

We must build a culture and practice of project management in the public service, to improve the efficiency and reliability with which we run service delivery operations. Related to this, we must deploy capable operational/project managers, including SMS members, to be responsible for service delivery operations and the management of service delivery institutions. Having deployed them, we must give them the necessary authority and resources to run these institutions effectively.

We must fill the critical administrative, technical and professional vacancies at service points. We cannot expect quality services where service delivery institutions are heavily under-staffed and under-equipped, as happens now in many places.

All departments should be required to assign a senior manager who will be accountable to the HoD for the quality of service that their citizens get at every service point. The HoD in turn will be accountable for the quality of service of the institutions of his/her department.

Among the key measures by which we evaluate our HoDs must be the assessed quality of service experienced by citizens at each service point. The HoD must ensure that across the service delivery value chain they have deployed managers of sufficient quality such that they will in fact deliver on service quality.

In this regard the quality of managers we deploy to run districts and service delivery institutions becomes important, much more valuable than simply those making quiet appearances at our various EXCOs or MANCOs at head office, or forever on study visits and at conferences. We must consciously induct, train and re-orient all our staff that interfaces with the citizens, so that they treat such citizens as the centre of their work, and end the culture of arrogance to citizens in many places. We must reinforce this with our performance management and coaching practices at all levels. We must have better people management practices at service institutions, since we cannot expect attitudes that exhibit caring and service from people who do not feel they belong to that organisation, and identify with what it is trying to achieve in the broader society.

The service institutions themselves should be well maintained, such that they provide adequate workplaces for staff, and adequate service points for the citizen. Some of the service points you find do not even appear to comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Yet we expect people who work there to serve with a smile, and citizens to be satisfied. The facilities where citizens are served must have proper sitting areas, with proper queue arrangements, with access to clean water and ablutions in our service points. They must protect people from the elements, and keep them safe from unsavoury characters.

As a rule we must have help desks and proper signage in all the major languages in our service points. These are just some of the practical suggestions we make in the Batho Pele Revitalisation Strategy that departments can implement immediately to kick-start or accelerate the Batho Pele process in their organisations.

In the end Batho Pele should be thought of as a set of mutually reinforcing interventions to transform all levels of the organisation, with a view to becoming a public service that puts people first. We cannot become that which we need to become unless we do that which needs to be done. Charles Darwin makes a telling observation when dealing with the matter of evolution of species at a much earlier age. He points out that “it is not the strongest nor the most intelligent species that survives, but rather the one most adaptable to change”. For the sake of the country, we hope that our public service is such a species.
The government introduced the Batho Pele Principles in 1997 as an initiative to improve delivery in the public service based on the principle of putting people's interests first. But look at the photographs shown at right that were taken at a large provincial hospital during Public Service Week in November 2004.

What has gone wrong here? Why can’t we keep a critical delivery facility like a hospital clean and properly maintained? Is the problem a lack of money or a misallocated budget? Or is it that the organisation is so weak that nobody is accountable for cleaning and maintenance? Or are there restrictive work practices preventing efficient allocation of maintenance and cleaning staff? Or is it that the maintenance department is bogged down with an inefficient procurement process?

It is likely to be a combination of all of the above, but Batho Pele becomes very difficult to deliver when these basics are not managed, e.g. maintaining and cleaning the toilets in a hospital. In the words of one of the nursing sisters in this particular facility, “How am I supposed to practise Batho Pele in facilities like this?”

During her Budget Vote Speech (June 2004), the Minister of Public Service and Administration, Ms Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi said that, “… As a collective we will have to ensure in the term ahead that we develop a public service that will continue to make us proud as a machinery of state that serves the interest of the people... This will demand that we extend ourselves from our traditional comfort zone of policy formulation to active involvement in monitoring implementation of our policy frameworks and providing assistance in creating capacity across the public service in order to overcome any impediments to successful implementation.”

The challenge
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The solution
Our 10 years of successful democracy have been characterised by transformation issues and policy formulation. The challenge is now to reorient the leadership of public service into translating these policy frameworks into programmes, operations and quality outputs for the citizens of our country. It is within this context that, as part of government’s effort to implement and promote the spirit of Batho Pele within the public service, Cabinet took a decision at its August 2004 meeting that Senior Management Service (SMS) members should do a compulsory deployment to service delivery points during every annual performance cycle.

However, it was realised that when SMS managers are exposed to the coalface, they may often not be fully equipped to identify, solve and prioritise the problems that they encounter. For the deployment to be successful, it is vital that each
Case Study

SMS member should go in equipped with the correct skills. Therefore, in order to give full effect to the Cabinet decision, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) has developed a programme, called Project Khaedu, with the following objectives:

• To expose Senior Managers from all departments and provincial government to service delivery issues at the “coal face”.
• To equip all senior managers with a practical management tool-kit for problem identification, analysis and resolution.
• To monitor and evaluate the implementation to ensure that the tool kit is understood and used in the managers’ own departments.

A professional service provider, Africa International Advisors, has been appointed to assist with the programme. Project Khaedu is now in the final phase of a very successful pilot. Thirty nine managers from a variety of national and provincial departments have completed the first phase of the programme between November 2004 and January 2005. Twenty more are planned for February 2005. Initial feedback from participants is highly positive, with an average of 4.4 out of five being scored by participants for the programme. Some comments from participants follow:

“The programme provides hands-on experience on how to fix service delivery problems.”

“A very good programme that should be undertaken by all Senior Managers…”

“This exercise has been very useful in translating the principles of Batho Pele into reality.”

“It is really empowering. I now understand how to identify and resolve critical problems.”

Project Khaedu takes an integrated approach linking case study based classroom work (4-5 days) with actual work experience at a service delivery point such as a hospital or clinic, pay point, Home Affairs office, charge office, magistrate’s court, rehabilitation centre, or school, amongst others (two deployments of five days each). The last five days of deployment is expected to take place during the Public Service Week in November of each year. Participants are coached in the following key areas:

• identifying and solving process problems
• budgeting and financial management;
• people management (how to recruit, train, support, performance manage and deal decisively with disciplinary matters);
• organisation design, decision making and accountability; and
• communicating for results.

It must, however, be pointed out that Project Khaedu is not a training programme per se. It is not attempting to mirror a “mini-MBA” or other executive management courses. The classroom phase merely serves to assist in facilitating the deployment of SMS members to the coalface in a more structured and meaningful way.

It ensures that managers understand the toolkit prior to deployment so that they can make the necessary observations and make well-informed interventions during deployment.

The programme is currently being refined for further roll-out to all SMS managers, nationally and provincially over a three-year period. Once managers have completed the initial programme, they will be assessed on their participation in the programme during each financial year. During the deployment, managers will be expected to report on their findings of the situation, on issues that complicate or constrain service delivery and their proposed resolution on how to unblock service delivery logjams.

A Project Khaedu webpage within the Batho Pele site is currently being established. This will be an interactive site where SMS members will go online to book their respective skills development and deployment weeks for the programme in advance, much like one would do for a hotel or airline booking.

Note that managers will be expected to honour their indicated schedule, having cleared their time allocation with their respective managers.

During his State of the Nation Address in May 2004, President Thabo Mbeki called for a special focus “on raising skills levels within the public sector, and ensure that its managerial and technological modernisation, is driven by a clear understanding of the developmental tasks of our democratic state.” It is hoped that Project Khaedu will go a long way towards contributing to the advancement of this vision. It is now time for leadership in the public service, properly skilled, to lead by example and show that We Care, We Belong and We Serve.

What has gone wrong here? Why can’t we keep a critical delivery facility like a hospital clean and properly maintained?
Improving Service Delivery at Home Affairs

The Department of Home Affairs is emerging from a very difficult and disruptive period. Prior to the appointment of the present Director-General, Mr. Barry Gilder, two heads of department left in quick succession. The instability was aggravated by the controversy surrounding the appointment of the new DG and the delay before his appointment was ratified.

Many of the department’s senior managers and professional staff left during this period of instability resulting in an organisation with a very depleted leadership. Moreover, the tension at the most senior level took its toll on the rest of staff with deep divisions running across the organisation.

Added to that, the department literally operated on a skeleton staff based on an organisational structure that was determined in 1995. This structure did not anticipate the tremendous growth in the demand for the department’s services that was brought about by the birth of democracy.

Both of the department’s core functions, Immigration Management and Civic Services, have felt the pressures emanating from South Africa’s transition to democracy and its acceptance back into the family of nations.

Between 1994 and 2002 for example, the number of visitors to South Africa increased from about 3.8 million to 5.6 million. The traffic volume at some of the land border posts such as Lebombo grew by 131% over the same period. The number of asylum seekers has also increased from about 5 843 in 1994 to over 20 000 in 2002. From about 9 000 deportees, the department now has to deport about 150 000 illegal immigrants per annum to their countries of birth.

The Civic Services Branch, which is responsible for services to citizens, has experienced a similar increase in the demand for their services.

What role does the Department of Home Affairs play?

The Department of Home Affairs plays a central and indispensable role within the Public Service, impacting on the lives of all our citizens and the people who visit us. To citizens, the department provides essential documents such as birth, marriage and death certificates as well as passports and identity books. These documents allow them to access vital public services such as education, housing, healthcare, social grants and pensions. These documents also enable them to exercise their democratic rights, including their right to vote for the parties and candidates of their choice.
To the private sector the department helps to confirm the identity of citizens and foreigners thus contributing to the growth of our economy and the fight against fraudulent practices such as money laundering. In terms of its responsibility in regulating the movement of people in and out of the country, the department contributes significantly to economic development, investment, tourism and international relations. Post 1994, South Africa emerged as a highly favoured destination globally, not only to legal immigrants and tourists, but also to thousands of undocumented foreigners. The Department of Home Affairs acts as a window to our country and to government. To a foreigner, the Home Affairs official behind the counter at a border post or the airport is often her or his first point of contact with a South African. The attitude that this official displays and the quality of her or his service often results in a lasting image of the country in terms of hospitality and friendliness, not to mention our tolerance of corruption and fraud.

To the citizen, Home Affairs symbolises the compassion of government and its commitment to the People’s Contract. Although there are many shining examples of exemplary service within Home Affairs and officials who are committed to the spirit of Batho Pele, the reality is that clients are often confronted by long queues, poor signage and shoddy service. This in turn tends to shape their perceptions of the State as a whole.

The Home Affairs turnaround programme

Although the vision of the Department of Home Affairs is to render a world-class service, the reality of chronic under-resourcing, coupled with poor infrastructure, inefficient business processes and outdated technology has meant that the department has been unable to render even a basic, decent service.

Following the new DG’s brisk orientation, senior management agreed that a decisive intervention was needed to rescue the department. The various elements of the turnaround strategy were communicated widely to obtain buy-in and support both from within the department and outside, targeting key stakeholders such as Parliament, Cabinet, FOSAD clusters, National Treasury and the media.

The turnaround programme is intended to address the department’s capacity shortcomings in the key areas of people, technology and infrastructure.

People

Following a review of the department’s human resource requirements, a new HR establishment was put in place which resulted in the department’s staff complement growing from 7 500 positions to 11 700. This would increase further by an approximate 2 500 positions once the department has finished its review of the Civic Services branch.

As opposed to its need for around 14 000 employees, the department currently employs about 6 000 people. The department has taken immediate steps to advertise the most critical of its vacancies, prioritising those at management level and those at the coalface of service delivery, some 1 000 in total. These initiatives have resulted in the appointment of five new Deputy Directors-General and several Chief Directors and Directors.

The recruitment process will be intensified as more funding becomes available over the next three to five years. The recruitment project is being complemented by a number of other HR-related projects, including:

• training and retraining of staff;
• sport and cultural programmes to improve morale and employee wellbeing;
• replacing volunteers with interns;
• improving the management of performance; and
• inculcating a culture of “talking to each other” to build team spirit and to prevent individual and collective disputes.

Infrastructure

Because many of the offices of Home Affairs are in a bad state or are poorly located, a project was initiated to review the condition and location of all offices. This project is complemented by initiatives to improve the department’s office equipment; its corporate identity including issues such as signage; and its service standards. The service standards will focus on all the basics of client management such as queue management and utilisation of “floor walkers”.

The audit of all the department’s government-owned properties has been completed. This has resulted in the introduction of a medium-term repair and maintenance programme, in partnership with the Department of Public Works. As a “quick win” provincial managers have identified the worst of their offices for emergency repairs. This included a “National Volunteer Campaign” involving members of staff in partnership with local communities, traditional leaders and the private sector.

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is assisting the department in analysing where its service points should be located. This takes into account the demographics of the country, urban and rural patterns of poverty, and proximity to other public services and transport.

The department plans to capitalise on the goodwill that exists elsewhere within

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government and the private sector in expanding and improving its office infrastructure. This is likely to take the form of an “adopt an office” campaign. Moreover, the department will be intensifying its involvement in the roll-out of Multi-Purpose Community Centres (MPCCs), while a tender has been issued to procure fully equipped mobile units to better serve rural communities.

The department’s head office has already relocated. The new premises are in Waltloo, Pretoria with vastly improved office accommodation and security. It has a campus style configuration, with open plan offices, state of the art conference facilities, a cafeteria for staff members, and ample parking for members of staff and visitors. This is likely to have many positive spin-offs in terms of employee morale, client service and records management.

**Technology**

While Home Affairs is the custodian of a number of databases and records of national importance, it has until recently functioned largely in IT prehistory. Most of its operations were and still are paper based. Many of its systems are not integrated. All of this is changing as part of the turnaround strategy.

Prior to the relocation of head office to Waltloo, over 200 million pages of data on births, marriages and deaths were stashed away in shelves in Civitas.

Records of the black population were the worst off. They were filed in about 19 different locations in the Civitas building. Locating these documents required profound skills and a fundamental knowledge of the history of South Africa and its geography as well as of the registry itself. This knowledge was handed down over the years, most of it verbally. As a result the organisation became dependent on a few individuals who in a sense were the institutional memory.

Reviewing and modernising the department’s business processes and technology required nothing short of an IT revolution.

A new IT strategy has been revealed called Itingwe, after the place of its conceptualisation, Mahalingwe. Itingwe consists of a number of complementary projects aimed at establishing an integrated biometric database of all the Department’s clients linked to fully computerised front-end client services. Itingwe will allow cross-referencing by departments and law enforcement agencies, and end the long, drawn-out processes facing clients when seeking services. The integrated information database will incorporate the different “stand alone” systems of the department such as the population register, refugee system, visa system and movement control system. This system will also improve the capacity of the State to identify illegal foreigners and to combat the fraudulent acquisition of IDs, passports and other documents such as birth and marriage certificates.

The department has put in place an information systems management board to give guidance on the development of its IT systems.

As Itingwe starts to bear fruit, the department’s services will become increasingly accessible and user-friendly. The benefits have recently been demonstrated in the “check your marital status” campaign. During women’s month (August 2004) citizens were invited to check their marital status on-line or by phoning a toll-free number. This gave citizens direct access to the population register and allowed them to report faulty information. It also drew attention to the abuse of South African women through so-called “marriages of convenience”.

A Citizen Registration Campaign is presently being rolled out to update Home Affairs records and to draw attention to the benefits of registration. This includes a birth registration initiative whereby women are able to register the birth of their babies at the hospital or clinic where they have given birth. This happens on-line and certificates are issued on the spot, showing what can be accomplished by combining modern technology with a determination to take services to the people.

In due course paper IDs and passports will be replaced by smart cards. Old-style computer terminals will make way for ICSGs, short for Integrated Client Services Consoles, which will enable clients to apply on-line for important documents. This will include an assortment of gadgets such as fingerprint readers, digital signature pads, bar-code readers, digital cameras and document scanners.

Key to Itingwe is the “back scanning” of manual records. As part of Phase 1 of the roll out of the electronic document management system, some 37 million birth, deaths and marriage records have been digitised.

A tender has also recently been awarded to back scan the 40 million odd manual fingerprint records that are housed in one of the department’s offices.

Plans to introduce an in-house client service centre are at an advanced stage. The operators in this centre will have access to the department’s systems and will be able to track and trace the status of one’s application. This should result in a significant improvement in client satisfaction and help to improve the department’s image.

Apart from the interventions in the cross-cutting areas of people, infrastructure and technology, there are numerous other projects under way, all of them aimed at improving service delivery in specific areas of the department’s operations. These projects are driven by internal teams which positively impacts on the sense of ownership that staff members experience and their readiness to change as new policies, procedures and systems are introduced.

**Transforming the immigration branch**

Arguably one of the most critical of these projects is the transformation of the Immigration Branch. This has been singled out as a priority area given the need to promote tourism, to facilitate the entry of scarce skills into the country and to counter the influx of illegal immigrants.

