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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.
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It is easy for members of the public to complain about service delivery. There are many stories in the media about long queues at Home Affairs or overcrowding at hospitals and it is almost habitual for people to join in the general complaints after one bad experience, or even without having had a bad experience.

It is harder for members of the public to understand the immense amount of work that is going in to improving service delivery – from the planning to the practical, and making sure that it is all sustainable. This is why for somebody not employed full-time by the Department of Public Service and Administration it is fascinating to be involved with this journal. Editing all these articles gives me an “insiders” view of the department’s work. Having access to information that is not normally readily available to the general public reveals exactly what is being done to improve the lives of all South Africans: from the long-term planning for sustainable development and management of knowledge at national level to the nitty-gritty of delivering services at a rural hospital.

Being exposed to all the problems, plans and solutions makes it easier for the public to understand the public service – and how to become involved in improving the quality of life in their communities.

So communication is a vital part of service delivery. Public servants need to communicate with their colleagues: making plans, finding solutions and sharing experiences. And then there is communication with the clients: telling people what services are available and how to access them and consulting communities about their particular needs.

As this journal is for senior managers, there are plenty of articles in each edition about the theory behind the many aspects of service delivery and the planning that has gone into various projects. But often it is the personal profiles and “real life” case studies that offer the most interesting insights into the practical side of service delivery.

There is a lot to learn from the everyday experiences of the CEO of the Helen Franz Hospital (page 108). How to use limited resources to provide the best service for the community, and probably most important of all, what to do when only one washing machine is working or the boiler breaks down.

Another interesting example of innovative problem-solving is the Breastfeeding Mothers’ Lodge at Kimberley Hospital (Page 70) which provides a place for the mothers of hospitalised children to stay nearby. The international case study of China’s poverty alleviation programme (page 17) is also a fascinating insight into this vast nation.

These down-to-earth case studies provide practical experiences that civil servants can apply in their own situations. They also help members of the public understand the real problems involved in service delivery. However, it is also important that the articles dealing more with the theory behind aspects of service delivery and the planning process involved in various government initiatives reach as wide an audience as possible.

And it is here that mention must be made of that dreaded word “acronym”: a word formed from the first letters of other words. To many it is a convenient and quick way to refer to government departments, units, jobs or programmes. But to those who are not as immersed in this way of communicating as civil servants are, acronyms are like faulty stop lights. Just as the driver makes stop-start progress from faulty light to faulty light so the reader of an acronym-filled article makes jerky progress, stopping often to work out the meaning of each acronym. It might be easier to sign up for a decoder.

In an article headed “SOS from these acronymaniacs” in The Weekender newspaper recently, journalist Rehana Rossouw writes about the abundance of acronyms citing a certain organisation on whose website there is one document that has “no less than 29 abbreviations and acronyms”.

We can take some slender comfort from the fact that “this psychosis is not unique to SA”. Rossouw writes: “The Plain English Campaign in the UK, dedicated to ensuring citizens understand government officials, reports that after a local authority found 27 acronyms in four paragraphs, they made a New Year’s resolution to give it up. “I support the American Association Against Acronym Abuse. AAAAA pretty much sums my reaction to acronymaniacs.”

It might seem shorter and simpler, but this “twelfth” language of South Africa doesn’t necessarily make communication easier or more efficient. Good communication is just one of the many skills needed in the public service. And as some of the articles in this edition emphasise, a skilled labour force is vital for service delivery. And a skilled labour force is always seeking to find and retain new knowledge and to learn from the experiences of others. There can never be enough skills, too much knowledge or an end to learning.

Christian Stephen
60 seconds

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Towards a common understanding of corruption in Africa

Corruption takes place at the interface between the public and private sectors. It is essential to recognise this in developing a common understanding and approach to corruption. The corollary of this argument is that effective anti-corruption strategies must be designed to both enhance democracy in the political sphere as well as corporate governance in the private sector.

Corruption has been manifest in all historical epochs. By situting corruption in its historical context and by linking it to the unregulated and regulated markets of capitalism, nationally and globally, we are asserting that corruption is more than the relationship between the bribe giver and the bribe taker. It has historical roots; it is systemic and goes beyond the individual to the structural and the institutional levels.

By asserting that corruption is rooted in the unbridled forces of the market and in the pursuit of profitability we are in fact suggesting that corruption, often seen as “the price of doing business”, must not be viewed as an intrinsic element of the value system of democratic capitalism.

Unsettling the North and South discourse

The discourses of both North and South need to be rethought in this light. One focuses on the corrupted, the other seeks to focus on the corrupter, but both ignore the complexity and nuance surrounding the structural relationships which are embedded in the political economic interface.

This is the political economy of corruption, wherein corruption is symptomatic of the current conjuncture of globalisation. It is in this conjuncture that multinational corporations and individuals can take advantage of vulnerable states, eroding value systems and where possessive individualism overrides any sense of the common good.

Corruption engenders perverse political dependencies, lost political opportunities to improve the general well-being of the citizenry and fosters a climate of mistrust particularly of public officials.

The losses that accrue from a culture of permissiveness with respect to corruption include a loss of revenue, loss of trust, loss of values, loss of credibility and legitimacy and a loss of the democratic ethos and impulse within institutions and organisations.

A 2002 World Bank report on corruption puts the financial costs of corruption at $148 billion a year, and increases the costs of goods by as much as 20%. Certainly the beneficiaries are few and the victims are the many – and the report notes that the poor are the hardest hit.

It is critical for us to develop a common understanding of corruption based on a conception of the “common good”. This derives from the state’s special obligations rooted in what we call the “People’s Contract”. This binds the elites to the masses and lays the basis for leadership qualities that require the promotion and articulation of values and principles of professional ethics by leaders.

Under conditions of democracy, the state needs to take the lead in combating, preventing, managing and eliminating corruption. The political cost of corruption is that it undermines democracy, weakens the developmental state and undermines responsibility, accountability and legitimacy.
In eroding the “People’s Contract”, corruption alienates citizens from the very officials they have elected and also alienates people from each other. Corruption weakens democratic processes, public order and undermines the ability to fight for reform.

Corruption destroys trust and erodes both the sense of global citizenship and the sense of shared responsibility as well as national citizenship and the sense of social cohesion.

The state has the responsibility for securing the conditions under which development takes place and security is ensured. Where states are undemocratic this proposition becomes problematic, as the ruling group frequently abuses state power in the interests of narrow sectional concerns. This promotes neither development nor security but creates the conditions under which corruption and so-called predatory states flourish.

We have the opportunity at this conference to share our experiences, our successes and our frustrations in dealing with the challenges of corruption. The theme of the conference, “Towards a Common Understanding of Corruption”, is also a call for us as Africans throughout the continent to work together to tackle this scourge.

**Corruption and development**

Developmental states are about the interface between the political, economic and bureaucratic elites. Democracy keeps politicians honest and accountable while sound corporate governance and systems of accountability keep the economic and bureaucratic elites honest.

Central to the developmental state is the strong interface between key state actors, institutions, business and civil society. As the developmental infrastructure is created, the interface intensifies, and there must be requisite levels of trust to ensure that public goods and resources are well managed and not squandered. The critical interfaces between politics, economics and the bureaucracy must be kept clean.

Critical to this is firstly reclaiming a value system that sees the individual as part of a broader community. In the South African context we talk about ubuntu. In kiSwahili we talk about ujamaa, the values that relate to neighbourliness and utu, possessing the values of a human being, humanity and co-operation.

The word ubuntu comes from the Zulu and Xhosa languages. A rough translation in English could be “humanity towards others”. Ubuntu also means, “I am what I am because of who we all are.”

The Zulu maxim is umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu (“a person is a person through other persons”). Ubuntu is “the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity”. If we take the second meaning of ubuntu we realise that if one in our community or our society is corrupt, then we are all affected. If one is in need we are all in need.

So by combining the many complementary meanings of ubuntu, we are in fact saying that we are human by virtue of doing for others and not just ourselves. This must be the essence of a value system that underpins our commitment to anti-corruption.

This is the spirit we must continue to encourage in all sectors of our society. This is the spirit that is necessary for the creation of a socially cohesive and inclusive Africa.

Secondly, we need strong robust democracies where all sectors of society, including the media and organisations of civil society, private sector, trade unions and faith-based organisations have a responsibility to educate and promote the values of ubuntu and anti-corruption.

Thirdly, there is the need for the establishment of a professional meritocratic public service that is able to uphold the values and principles of democracy, good governance and ubuntu.

Government intervention in the economy to promote development implies extensive interaction between politicians, bureaucrats and business people. The interaction could take the form of collaboration, collusion and corruption, or all of these.

The experience of developmental states across the globe has problematised the close relationship between government and business. It can be seen as benign collaboration or crony capitalism or corruption.

In pursuing a development agenda the collaboration between government and business is critical, because information
exchange is a prerequisite for effective policy formation and implementation. A professional, meritocratic bureaucracy is a key condition for preventing collaboration from degenerating into collusion and corruption.

But the bureaucracy itself must also be steeped in a strong code of conduct and a code of ethics. These codes need to be implemented and rigorously enforced. Similar codes must be established, implemented and rigorously enforced for elected officials and for the corporate sector.

Corruption undermines growth and development by diverting resources away from development programmes thus increasing poverty, inequality and underdevelopment. Corruption is therefore a critical channel through which inequality undermines economic growth.

It is important to note, however, that developmentalism and state intervention do not necessarily lead to increases in corruption, although some forms of state intervention may lead to corruption.

The sale of state properties, extensive ownership by the state of large corporations, the favouring of big conglomerates, and the manner in which some huge tenders are awarded to national and or international bidders has led to corruption in some developmental states. Nevertheless, linking the extent of state intervention or the scale of state participation in the economy to corruption is highly problematic.

There are objective factors which determine the levels of corruption beyond the simplistic notions that state intervention in economic development produces corruption. Corruption is more likely to be found under conditions where policy failures have increased redistributive pressures to address inequality than where development policies have been successfully implemented by a meritocratic bureaucracy, thus decreasing inequality.

The deepening of democratic institutions is likely to reduce corruption due to enhanced monitoring and accountability mechanisms. These are critical elements of National Integrity systems that link values and principles of good governance with the institutional structures and practices that give effect to these values.

National Integrity Systems

Good governance is a prerequisite of preventing and combating corruption; while the scourge of corruption undermines good governance. Corruption can therefore be viewed as a governance challenge.

The concept of a National Integrity System is fundamental to the development of an anti-corruption discourse. It comprises the building blocks necessary for the long-term fight against corruption and other forms of unethical and anti-social behaviour. Its core elements are constituted by a society’s value system.

The National Integrity System’s values must permeate the structures, practices and principles of the state, the corporate sector and civil society. These values include accountability, transparency, equity, efficiency, developmentalism, and fundamental rights and freedoms including freedom of speech, access to information, democracy and participation.

The successful practice and implementation of a National Integrity System is predicated on strong leadership and the ability of leaders to set a vision, based on the values of the society. Governments can create a National Integrity System infrastructure with laws, systems and structures, but ultimately there needs to be on the part of leadership a voluntary submission to a higher code of probity, which goes beyond strictly legal prescriptions.