The project is aimed at introducing a proper immigration capacity for South Africa. It will be implemented in a...
phased way as funds become available. It is likely to cost in excess of R500 million over the medium term. A team has been appointed to concentrate on this task full time, focussing in particular on process, personnel and logistical requirements. The team will ensure that the department is able to live up to the ideals contained in the new immigration legal framework. This includes the changing of the mindset of hardened immigration officials who see their work as consisting only of “catch and dispatch” activities as opposed to a more humane and holistic immigration management strategy that includes the countering of xenophobia in all its different manifestations.

Other challenges include a general lack of skills among immigration practitioners, poor language proficiency, and inappropriate attitudes brought on by past policies. These all require a massive change programme.

Counter corruption
Because of the nature of Home Affairs’ services, the department is a prime target of criminals and criminal syndicates. There is also the phenomenon of “convenience corruption” whereby clients are prepared to grease the palms of officials just to receive a decent service.

To counter this the department has developed a holistic counter-corruption strategy. The challenge now lies in its implementation, which in turn requires a significant expansion of internal capacity.

Client management
Apart from the initiatives already alluded to such as the introduction of a client service centre, the adoption of effective queue management, proper signage and a corporate identity, the department has initiated “the client is always right” campaign. This is meant to change the attitude of the department’s staff towards their clients.

Together with the other interventions to improve the working environment and introduce better processes and systems, this campaign is expected to make a major contribution to the improvement of service delivery.

The challenge is getting all staff members to understand that they themselves can make a difference. Integral to this is a commitment to contribute to the vision and to adapt to new attitudes and behaviours that are required.

Programme and project management
When the turnaround programme was initiated in September 2003, a total of 64 teams varying in size, scope and focus were appointed. These teams were given basic guidance on how to develop project plans and manage their projects. At the same time a monthly reporting system was introduced and a forum created for the sharing of experiences and for learning to take place.

After an analysis of the progress of the various teams, and coinciding with the adoption of the new strategic plan, the turnaround interventions were organised in 10 intervention areas with specific managers appointed for the different work streams. This means that the change interventions are now part and parcel of the “deliverables” expected of managers, with clear performance indicators identified for each output.

A monitoring and evaluation system has since been introduced with reports on progress serving at monthly management meetings. This system allows the tracking of progress while also detecting risks that could impact on the delivery of future outputs.

The Minister, Deputy Minister and Director-General take an active interest in the turnaround programme, meaning that there is visible and active leadership in making it work.

Change management
The review that was conducted of the turnaround strategy after its first six months of implementation has confirmed that the extent of change that is required has not been successfully communicated to all provincial, regional and district offices. Staff members and their union representatives have also not been properly briefed. This has resulted in some members of staff adopting an attitude of “seeing is believing” meaning that they will only believe that the changes are real if they experience these first hand.

The challenge is getting all staff members to understand that they themselves can make a difference. Integral to this is a commitment to contribute to the new vision and to adapt to the new attitudes and behaviours that are required.

To facilitate the transformation process, a comprehensive change plan is being put in place focusing, among others, on effective internal communication, learning and information sharing.

Conclusion
Home Affairs has publicly acknowledged that it lags behind in the transformation journey. The turnaround strategy embodies a commitment to set the record straight. As such it is deserving of our active support and encouragement. A number of sister departments and organisations have already extended a helping hand.

These include the Department of Public Service and Administration, Centre for Public Service Innovation, Public Works, Social Development, StatsSA and National Intelligence Agency. Other partners include Business Against Crime, the CSIR, Umsobomvu Youth Fund, the International Office on Migration and the UN High Commission of Refugees. The private sector has also contributed. This is Ubuntu and Batho Pele at work. We thank all of you.
The inaugural Red Tape Reduction Challenge Awards attracted a total of 83 proposals, 30 of which went through an adjudication process using the following criteria:

- Clear problem description as it relates to red tape;
- The proposed solution should be innovative and stand a good chance in addressing red tape;
- It should allow for speedy implementation of less than three months;
- Consider the availability of resources needed to roll out the solution; and
- The proposal should be sustainable and likely to yield long-term benefits.

Although the small number of proposals entered (out of over a million public servants) is certainly “not a deluge”, as Glenda White of the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) noted, the awards were nevertheless a step forward in improving efficiencies in the public service machinery.

In her keynote address at the Red Tape Awards ceremony, Public Service Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi said that while the reduction of red tape in the service should be encouraged, the Red Tape awards initiative is not meant to remove essential government regulations.

Service delivery improvement executive manager, Khaya Ngema, described red tape as the “burden of regulations that inhibit service delivery”.

Ngema also emphasised the need to balance between “respect for controls” and the need to “improve efficiencies through initiatives such the Red Tape Reduction Challenge Awards”.

Red tape is one of the major service delivery barriers that contradict both the spirit and practice of Batho Pele. It is also associated with huge social and economic costs that are currently difficult to quantify as a reliable costing exercise has yet to be conducted in South Africa.

However the burden exerted by red tape is likely to be substantial. Some studies, including work by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), suggest that on average the equivalent of 4% of a nation’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is lost due to red tape-related costs.

The awards are an outcome of the red tape impact assessment report entitled...
"From Red Tape to Smart-tape", which was launched in March 2004. It was during the launch of the report that Fraser-Moleketi officially called for red tape proposals from government employees at national, provincial and local levels. CPSI, DPSA and the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) would oversee the post awards process.

The 11 winning proposals would be closely scrutinized to determine their feasibility as potential pilot projects. Below are biographical sketches and comments from the winners of the inaugural Red Tape Reduction Challenge Awards.

Taking paper work out of job applications
Therese Davel is Deputy-Director of Administration in the Office of the Minister of Public Service and Administration in Pretoria in the Gauteng Province. She has been in her current position for the past two and a half years. She previously worked for the Department of Social Services. Theresa is a bona fide resident of Pretoria:

"Red tape informs and determines everything in the endeavour to provide services. It is an essential element of any civil servant’s job but is perceived as negative when it hampers the provision of services. The current system for processing public service job applications is both time-consuming and physically stressful for human resources personnel. They have to handle large stacks of paper. Transferring the Z83 public service job applications and the attendant documentation to the electronic realm would not only open up time for personnel to focus on the quality of the job applications, it is also likely to make things easier for applicants."

Speedy clothing allowances for cops
Captain Theo Steyn has for the past 18 years occupied various positions within the South African Police Service (SAPS). He is currently the commander of the Mafikeng SAPS Vehicle Identification Unit in the North-West Province. Managing people is an
Profiles

Important aspect of his responsibilities within the unit. Steyn is married, with two children, and lives in Pretoria, about 64 kilometres from his workplace.

“Police not wearing uniforms are entitled to an annual clothing allowance for buying a suit and a tie. The only problem is that it is a drag to access the R1 200 allowance. It takes as long as six weeks after handing in requests before people receive the money. Directly depositing clothing allowances into salaries would result in less administration and a reduction in paperwork.

This would also reduce the strain on police’s small salaries. Plainclothes police are required to buy clothes out of their own pockets and submit receipts for reimbursement at the beginning of each financial year.”

Speedy clothing allowances for cops

Mahamed Wahab was director of SAPS provincial management services in the Limpopo Province at the time he submitted his Red Tape Reduction Challenge Award proposal. He is currently section head for support services at the SAPS Head Offices in Pretoria in the Gauteng Province.

Wahab was born in Durban and now lives in Pretoria with his wife and two children.

“The awards are extremely important. The recognition of innovative public servants is an encouraging gesture from the government.”

Cutting red tape, going online

Janine Gibbons is secretary to the headmaster of Greenside High School in Johannesburg.

She has been in that position for nearly 10 years. Gibbons previously held similar positions in private schools and also had a stint in the private sector as a public relations practitioner. Born in Durban, she now lives in Johannesburg.

“Red tape is all the steps that one takes to get to a decision or take action. It is normally negative and arduous. The thrust of my proposal was about shortening the steps between accessing and submitting various government forms.

“This could be achieved by creating a mechanism that would make access and submission of forms online possible.”

Standardised police services

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Captain Rulene Kuhn of the South African Police Service in the Free State Province lives in Bloemfontein with her husband and two children.

“The awards are a surprise, as I have never won anything in my life. It is also good for the image of the police and will enhance service delivery.”

Revamping the supply chain

Dani Kgosi is Deputy-Director, manufacturing, at the Department of Science and Technology in Pretoria in the Gauteng Province. She has been in that position for about a year and previously worked in the planning and logistics sector. She holds an industrial engineering degree from Wits University and a second degree from Pretoria University. Kgosi, who is married with two children, is originally from the rural Sjyabuswa village in the Mpumalanga province.

“Government procurement procedures are riddled with inefficiencies and bottlenecks that make the performance of the system slower. Suppliers generally take too long to deliver goods. In some instances the delays are due to incomplete orders or delivery of wrong goods. The time between placing an order for a printer, for example, could take as long as five and a half weeks and even longer for some commodities. The biggest challenge lies in the realignment of the entire procurement and supply chain. This would include easing the difficulties in securing signatures for purchases as well as detailing clear delivery timeframes for different commodities. An order for a set of pens should not take more than a day to be delivered, and a desk should take about a week.”

Performance management made easy

Superintendent Herman van Zyl of the South African Police Service in the Western Cape Province has been associated with the service for the past 24 years.

Performance management made easy
Van Zyl is currently commander of the Vehicle Identification Unit in Cape Town and says finding new ways of organising work for effectiveness is his greatest interest. He lives in Cape Town with his wife and two children:

“When I was appointed to the position of line function manager in 1992, I had no clue how to measure the performance of my subordinates. And the same applied to other managers. It was for this reason that I began developing my own version of a performance management system.

“The initial efforts were based on trial and error, and driven by my instincts. But those efforts have over the years resulted in the development of a performance management software tailored to suit the conditions in the police services ... There are a lot of people with innovative ideas. The problem is that there are often no official channels to carry through some of the ideas ...

“The awards have opened up space for participation and have the potential to make government a leader in innovation, instead of always trailing behind the private sector.”

Streamlining procurement

Savithree Moodley works for the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) in Pretoria, Gauteng Province. She is currently the DCS Deputy Director and is in charge of the HIV/AIDS programme. Moodley has been with the public service for 21 years and previously worked for the departments of Health and Social Services. Born in Durban, she now lives in Pretoria with her family, including two children:

“The proposal suggests that government forms a central bureau for managing the tender processes of the entire public service. The bureau would provide a database of service providers and have procurement procedures that are suited to meet the needs of programme managers.

“Currently, units within department have their own tender processes, which makes the whole business of tendering messy and irritating. The bureau could be located in the national department of finance.”

Seamless flow of customs goods

Bernadine Williamson is a collections clerk at the South African Revenue Services (SARS) in East London in the Eastern Cape Province. Williamson, who is married and has two children, has been working for SARS for the past 10 years:

“The proposal is basically about finding solutions and procedures that would assist SARS to save time. At the moment personnel handling goods kept by SARS [pending payment of customs and duties] waste a lot of time manually putting tags on each item passing through customs. The idea is that instead of repetitively writing down information on each item, the goods tracking system could be improved by developing standard tags with item numbers and dates.”

Real time access to financial information

Annette Myburgh works for Statistics South Africa in Pretoria in the Gauteng Province:

“Although the information already exists in the system, accessing it is often a tedious and time wasting exercise. Managers requiring information for planning purposes have to go through all kinds of channels for access approval. The idea, which was a team effort, proposes an integrated information management system that would ensure real time access to information.”

Printing police forms on demand

Veronica Moolman was born in Vereeniging in the Gauteng Province. She is currently Principal Typist in the family violence, child protection and sexual offences unit of SAPS in Vereeniging. Moolman is married with two children:

“The work culture in the public service is such that people always get top-down instructions. There is little consideration of input from the ground ... the awards stimulate ideas and recognise that people on the ground also have ideas that need to be heard.”

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Building a Unified System of Public Administration

Building an effective developmental state is a central objective of the current government in South Africa. A developmental state is pro-poor and must intervene decisively and coherently in the economy and society to address social and economic developmental goals. These fundamentally include bridging the historical racial-based divide between the developed first economy and the underdeveloped second economy.

The ANC’s 2004 Election Manifesto, The People’s Contract, calls for the establishment of a common system of public services. This common system, a unified system of public administration, is a key goal of the South African developmental state. This paper seeks to demonstrate that the imperatives of integrated service delivery and mobility between the spheres underpin the impetus for the evolution of a unified system of public administration.

Initially the development of this system requires the harmonisation of conditions of service between the public service and local government, but it will ultimately find expression in overarching framework legislation that will establish common norms and standards for public administration.

The paper also questions whether the creation of a public administration system based on the new public management framework is able to deliver on the imperatives of the developmental state. This is because this framework emphasises the need for particular reforms including decentralisation and deregulation. These run counter to the central tenets of developmental statism, which are based on coordinated planning from a central level and greater regulation to ensure that resources are allocated to areas of specified needs.

Integrated service delivery

Research has shown that many people have difficulty accessing government services, often because transport costs are prohibitive. Some people are not even aware of the benefits and services to which they are entitled. To respond to these challenges, it is necessary that government organises itself in such a way that as many government services are concentrated in a single location, and that the...
A recent initiative aimed at bringing government closer to the people is the Community Development Worker (CDW) Programme. Currently 500 learner CDWs are enrolled in a learnership and are deployed to municipalities. Once they have completed their learnership they will apply for posts on the establishments of provincial government. At ward level the CDWs will interact with Mayor’s Offices, ward committees and will establish ties with other government community workers such as community health workers and agricultural extension workers. CDWs will be required to interact with all spheres of government, reporting on challenges and needs faced on the ground. Institutional integration will improve government’s responsiveness to CDWs, and CDWs’ service to communities.

A further example of integrated service delivery is the Multi-Purpose Community Centre (MPCC). MPCCs deliver services of all the spheres of government, from a single location. They are located in townships and rural areas, close to communities that have previously been marginalised in society. The establishment of MPCCs gives rise to the need for cooperative institutional arrangements. For instance, officials staffing these centres will in time need to take responsibility for delivering services other than those of their immediate department. Another important requirement is a financing system for jointly run service delivery institutions.

Plans have been mooted to establish urban government service delivery malls to complement the MPCC initiative. Integrated service delivery centres such as these have been established in the state of Bahia in Brazil. They offer a one-stop service in a pleasant environment with flexible hours of business and well-trained staff. Such innovations in service delivery will be facilitated by institutional integration, especially between the spheres of government.

One of the most pressing problems in effective service delivery to marginalised areas is a lack of information on government services. As a first step in the e-Government project, a Batho Pele Gateway portal has been developed, which offers information on government services from the Government website. A call centre operating in six languages is also operational. The portal and the call centre offer information on seven key questions on each service, including the cost of the service, the nearest location etc. The portal has been made available at pilot MPCCs and 55 Post Offices through the Public Information Terminals.

Given the potential for integration offered by information and communication technologies, it may in future be possible to apply for an ID book at a clinic, for example, or to pay your traffic fine at a supermarket. The technology already exists for many of these innovations and there have been isolated breakthroughs in the public and private sectors. The aim, as already mentioned, is to provide as many services as possible in one place, and then to locate the service delivery point close to the people.

Transactional capability for the portal will certainly be a big step forward, if progress is also made in expanding the access channels to the portal.

**Cooperative governance**

In the light of this vision of future service delivery, it is necessary to take stock of the constitutional framework in terms of which we currently deliver services. Underpinning our system of governance is the concept of cooperative governance,
which is enshrined in the Constitution. As a function of cooperative governance, the spheres are required to coordinate their actions so as to provide coherent government for the country as a whole. This mandate provides the backdrop for both integrated service delivery and institutional integration.

One of the key principles contained in the Constitution is that the spheres of government are “distinctive, interdependent and interrelated”. A system of unified public administration would not seek to undermine the distinctiveness of local government as a sphere; rather, it seeks to improve the manner in which the spheres interrelate. The recently published Intergovernmental Framework Bill will assist by formalising the intergovernmental forums and regulating dispute resolution. However, it is necessary to do more than this in order to facilitate seamless service delivery.

Mobility of staff

One of the strongest arguments for a unified public administration is the facilitation of mobility between the institutions of government. Greater mobility facilitates the transfer of functions between spheres, to allow services to be delivered at the most appropriate level, and also enables the deployment of managers to where they are most needed in government.

The Constitution requires that national and provincial governments must assign functions to a municipality, by agreement, functions that would be more effectively be administered locally, in cases where the municipality has the capacity to administer the functions. The Constitution and legislation also require the transfer of specific functions, as in the cases of the Departments of Health and Water Affairs and Forestry.

One of the implications of a transfer of functions between the spheres is that the personnel must be transferred as “a going concern”. In addition, the conditions of service of transferring staff may not be reduced in the process.

Numerous complications have arisen in transferring personnel between the spheres. The conditions of service in the public service and local government are significantly different. In the public service, a job is evaluated and calculated to have a certain job weight, which corresponds to a salary grade. The job weight determines the salary, and the salary grades are uniform throughout the public service, with some sectoral exceptions.