This submission to a moral code ensures that institutions do not become vacuous without direction or purpose. Ethical behaviour, while highly desirable, respected and valued, cannot be assumed. This is why specific measures and institutions to safeguard integrity and to promote ethics are necessary.

The lack of these measures and institutions, or their ineffective implementation and functioning, opens the way for all manner of unethical behaviour, including corruption.

The values expressed in the National Integrity System need to permeate all institutions of state, the corporate sector and civil society, and specific measures or actions relating to anti-corruption need to be identified within particular institutions.

A National Integrity System therefore provides the institutional and philosophical basis for both enforcement and preventive action against corruption.

Towards a broader definition of corruption

Thus far, corruption has largely been perceived as an African and “developing south” phenomenon. Definitions of the problem have often been limited to the abuse or misuse of public power or resources for private benefit, thus focussing on the behaviour of politicians and those in the public service.

Corruption and bribery have also frequently been used interchangeably and in a manner that conceals that bribery is a two-way transaction involving both bribe givers and bribe takers. There has also been a projection of particular societies or people as endemically corrupt, so that an outsider is required to pay bribes in order to conduct legitimate business.

There has also been a tendency to propose solutions and strategies for combating corruption as apolitical, largely legalistic and technocratic, devoid of ideology and values, while ignoring the value laden definitions and perspectives of those who defined the problem and prescribed the solutions.

The result of this approach is that the role of the private sector is rarely addressed, and the prevalence of corruption in the developed north, if noticed at all, is perceived as an aberration or deviation from the norm.

Yet our experience has been that corruption is prevalent in both developed and developing countries. People occupying the highest political offices have abused their offices for private gain or to further their own personal or political party’s ambitions.
Many corruptors have been exposed. Legal action by governments, including that of Lesotho, has led to international corporations being found guilty of paying bribes.

Globally we have witnessed the abuse of political power and resources for personal benefit and for ruling elites, at the expense of ordinary citizens, including shareholders, private clients, workers and the poor. We have also seen abuse by the rich and militarily strong countries that promote their own ideology, and impose leaders on others.

This is done in pursuit of their own national interests at the expense of the populations of entire countries and regions while in the process weakening multilateral co-operation and institutions.

South Africa understands corruption to be a societal problem, which affects all sectors of society differentially. Over and above our common colonial experience, the experience of apartheid exposed us to the reality of systemic corruption, which infused the entire society and was used to sustain those in power.

The collusion of the elite with the ruling party amounted to a takeover of the state. The security of the state and protection of the rulers shaped the institutions as well as policies of governance and conditioned the behaviour of politicians, diplomats, business people and the security services.

Apartheid was a criminal system and was maintained by criminal means, with scant regard for public or private morality, or respect for human life. The activities of agents of the state were unconstrained, institutions lost their legitimacy, and growing numbers of citizens abandoned previously accepted norms of behaviour as they were required to condone, rationalise and legitimise injustice and oppression.

Repositioning the discourse on corruption requires us to go beyond the simple corrupter-corrupted relationship. Current discourses privilege one or the other and focus on the perceptions of one or the other. It is far more useful in developing a common understanding to focus on the interface between politics and economics.

It is the premises identified earlier that provide the basis for a far more rigorous conception of corruption.

As we have argued throughout, a broader conception and definition of corruption must recognise that corrupt practices take place in the interface between the public sector, the private sector and even the civil society sector.

The African Development Bank (ADB) has gone a long way towards articulating a common definition of corruption by arguing that corruption is a cross-sectoral and cross-boundary activity, and involves practices such as theft, fraud, bribery, extortion, nepotism, patronage, and laundering of illicit proceeds.

Private sector corruption is as serious as public sector corruption, and the costs are just as great. The ADB also points us to the reality of Grand Corruption, that stems from the interface between the private and public sectors.

It is also important to acknowledge that corruption is not restricted to purely commercial transactions but may also be present when citizens seek to access social services such as health, welfare and education services. A bribe may be demanded by a public official in order to deliver the service or grant access to the service to which the citizen is entitled, and which the public official is obliged to deliver.

The failure to deliver leads to a culture where citizens feel forced to offer bribes in order to receive that to which they are entitled, hence strengthening a climate of corruption.

A more appropriate definition of corruption including these additional facets of the problem is proposed to enable African countries to individually and collectively develop targeted strategies and practices to combat corruption as it confronts us.

Such a definition may see corruption as a transaction or attempt to secure illegitimate advantage for national interests or private benefit or enrichment, through subverting or suborning a public official or any person or entity from performing their proper functions with due diligence and probity.

We need to reflect on this definition in order to collectively as Africans build democracy in our respective countries and promote economic growth and development in order to create a better life for all our people. We need to understand how corruption flourished under colonialism as well as in the post-colonial period.

We are now able to recognise that corruption has implications for the commercial gain and benefit of its protagonists while simultaneously undermining democracy. Corruption compromises democratic political process and generates apathy and disengagement amongst citizens.

In developing an African conception and understanding of corruption, we need to recognise the colonial legacy and its impact on the coloniser and colonised alike.

The principles of democratic administration, transparency, accountability and the rule of law form the basis of a more comprehensive understanding of corruption. Within the public sector the South African ethos of Batho Pele, “citizens first”, is being progressively entrenched amongst public servants to ensure that they become service oriented and understand their role in providing essential services to the people of South Africa.
Their efficiency and effectiveness in rendering these services is critical in giving substance to the expectations of the people, and enabling the state to promote the conditions for development that will eliminate inequality and alleviate the plight the poor.