In a municipality, remuneration is determined in line with the revenue collected by the municipality. Affordability to a large extent determines the salary level. In practice this means that there are a multiplicity of pay scales in local government.

This makes the transfer of staff very complex, given that overall conditions of service must be retained. Add to this the fact that transferring employees are likely to have to resign from their pension funds, to their detriment, and may have to join a different medical aid. Their union might not be represented in the bargaining council of the sphere to which they have moved. Two strategies must be employed. Firstly, mechanisms must be found in the short term to make the transfers easier within the existing constraints. Secondly, conditions of service must be harmonised as far as possible to ensure mobility.

The harmonisation of conditions of service requires initially that local government rationalise its conditions of service. This is already happening, and there have been many positive developments. Local government is now working towards a single medical aid and a single pension fund. In the public service there is a single pension fund and the intention is to create a single medical aid fund. SALGA has instituted 10 categories of municipality, limiting the number of pay scales, and has instituted job evaluation systems. Despite these efforts, public service and local government conditions of service are still very far apart.

Harmonisation versus alignment

There is no blueprint to guide how local government conditions of service should be rationalised. In 1994, when the various public administrations were being integrated, the “generally prevailing” conditions of service were adopted. In terms of numbers, the public service conditions of service are generally prevailing. And yet SALGAs efforts at rationalisation are not always working towards alignment with the public service. Envisaged legislation to regulate employment matters in local government will certainly promote the harmonisation of conditions of service within local government, but will not result in full alignment.

It is easy to become pre-occupied with conditions of service and to forget the end goal of the exercise. Mobility between the spheres is just one aspect of strengthening the integration of government. To achieve seamless service delivery is the ultimate goal. Yet the difficulties with conditions of service do give rise to questions regarding the nature of a future unified public administration. It seems that uniform conditions of service across the spheres will be unlikely, although this cannot be excluded as a possibility in the long term. It may be possible comprehensively to align other conditions of service such as pensions and medical aid.

Public entities

While local government is taking steps to rationalise its conditions of service and legislation is being developed to regulate municipal employment matters, the National Treasury and DPSA are conducting a review of public entities. The process will lead to the development of legislation regulating public entities’ corporate governance and human resource matters. For the present, the National Treasury and DPSA are focusing only on addressing Schedule 3A and 3B public entities. The Department of Public Enterprises is undertaking a similar review exercise on Schedule 2 public entities.

Public entities are essentially instruments of the state that should assist the state in delivering on its development goals. If they are not sufficiently under the control and guidance of the state, they may not be delivering on those goals. In recent years there has been a proliferation of public entities, which were created for
various reasons, often to avoid the strictures of the public service pay scales or procurement procedures.

It was frequently argued that public entities would be better placed than normal line departments to procure the services of hire particular experts required. In some instances, the nature of the function performed, such as an advisory function, requiring independence from government, provided the rationale for the establishment of a public entity. Public entities enjoy a measure of freedom in the way they operate, and the question was whether that freedom was necessary or being abused.

The review developed a new classification system for public entities based on the principle that form follows function. It was done on the corporate forms of public entities and a new category of “government agency” was developed. Proposals were also made on corporate governance and human resource practices. The review has developed a set of tools that will enable departments critically to examine the public entities they control, to evaluate whether they should be public entities, whether they should become part of the department again, or whether they should become a departmental agency. The work done so far has also provided information for the development of a legislative framework that will bind all public entities.

Framework legislation for a unified public administration

The Constitution provides for certain basic values and principles governing public administration:  
• A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained;  
• Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted;  
• Public administration must be development-oriented;  
• Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias;  
• People’s needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making;  
• Public administration must be accountable;

• Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information;  
• Good human-resource management and career-development practices, to maximise human potential, must be cultivated;  
• Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management based on objectivity, fairness and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation.

These principles form the basis for overarching framework legislation for public administration. The Constitution also provides that legislation regulating public administration may differentiate between different sectors, administrations and institutions. The nature and functions of the different sectors, administrations or institutions of public administration are relevant factors to be taken into account in legislation regulating public administration.1 These provisions provide the constitutional basis for a unified system of public administration.

The objectives of the proposed new Public Administration legislation are:  
• to ensure effective, efficient and seamless service delivery;  
• to create a broad framework of norms and standards for public administration;

• to allow for a degree of autonomy and differentiation within public administration; and  
• to provide for mobility within public administration.

The legislation will outline the organisation of government, including national, provincial and local governments, as well as public entities and the categories within public entities. Mechanisms will be required to create public entities and for public entities to change their corporate form. There will also be mechanisms for the transfer of functions and personnel within the spheres and between spheres and public entities. The roles and responsibilities of heads of institutions will be addressed, and the establishment of a senior management service for public administration. Employment and other personnel practices for all employees and conditions of service and labour relations will be regulated, allowing for deviations where appropriate.

A unified Public Service, new public management and the developmental state

It would seem logical to suggest that a unified public service is consistent with the goals and objectives of the developmental state. This is because the central objective of a unified public service as has been argued is improved and integrated service delivery, which in turn is a central goal of the developmental state. The constitutional principles of good governance focus largely on improved citizen-centred service delivery. The principles also resonate with the paradigm that dominated public administration at the time they were written: new public management (NPM).

The term NPM is often used to describe a public management culture that puts citizens and the delivery of services to them at the centre and which emphasises accountability for results and outcomes. Decentralisation and the use of agencies for the delivery of services are often promoted to ensure that things get done better. Typical features of NPM and the related approach to governance include the following:
Taiwan, Korea and Malaysia are all cited as models of developmentalism, which have sustained their national economies. Post World War reconstruction was marked by a variety of historical forms, and is clearly contradicted by the central goals of the neo-liberal advocacy of a slimmer state in which fewer services are delivered. This approach does not of necessity exclude decentralisation. Nevertheless, in a context where skills and managerial capacity are scarce, decentralisation can undermine effectiveness by giving responsibilities to managers and systems that are simply not ready for them, leading to breakdowns in service delivery.

The time has come for us to seek a better balance between centralised and decentralised approaches in order to strengthen public administration and lay the basis for a common unified system that will support our social and economic development goals. This may require the revoking of certain delegations and/or the creation of new systems of accreditation.

Conclusion
Integrated service delivery, especially delivery aimed at bringing services closer to the people, is an undisputed goal for government. Innovative modes of service delivery, especially at integrated service delivery sites, are creating an impetus for institutional integration. At the same time the need for services to be delivered at the most appropriate level requires that functions and staff be transferred from one sphere to another, or to or from public entities. The harmonisation of conditions of service, systems and norms will facilitate these transfers. Government’s broad vision of a unified system of public administration seeks to respond to these practical needs.

A unified system of public administration does not seek to undermine the distinctiveness of local government, nor does it seek to inhibit the freedoms that public entities legitimately require to be effective. Achieving greater harmony between the spheres of government and public entities will enable the South African developmental state to increase the effectiveness and impact of its service delivery. While it has been necessary to spend time on technical work relating to conditions of service, it is important not to lose sight of the ultimate goal, which is the attainment of seamless and convenient delivery of public services to the citizens of this country in support of our social and economic development objectives.

In seeking to achieve our developmental goals we will need to ensure that public administration remains coordinated and planned. This will require a better balance between centralised and decentralised modes of internal and external service delivery in order to optimise the use and deployment of resources. New public management should increasingly be seen as a toolbox of progressive management practices and innovations (popular participation, citizen-oriented service delivery, management empowerment) rather than as a paradigm linked to the weakening of the state to allow markets to operate more freely and efficiently.

References
1 Section 41(1)(h)(iv) of the Constitution read with section 41 (1)(c).
2 Section 195(1) of the Constitution.
3 Sections 195(5) and 195(6).
4 This has emerged out of several human resource reviews and evaluations conducted by the Public Service Commission. See Public Service Commission, State of the Public Service Report, (2004).
The current government's vision of "A Better Life for All", can be viewed as its strategic intent or overarching strategic goal for the country that must be realised in the long-term, say the next 20 or 30 years. This long-term goal is being pursued through various policies, namely economic, education, health, infrastructure, social development etc. The Medium-Term Strategic Framework and the Medium-Term Strategic Expenditure Framework, which, inter alia, includes the alignment of strategic planning and budgeting, have come into being in the SA Public Service in 1999 when the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act No 1 of 1999), as amended came into force.

Government departments and institutions are still in the process of fine-tuning the alignment of strategic planning and strategy implementation with resource allocation. This was followed by the Cluster approach, in terms of which national ministries and departments are grouped into five clusters, namely Economic, Investment & Employment, Governance & Administration, International Relations, Peace & Security, and Social Sector, in order to coordinate and integrate government activities and programmes.

The cluster approach is complemented by similar structures in provincial administrations and integrated development planning (IDP) at municipal level. The Policy Coordination & Advisory Service (PCAS) Branch was established in the Presidency to ensure macro policy coordination and integration at the national level. In some of the provincial premiers’ and executive mayors or municipal managers’ offices a similar structure has been created.

The Ten Year Review and Planning approach was introduced in 2001, but the concept of a 10-year planning horizon was only effectively operationalised last year. The National Spatial Development Perspective is by its nature (of dealing with one aspect of development, namely space) not geared to be such an overall development framework of plan.

The strategic framework or plan, some may even call the "National Development Plan", the country requires will to my mind from this point onwards make for more effective management of the Public Service. Such a framework will help the PCAS Branch in the Presidency to achieve more effective policy and programme coordination and integration at a macro national level.

I think we should consider a Programme Office as part of the PCAS Branch in the Presidency. Similar structures at provincial and municipal level must also be put in place to coordinate and integrate crosscutting programmes and projects. The Programme Office should have its own operational budget, programme leaders/managers and should employ a matrix or so-called project man-

The Need for a Strategically Managed Developmental State

Greg MacMaster, of the Department of Public Works, explores an array of strategies that government can employ in bringing to fruition a “better life for all” as spelt out in its long-term vision to improve the quality of life of all South Africans.
sustainable strategic position, in tors so as to provide a unique value propo-
form activities differently from competi-
foundations of strategy as the activities in
it is an effort or deliberate action that an
holder expectations.
the needs of markets and to fulfil stake-
within a changing environment, to meet
through its configuration of resources
achieves advantage for the organisation
an organisation over the long term: which
strategic thinking is therefore criti-
organisations, and business process strategies; and functional strategies (such as financial, staffing, facil-
procurement strategies). All these strategies
may be either long term or short term.
Strategies are different from tactics. Tactics are short-term, adaptive actions and reactions used to accomplish limited objectives. But the distinction might at times be academic. Tony Manning’s insight needs sharing at this point: “Strategy is not rocket science. It’s common sense and creativity combined. The way you make strategy is as important as the strategy you make. Strategic conversation guides and inspires people to high purpose. It also grows them as a resource. It is the missing link in what we know about knowledge work. Strategy is made and implemented by human beings. It works when they work well together and fails when they don’t. Collaboration is vital.”

There is a distinct difference between policy and strategy, although some scholars say policy can be easily substituted for strategy in the public sector. A policy statement is usually developed according to politicians’ interpretations of what citizens require, and what needs to be done to achieve the objectives set by society. Policies are therefore heuristic and broad in scope; they may set goals for organisations, but do not state how these are to be achieved.

A strategy, however, describes the methods an organisation intends using to achieve policy aims. Strategy has to do with how an organisation and its leadership are going to put policies into effect; the plans that need to be drawn up and put into action in order to achieve policy aims while working within the general principles of that policy.

The distinction between policy and strategy is important, as it underlines the notion that the top management within a government department or institution must act within the broad policy framework. It is the task of politicians to devel-
The distinction between policy and strategy is important, as it underlines the notion that the top management within a government department or institution must act within the broad policy framework.

Another school of thought argues that although strategic management is often discussed as an extension of strategic planning, and the two terms often are confused and used interchangeably, they are by no means synonymous. Strategic planning is defined as a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it. It blends futuristic thinking, objective analysis, and subjective evaluation of goals and priorities to chart future courses of action that will ensure the long-run vitality and effectiveness of the organization.

In contrast to the more closed-system orientation of traditional long-range planning and conventional programme planning, strategic planning is a "big picture" approach. A word of caution: Creating a strategic plan is less important than creating the ability or capacity to think and act strategically.

Strategic management shares these same attributes, but it is a more encompassing process that is concerned with managing an organization in a strategic manner on a continuing basis. Strategic management is "an advanced and coherent form of strategic thinking, attempting to extend strategic vision throughout all units of the organisation, encompassing every administrative system". Strategic management does not occur when top management micromanage operations to ensure uniformity; rather, it occurs when decisions and actions at all levels are driven by a few fundamental strategies or policies that are strongly endorsed as being critical for improving an agency's performance over the long run.

A strategically managed public agency is one in which budgeting, performance management, human resource development, programme management, and other management processes are guided by a strategic agenda that has been developed with a buy-in from key actors and communicated widely within the organization and among external constituencies.

Strategic management is concerned with implementing strategies and measuring performance as well as monitoring trends and identifying emerging issues that might require strategic responses.

Operational control is what managers are involved in for most of their time, and it is vital to the effective implementation of strategy, but it is not the same as strategic management. The scope of strategic management is greater than that of any one area of operational management.

Whilst strategic management is involved in all areas of management, it is not the same as day-to-day management. Successful implementation of strategic management requires an assessment of organization capacities in such areas as managerial capability, power structure, culture, leadership, and organizational structure. Strategic management must provide a process for developing strategic plans and updating periodically, which may involve a "strategic planning systems" approach layered down through functional divisions and operating units, but it also must provide the means for ensuring that strategic plans are implemented and monitored effectively.

The strategic management process comprises strategic/organizational direction and environmental analysis, strategy formulation, and strategy implementation. Every organization should have a vision and mission statement to guide it into the future. These give organisational direction and focus the employees and managers on how and why they are in
business. This organisational direction is developed on the basis of ethical behaviour and corporate governance which is the backbone of strategic management.

The environmental analysis of the organisation consists of evaluating and analysing the external environment for possible opportunities and threats, and the internal environment for possible strengths and weaknesses (SWOT analysis). The internal environment is also known as the company profile — in the microenvironment — and includes aspects/factors over which the organisation has no control. This environmental analysis is critical to the strategic management process and without it is impossible to effectively move on to the next phase in the process, namely strategy formulation.

Given the strategic direction and environmental analysis the organisation is in a position to develop long-term goals, which are more quantifiable than the mission statement developed in the previous stage, but which is derived from it. After this stage the organisation decides which is the appropriate way forward by means of corporate and generic strategies. These generic strategies are very broadly defined in the form of grand strategies available to it, which can be divided into three major groups, growth and decline strategies and corporate combinations.

To be able to implement the strategies chosen in the previous stage, certain drivers (driving forces) are available to successfully achieve the goals and mission. These include leadership, culture, reward systems, organisational structures and allocation of resources. These are supplemented by strategic instruments like short-term objectives and policies.

Strategic evaluation and control through continuous improvement is seen as the last step in the strategic management process and should not be neglected. Aspects like total quality management and the balanced scorecard are tools which can help and improve the manager’s task of successfully controlling the strategic management process. The strategic management process applies to all kinds of organisations, not-for-profit organisations, amongst other organisations, have other options and strategies to consider as well. It is, however, important to first understand the process of strategic management before trying to adapt it to one of these types of organisations.

It is necessary to explain the role of policies in strategy implementation. Although functional tactics provide guidance on the key routine activities that should be performed in the various functional areas, more detail is often required. Policies provide this detail. Policies can be defined as the specific guidelines, methods, procedures, forms, and administrative practices that direct thinking, decision and actions of managers and employees in strategy implementation.

Policies inform employees what is expected of them and clarify what can and cannot be done in pursuit of the short-term objectives in the strategy implementation process.

Policies, previously referred to as standard operating procedures (SOPs), standardise routine decisions, thus reducing the time it takes to make decisions, and provide a basis for control and promote coordination and consistency across organisational units.

In order to be a valuable strategy implementation instrument, policies need to support the chosen strategy.

A change in strategy requires a change in policies. As strategic change does not occur automatically, policies are needed to guide day-to-day activities and procedures to ensure successful strategy implementation. If existing policies are not changed when a new strategy is implemented, they can become a barrier to strategic change. In order to support customer-focused strategies, for example, front-line employees should be empowered through policies to take decisions or act to fulfil customer needs so as to deliver a high standard of customer service.

From the above theoretical formulations or statements, one can conclude that there is a difference between policy and strategy in the public and private sectors, which is borne out by current practice and reality in the public service. Strategy can, therefore, not easily be substituted for policy in the public sector. The confusion around policy and strategy is clarified, by distinguishing between political, government, executive and operational policies on the one hand, and on the other corporate, business and functional/operational strategies, as well as stating that strategies are implemented through policies, one can conclude that operational strategies are implemented through operational policies.

Government and executive policies are implemented through corporate and business strategies. It is important to understand the symbiotic relationship between strategy and policy. As said in the introduction, government has strategic intent or an overarching strategy or strategic goal, which needs to be translated into various policies or policy frameworks such as economic, education, health etc. To implement these policies, implementation strategies are embedded in programmes, projects and “normal operations” have to be developed.

A clear distinction also exists between the concepts strategic management and strategic planning. I endorse the view that the latter forms part of the former, but strategic management is more comprehensive. One can further distinguish clear activities, elements or phases in the strategic management approach or process, although different scholars call them by different names.

The three activities, elements or phases can in effect be divided into four: strategic analysis/planning/strategic direction and environmental analysis, strategic choice/strategy development/formulation, strategy implementation, and performance evaluation and monitoring.

For the purpose of this paper I support this four activity, element or phase breakdown or process, and call them strategic analysis/direction/planning, strategy development/formulation, strategy implementation, and performance monitoring and evaluation.
Conclusion

Strategic management is a broad concept that “embraces the entire set of managers’ decisions and actions that determine the long-run performance of an organisation”, and is “an advanced and coherent form of strategic thinking, attempting to extend strategic vision throughout all units of the organisation, encompassing every administrative system”.

Strategic management occurs when decisions and actions at all levels are driven by a few fundamental strategies or policies that are strongly endorsed as being critical for improving an agency’s performance over the long run. A strategically managed public service or a public agency is one in which budgeting, performance management, human resource development, program management, and other management processes are guided by a strategic agenda that has been developed with a buy-in from key actors and communicated widely within the organisation and among external constituencies. Strategic management is concerned with implementing strategies and measuring performance as well as monitoring trends and identifying emerging issues that might require strategic responses.

An integrated governance framework is suggested so that both strategies and policies are more effectively implemented through programmes and projects, as well as through “integrated” management in government departments or institutions. The effective management of available resources, including assets, finance, human and technological resources, is in order to realise improved service delivery across the three spheres of government and departments and institutions at national, provincial and local levels requires a strategic management approach.

The matrix which has been presented on the interrelatedness or overlap of the activities, component parts or elements of the six management competencies, disciplines or functions and programme management roles and capacities, helps one to see that interrelatedness or overlap at one glance. Like a picture, it says more than a thousand words. However, a word of caution would be appropriate at this point: All these management tools or aids are just that; they should never replace common sense, creativity and collective wisdom.

It is therefore argued that in the public sector strategic management as the all-encompassing and overarching management competency, discipline or function, embraces all the other management competencies or functions such as public policy, project, operations and resource management; in other words all of them constitute a continuum or value chain, and that effective overall governance and management in the public sector requires an integrated approach, if real “value for money” or “public value” and enhanced service delivery is to be achieved.

The Balanced Scorecard is the strategic management tool that helps to achieve the required integration of budgets (and other resources), organisational culture and performance management, and goes hand in glove with regular strategic conversations. But in addition to using this management tool, national and provincial departments and municipalities should establish Strategic Management Units within the Office of the Director-General or Chief Executive Officer to provide her/him and the Top Management Team with the required strategic support. A Programme Office has to be created in such a unit to coordinate and facilitate strategy implementation and monitoring & evaluation through (strategic) programmes and projects/operations.

In conclusion I wish to return to the point I made in the introduction; the current government’s vision of “a better life for all”, can be viewed as its strategic intent or overarching strategic goal for the country that must be realised in the long-term, say the next twenty or thirty. This vision or long-term goal is being pursued through various policies, namely economic, education, health, social development etc.

These policy frameworks require implementation strategies embodied in programmes, projects and on-going operations, sometimes called activities, which are made possible and underpinned by the necessary resources e.g. financial, human, physical and so forth. The government’s vision, strategic intent or overarching strategic goal should further be elaborated through a strategic planning and implementation framework, which involves all six management competencies, disciplines or functions.

The RDP has been this strategic framework to date, but the synthesis report, “Towards a Ten Year Review”, expresses the need for an overarching encompassing national development framework to coordinate, guide and integrate government initiatives and programmes. I am of the opinion that in addition to that a Programme Office in the Presidency should be established to coordinate and integrate cross-cutting programmes and projects, with its own operational budget programme leaders/managers and employing a matrix or so-called project management structure should be seriously considered.

The basis has been laid or is being laid for strategic management in the public service, and will make it possible for government to use a such an approach in which policy, programme, project, operations and resource management, together with the intergovernmental relations concept, are employed as an integrated governance/mangement methodology to achieve enhanced service delivery and “value for money”. In fact I would be so bold as to suggest that this entails what I would call the “revised new public management” approach.

However, all public managers at senior and middle levels need to be trained in these disciplines to clearly understand what they entail and how to integrate them, so that the South African State can more effectively and efficiently meet the challenge of a “developmental state” and deliver quality public goods and services to the millions of historically disadvantaged and poor South Africans in the second decade of our freedom.

Due to space constraints policy/policy management, programmes/programme management, projects/project management and operations/operations management will be examined in subsequent articles.
One only has to think of the number of broken marriages or friendships to know that partnerships are difficult. Indeed, there would surely be many lessons from marriage counselling that would have applicability for partnerships within government. Yet it is obvious that partnerships are pivotal for the Public Service’s management and delivery, and co-operative governance is strongly emphasised in government’s policies.

This essay reflects on 10 years’ of running partnership programmes within our new democracy. The immediate challenge in writing such an essay is to question what the opportunity costs of candour will be. Although problems are almost always a “two-way street”, sometimes it can be more the other partner’s fault. But is public exposure the most effective in addressing the problems? That said, I shall give my perspectives on these partnerships, and accept that there may be others.

This essay will focus on the Working for Water programme, and will also refer to the Working on Fire programme, the Working for Wetlands programme, and the Santam/Cape Argus Ukuvuka Campaign. These are all among the most successful programmes that have been launched since democracy, and are steeped in a partnership approach. The essay ends with some suggestions in setting up and managing partnerships.

The Working for Water Programme
One of government’s flagship programmes, Working for Water (WfW) grew from a programme with a budget of R27 million in 1995/6 to one that now commands a direct budget of R440 million in 2004/5. This excludes the budgets for Working on Fire (R35m) and Working for Wetlands (R40m).

WfW clears invasive alien plants in a labour-intensive manner, because of the impact that these plants have on water security, biological diversity, the integrity of natural systems, the productive potential of land, soil erosion and the intensity of wild fires, amongst other impacts. It is said to be the biggest conservation programme in Africa.

There would be many reasons for the high profile and success of WfW. It has had strong political champions. Professor Kader Asmal made WfW possible, and was able to win the support of the then President Nelson Mandela as the Patron in Chief. Ministers Ronnie Kasrils and Buyelwa Sonjica have continued to
champion from within DWAF, with significant support from the Ministers of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (Ministers Valli Moosa and Pallo Jordan, and now Martin van Schalkwyk) and Agriculture (Ministers Thoko Didiza and Derek Hanekom).

The programme was principally funded initially through the Reconstruction and Development Programme (thanks to then Minister Jay Naidoo), and later the Poverty Relief allocation (thanks to Minister Trevor Manuel and Deputy Minister Gill Marcus, and National Treasury officials). This enabled the programme to take a broader perspective, arguing that this was government’s money, and that it should not focus solely on the needs of DWAF.

This included arguing that we should not focus only on those plants that impact on water security (ie, the trees that use far more water than the plants they displace), but should look to deal with the full spectrum of invasive alien plants.

If that battle was won, we did not succeed in persuading DWAF and our partners that we should be part of an integrated programme dealing with all invasive species, and focusing on their prevention as much as their control. (Many international experts could not fathom how we could spend so much on control, and so little on prevention, when the returns on investment from the latter are so much higher) This failure has cost South Africa dearly.

A more difficult aspect for some of the officials was the focus that WfW placed on its social responsibilities. Once again we argued that we are an integrated programme, and could not merely focus on the technical aspects if there was not the capacity to deal with the social challenges of our beneficiaries. This led to a strong social development focus, not only in the targeting of the marginalised (by race, gender, disability, age, geographic locality and poverty status, including single-parent households), but also in providing support in terms of social development needs like life skills, sexual and reproductive health support, child-care and even the provision of crèches in the early years of the programme. More on this later.

A third major reason for the programme’s initial success was its institutional organisation, being led by a Special Advisor, and based in Cape Town. Although this happened by default rather than design, it did enable more decisive decision-making and action, operating more as a public entity. However, this later turned into almost a liability, as accounting officers sought to take control over the operations of the programme, and refused to delegate authority.

The direct links to political decision-making, and the fluidity of the operations in the early years, led to quick successes. The programme has spent an average of 98% of its budget over the past nine years, never slipping below 90% of its budget within a financial year (easily the best per-
performance of any major programme of government since democracy).

WfW was able to respond to broader government needs, such as establishing projects in flashpoints like Bulwer, Richmond and the Dukuduku Forest area, to defuse tensions. It created work opportunities in the early years when there was so much pressure on government to deliver on employment, and was one of the highest-profile programmes in this respect.

However, experience has also shown that the early flexibility of the programme had a significant opportunity cost in the failure to focus on long-term planning (and particularly long-term clearing plans for invasive alien plants).

WfW enjoyed very good press, largely through its very committed and visible ministers. It has won or been part of 38 national and international awards — this despite never trying to win an award for a second time (other than for health and safety). It got to a point where WfW was getting so much credit that we were concerned about jealousy from other programmes, and effectively withdrew from entering for any awards. (Interestingly, Ms Cheryl Carolus was aghast that we should have done so.)

We also stood back in terms of international funding, where it became clear that pushing for such funding put one in competition with other programmes. We took the view that we needed the good relations within DWAF and with other departments more than we needed the additional funding (especially given the wonderful support WfW enjoyed from the National Treasury).

Aligned to this “good press” has been a strong focus on branding. The yellow T-shirts and paraphernalia have all been strong in branding WfW as a programme that enjoyed easy recognition. It has also been important in communities where the programme has worked well. A notable example was the high altitude teams who abseil down cliffs to clear difficult-to-reach invasive alien plants. Such has been the status of these workers that they would saunter down the streets on market days, wearing their climbing kit as a status symbol. (This is also being seen now among the fire-fighters in the Working on Fire programme.)

The programme has produced its own annual report, has had the authority to respond directly to issues in the media, and has been quick to engage the support of national experts to argue its case in times of need. It has also had very good international branding, being hailed as a role-model programme by a variety of prestigious organisations, institutions and individuals.

What also sets WfW apart is the extent to which it has endeavoured to add value through its activities. It has had its own natural focus on value-added industries (trying to use the accessible cleared biomass for charcoal, firewood, woodchips, building materials, crafts, toys, furniture, etc.), but in addition has looked for ways in which it can help to meet broader government needs.

A pertinent example has been its efforts to provide work opportunities for war veterans, through its Operation Vusela partnership with the Department of Defence. It remains a mystery why so few other programmes have deliberately targeted this marginalised group. It has worked with the correctional services authorities and NGOs to provide opportunities for former inmates, giving them employment opportunities to reintegrate them into society.

It worked with the Department of Land Affairs to endeavour to facilitate the level of success in the redistribution of land (ensuring that the land was cleared, and that the beneficiaries gained the work opportunities in doing so). It has sought to focus opportunities for disabled people, through a Working on Abilities partnership. While the programme certainly continues to provide work and training opportunities for this marginalised group, the partnership itself has somewhat floundered.

One of its most successful partnerships was the Greater Hermanus Water Conservation Campaign. This enabled WfW and the coastal town of Hermanus to combine resources, where WfW was one of a 12-point plan for water conservation. In the early years of the campaign, water use dropped by 12%, revenue from water sales went up by over 20%, water was more affordable for the poor (the free basic water and electricity policy had its roots in the arguments being developed in tariff campaigns in Hermanus and Durban), and those who drove the marginal cost paid the marginal price.

One of the off-shoots was that WfW received matching funding from Hermanus for its work, thereby providing additional employment in the area. Sadly, this successful model was also not built upon. There are many other examples that could be cited, where WfW has tried to use its existing capacity to add value to other initiatives of government. What has often been difficult has been to find the champions for these partnerships, and to maintain the added focus within our workload.

The social development partnership warrants special mention, for this has been at the heart of the programme. There is no doubt that the ability of WfW to create jobs in areas of poverty was a prime reason for its rapid growth, more than a full appreciation of the massive threat of invasive aliens. Indeed, we have had to stress to staff that we are WfW, and not some other programme, because we clear invasive alien plants, and this remains the main goal of the programme.

The programme leadership has argued that it has had to address the well-being of its employees, rather than demand that the responsible authorities do so. Although this has covered a number of issues, perhaps the most contentious within DWAF has been the continued support for child-care. WfW argued that it could not ask its workers (many of whom are single parents) to go off up the mountains if there was not child-care for their children.

DWAF agreed that this was a concern, but felt that the Department of Social Development should provide this service. DSD did not disagree, but argued that it could not simply focus on certain people in a community who happened to get work through WfW, and therefore had to...
develop its capacity to provide this service. WfW therefore felt that it should continue to provide this service.

There is still not a satisfactory resolution to this problem. This is a problem for the workers. (It should be noted that the focus was on the younger children, but experience has shown that it is the older children who are probably even more in need of support.)

All of the above would count for little without the passion of staff. There is little doubt that WfW professional staff put in many more hours than the average civil servant.

This could be partially ascribed to a programme having a relatively small staff. Many identify strongly with what the programme is trying to achieve, and how we are trying to do so (e.g., transformation) — despite perhaps inadequate rewards for their commitment.

They can see so readily the difference that WfW has made, both ecologically and socially.

The work is technically relatively easy (although insufficient technical capacity is a problem).

What is certainly important has been being a ring-fenced programme — having a focus that is tangible, and where cleaners, administrators and other support staff have a sense of being part of the accomplishments of the programme (far more difficult in general departments).

They have been made to feel special by the strong engagement of political leadership.

It is important to state that these benefits have been eroding, both because of continuing uncertainty over the future institutional arrangement of the programme, and because of the difficulties that occur the growth into being a large programme. Management difficulties, and an insufficient attention to team-building and professional development of staff members, have also been growing challenges.

Integrity is vital for any programme. We have attempted to respect the poverty-alleviation nature of the programme, avoiding unnecessary costs (e.g., having modest office rentals, by staying in inexpensive accommodation, by reducing the cost-per-head for luncheons to as low as R6.50). Corruption and maladministration are a challenge for any programme, and while WfW has been rather fortunate in escaping serious censure, there are problems.

It is noticeable that the slowness, and sometimes failure, to deal with disciplinary problems is increasingly undermining Batho Pele in the programme. One aspect is the ability of those facing disciplinary action to resign before sentencing, and escape any work-related censure for their actions. This loophole must be closed.

That is not to say that the programme has not had its problems. An evaluation found significant weaknesses in the programme’s planning, institutional arrangements, management and other aspects, as was reported in an earlier article in this magazine.

There is no doubt, nevertheless, that partnerships have been pivotal in what WfW has been able to achieve. And yet it is also true to say that the partnerships that WfW has attempted to forge have been sub-optimal. In too many cases, WfW has done most of the work, leaving the partnership a somewhat one-sided affair. Some of the reasons for this could be the following:

- The failure to cement formal memorandum of agreement that commit partners to specific aspects.
The Working on Fire Programme

It has been most interesting to be struggling to make WoW work, and at the same time to be part of the Working on Fire (WoF) programme. There cannot be many better programmes that government has initiated than WoF. It too went through a process that saw political leadership (Ministers Ronnie Kasrils, Sydney Mufamadi and Buyelwa Sonjica, Speaker Baleka Mbete and Ms Gill Marcus) provide the space for this programme.

WoF has built strongly on the capacities and experience of the forestry industry, which is particularly vulnerable to wild fires, and the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) in the Department of Provincial and Local Government. Here the partnership between principally WoW, NDMC and the Forestry Chief Directorate in WoW, supported by DEAT and DoA, has been more structured. There is still no final agreement with respect to the role of WoW in fire-prevention work and the application of laws, and a firm memorandum of agreement and strategic plan is still to be agreed upon. This could be a threat to WoW.

Operationally, WoW is exceptional. It has instilled discipline, dignity and delivery as core attributes in the programme. This is vital in such dangerous work — indeed, it is a prerequisite for employment that workers be able to run 2.4 kilometres in 12 minutes. (The record, for both men and women, is under seven minutes.)

When trying to analyse why WoW is so successful, among the possible explanations are its relatively small size, the years of experience of the forestry industry management, the clear authority that the institutional arrangements allow the management (through Professional Service Provider agreements), and very good working relations between the core partners. It is also a young programme, and most partnerships are usually easier in the beginning, and when things are going well.

What has also happened is that the leadership has also respected the professional expertise of the management of the programme (through the PSP). They are deeply experienced fire-fighting professionals, and determine best practices. Our role has been more to guide the broader Expanded Public Works Programme and other requirements, such as labour-intensiveness, transformation (in a profession that is still largely white and very male, and where the disabled hardly feature), training and exit strategies.