The philosophy of ubuntu as articulated in South Africa finds resonance across the African continent. This philosophy does not represent values that are exclusively South African. It contributes towards a definition of the common good at a broader continental level.

Traditional African society was forged on the basis of communal values. This contrasts with the values of rampant free market capitalism under globalisation which emphasise individual wealth acquisition.

This is why we need to reflect on the functioning of our national, regional and global political economies. In doing so we need to understand the objective social forces that shape our nation states, our regions and our continent and the material context in which corruption occurs.

The purpose of this analysis is to enable us to design and implement appropriate structures and strategies to combat corruption, and not to shift the blame for corruption to external forces.

The market fundamentalism of contemporary global capitalism and its atomising effect has created the conditions under which corruption flourishes. Self-interest has taken precedence over the collective good. Our people no longer see themselves as an integral part of their communities with the attendant responsibilities that this entails.

The state has a critical role in counteracting these tendencies through democratic practice. At the core of defining the common good lies the need to bind the elite and the impoverished through the implementation of a People’s Contract. The commitment to development, alleviation of poverty and the reduction of economic inequality lies at the heart of a contract between the government and its people.

Corruption undermines the ability of the state to meet its development objectives. A People’s Contract must therefore contain effective regulatory frameworks and mechanisms for the creation of sound National Integrity Systems.

The state plays a central role in binding the political and economic elites to the masses of the people. This can be achieved through the articulation and agreement of a set of common goals for the common good. By creating the conditions for effective implementation of a programme of action for the common good, the state must entrench the links between the elites and the masses.

There is an onus on leadership to articulate and sketch a vision based on the values of a society and to design programmes to give meaning and content to this vision. Strong leadership in all sectors - political, economic, administrative and civil society - must be based on integrity and through example must give concrete expression to the codes of good practice contained within the National Integrity System.

There has been extensive debate on what needs to be done in order to tackle corruption and many initiatives have been taken at national, regional and continental levels. Sound frameworks are already in place.

The time has now come for action and implementation: we need to focus on practical action and share our hard-won experiences of best practice.

Our approach needs to be multi-faceted and it is important to put in place anti-corruption strategies that consist of a myriad of tools to fight corruption. The strategies must look at prevention, education and awareness as well as detection and the enhancement of capacity of the law enforcement agencies and other institutions fighting corruption.

We need to examine how to counter corruption more effectively through co-operation and co-ordination including cross-border support. We need to operationalise our structures and lobby and pressure the countries of the developed world to support our initiatives in order to close the loopholes that may exist in their jurisdictions.

We must also take the opportunity of this gathering to develop a plan of action that will serve as a guide as we continue the fight against corruption. This plan of action must include developing a methodology to measure corruption more accurately than simply relying on the “perception” indices that have dominated corruption and anti-corruption discourse.

Once many low and middle income countries have been labelled and perceived as corrupt the “perception” is very difficult to dislodge and their efforts at development are significantly undermined either by failure to invest or by disinvestment. Surely this cannot be right and “perceptions” ought not to dominate the development trajectory of particular countries let alone the development discourse writ large.

**Conclusion**

We can all agree that corruption undermines democracy and negatively impacts on sustainable growth and development. The most effective antidote to corruption therefore has to be a strengthened National Integrity System that puts issues of good governance in all the spheres of society (the political sphere, the corporate sector and in civil society) at the very heart of the anti-corruption project.

The perception discourse that focuses on the corrupted and the discourse of blame that focuses on the North do little to illuminate the complexities hidden beneath the surface. They are simplistic and glib and avoid a more holistic approach that is structural and systemic and looks at social forces that are conjunctural.

A structural approach to corruption is a far better point of entry into the debate for it locates corruption precisely at the interface between the public and private sectors and thus allows us to focus our attention more sharply on the critical issues that confront us in Africa today.
Eastern Cape Food Programme to benefit over 15 000 households

The Eastern Cape Government has set aside R69 million for the Siyakhula/Massive Food Production Programme (MFPP) to benefit more than 15 000 rural households.

The Agriculture department reported that the total budget for the MFPP was R61 million for production and R8 million for administration for the 2006/07 financial year.

Agriculture Department Senior Manager, Kay Yankee, said the funds were allocated to the five district municipalities in the Eastern Cape by Uvimba Agricultural Bank.

The five district municipalities are Ukhahlamba, OR Tambo, Amathole, Chris Hani and Alfred Nzo. “421 MFPP projects were implemented in the five district municipalities in an area totaling 19 977 hectares, for the benefit of 15 099 households,” said Mr Yankee.

According to Mr Yankee costs of harvesting are not provided for in the conditional grant, as the entire grant is for input costs. “Harvesting expenses are provided for from the proceeds realised from the sale of crops,” he explained.

In terms of marketing their crops, he said, the Eastern Cape farmers signed forward contracts that allow for the deduction of harvesting costs. In addition to the signing of forward contracts to traditional buyers of grain in the province, an initiative involving the Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECDC) and a commercial bank is underway.

In her State of the Province address, Eastern Cape Premier Nosimo Balindlela acknowledged that Siyakhula and Siyazondla Food Security Programmes have benefited more than 15 000 households. “We will target 5 000 new households this year. Five irrigation schemes have been revitalised including Ncora, Tyefu, Shiloh and Qamata in the province,” said Ms Balindlela.

The main objective of the Siyakhula is the production of the most important grain foods in the underdeveloped high production areas of the Eastern Cape. This is done through appropriate conditional investments to overcome challenges that limit the effective use of natural resources for food production.