That is not to say that WoW does not face partnership challenges. There are very good relations between WoW and the forestry industry, and a MoA has been developed (but not yet signed) with WoW. The Fire Protection Associations under the National Veld and Forest Fire Act will be challenges (unless they work through the local authorities’ use of rates and the equitable share). And a clear alignment with the Expanded Public Works Programme (through the PSP). They are very good relations between the core partners and very good Provider agreements, and very good management (through Professional Service Provider agreements), and very good working relations between the core partners. It is also a young programme, and most partnerships are usually easier in the beginning, and when things are going well.

The Working for Wetlands Programme

The Working for Wetlands programme (WWetlands) is also a relatively young programme, and has also grown out of WoW. It has its roots in the work being done by the then Rennies Wetland Trust (now Mondi Wetlands Project), and built up as a partnership being driven from WoW between middle-management staff in DEAT, DWAf and DoA.

Of all the government programmes in which the author has been involved, WWetlands has had the most engaged and equitable departmental support. It has also enjoyed strong political support, with Minister Valli Moosa and Deputy
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Minister Rejoice Mabudafhasi, and recently Minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk, being particularly visible. WfWetlands was initially driven from within the WfW programme. It was decided to move it to a different institutional arrangement, owing to increasing frustrations being expressed by partners about the WfW bureaucracy. It was moved to what is now the South African National Biodiversity Institute, a public entity under DEAT. It is clear that the programme has attained a far stronger operational platform, and is operating far more smoothly than before.

WfWetlands still lacks the full delegations that such a programme must have (including to use disincentives in concert with its use of incentives and advocacy), but is on its way to achieving a strategic plan that has full ownership by its principal parent departments (DWAF, DEAT and DoA). Its major partnership challenge will be in working with the many land-users who must conserve their wetlands.

It is interesting that Working on Fire and Working for Wetlands have essentially “come of age” as programmes, while their parent programme, Working for Water, is still grappling with what is needed to put it on a sure strategy for success. Part of this has been that the partners have been able to learn from the challenges that WfW has had to face.

The Santam/Cape Argus Ukuvuka Campaign

Among many other partnerships that have been forged, the Santam/Cape Argus Ukuvuka Campaign is mentioned, as it has had to address partnership challenges that certainly address the topic of this essay. Ukuvuka was initiated after the fires along the Table Mountain chain in January 2000, as a four-year campaign.

It expanded its brief to include looking at the problem of informal settlement fires, after the positive engagement of the City of Cape Town. Ukuvuka was fortunate to receive substantial private sector sponsorship, principally from Santam (R20m), Cape Argus (R5.4m), Nedbank (R5m) and Total (R4m), in addition to the funding from the City of Cape Town (R30m) and collateral funding from the national programmes (WfW, WoF, WfWetlands).

Ukuvuka operated as a Trust, and it was instructive how easy it was to make decisions in comparison with WfW in particular. That was not to say that the campaign was significantly better for this, however. The partnerships were difficult, with strained relations between the (then very divided) local authorities and the South African National Parks. SANParks also had additional funding from the Global Environment Facility, and insisted on their own norms and standards that conflicted with those of WfW that were
adopted by Ukuvuka (and particularly in respect to the daily-wage equivalent on which contracts were calculated). Ukuvuka was an unusual institutional form as it was short term, issue-focused, nimble and with governance that allowed fairly short response times. Having such a small, flexible body at arms length from the mandated authorities, enabled them to manage any risk — perceived or real — from testing out innovative responses to managing the issue on which the partnership focused (principally fire risk, in Ukuvuka’s case).

Ukuvuka also created an environment in which there could be time enough to test different approaches. This led to significant changes in the City of Cape Town’s Fire Services from the dominant 150-year-old tradition of fire suppression to formalising structures for fire prevention that had been tested, piloted and demonstrated with Ukuvuka support and funding. It also led to the innovation of using helicopters as tools in fighting the devastating fires in informal settlements.

Another lesson was that the private sector partnerships were not as well managed as they should have been. It is clear that there should have been formal agreements that stipulated the agreed outcomes that were being sought, and how the private sector could claim its victories.

Santam and the Ukuvuka Trust (now working primarily through WoF) are still engaged in negotiations, and there is a looming dispute between Ukuvuka and Total, over monies still owing to the campaign. One also has to invest in partnership management capacity and use the growing body of insight and skill related to optimising sponsorships.

The City of Cape Town has withdrawn its financial support from a mooted extension of the Ukuvuka Campaign, seeking rather to build the necessary capacity within its own organisation. The timing of this is not considered to be optimal, and this indicates that the partnership with the city was not as strong as it should have been. The many political changes within the city during the period of the campaign were certainly a major factor in this respect, although the city officials have been largely

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It is clear from the above that there have been many difficulties in building partnerships through these four programmes. Were I to start another partnership programme, these are 21 steps that I would try to take:

• Secure political support, and try to ensure that the partners commit their true champions.
• Agree on policy and outcomes of the partnership, as part of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), and ensure that the partners commit their true champions.
• Agree on responsibilities and rights of each partner, as part of the MoU, but allow for some flexibility.
• Seek an institutional arrangement and delegations that allow for optimal delivery. It is my opinion that, for programmes such as those described above, this is a public entity under the control of the partner government departments. No one department should have effective sole control.
• Invest in a strategic planning process, and measure and report on key performance indicators on a regular basis (including as they pertain to the interests of partners). It is important to add the rejoinder that good planning builds in a capacity for flexibility. Ours is an unpredictable world.
• Ensure an adequate management capacity to deliver, and ensure that this is not limited by some arbitrary percentage of costs. Without proper management, everything else fails. Senior managers must have passion. They must have a strong, technical deep understanding of the work to be done. They must be given full management authority and accountability. Without these, don’t even start.
• Invest in transformation. To be done successfully, it takes resources and discipline. Work out a growth and retention strategy for star performers, and ensure partnership buy-in of this strategy.
• Invest in good information management, and ensure that there are clear, understood and applied policies, procedures, norms and standards, research protocols and a pro-poor ethos — and, in the implementation of the partnership programme, have fair but very firm discipline.
• Ensure that the partners is committed to investing in management training, linking this to career prospects. Our duty is not only to the short-term outcomes of our programmes. In these days of skill shrinkage (it will shrink down), have contingency options for when key staff move on. And be cautious in poaching staff from other programmes. Continuity, institutional memory and relationship-building are important for successful partnerships.
• Respect the role of political leadership. They deserve the accolades that might be forthcoming from a successful partnership programme — not for sycophantic reasons, but for enhancing democracy in our country. Officials are not elected, and our role is to ensure that political leaders are put in a position to make informed decisions, and then for us to implement them. It is also then right to expect leaders to take reasonable accountability when things go wrong.
• Confront problems in the partnership.
These are inevitable, but can foster if not addressed. This also implies a willingness to compromise; a commitment to treat partners’ interests with the respect that you would respect yours; an acceptance that no-one has a monopoly on good ideas, and an acknowledgement that there are usually several routes to achieve an outcome. But be tactical, and (if appropriate) ruthless, in exposing those driven by egos and inward-looking territoriality.

- The power of the individual is an increasingly worrying aspect. Whole initiatives can change around the personality and preferences of individuals. This heightens the importance of MoAs in partnerships. Where officials behave as if government’s resources are their own personal property, they must be exposed. Notwithstanding this, such risks must be recognised and addressed.
- Accept that not all marriages are made in heaven, and be prepared to challenge the viability of partnerships when they are not working. Passive-aggressive “partners” can be more destructive than when going it alone. But such decisions must be taken by the political leadership.
- Make sure that the partnership is committed to taking the broader stakeholders (ie, non-partners) with you in the programme, being reasonably sensitive to differing opinions (this is very much an issue in WW and WoF, in particular). Advocacy is essential. Government cannot govern without the support of the people.
- Be prepared to take calculated risks (within the mandate). There has to be a balance between process and outcome. If WW had listened to its detractors when it was trying to get going, we would still be arguing about process and alternatives, the country would have hundreds of millions of additional invasives wreaking havoc, and the consequences of not having the social benefits of one of the country’s most successful public works’ initiatives would surely be serious as well.
- Partnerships are not a one-way street, although many of us fall into the trap of looking at the world from our own perspective. Be prepared for partners to expect reciprocity in helping them with their own partnership plans, and build this into the capacity and flexibility of staff work-plans.
- Start a parallel independent evaluation process (a longitudinal assessment that can be supplemented by periodic cross-sectional evaluations), and ensure that those who evaluate the programme have had experience in managing such programmes.
- Create a climate that accepts that you will make mistakes. Obviously one wants to limit these, not repeat them, and have the successes outweigh the mistakes. But those who make few mistakes rarely achieve anything. Make sure that the partners buy into this philosophy. And be humble when you make your mistakes. A frank acknowledgement and focus on doing better, is usually appreciated. In WW, we have admitted to things when they have gone wrong, and have been well treated for doing so.
- Look after the workers. They are key intended beneficiaries, and the partnership must invest in their health, safety, training, potential exploitation, prospects for exiting successfully, and general well-being. Be prepared for partners to expect reciprocity in helping them with their own partnership plans, and build this into the capacity and flexibility of staff work-plans.

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**Look after the workers. They are key intended beneficiaries, and the partnership must invest in their health, safety, training, potential exploitation, prospects for exiting successfully, and general well-being.**

- Finally, bite off what you can chew. Things always seem easier in the first flush of a partnership. Having said all that, it should be borne in mind that WW, in particular, did not have the luxury of forward planning. The situation was such, and was reinforced by political leadership, that employment outcomes were demanded, and planning had to be done “on the hoof”. Under the circumstances, these partnership programmes have been honest efforts to address serious issues confronting our country.

Every now and then a partnership emerges that is exceptional. A recent case for WW has been the approach to the problem of invasive alien plants and other species being adopted by the provincial government in KwaZulu-Natal, driven by the Premier, Cabinet, and the MEC and Head of Department for the Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs. They are approaching the partnership with a strong, outcomes-based focus, a commitment to best practices and a disdain for territoriality. Even though these are early days in the partnership, it illustrates that President Thabo Mbeki’s demand for co-operative governance can be made to work. It is up to us all. I would like to end by paying genuine tribute to all those who have put so much into these programmes and paid at all levels. Much has been achieved, and I remain optimistic that logic and fairness in seeking optimal outcomes, win through in the end.

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Over the last few years, NGOs and other special interest organisations have been working closely with government to find innovative and effective ways of improving the delivery of services to South Africans. This move towards creating partnerships was the result of an honest assessment of the challenges facing service delivery in a country as vast as South Africa: many parts of the service delivery process are complex and dynamic; and the shortage of skills and capacity is a pervasive problem.

To encourage and support such partnerships, the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) introduced the category “Innovative Partnerships for Service Delivery” within its innovation awards programme. The Sustainable Energy for Environment and Development (SEED) programme received an award in 2004 in this category. The programme also won an Impumelelo Innovations award in 2003.

SEED focuses on the challenges of energy provision, particularly for poor households in urban areas. The government has consistently called for government-civil society partnerships that contribute towards sustainable development and poverty alleviation in disadvantaged communities. On 21 May 2004, in his State of the Nation address, the President of South Africa noted the importance of co-operation between civil society and government and the government’s commitment to consolidating the practice of partnerships between its structures and civil bodies.

This case study of SEED documents the partnership experience between local government structures, an NGO called Sustainable Energy Africa (SEA), and other non-governmental organisations in setting up infrastructure to enhance the innovative provision of energy.
coordinated by the Energy and Development Research Unit (EDRC) of the University of Cape Town (to 2001) and urban SEED has been coordinated by SEA, and is ongoing (since 1998).

This case study covers only the urban component of the programme and therefore the term “SEED” in this document, refers only to urban SEED.

Local and global concerns about energy

The democratic government that took power in 1994 faced two major tasks: addressing the poverty faced by the majority of black people and reducing the huge disparities in the way white and black South Africans lived. An important way in which these disparities were to be tackled was through providing housing and efficient energy. However, at the same time that the supply of energy to South Africans needed to widen, the concerns about energy and the environment were widening on a global scale. The first of these concerns is the earth’s diminishing energy resources, and the second is the global warming created by the indiscriminate burning of fossil fuels and the deforestation of the earth.

As South Africa is a signatory to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and is committed to global efforts aimed at protecting the environment from damage, the big challenge for the government is to strike a balance between providing affordable services to poor households and complying with international and local obligations about protecting the environment.

In line with its commitment to redress, the government has put in place policies aimed at improving access to appropriate energy sources, promoting energy efficiency, and managing energy-related environmental and health effects. The 2002 White Paper on Renewable Energy highlights the need for developing renewable energy technologies, and the Integrated Energy Plan advocates the promotion of renewable energy as part of the country’s energy supply.

The need to provide energy to the poor is a priority as part of sustainable development and poverty alleviation. Despite progressive energy policies, supply-driven implementation programmes have generally overlooked the developmental needs and priorities of the users. For example, it has been found that among low-income households, many electrified households continue to use a range of energy sources to meet their needs. In addition, inefficient energy use compounds poverty: housing without ceilings and a complete lack of accessible information to users on appropriate and efficient energy use condemn poor households to a future of high energy costs (a poor household will typically use between 20% and 25% of its income only just meeting its home energy costs).

The implementation of energy policies requires creative thinking and innovative strategies to ensure delivery of services to poor households. Sustainable Energy Africa (SEA), a non-governmental organisation that previously worked under the name Energy & Development Group (EDG), conceptualised, developed and still coordinates the SEED programme partnerships.

The SEED Programme

SEED’s primary task is to promote the integration of sustainable energy policies and practices into urban development in South Africa. The programme’s establishment began as part of the Household Energy Action Training (HEAT) strategy on capacity building around rural and urban energy provision that was developed and funded by the Department of Mines and Energy (DME).

SEED is a national capacity-building programme that aims to integrate sustainable energy approaches and practices in urban development, through partnerships with local government and non-governmental organisations. Because of its strong emphasis on sustainability, the programme promotes an active awareness of the way in which various energy practices impact on the environment, the use of renewable and cleaner energy, as well as energy efficiency.

SEED is also focused on changing the dynamics and processes of energy-related work, moving away from a supply-led mode of provision by white male engineers to black development work that is demand-led. Energy-related work now has a clear and explicit focus on the developmental needs of users, and involves men and women from various backgrounds.

The programme’s key intervention is the placement of SEED advisors in the different partner organisations. SEED
advisors are young black professionals and are identified by SEA and its municipal and NGO counterparts. Importantly, the municipal partners employ the advisors from the outset.

SEA provides a salary for a period of time that varies according to the needs of, and agreements with, the different partners and offers training, ongoing support and advice to both the SEED advisors and their organisations, as well as providing funding to do demonstrations for communities on appropriate and efficient energy use.

According to one of the SEED advisors, a major strength of SEED’s partnerships is that SEA makes a substantial financial contribution to the partnerships and does not expect government and NGO partners to provide all the finances.

Because the programme represents a paradigm shift in service provision, resistance to SEED work occurs, but this is managed with the support and mentorship of the SEEU supervisors. Since the SEED programme cuts across departments and portfolios, advisors require a lot of support in working within the structures of the organisation.

The different partnerships

The cornerstone of the SEED programme is the partnerships it forges between SEA, local government, and NGOs involved in development work. Because of the pioneering nature of the work, the central issue of sustainability, and the need for creativity and innovativeness for the programme to be implemented successfully, all partners selected have to be strong in themselves and have solid administrative systems.

In the local government-SEED partnership, a senior supervisor to act as a mentor for the SEED advisor was identified. This person would champion the advisor’s work, and provide effective leadership. The role of champions was threefold, therefore: to support the SEED advisors; to teach them how to work within the system in ways that would maximise their effectiveness; and to promote the infusion of SEED ideas into the advisors’ organisations.

While champions generally are key leaders within organisations and in the community, they also have high levels of commitment to communities and to the preservation of the environment in terms of delivering on promises. Ideally, each municipal partner is partnered with a suitable NGO and the SEED advisors placed in these structures support and participate closely in one another’s work.

Phase One of the SEED programme was implemented in three municipalities (metros), which were identified as having a strong drive to provide houses and electrification as part of their poverty-alleviation strategy. The use of three metros in Phase One allowed for a cross-fertilisation of ideas and strategies and provided useful lessons on working with partners who have different needs and resources.

The three metros selected were the City of Cape Town and the Development Action Group (DAG); Durban Metro Housing and the Built Environment Support Group (BESG); and Midrand Eco-City (which subsequently became part of the Johannesburg metro) and the Greenhouse Project. The partners’ task was to provide a post that could be located within an appropriate department (this was different for each partner) for a SEED advisor. The advisors’ job descriptions, developed by SEA and the partner together, allowed them to focus on SEED work.

Since then, more partnerships have been established. Phase Two of the programme includes ongoing partnerships with the City of Cape Town, DAG, the City of Joburg, the South African Local Government Association, the national departments of Housing, Minerals and Energy, and Environment and Tourism, as well as new partnerships with the City of Tshwane, Sol Plaatje Municipality, and the Ekurhuleni Metro.

While SEA pays the salary of advisors for the agreed-upon period, as well as training and support costs, the metro and NGO partners pay for the running costs of the posts themselves. SEA also supplies demonstration funds for the advisors. The partners commit themselves to taking on the full costs of the SEED post after an agreed-upon interval and, where possible, converting the post into a permanent one within their organisation. As an example, Durban’s eThekwini Housing Unit continues to employ its advisor from Phase One.

Because of changes and career mobility within organisations, SEA is also committed to developing and nurturing relationships in various departments within municipalities and metros and NGO partner organisations. The demonstrated usefulness and practicability of the programme during Phase One has secured ongoing support for SEED ideas and has allowed these ideas to become a central factor of the organisation’s functioning.

Functions of the SEED advisors

The advisors represent the face of SEED in the places where they are located. They are responsible for implementing the various aspects of the programme. According to one of these advisors, understanding how local authorities function is necessary for advisors to work effectively, and, without the support and mentorship of political and technical champions, his own work would have been much more difficult.

SEED advisors work with the organisation, training officials in the housing and energy departments about efficient energy use, as well as the community each one
Case Study

Innovative programme implementation

Recognising that poor households spend a high percentage of their income on energy, Phase One of the SEED Programme (1998-2001) focused on poverty alleviation by promoting more efficient energy use within these communities, as well as access to better energy sources. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), with a strong drive towards providing housing for low-income earners, provided an excellent opportunity to implement SEED work around housing. The programme has implemented a number of innovative strategies to raise awareness about energy and energy-related issues. SEED uses an interactive and multi-pronged approach to training and learning. Apart from the demonstration projects and centres that are funded by the programme and undertaken by the SEED partners, advisors also work with communities. Youth groups — with SEED advisors promoting and supporting their activities — are mobilised as energy activists tasked with raising awareness in the community on energy and related issues.

The SEED advisor working in DAG built a demonstration house in one of the organisation’s community projects. Subsequently, 75% of micro loans for new house owners were for ceilings and for weatherproofing. SEED has, through the foundations it built in Phase One, been able to move on in its second phase, to working on whole city energy strategies. Cape Town has committed to 10% renewable energy supply by 2020 and 10% solar water heaters by 2010.

Funding for SEED

Phase One of the SEED programme was funded by DANCED, the Danish environmental funding agency whose primary focus was environmental sustainability and the development of poor communities. DANCED was closed down by the Danish Government in 2001 and all its projects incorporated under DANIDA (Danish International Development Agency), which funds Phase Two of SEED. Through partnership agreements, the SEED partners are required to provide complementary support funding to the funds provided by SEED. The funds are spent on training the SEED advisors, on advocacy, and on the payment of the SEED advisors’ salaries.

Distinguishing features of SEED partnerships

A holistic approach: Development is viewed in a holistic way. Energy provision begins with an understanding of the earth’s energy system and how energy use affects this. The SEED programme, as a result, promotes a demand-led approach that begins with understanding user needs and fitting supply to these needs, rather than the other way around.

Solid understanding of sustainable development: This not only relates to environmental concerns, but is also explicit in the way both the partnerships with metros and the programme are conceptualised and structured. SEA does not encourage dependency, but provides ongoing support that ensures that partners take full ownership of projects and continue the work on their own. The partnership is adapted or terminated as the needs of the organisation evolve.

Enhancing the work of partner organisations: SEA offers both its government services. To this end, SEA provides each advisor with funds for demonstration projects. This can take many forms: demonstration houses, exhibits, or demonstration centres where people can be taught about appropriate and efficient energy use. In this way, advisors are able to reach poor communities and communicate their message to those who are not easily reached through the usual channels.

Solar water heating, cfls and ceiling installation in low cost pilot sustainable house, Kuyasa, Khayelitsha
and NGO partners an intervention that is designed to enhance their work and enable them to reach their objectives. Partnerships work best where there is a clear understanding of the objectives, policies, and functions of all parties. For this reason, SEAs offers a partnership intervention that does not clash with day-to-day organisational functioning. The value of the SEED programme will become increasingly evident when partners involved in Phase One start taking much greater responsibility for funding Phase Two of the programme (2001–2005) and integrating SEED into their organisational structures.

Technical expertise: SEA has sound technical knowledge in the area of energy provision and development, as well as the resources and skills that enable it to manage emerging issues on the intervention. SEA staff members, collectively and individually, have been engaged in energy work and political activism for decades and are able to use their experiences to enrich the programme.

What is more, networks developed during the years of struggle against apartheid have contributed significantly to the success of the programme. For example, SEED advisors are able to call on experts from other organisations, when they need to, to support their presentations to Parliament’s portfolio committees.

Case Study


A big issue in energy and development work is the lack of expertise in translating the ideals of sustainable energy policies into practical implementation strategies. This is why a significant aspect of the SEED programme is training, in which all the partners are involved both as learners and teachers. The most beneficial part of the training is the content and the methodology of the training. Because of the gender inequalities that show up frequently in various aspects of energy work, for example, both the primary SEA staff members as well as the trainers were included in the training on gender-related issues.

The training situates the SEED programme firmly within a comprehensive framework of development work. Giving SEED a developmental context means there is a solid base from which innovative and creative work can emerge.

The content of the training and the mutual learning honour and respect all forms of knowledge. Because SEED work is informed by an understanding of the dynamics of different communities, any resistances to the programme can be understood contextually and worked with in appropriate ways.

Experiential training methods, based on scientifically sound principles, are used. There is a strong focus on developing advisors’ critical thinking skills so that they are able to analyse and resolve emerging problems more efficiently. SEED advisors use these techniques to capacitate and pass on skills to the various groups they train.

The training is ongoing, with partners having bi-annual, one-week training/networking sessions. Feedback from the work is used creatively to inform the programme and make adjustments where these are required.

In addition to training, SEA has published a very user-friendly book that explains energy-related issues in simple terms that are accessible to ordinary people. SEED advisors also develop the presentation and communication skills of their colleagues in their partner organisations.

SEED’s achievements

SEED has contributed significantly to energy policies and practices at both local and national government level.

• SEED often makes presentations to parliamentary portfolio committees and, as part of capacity building, SEED advisors often perform this task.

• SEED ideas are implicit and explicit in the White Paper on Renewable Energy.

• SEED has been instrumental in assisting local governments develop their energy strategy plans; for example, the draft Cape Town Energy Strategy (2003), as well as information and training manuals such as Energising South African Cities & Towns: A Local Government Guide to Sustainable Energy Planning (2003).

• The City of Cape Town’s Energy Strategy received accolades at the Bonn Renewables Conference in 2004, as a lead example for South countries.

• All South African cities are now committed to sustainable energy. This has also been facilitated by the increased global focus on energy issues, as well as the twinning of South African cities with northern cities that are invested in sustainable energy.

• SEED has enhanced the work of local governments and helped partners to deliver on their mandate, and be seen to be doing so.

• SEED ideas have become infused into the functioning of the partners involved in Phase One and now constitute a core function of the organisation. The Cape Town Metro, for example, now has an energy post on their organogram and is committed to managing and using energy resources more efficiently and to introducing renewable energy into their own operations.

• The infusion of SEED into institutional practices has resulted in the programme surviving beyond personalities. This means that the loss of champions in partner organisations has not resulted in the programme collapsing.

• Because of the success of Phase One, more local authorities have come on board in Phase Two, with most of these becoming more proactive and approaching SEED for partnership.

Local governments involved in Phase Two include Tshwane, Ekurhuleni, South Africa Local Government Association, Sol Plaatje, with strong relationships being built with the South African Cities Network, Buffalo City, Saldshu, and Potchefstroom.

• New SEED projects are developing all the time and, in each one, local partnerships and conditions inform the shape of the project. For example, a major new project is to develop Sol Plaatje as the first solar city in Africa.

• All SEED advisors and champions who have moved to new and often more senior positions in other organisations continue to promote SEED ideas in their new jobs and are often in charge of po-
people who have taken over the on-the-ground implementation work.

• SEED has contributed significantly to delivery being measured not only by quantity, but by quality and sustainability, as well.

• SEED has contributed to a number of publications that make energy work and related issues more accessible to lay people. SEA co-hosted the City Energy Strategies Conference in November 2003 and is planning a follow-up conference in 2006. Two business and energy conferences will be held in 2005 to promote business partnering with local government in promoting a sustainable energy future. SEED has also produced a number of its own publications.

The challenges facing SEED

• Because of the importance of having a champion in local government for SEED work to proceed more constructively and smoothly, institutional changes such as the loss of champions when they move and the task of nurturing new relationships are ongoing challenges, but they have not resulted in the programme being disrupted.

• Because SEED is new and represents an innovative approach to energy and related services, management support is crucial. Poor management has resulted in contracts with one NGO and one local authority not being renewed.

• The junior level at which SEED advisors are placed within organisations makes it difficult for them to participate at a strategic level in the organisation. A senior supervisor champion makes all the difference. However, while the junior position makes work difficult, it also enables the advisor to learn the workings of the organisation from the bottom up, and to interface more easily with officials and community.

• There needs to be a change in the gender and racial profile of energy workers — all the SEED advisors are black and, over they years, about 40% have been women.

Lessons learnt

There is a need to garner an in-depth understanding of the functioning of the partner organisation, so as to be able to determine the best entry point for an intervention. It is also important to build a relationship of mutual trust with government partners.

Building capacity within the partnerships is essential so that the partner organisations can take ownership of processes and carry on the work themselves. While partnership with the government is useful for getting sponsors for non-governmental organisations, independence must be promoted. By building strong foundations advisors are always able to hand over and move on to the next challenge. There is always another challenge to be taken up.

It is crucial to build and support champions who believe in and are committed to the ideals and objectives of the intervention being offered, particularly within government bureaucracies.

There is a need for ongoing critical engagement with partners and sufficient flexibility to allow for growth and integration of new material into the programme. Knowing when to terminate a partnership that is not working is essential.

Acknowledgements

The compilers acknowledge the time and contribution of the following people and sources in providing the content for this case study:

• Sara Ward of Sustainable Energy Africa
• Monwabisi Booi, former SEED Advisor in the City of Cape Town Municipality.
• SEED Updates — biannual magazine since 1999.
• Regular eSEED Newsletter.
• Energy Use in the Home — Soul City booklet (distribution of one million copies).

Article courtesy of the Centre of Public Service Innovation
Issues

Creating Job Opportunities in a Developmental State

One of the dramatic moments in the creation of the dual economy in South Africa was in the 17th century when the Dutch East India Company directors contemplated digging a canal from False Bay to Table Mountain to make the Cape Peninsula an island to channel the wealth of the Cape Colony to the colonial motherland. While the idea of the canal did not materialise Jan van Riebeeck succeeded in planting a hedge that covered a good 6 000 acres.

Fourteen countries in the SADC region labour under a heavy burden of a colonially imposed dual economy characterised by exclusion of the majority from meaningful participation in the formal economy. “All countries in the region have evolved dual economies, with formal sector enclaves that account for most of the GDP but relatively little formal employment, and a large non-formal sector where most of the labour force ekes out a living from smallholder, near-subsistence agriculture, or informal urban activities. Colonial economies grew by exploiting primary production for export markets without providing any socio-economic infrastructure for the majority living and working outside of these enclaves.” (ILO GPE)

The majority living and working outside these enclaves battle a living in the informal economy characterised often by poverty, limited access to assets of livelihood, limited access to advanced technology, low levels of skills, a narrow window to global markets, little or no social security and workers often not well protected by labour legislation.

In short this majority is condemned to living on the periphery of the good enjoyed within the enclaves — a situation that no responsible government can ignore.

Intra-nationally the divide is in the form of dual economies while internationally it can be seen in terms of developed and developing countries. To remedy the historic injustices of both sides of the divide calls for an integrated inward- and outward-looking strategic intervention.

This paper argues for the strategic intervention of the state that upholds “inclusivity”, links growth with development and ultimately improves the quality of life for all.

Why developmental state?

“Thou shall not tamper with the hard-earned equilibrium”, is the stern warning often pronounced by the advocates of the status quo. In essence this is a premature call for the withering away of the state while the majority of the people are locked out in limbo, especially in the developing countries.

Globalisation has opened up opportunities on the one hand and at the same time it has silently unleashed the civilised law of the jungle. We live in this era of dimen-

Dr V Mkosana, Acting Director-General in the Department of Labour, argues that the informal economy should be encouraged and nurtured as one element in the overarching strategy of creating jobs in a developmental state.
sioning nation states socio-economic boundaries, dimensioning capacity to protect national markets, unbridled trade liberalisation, the changing nature of work organisation and the changing nature of employment relations, the era of the advent of the virtual workplace and the death of the distance.

These circumstances stand to occasion the survival of the fittest. The fittest are in the developed countries and nationally they are in the enclaves. In both instances there is no fair distribution or access to the means of livelihood. Instead of narrowing the gap it is getting bigger.

The gaps and imbalances between industrialised and developing countries in a number of economic and social spheres are vast and increasing. In 1960, per capita GDP in the richest 20 countries was 14 times that in the poorest 20 countries. By 1998, the gap has widened to 34 times.

The gap in the employment opportunities between the industrialised and developing countries also continued to remain wide over the past five years.

Of the world’s 137 million unemployed workers the global economy needs to generate jobs for 500 million new entrants to the labour force over the next 10 years.

The gap between the North and the South is also widening in respect of global resource flows, which provide the investments vital for reducing disparities in incomes and job creation between capital-rich industrialised countries and labour-abundant developing countries. During the period 1973-93, 38% of the world’s total foreign direct investment went to developing countries. In 1999 this share dropped to 24%.

Coupled with this gloomy picture is yet another matter of great concern — the location of the world’s best brains. The best researchers and other knowledge worker experts are concentrated in the developed world. These include those whose origin is in the South. While some accuse these “Southerners” of having allowed their patriotic commitment to be price-tagged, the reality is that in the era of globalisation it is hard to keep anybody to their locality. This is more so with the
experts with high levels of skills. These experts are gradually assuming a posture of the citizens of the world. The misfortune of going where money is is that “he who pays the piper chooses the tune”. These experts help policy makers both in government and in the global institutions, which influence the direction the world trends take. There can be no human dignity where poverty, joblessness and inequality prevail.

There are those who maintain that economic growth is the ultimate solution to these problems. “Supplies of labour” outlines his theoretical model of economic development based on two assumptions namely that “there was unlimited supply of labour in the developing countries and that, as the modern industrial sector in these countries grew, this vast pool of surplus labour would be absorbed.”

This theory was reinforced by the fast growth in Europe, Japan and North America after the Second World War. However, in the main, the opposite holds true especially under the conditions of globalisation. There is a tendency to pursue the route of developing policies that put the developing countries on a growth path yet they fail to create jobs. Jobless growth is pale and dry and in the fullness of time fails to address the problems of poverty, inequality and job creation.

While there is much debate about the impact of growth on poverty and inequality, South Africa’s sluggish growth may be rooted in its high and increasing inequality. The new economies contend that inequality prevails. “Supplies of labour” outlines his theoretical model of economic development based on two assumptions namely that “there was unlimited supply of labour in the developing countries and that, as the modern industrial sector in these countries grew, this vast pool of surplus labour would be absorbed.”

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and training programmes, as well as programmes to develop small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs). Emphasis on poverty and inequality are important in a situation like ours in South Africa in order to develop policies and programmes that are aimed at addressing past legacy distortions and go beyond to a stage where opportunities will be accessed on equal basis.

There is sufficient evidence in the international literature that, contrary to neo-liberal economic orthodoxy, co-ordinated market economies (in which the state plays a critical role in regulating economic development) are more successful in the age of globalisation than free market economies. Effective human resource development policies are a key requirement of co-ordinated market economies.7

**Employment and informal economy**

The informal economy is often ignored and even suppressed by government and yet it remains a big employment creator. “Over the past decade or so, informal work is estimated to have accounted for almost 80% of non-agricultural employment, and over 90% of new jobs in Africa. In the Sub-Saharan Africa the informal sector accounts for three quarters of non-agricultural employment, having increased over the last decade from about two thirds.”

For women in Sub-Saharan Africa, the informal sector represents 92% of total job opportunities outside of agriculture (against 71% of men), and almost 95% of these jobs are performed as self-employed or own-account workers and 5% as paid employees.

These figures indicate that informal economy should be a priority in developing job strategies. Secondly within informal economy women have added advantages. Income earned by a woman is more likely to be shared in a household than income by a man. Furthermore women’s status is elevated in the community as they cease to depend on men thus, this focus concurrently address the problem of inequality. Thirdly, informal economy is dominated by the poor often outside the enclaves. Focusing on creating employment in the informal economy helps narrow the gap between urban and rural areas. The current Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) is in line with this focus. It is however still early to assess it.