Siyakhula refers to those individual project areas that are less than 50ha in extent and are a step-up programme for crop production that enjoy entry into commercial cropping with greater conditional grant subsidy than for Massive Food areas.

Based on sound crop rotation, these areas can potentially and profitably sustain crop commodities including maize, sorghum, soya, canola, sunflower, wheat and other major crops such as potatoes, beans, cotton in order of 50 000-150 000 ha per year.

This will provide adequate quantities of respective commodities for meaningfully large agricultural commodity-based economy for these less developed areas of the province. "If you have a commodity you have an economy. No commodity means no economy." The MFPP includes Food Security, Rural Economic Development as well as Conservation Cropping Practices.

Lucky Khumalo, BuaNews

SA’s GDP increases for the 33rd successive quarter

South Africa’s real growth domestic product (GDP) has continued with its upswing, registering yet another increase for the 33rd consecutive quarter since 1998.

Figures released by Statistic South Africa (Stats SA) on Tuesday show that the real GDP at market prices rose by an annualised 5.6 percent for the fourth quarter of 2006, far exceeding expectations. The figure is up from a 4.7 percent revised increase of the third quarter of the same year.

The corresponding real annualised economic growth rates for the first two quarters of the year were five percent and 5.5 percent. Economists had predicted that the figures were going to come in at only around 4.8 percent.

Stats SA said the increase in economic activity for the period could be attributed to the manufacturing industry (1.4 percent) and the finance, real estate and business industry (one percent).

Also contributing to the increase were the wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants industries (0.8 of a percentage point) and the transport, storage and communication industry (0.5 of a percentage point).

Real value added by non-agricultural industries increased by six percent during the fourth quarter of 2006 while the year-on-year GDP at market prices rose by 6.1 percent during the same period.

ABSA economist Chris Hart said the
real GDP figure came in higher than he expected.

“We had expected a 4.8 percent increase but this rise (5.6 percent) is good for growth going forward. It reflects that the manufacturing sector responds well to the supply needs of the economy.”

Managing Director of SMM Financial Services, Simon Mohapi, also expected a 4.8 percent increase. “This shows that there is a good support level. It is a promise for people to get good jobs,” he said.

### Women’s empowerment key to eliminating poverty – UN

Empowering the world’s women is a key factor that could help in the fight against poverty, the United Nations has said.

The Secretary General’s Special Advisor on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women Rachel Mayanja said women’s empowerment could also help fight discrimination, close educational gaps, decrease high maternal mortality and alleviate other social ills. “Continued discrimination against the girl child, violence against women, and low representation of women in decision-making still pose major problems in our societies,” she said at the 51st Session Commission on the Status of Women at UN headquarters in New York.

“Despite several promising steps, including increased provision of microcredit and the accession of several States to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), challenges remain.” She also urged the commission to examine the plight of women widowed by HIV and Aids, conflicts and natural disasters.

Many of these women, she said, did not remarry, were unemployed and isolated from society, resulting in poverty disproportionately affecting them.

Among the almost 50 speakers at the meetings was the Executive Director of the UN Development Fund for Women, Noeleen Heyzer, who called for the implementation and monitoring of provisions of treaties targeted at empowering women.

Another speaker, Carmen Moreno, Director of the UN International Research and Training Institute of Women, asserted that women must have greater decision-making power at all levels. “It can happen in the household or in politics to allow both governments and societies to be more responsive to their needs,” said Ms Moreno.

This year, the commission is introducing new work methods by focusing on one key theme, the elimination of all forms of discrimination against girls, during this session, which will last from 2007 to 2009.

Treasury DG paints a picture of ‘fiscal space’ while outlining growth challenges

Growth challenges for the South African economy are to increase exports, produce more unskilled jobs, raise levels of productivity and minimise bureaucratic red tape around business development, Director-General in National Treasury, Lesetja Kganyago told MPs recently.

Along with Finance Minister Trevor Manuel and South African Revenue Service Commissioner Pravin Gordhan, Mr Kganyago was briefing the Portfolio Committee on Finance on the 2007 Budget presented by Mr Manuel.

Describing the growth challenges as “straightforward”, Mr Kganyago added that these measures would be the only way of ensuring that South Africa meets the Millennium Development Goals of halving poverty and unemployment by 2014.

Increasing exports required an appropriate strengthening of industrial policy, he said, while adding that a regulatory impact assessment unit was being established in the Presidency to look at ways of reducing the regulatory burden on businesses.

The performance of the public sector also needs to be strengthened, he said, adding that the underlying strength of the economy and the “solid fiscal position that we find ourselves in” has enabled government to continue to grow expenditure at nine percent in real terms.

“Revenue has grown even faster in recent years, hence a fiscal position that proposes a surplus for forthcoming fiscal years [of R5.3 billion – 0.3 percent of GDP in the 2006-2007 financial year – and 0.6 per cent in 2007/08],” he said.

Generally, households and government have been in “a laager” in terms of
their contribution to national savings, Mr Kganyago said. But in the first quarter of last year government had begun to “turn the corner”, becoming a net saver, adding that government’s net savings would continue over the medium term.

Increases in capital expenditure relative to current expenditure and a broadly balance budget would continue to improve national savings, he said, adding that state debt costs would continue to decline, to just about 2.1 per cent of GDP by 2009-2010.

Now that this “fiscal space” had been created as a result of the solid macro-economic and fiscal management policies practised by government over the past years, the question now was: “How do we utilise this space?”

One of the first “fruits” of this position was net tax relief of over R12 billion – with R8.4 billion of this provided to individuals – and the reduction in the Secondary Tax on Companies with its replacement tax on dividends bringing this down to 10 percent from 12.5 percent.