**Skills and employment**

Technological advancement is sometimes viewed as a threat to jobs as a result of automation. On the other hand it brings in new job opportunities. The challenge faced by all countries globally is to keep the pace of human resources development with the needs of the markets and even go ahead for an all round development of their individual citizens.

South Africa has a problem of mismatch between job opportunities and available skills. Largely this is as a result of the bulk of South African workforce who was excluded from accessing skills needed by the labour market on the basis of race. At the same time there are scare skills needed by the market in order for South Africa to be globally competitive. Both problems are catered for by the South African National Human Resources Developmental Strategy whose mission is “To maximise the acquisition of knowledge and skills, to work productively and competitively in order to achieve a rising quality of life for all, and to set in place an operational plan, together with the necessary institutional arrangements to achieve this.”

The National Skills Development Strategy has been developed in line with the HRD strategy. Its implementation has seen the introduction of the concept of learnerships which allows recognition of learning in the workplace. However, for the HRD strategy to be effective in meeting the demands of its times it is necessary that an integrated learning system be in place. This will enable realisation of the needed synergy between supply and demand. The Departments of Education and Labour are currently finalising this.

**Information and Communication Technology (ICT)**

This creates opportunities for young people whose curiosity is met with unlimited learning as they get exposed to the world through for example internet. Equally so women are beginning to increase as ICT entrepreneurs. In USA 60% of new companies are owned by women thanks to ICT. This poses a question whether - can’t developing countries use ICT to address the problem of unemployment and poverty and leap frog and get to a higher stage of development. This calls for focused policies and making the needed resources available.

In conclusion a developmental state’s role in employment creation calls for:

- guidance and leadership of the government;
- policies that uphold inclusivity;
- championing of programmes that link growth with development such that we reduce possibility of growth without job creation or without reducing poverty.

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From Rehabilitation to Revitalisation: The Successes of Limpopo’s RESIS Programme

This article, put together by Marna de Lange, coordinator of the RESIS Programme-Limpopo Department of Agriculture, explains why it is important to "revitalise" existing irrigation schemes instead of building new ones.

The South African government’s National Guidelines on Agricultural Water Use describes government policy to transfer the management of smallholder irrigation schemes to farmers and to broaden opportunities for multiple uses of agricultural water to rural communities.

Limpopo Department of Agriculture (LDA) has taken the lead in implementation of this policy by launching a major programme for the Revitalisation of Smallholder Irrigation Schemes (RESIS).

This is a provincial and national flagship programme to combat poverty and joblessness in the rural areas and the following graph shows why. The Limpopo province has by far the largest number of smallholder irrigation schemes and they are therefore of direct importance to the province’s rural economy.

If practical implementation methodologies and approaches can be developed during the course of this programme, the value for the rest of the country and indeed, the continent, is significant.

Political visionary leadership

In his acceptance speech of a major international award in August 2000 for his visionary leadership in South Africa’s internationally acclaimed Water Law Review, Professor Kader Asmal said that every major initiative requires a committed political champion.

The smallholder irrigation sector found its first-ever political champion in the former MEC for Agriculture, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, in the early years of the 21st century. His vision and drive led to the establishment of the very ambitious RESIS programme — a major rural infrastructure and transformation programme with a budget of R1.08 billion over six years.

In the dying months of 2004, Dr Motsoaledi’s vision survived a complete change of leadership at the Department of Agriculture when both a new MEC and a new Head of Department were appointed.
and established their own priorities.

With the support of the new MEC, Ms Dikeledi Magadzi, the new HoD, Bigman Malo, has successfully integrated the programme into the departmental delivery system. He accomplished this by building bridges between the various units and programmes in the department and instructing every official to measure their personal contribution to the successful implementation of the RESIS Programme.

From ‘Rehabilitation’ to ‘Revitalisation’

Rehabilitating irrigation infrastructure is nowadays a more common practice than building new schemes. Revitalisation is a newer offspring of this global movement, but one rooted in a holistic development philosophy more likely to achieve successful outcomes.

“Rehabilitation” is referred to here as the engineering centred re-construction of dilapidated infrastructure, while the concept of revitalisation is much broader in its development focus. Revitalisation carries with it the expectation of a holistic approach to rebuilding socially uplifting, profitable agri-business on existing schemes.

“Revitalisation” therefore implies a move away from pure infrastructure rehabilitation to a comprehensive programme to structure, train and capacitate the smallholder farmers to run their scheme profitably and sustainably.

The current RESIS Programme evolved from a series of initiatives that began in 1998 when this approach was identified as the preferred method to breathe new life into the region’s many smallholder irrigation schemes. The RESIS Programme builds on the learning and experience from all the previous phases, such as the WaterCare Programme and other departmental programmes, such as the “Participatory Extension Approach” (PEA) and the Limpopo Agriculture Development Programme (LADEP).

The way in which the RESIS Programme evolved from these previous phases, the lessons learnt, the experiences that moulded the current thinking and the challenges that are still remaining, will be the subject of a range of future articles.

Overall programme objectives

While the RESIS Programme targets smallholder irrigation schemes and the surrounding communities, it was recognised from the outset that the programme cannot succeed without stable and sustainable support from government structures. The programme therefore has two focus areas:

• The participating communities and all the programme activities and methodologies aimed at successful implementation; and

• The government systems including personnel and the support systems required to support programme implementation and aftercare.

The RESIS Programme is targeting 126 smallholder irrigation schemes in Limpopo Province. RESIS strives for transformation of rural society by enabling rural households to exercise much more control over their daily lives and especially their economic activity.

This is achieved by giving the farmers authority over management and expenditure on their irrigation scheme infrastructure, and training and support for dryland crop production.

Local organisational development, namely the establishment and strengthening of enterprise management structures, underpins the economic transformation in the rural areas.

A key parallel objective of the RESIS Programme is the “transformation of government service”, as reflected in the Integrated Provincial Support Programme (IPSP). In order to support the community participants in a programme
of this size, government must not only have efficient service delivery systems that work in practice, but it must also have personnel and managers who are sufficiently experienced to enable the systems to function efficiently.

Outline of some of the specific RESIS goals

To raise and sustain incomes of farm families in Limpopo Province on irrigation schemes and in the villages surrounding them by a substantial percentage within the programme period from 2004-2010. This goal will be achieved through the following activities:

- Deep and thorough consultation of farmers and their communities about their problems, needs, fears and aspirations, leading to an agreed Development Plan between the farmers, communities and the department for each RESIS scheme.
- Establishment and/or strengthening of farmer management committees to manage the irrigation schemes.
- Farmer training in crop production, scheme management, entrepreneurship and water management, dovetailed with implementation activities.
- Implementation of profitable agricultural production with stable access to all the factors required for successful farming enterprises (market and transport arrangements, credit, access to inputs, and functioning institutional arrangements).
- Infrastructure rehabilitation, and redesign where necessary to enable management by the farmers.
- Follow-up advisory and mentoring services to farmers and their management committees.
- Monitoring and evaluation of all activities to provide data for refinement of approaches as the rollout moves to additional irrigation schemes.

RESIS rollout and scope

The RESIS rollout programme involves 126 irrigation schemes, each requiring a full four-year period of intervention to complete the RESIS project cycle. All 126 schemes need to be completed within a six-year term. This implies that activities need to run in parallel on all schemes for a couple of years.

Rollout and RESIS impact:

- 126 schemes in six years
- 20,000 hectares
- 16,000 farmers
- 60,000 households

The table indicates a summary of the activities and planning budget for the RESIS Programme.

### RESIS financial summary of activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total (R)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation</td>
<td>Scheme revitalization</td>
<td>80,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Scheme, water management, crop and entrepreneurship training</td>
<td>41,022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aftercare</td>
<td>Aftercare on training</td>
<td>61,533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WUA Institutions</td>
<td>Rehabilitation and legal establishment of WUAs</td>
<td>41,022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water supply</td>
<td>Bulk water infrastructure</td>
<td>236,260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infield irrigation</td>
<td>Infield irrigation equipment</td>
<td>98,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access roads</td>
<td>4 km road per village</td>
<td>184,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainwater harvesting</td>
<td>100 tanks per village</td>
<td>92,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock dam &amp; watering system</td>
<td>1 dam or system per village</td>
<td>36,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dip tanks</td>
<td>1 tank per village</td>
<td>4,606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dryland</td>
<td>Support for 100 hectares per village</td>
<td>210,045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,086,880</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Programme Coordination and Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Private sector services</th>
<th>Departmental responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Administration and Logistical Support</td>
<td></td>
<td>LDA Chief Financial Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement, financial and contracts management</td>
<td>As required</td>
<td>LDA Legal Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Services</td>
<td>As required</td>
<td>LDA GIS unit to be established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIS &amp; GIS</td>
<td>As required</td>
<td>LDA Communications Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media &amp; communication</td>
<td>As required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following is an organogram type representation of how the RESIS Programme structure is currently organised. It is not a formally correct presentation as the lines shown does not necessarily imply line function authority in all the relationships.
Overall management of the programme rests with the Programme Management Unit (PMU), chaired by the LDA General Manager: Projects & Infrastructure. The PMU is a sub-structure of the LDA Senior Management Team (SMT).

Chief Financial Officer
Ndlalo Managing Director

RESIS Programme Coordinator

IPSP awarded a tender to a BEE company, Ndlalo Agri-Business Solutions and Investments, through which the RESIS office has been established to provide leadership and support to the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) and administrative and logistical support for programme implementation. Communication services, accounting and procurement services, and legal services are the responsibility of existing Departmental units. The establishment of a new Management Information and GIS unit in the department will be supported.

The Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT)
A key feature of the project structure for the implementation of the RESIS Programme is a Multi-Disciplinary Team consisting of government and private sector staff responsible for the provision and management of key specialist services to the Programme. It was previously highlighted that the two main objectives of the Programme are transformation of rural society and transformation of government service. The composition and functioning of the MDT aim to achieve these two objectives simultaneously.

The Multi-Disciplinary Team has been established through assignment of key staff by the department and soliciting of private sector participation in the RESIS-MDT.

Consists of government and private sector staff;

Provides and manages key specialist services to the programme;

Builds capacity of LDA staff; and

Facilitates transformation of govern-
through them to ensure proper coordination among the scheme's stakeholders. Other role players are communicated with the scheme of the MDT units and their management at the coalface. All interactions with the scheme of the MDT units and other role players are communicated through them to ensure proper coordination.

Scheme Facilitators are deliberately not called "Scheme Leaders", as the leadership role needs to be fulfilled from the outset by the farmers' Management Committees, with temporary (maximum four years) support by the Facilitators.

The Implementation Cycle
The four-year implementation cycle on each scheme consists of the following generic steps:

- Go/No Go assessment;
- RESIS Introduction: Awareness and buy-in of local leadership and communities;
- Pre-Development Survey: Community mobilisation, vision-building and baseline information gathering;
- Local Organisational Development: Establishment/confirmation of Management Committee and joint development and agreement on Development Plan;
- Farmers and Management Committee Training and Capacity-Building;
- Implementation: Market development, agricultural production, infrastructure rehabilitation;
- Monitoring and Aftercare;
- Evaluation and Refinement

When the community confirms that the Go/No Go assessment has been established, the RESIS programme is introduced to the whole community — both farming and non-farming households — through an awareness campaign. The scheme is depicted as an overloaded wagon stuck in the mud. The “overload” of problems each needs to be offloaded and assigned to an appropriate management structure to get the wagon moving again.

Pre-Development Survey: vision-building, community mobilisation and baseline information gathering
The awareness campaign is followed by a Pre-Development Survey, which engages the community in group discussions and individual house-to-house interviews to establish problems, needs, fears and aspirations regarding agriculture and life in general. Women, youth, agriculture and technical aspects are addressed in separate group discussions.

The outcome of the Pre-Development Survey is captured in a report which is presented back to the community and discussed and adapted to their satisfaction. When the community confirms that the report accurately and comprehensively reflects their situation and development needs, it is formally signed by the community leadership in a public meeting, and thus becomes the recognised Development Plan for RESIS interventions.

Local organisational development: Management Committees and other structures
The wagon’s “overload” are problems which each needs to be off-loaded and dealt with by the most appropriate body for the particular problem. A properly constituted, elected and recognised Management Committee is essential to take on particular problems, while the department of Agriculture, Health, input suppliers or even joint venture partners may need to take on others.

The Pre-Development Survey is followed by a “scheme management structures workshop” to lay the foundation for the off-loading of the wagon. At the same time, services to improve delivery mechanisms.

The diagram summarises the composition of the MDT. The lead position for each component is indicated in bold text. The RESIS programme and the MDT in particular, acts within LDA policy and procedures.

The overall objectives of the MDT are:

- To provide specialist services for the revitalisation of smallholder irrigation schemes in Limpopo Province;
- To promote rural development and job creation on the irrigation schemes and in adjacent communities;
- To build the capacity of LDA staff to ensure a phased withdrawal of external specialists;
- To investigate feasible options for the revitalisation of individual irrigation schemes, and recommend how to proceed to ensure economic and financial viability;
- To do business modelling for various commodities.

To solicit support for proposed interventions among political and other stakeholders.

To conduct community mobilisation/information gathering exercises with a view to maximising beneficiary participation in planning and implementation.

To ensure election of management representatives from among beneficiaries to represent people from across the spectrum of poverty within the village.

To facilitate transformation of government services as needed to improve service delivery mechanisms.

To obtain or provide other professional services as may be required.

The Facilitation Team
The Provincial Facilitator is a member of the MDT and leads the Facilitation Team through District Facilitators. The Scheme Facilitators are the crux of the programme, facing and solving the daily challenges associated with programme implementation at the coalface. All interactions with the scheme of the MDT units and other role players are communicated through them to ensure proper coordination.

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time, the appropriate relationships between the Management Committee and existing community leadership structures are discussed and agreed.

Training
Practical hands-on training in crop production, irrigation scheme management, water management and entrepreneurship are cornerstones of the programme. Training needs are established in consultation with the communities during the Pre-Development Survey and confirmed as time goes.

Training is tailored to illiterate learners, since approximately 60% of smallholder farmers are functionally illiterate (Departmental Survey, 2002). The Limpopo Farmer Training Team has been established in the department and is based at the two agricultural colleges and in specific districts. The team consists of college lecturers, extension officers and successful smallholder farmers trained as Farmer Trainers. Training demands in excess of the capacity and/or skills of the Limpopo Farmer Training Team can be outsourced from time to time for provision by the private sector.

Implementation
Implementation activities can only start once the Pre-Development Survey process has culminated in an agreed Development Plan and the Management Committees are in place. Implementation encompasses a range of actions in support of sustainable production and marketing.

The first phase is aimed at re-establishing or improving crop production in the first season of engagement with each scheme.

Secure market access is a starting point and access to inputs, mechanisation and production credit is facilitated. Emergency infrastructure repairs are done to address particular bottlenecks. Crop and scheme management training commences immediately and runs parallel to the implementation activities in preparation for the planting season.

After the first production season more advanced training is offered and a more detailed infrastructure rehabilitation plan is developed in collaboration with the farmers and their Management Committees. New policy enables the redesign of infrastructure where necessary to enable management-by-the-farmers. Detailed economic and sustainability analysis is done on the farmers’ infrastructure choices.

Construction is labour-intensive where possible and maximises the use of local contractors and labour. Farmers are encouraged to help build their scheme infrastructure to develop familiarity and ownership so that they can operate, maintain and repair their own infrastructure in future.

The farmers’ Scheme Management Committee supervises and approves all payment certificates of contractors working on the scheme infrastructure.

Scheme infrastructure must be fully commissioned (including user training and full testing) and the infrastructure handed over to the farmers according to an agreed Hand-over Protocol.

Monitoring and Aftercare
An important component of the programme is monitoring and the establishment of an “aftercare” system, which must enable the smallholder irrigation schemes to continue producing at least at the levels attained during the programme and to continue to improve and adapt to changing economic circumstances.

The programme cycle of four years provides opportunity to gradually withdraw external support. During this period, farmers establish long-term relationships with suppliers and advisors and the ongoing role of departmental staff is defined and implemented.

Evaluation and Refinement
Regular evaluation of programme activities and outcomes provides input for the refinement of approaches and methodologies used in the programme. It is envisaged that self-evaluation of all RESIS team members will be further supported and underpinned by the services of a monitoring and evaluation specialist.

RESIS in 2005: current status and challenges
Though the visionary leadership of the MEC for Agriculture and the new Head of Department of Limpopo Department of Agriculture, Bigman Maloa, the RESIS Programme is being fully integrated into the Department. The RESIS Multi-Disciplinary Team was established in January 2005 and the Programme Management Unit is expected to be functional from February 2005.

Forty-six irrigation schemes completed the Pre-Development process in 2004 and a further 35 schemes will be introduced in the course of 2005. The balance of 31 schemes will be introduced early in 2006.

As soon as the department confirms appointment of engineering service providers, infrastructure rehabilitation and redesign can start on the first 46 irrigation schemes immediately, and then as a follow-up on new schemes as and when they complete their Pre-Development Surveys.

The single most important challenge for RESIS implementation is the timely procurement of goods and services through the departmental system. Without the supply of specialist services, material and equipment, a programme is merely hollow words.

The procurement options and challenges will be discussed in more detail in a
Fred Khumalo speaks to Alvin Rapea who’s just left the DPSA having performed sterling work in contributing to the transformation of a public service that was saddled with the apartheid legacy of a lack of professionalism.

A lvin Rapea, who recently left the DPSA to explore new professional challenges, cites the period he was appointed acting director general in the DPSA as the most challenging and equally rewarding time of his career, not only with the government but in his totality of experience as an employed professional.

“I was at the helm for almost 18 months during the DG’s absence,” recalls Rapea who joined the DPSA at DDG level in 2001.

His primary responsibility when he was appointed was to look at the management and development of human capital of the public service — ensuring that the public service had the right staff at the right place who were well trained and appropriately rewarded. This means that he had to lead a team that reviewed the public service Human Resources policies and practices through consultation and negotiation with the then 12 public service trade unions (the number has gone down to eight).

He was still enjoying himself in his primary job when the now legendary Eastern Cape scenario necessitated that at least 30% of senior managers from the DPSA be seconded down to the Eastern Cape.

Obviously, one of these senior managers within the DPSA was Robinson Ramaite, the then DG who was heading the management contingent that went to the Eastern Cape with the view to putting the public service in that province on a healthy footing again.

“It’s an experience that I will savour for a long time. I am truly grateful that the minister thought I had the ability and capacity to run the organisation, managing ±250 people many of whom are involved in intricate and complex projects that range from information and communication technology to management of human capital and organisational development supporting the entire public service.”

“During the period I have been with the department, a number of flagship programs were initiated and implemented to give effect to the culture of Batho Pele which, guides everything we do in the public service.

“The Polokwane public service job summit agreement gave impetus to resolution 7 of 2002 that defined the framework for restructuring of the public service. The implementation of this resolution compelled managers to develop strategic and human resources plans and had to present these to the unions to justify excess employees in their departments.

“The process put to rest the perception that the public service is overstaffed (bloated). Only 13 000 employees were found to be in excess at the end of the life of the resolution and after redeployment, the number has reduced to about 5 000. Not a single employee was retrenched, and a programme has been designed to re-skill the remaining 5 000.

“The Batho Pele e-gateway project was launched and implemented to give
the people of South Africa and the world a single window of access to government services. To ensure access to those who don’t have computers, a call centre was established to respond to enquiries 24/7.

“Through the Inter-Provincial Support Programme (IPSP), a number of innovative service platforms were designed, e.g. the mobile police station which won the UN award in 2004, and the mobile social grant pay point.

“Also the establishment of the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) to assist government with the development of innovative ideas and incubate the projects before roll out throughout the public service.

“The drive to reduce personnel expenditure required a lot of innovation. The automatic promotion called rank-and-leg was abolished and replaced by the performance-based pay progression, the employer contribution to medical aid was capped to mitigate the impact of medical aid inflation, and the multi-term salary negotiations was introduced to align salary increases to the medium term expenditure framework.

“The Senior Management Service was introduced to attract and retain highly skilled senior managers. The remuneration of senior managers was changed to a flexible total cost to employer which made their salaries more comparable to the private sector. A uniform performance management system was introduced which included pay progression and performance bonus for excellent performers. A competency profile and a competency assessment tool was developed to assist with the selection and development of senior managers.

“That’s the only way we thought we could attract suitably qualified people to the public service and, to some extent, even compete with the private sector. The competency system and our performance management system meant the appropriately qualified people, performing at their optimal level in a professionally run organisation were duly rewarded, says Rapea.

Having achieved so much in such a short period within the DPSA why is he leaving all of a sudden?

“When I arrived here, my ambition was to make my contribution to the transformation of the public service for three years, but I stayed for two more years because I wanted to ensure that all the projects I started are completed. I also came to realise that you cannot achieve much in three years, but also enjoyed what I was doing. I joined the public service as a DDG and I never saw myself as a career public servant who aspired to become a DG. I believe that I have set up a proper foundation on which others can build.”

Rapea, 40, holds a B Com from the University of the North, a post-graduate diploma in management from Wits University and a Diploma in Labour Law from the Graduate Institute of Management and Technology (GITM).

After university he had a healthy run in the private sector (Parastatals) where he served variously as Group HR manager at the Development Bank of Southern Africa and Organisational Development Manager at Eskom.

“I am leaving the public service with a clear conscience that the commitments I made when the minister interviewed me in 2000 have been fulfilled, and I leave a very strong team in my branch who will take the baton forward with ease.”
Ten years into democracy the people of South Africa will judge their government on its effectiveness to deliver high quality public services to all. In this regard, the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, published on 18 September 1997, states that “public services are not a privilege in a civilised and democratic society; they are a legitimate expectation”.

Indeed, much has been done over the past decade to meet the basic needs of our people. On the other hand, there are also still a lot of service delivery gaps that require urgent attention. In an effort to revitalise the Batho Pele campaign many government departments have decided to initiate new creative steps to remove any blockages to service delivery.

One example is a unique initiative of the Public Service Commission (PSC) and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ). They have embarked on a project to develop procedure manuals for the most essential services in government.

The aim is to provide frontline government officials with step-by-step guides explaining the process of how a particular service is to be delivered in terms of customer-orientation, policy and law. These manuals will also be available for non-governmental organisations and other interested people assisting the community in accessing government services. By making the procedures transparent to everyone the public service becomes more accountable to the citizens it serves. But also other Batho Pele principles are enhanced such as “consultation”, “access”, “information” and “redress”.

First manual on Social Services

The first partner in this initiative is the Department of Social Development. Its mandate extends to issuing social grants, which include the Old Age, Child Support, Disability, Foster Child, Care Dependency and War Veterans Grants, grants in Aid and Social Relief of Distress. All these departmental services target the poor, vulnerable and marginalised people in our society. Improving access to them assets to fight poverty and underdevelopment thereby helping to bring dignity to the lives of many people living in dire cir-
In performing our duties, we will uphold the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the laws governing the public service and the Code of Conduct for the Public Service.

We will act in a lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair way in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Constitution and the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000.

To us, lawful means to observe the provisions of the Constitution, the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000, the Social Assistance Act, 1992 and its regulations.

Provincial Departments’ vision, mission and values:
Please note that your Provincial Department will have its own vision, mission and values (in line with those of the National Department) that you must read and understand.

Chapter 2
Guiding principles and law

The Constitution is the highest law in the country. All other laws and all practices must follow the rules in the Constitution.
Everyone (including members of the Department) must follow its rules.
The project team did not have to start from scratch. In fact, the Department of Social Development may be considered as one of the best practice examples in government as it had already produced a procedure manual on its own accord. However, four areas of improvement were identified when reviewing the document.

First of all, the manual did not make any reference to the specific provisions of the enabling legislation such as the Social Assistance Act (SAA) and its Regulations as well as law of general application such as the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (AJA) dealing with issues of procedural fairness. As a result, an administrator making use of the manual would still not be able to take informed decisions in terms of the applicable law.

Secondly, the need for plain language throughout the manual was still not be able to take informed decisions in terms of the applicable law. A plain language text and the illustrations are the main features that make the manual very attractive. This is also true for the humorous approach taken by the artists.

Thirdly, in the first manual the procedures were illustrated with Microsoft Clipart. Although useful in principle it was felt that the artwork should be more aligned to the content of the manual. Therefore, it was decided to ask professional graphic designers to map out each process individually. Finally, frontline staff in provincial offices asked for a manual that would be more guided by practical questions of implementation rather than just stating what is required in theory in terms of policy and law.

The implementation of the project was agreed to at senior level in an exchange of letters between the director generals from the Office of the Public Service Commission and the Department of Social Development. Subsequently, a project Steering Committee was formed with representatives from the Department of Social Development, the Office of the Public Service Commission and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation.

Advocate Greg Moran who is not only an expert in administrative justice but also a well-known plain language editor assisted the Steering Committee with his advice. Three students from the Department of Graphic Design of the University of Stellenbosch won the respective tender and did the required illustrations as well as the layout of the manual.

The process
Obviously, the existing procedure manual of the Department of Social Development constituted the main reference point in the initial phase of the project. In a first step, it was scrutinised in terms of its compliance with the relevant policy and law. References to specific provisions in the Social Assistance Act, the Regulations and the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (AJA) were added where applicable. According to the findings made at this stage relevant processes were amended or complimented. All this was done in a desk study compiled by a legal team.

In order to verify the results obtained from the desk study the second step of the project followed a more consultative approach. Representatives from the social security directorates of all nine provincial Departments of Social Development...
were invited to a workshop where the amended procedures were presented in eight different stalls each of them dealing with the application procedure for one of the eight different grants.

At each stall people from different provinces discussed the procedures in terms of the practices followed in their respective jurisdiction. It emerged that in some instances procedures differed from province to province because due to the scope of discretion left in the legal framework there is not necessarily only one lawful way for the grant administration process. As a result, participants engaged in very interested debates as to what would be the most effective way of dealing with a citizens application.

In some instances consensus could not be reached. Participants of each stall were asked to present their findings to the plenary including all possible alternatives in the grant administration process. This resulted in another debate involving the legal advisor of the Steering Committee as well. On the basis of these discussions a new draft text of the procedure manual was developed and distributed to all provincial departments for their comments.

In a second workshop the final draft was discussed once again in order to make sure that the plain language text did cover the outcome of this process in adequately.

As indicated, the question of how the information is presented is core to the success of this project. This was also observed when compiling the 12 different chapters. The first four chapters explain the general grant administration process whereas each of the other eight is designated to a specific grant. Each of the latter contains all the relevant information required for the administration of that particular grant. In other words, each of the eight chapters can stand on its own. Therefore, it will be sufficient for a person looking for information on the Child Support Grant to simply study that particular chapter as opposed to the entire booklet. It is believed that this feature will make the manual even more user-friendly.

When the final draft text was available, three students from the University of Stellenbosch began with the illustrations as a fourth step in this project. Their brief was to visualise the procedures described in the manual step-by-step, i.e. from the citizens’ application to rendering the requested service. This approach was taken to further unpack the information contained in the manual and to make it user-friendlier.

The aim of this effort is to avoid a situation sometimes observed in government where guides containing comprehensive information are rather shelved than used. New incumbents in particular will find it very useful to be equipped with a reference tool that is self-explanatory and fun to read. But the large number of new policies, regulations and laws as well as their general nature sometimes even overwhelms frontline staff. In those cases the application to a particular service turns out to be difficult.

Likewise, civil society organisations such as advice offices trying to assist those in need will benefit tremendously from the information provided in the procedure manual.

Lessons learned
In essence, process mapping means to translate a prescribed policy into practice by unpacking it in a step-by-step flow chart. At a first glance this seems to be an easy task. But in practice it turns out to be rather difficult because legal documents are not always conducive to clear-cut processes. In particular, people were struggling to determine when exactly a decision is taken in an application process although this information is core for compliance with the requirements of the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (AJA).

Furthermore, unpacking a service delivery process requires an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the relevant administration as well. Therefore, it was crucial for the success of this project to develop the manual in close consultation with social security experts from the provinces. It is one of the strength of this
project that this fundamental requirement has been observed all along. Nonetheless, it would have been preferable to have provincial representatives participating in the drafting team as well. Their contribution could have avoided some of the discussions about the draft that caused some confusion and delays in the process.

The plain language text and the illustrations are the main features that make the manual very attractive. This is also true for the humorous approach taken by the artists. Yet, it was very important for the Steering Committee to make sure that the examples employed were appropriate so that no user feels embarrassed or even offended when reading the handbook.

For the same reason one had to make sure that the characters appearing in the manual are balanced in terms of race and gender. When analysing the illustrations and the text as well as their relationship with one another it becomes apparent that lots of thought went into these aspects of the document. In fact, ensuring a stimulating communication with the potential reader required far more attention than anticipated. On the other hand, the usefulness of the guide depends to a large extent on the question whether it succeeds to activate a relationship with the reader. It was therefore important to invest time and resources in this part of the work.

No matter how colourful, reader-friendly and attractive a manual is all these factors only contribute to the likelihood for the guide to be used. However, the latter should never be taken for granted. As the experiences with regard to the first procedure manuals of the Department of Social Development have shown it remains important to monitor the manual’s application in day-to-day administration.

Should it not be utilised to the desired extent reasons need to be identified. To mitigate this risk a communication strategy introducing the new manuals is very important. In addition, training sessions may be required as well and therefore should be provided for.

More manuals to follow

The procedure manual on social grants has just been completed but will only be the first in a series. In fact, the Department of Home Affairs has already joined the party and — in cooperation with the PSC and GTZ — is busy producing a procedure manual for all civic services. Other essential government services including those at local government level will follow.

In increasing access and transparency this initiative is just another step to fight poverty and work towards a new service delivery culture in government.

It underlines the benefits of democracy — a better life for all.
Improving Learning Transfer in Organizations

By EF Holton III and Timothy T Baldwin

Improving Learning Transfer in Organizations features contributions from leading experts in the field of learning transfer, and offers the most current information, ideas, and theories on the topic. The book aptly illustrates how to put transfer systems into action. In this book, the authors move beyond explanation to intervention by contributing their most recent thinking on how best to intervene in organizational contexts to influence the transfer of learning. Written for chief learning officers, training and development practitioners, management development professionals, and human resource management practitioners, this important volume shows how to create systems that ensure employees are getting and retaining the information, skills, and knowledge necessary to accomplish tasks on the job.

Improving Learning Transfer in Organizations addresses learning transfer on both the individual and organizational level. This volume shows how to diagnose learning transfer systems, create a transfer-ready profile, and assess and place employees to maximize transfer. The book includes information on how to determine what process should be followed to design an organization-specific learning transfer system intervention. The authors focus on the actual learning process and show how to use front-end analysis to avoid transfer problems. In addition, they outline the issues associated with such popular work-based learning initiatives as action learning and communities of practice, and they also present applications on learning transfer within e-learning and team training contexts.

Simulations and the Future of Learning: An Innovative (and Perhaps Revolutionary) Approach to e-Lear

By Clark Aldrich

The book outlines the design principles and critical decisions around any simulation’s components: the interface, the physics and animation systems, the artificial intelligence, and sets and figures. Using this accessible resource, readers will learn how to create and evaluate successful simulations that have the following characteristics: authentic and relevant scenarios; applied pressure situations that tap user’s emotion and force them to act; a sense of unrestricted options; and replayability.

Emerging Systems for Managing Workplace Conflict

By David B Lipsky, Ronald L Seeber & Richard D Fincher

Emerging Systems for Managing Workplace Conflict presents illustrative real-life examples as well as cutting-edge methods and tools for integrating systems of dispute resolution into standard corporate procedures.

This vital resource investigates the systems organizations have developed to manage common and costly workplace conflicts involving supervisor-employee relationships, race, age, and gender discrimination complaints, sexual harassment, occupational safety and health, reasonable accommodation of the disabled, and wrongful termination.

The book is filled with illuminating case examples and stories from organizations, such as Warner Brothers, Universal Studios, Johnson & Johnson, Shell, Prudential, and others, that have instituted systems of dispute resolution in response to ongoing destructive conflict, expensive litigation, and crippling settlements.

These book reviews are taken from the Knowledge Resources catalogue/database. For more information see www.kr.co.za
The famous Did You Hear? column in Financial Mail recently told a thought-provoking story about brains versus brawn: Footballer Craig Bellamy of Newcastle United recently made it apparent why he was in a physical career as opposed to an intellectual one. Bellamy and manager Graeme Souness have been waging a war of words for months over what position he should play. After hearing a radio interview when Souness said Bellamy had threatened to feign injury rather than play out of position, Bellamy told Sky Sports: “I couldn’t believe that he (Souness) went behind my back right in front of my face.”

Hhhm ... makes you think, neh?

People who should have won this year’s Nobel Prize

Britney Spears and Eminem who, combined, have written more books than they’ve read.
America’s oil companies for a lifetime body of work proving that oil and water don’t mix.
Bill Gates for creating the X-Box and convincing Americans that their children need a $200 video game system during a recession.

Restroom use

Entirely too much time is being spent in the restroom. In the future, we will follow the practice of going in alphabetical order. For instance, all employees whose names begin with “A” will go from 8:00 to 8:10, employees whose names begin with “B” will go from 8:10 to 8:20 and so on. If you’re unable to go at your allotted time, it will be necessary to wait until the next day when your turn comes again. In extreme emergencies employees may swap their time with a coworker. Both employees’ supervisors must approve this exchange in writing. In addition, there is now a strict three-minute time limit in the stalls. At the end of three minutes, an alarm will sound, the toilet paper roll will retract, and the stall door will open.

Teaching the teachers

A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.