“In the main here, the biggest benefit for the relief has actually been income tax given to individuals,” he said.

With other beneficiaries of this fiscal space being investment in the 2010 Fifa World Cup, the government was “beginning to strike the balances right” because now spending on supporting infrastructure is larger than that actually being spent on stadiums.

Cost of stadiums have been contained to the R8.4 billion previously set aside for this, while an extra R2.3 billion has been added to the spending on public transport infrastructure, boosting this from R6.7 billion to R9 billion. Overall, the 2007 budget adds R89.5 billion to the forward estimates, Mr Kganyago said, with R544.6 billion being provided for in 2007-2008.

And growth in investment across the economy continues to grow. It increased by 11.7 percent in the first nine months of 2006, and as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product it rose to 18.4 percent, keeping investment growth well within double-digit figures.

Growth in non-agricultural sectors of the domestic economy has remained strong, with fast-growing sectors including the construction, financial and transport sectors. If one strips out the agricultural and mining figures from the overall domestic picture, “you will actually find out that the economy is already growing at a rate that is faster than 6 percent which is what we are targeting from 2010”, Mr Kganyago said.

In the meantime, inflation expectations remain within the targeted band of between 3 and 6 per cent throughout the current focus period ending in 2009/10.

Shaun Benton, BuaNews.

North West to implement poverty alleviation strategy

The North West provincial government is to implement its newly drafted poverty alleviation strategy this financial year.

Delivering her fourth State of the Province Address, Premier Edna Molewa confirmed that the strategy, which was drafted last year, would also be incorporated into the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy. “This is largely aimed at benefiting rural community-based projects and also helping emerging cooperatives,” said Premier Molewa.

The strategy forms part of the government’s mission of helping communities become independent, self-sufficient and sustainable. Implementing the poverty alleviation strategy will require the establishment of a Poverty Alleviation Fund, in an effort to improve the quality of life for rural communities.

The fund will assist in creating market access for products and services offered by small, medium and micro enterprises and create business linkages.

Ms Molewa said that in line with the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa, the provincial government had expanded Early Childhood Development services around the province.

To date, 105 new ECD centres, or creches, have been built and 23 more have been approved for subsidisation in line with Expanded Public Works Programme’s mandate. “This program takes a developmental approach and focusses on how to address the needs of children according to specific ages,” said Premier Molewa.

This is part of the programmes outlined by President Thabo Mbeki in his ninth State of the Nation Address in February.

The ECD, Mr Mbeki said, is one of the social sector programmes for this year, whose expansion as part of the EPWP is geared towards improving access to the general education system. Reviewing progress made last year, Ms Molewa commended the major contribution made by the interdepartmental EPWP projects in Modimolla and Modimong towards eradicating poverty and creating jobs.

A total of 7,441 job opportunities have been created by the two projects since they began two years ago. “These two projects bear the necessary fruits by equipping our people with skills whilst giving them some employment,” said the premier.

The R22 million Modimolla agriculture road construction project recently won two Impumelo local awards. “Given the exceptional performance of these two projects we intend to extend similar projects in Tosca area in this 2007/2008 financial year,” said Ms Molewa.

Future projects will include road construction, road maintenance, village access roads, agricultural initiatives, ensuring household food security and building community halls.

Lehuma Ntuane, BuaNews
Civil servants have a crucial role to play in turning the Age of Hope into a time of real achievements for the people of South Africa, writes Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

In any country, the civil servants as the machinery of the state provide the capacity for the state to fulfill its mandate to the citizens. This government has promised “a better life for all”, which implies incremental and tangible improved circumstances at a very personal level for citizens. We have promised that we will accelerate delivery, which implies that we have to adopt a faster delivery model. We have also admitted that we have room to improve on the pace at which we deliver services.

In his 2006 State of the Nation Address, our President outlined the programme of action for the year, for all of us, saying, “Clearly the masses of our people are convinced that our country has entered into its Age of Hope. They believe that the country they love, their only homeland, will not disappoint their expectation of an accelerated advance towards the day when they will be liberated from the suffocating tentacles of the legacy of colonialism and apartheid.”

We are referring to the hope and trust that the people of South Africa have put in us because they know what we can deliver. Their trust and hopes are all pinned upon us. As the Methodists say in one of their popular sung prayers, “Siyakudumisa – Nkosi ngithembele kuwe mandingaze ndidaniswe.”

There is indeed a price to pay in dashed hopes, our legitimacy and the impact of our past successes are minimised. Our people have always seen us as bearers of good news. It is a thread that runs through the complex garment of our country’s history.

When the legions of freedom fighters went through the dark valleys of injus-
tice and oppression, the penetrating light of hope carried them through and showed them the way to the promised land of freedom, which South Africa has become.

Their’s was hope born out of a belief in the justness of their cause, born from the realisation that their power lies in the mobilisation of the collective morality and energies of ordinary South Africans – black and white. There has always been hope and trust in the inherent goodness of most South Africans.

Our history is full of examples of when collective hopes were expressed at times when there were so many odds against us. Statements of hope and unity in action were demonstrated at great cost. People proceeded to work hard to realise these dreams such as the Freedom Charter in 1955, the women in 1956 and the youth in 1976.

It is this same audacity of hope and a yearning for justice which led the legions of our women to march to Pretoria 50 years ago and warned, “You touch a woman, you touch the rock, you will be crushed”. That has enabled so many of our people to continue to put their hopes on us and on you. “Bathembele kithi mabangadaniswa!”

In the bitter winter of June 1976 the same audacious hope propelled the schoolchildren of Soweto to face down the barrel of the gun in pursuit of freedom and human dignity. They hoped that freedom would deliver a new society for them even if they had to die to make their point. We are the State they fought for and we carry their hope and trust.

It is this triumphant march of hope over despair, which – amid predictions of doom and gloom – ushered South Africa into a country alive with possibility in April of 1994. Now our people need to enjoy the fruit, our youth need not die but need to have their genuine and reasonable needs addressed.

All the sacrifices that made 1994 possible now fall on us to turn into real achievements. Hopes in 2006 cannot be like the hopes and sacrifices of 1955, 1956 and 1976 because now the cries are not falling on deaf ears.

It is the hope we refer to when we say our country has entered into the Age of Hope. You are the hope. Our people are not pinning their hopes on market outlook but on a government that cares for them and has the will and a lot of means to help them.

History has entrusted us with a responsibility to ensure that their hope for a better life is realised and we dare not disappoint them in that regard. If we fail them, ithemba labo liyobaphi?

**Unprecedented successes and challenges facing the state**

The senior managers in government have a significant role to play in our attempts to improve the delivery of services. When addressing this very gathering of senior civil servants, Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel, said: “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:"

For we are at a crossroads, either to ascend to be a winning nation and fulfill the aspirations of our people; or if we fail to rise to the challenge, our country will deteriorate into the state of under-development and we will lose our competitive advantage.

Let us remember that every decision committed or omitted helps to contribute to or compromise the attainment of our collective goals. Indeed, we ought to be proud of the strides we have collectively made since the dawn of freedom 12 years ago.

For instance, beneficiaries of social grants increased from 2,6 million in 1994 to 9,7 million in June 2005; housing beneficiaries increased from 325 086 between 1994 and 1998 to 1,6 million beneficiaries in 2005.

In addition, as of March 2004, 42,7 million people out of an estimated 47,1 million population (or 91% of the population) had access to basic water supply infrastructure or a higher level of service such as water in-house or in a yard.

The electrification programme must rate as one of the most significant achievements by this country and unprecedented internationally, as 3,5 million homes have been electrified since 1994. This translates into over 435 000 homes per annum. By May 2005, access to electricity was estimated at 71%.

These are record achievements by any standards, which are unparalleled in the history of this nation and many developing nations in the world. It is these achievements that have given rise to the Age of Hope. People know we can do it. However, those who still wait for their turn are impatient and desperate; for some our delivery, may already be too little too late.

In that regard, universal access to basic services has to be achieved in targeted time. The first decade of freedom was about breaking the back of mass access to services; the second decade has to be about universal access to these critical services.

Universal access must mean all South Africans must access basic predictable and reliable service levels in the key areas we have already committed to: universal access to water, sanitation and energy. This country can close this same gap for all of our people.

Let us remember this is the least we can do to share the benefits of democracy in a growing economy. For people without water, sanitation and reliable energy sources are those who have no one to turn to but us. What use is growth to these people? They need and deserve, “Dignity! Life! Opportunities!” Sanitation is dignity, water is life and energy brings opportunities.

We know that despite many positive changes too many of our people are trapped in gripping poverty, in a prospering society. Our response has been to provide a safety net – through free basic services and grants, which are government’s biggest poverty alleviation initiative although it is not sustainable.
In the context of a developmental state as against a welfare state, we need to find a concrete path to make grant recipients who are healthy and of economically active age convert grants to “starter packs” for self-development, to move on to a guided and enforced path of skills acquisition, self-improvement and self-reliance.

In every family that has been classified as extremely poor we need to see if it is possible to invest in at least one family member who can redefine the socio-economic path of that family through meaningful work or education.

**Developmental state**

The Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA) has to be seen in that context of building a developmental state – a state that is focussed on redistributing the benefits of growth. ASGISA is also about: pace of delivery; size of intervention, i.e. mass delivery as against pilots; taking advantage of low hanging fruits/easy but sustainable victories; efficiency and optimising use of state machinery; and partnerships.

ASGISA is meant to take corrective actions in those areas where we have stopped or slowed down the country from realising higher levels of growth. In a do-nothing scenario and at the pace at which we currently work, and at the level of leakage of value from the state and uneven degrees of dedication to service, the age of hope could be a fantasy.

As the state, our contribution to growth was 15% of the GDP in 2004/05. Can we improve it? Through ASGISA we must practically increase our contribution to GDP and reduce leakage.

We have chosen the interventions that we will make through ASGISA to respond to the identified constraints to shared growth. I must also restate that ASGISA is not about new policies but about implementing existing policies better. ASGISA interventions are in the following areas:

- infrastructure;
- delivery and governance;
- impact of the second economy;
- skills development;
- sectoral development;
- provincial interventions; and
- macro-economics.

We now face challenges of implementing these responses to the binding constraints; as public servants we have to deal with responses that speak to us directly as members of the Senior Management Service and as public representatives:

- on the Macro Economic-Budget Planning and Financial Management (skills);
- on infrastructure – processing of contracts, on time and within the budget and with jobs and the management of consultants (skills);
- delivery and governance – corruption and dedication to service (skills);
- second economy – policy vacuum, dedication to servicing the poor, our interventions are still very limited;
Let us make sure that people who work with us come to work on time, do their work diligently, and treat the public with respect and humility.

- skills development through Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA), South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI) and other means which impact on potential for sustainable job creation; and
- sectoral development and the implications for jobs.

Other challenges which are inhibiting greater success, and that need us in government to be honest about, include: lack of a sense of sense of urgency, a business as usual approach vs acceleration; resistance to integration and co-ordination; disregard for Batho Pele principles in pockets of the service; limited interventions which lack massive impact; greater need to target especially youth and women; and effective monitoring and evaluation and working in agreed timeframes.

If we do not overcome these challenges we become a binding constraint to ASGISA, but I am hopeful that together we will overcome. This government has set a core objective of halving poverty and unemployment by 2014. We can create more opportunities also in the public service, especially for young people. In our internship and learnership programme, we can do more.

Does performance evaluation ask the right questions? As senior managers you have to take performance management and evaluation seriously and ask the right questions so as to intervene and take corrective action or the challenge to halve unemployment and poverty by 2014 will not be achieved – not without effective socio-economic leadership.

We also need effective partnerships between government and other key stakeholders such as organised labour and business. A lot of groundwork has been done for the needed partnerships.

Building a skills reservoir

Further, we must address the skills challenge in society and within the state. While there are many skills requirements, some have been identified as priorities for economic growth and development in the short to medium term.

They include the acquisition of intermediate artisan and technical skills for the infrastructure development programme; the development of information and communications technology (ICT) skills, which is a cross-cutting need in ASGISA but also for the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO); the recruitment, training and employment of unemployed graduates for some of these shortages and training at higher levels; and the skills needed for the sectoral development and the implications for jobs.

In the short to medium term, we also seek high-level, world-class engineering and planning skills for the transport, communications and energy industries; city, urban and regional planning and engineering skills; management capacity in education and health; teachers of mathematics, science, technology and language competence all in the public schooling system.

SMME development as a component of the second economy is a make or break factor for ASGISA, including access to finance and building productive capacity of the SMMEs. How we use preferential procurement and how we pay SMMEs are all sharing issues for us. If we get it right we will be better positioned to challenge the private sector when they underperform.

Senior management in the public service together with educational institutions have an important contribution to make to achieving the goals of ASGISA, for instance contributing critically in guiding and steering skills acquisition in the country; and ensuring that the educational institutions are capable of effectively carrying out their duties in order to promote the national strategic objectives of the country – producing people with the ability to be productive beyond being educated.

While actual growth may not be our biggest challenge, “sharing and accelerating” it is.

I would like to highlight some of the potential high impact government-led initiatives that can make a big difference while upholding a developmental state. They are the Extended Public Works; universal access; human resource development; Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises; national youth service development; support for the growth sectors; and targeted support to women.

We should, however, always keep in mind that there is no substitute for mobilising our people to work together to meet these challenges. The best place to start with this mobilisation is in motivating at our own work places and promoting Batho Pele. Let us make sure that people who work with us come to work on time, do their work diligently, and treat the public with respect and humility.

Conclusion

Let all of us pledge that from now on we will never tolerate the abuse of resources and office for private gain. Our people’s hope must not be shattered. If we do that, we will have taken our collective effort to halve poverty and employment by 2014 a great leap forward in our right as a state.
Poverty alleviation in rural China: Capacity-building and development strategy

Mr Wang Shi-Ting, Councillor of the Chinese Embassy, outlines lessons to be learned from the successful poverty alleviation programme in China.

I introduce this paper by offering its structure so you get an indication of where it is heading. I will start with a general poverty alleviation background and situation in China. This will be followed by a discussion on major policies and measures taken to alleviate poverty, mainly through capacity building. I will then offer a case study which is based on the Agriculture Technology Extension Systems (ATES) in China. I will then move on to a discussion on lessons learned from poverty reduction practices in rural China. The last section of the paper will focus on challenges facing rural poverty alleviation.

**Background to poverty alleviation in China**

In the past China has had the highest poverty stricken population in the world, which in 1975 stood at 250 million. However, in the past two decades China created what can be termed the “anti-poverty miracle” where in 2004 the number people subjected to poverty was reduced to 26 million. During the period from 1978 to 2004 China, therefore, saw its share of the population living under conditions of poverty falling from 30% to 2.8% of the total population.

This is incredible and means that China has achieved the first Millennium Development Goal of halving poverty ahead of the scheduled 2015.

**Major poverty alleviation policies**

There were about four critical stages in policy development with regard to poverty alleviation in China. The first policy was the Structural Reform Promotes Poverty Relief which guided initiatives from 1978 to 1985.
In 1978, the population subjected to conditions of poverty numbered 250 million which was 30.7% of the total population. The main cause for this was that the operation system in agriculture did not suit the needs of the development of productive forces. In 1978, therefore, the reform replaced the collective management system of the people’s commune with the household contract responsibility system which liberated the productive forces. From 1978 to 1985 the number of poor people decreased from 250 million to 125 million.

The second stage involved the passing of the Large-scale Development-orientated Poverty Relief Drive policy which operated from 1986 to 1993. China was marked by uneven development. Moreover, a number of low-income people could not meet their basic needs.

In 1986, important measures were taken including the establishment of special help-the-poor work units, allocating special funds, formulating special favorable policies, reforming traditional relief-type poverty reduction approach and putting forward the development-orientated policy.

As a result of these, numbers of poor people in China dropped from 125 million to 80 million with an annual decrease rate of 6.4 million on average. The number of poor people in rural areas decreased from 14.8% to 8.7%.

The third stage involved tackling key poverty challenges through development-orientated measures during the period 1994 to 2000. It also involved rural China poverty reduction and development of the programme which started in 2001. Its completion is scheduled for 2010.

After the great achievements of the Large-scale Development-oriented Poverty Relief Drive, there were still about 80 million people subjected to conditions of poverty. The third stage programme was therefore designed to assist those people to escape poverty through mobilising the forces of all walks of life in society.

The fourth stage was in 2006, where it was once again an all-round transformation in the area of poverty reduction in China. As a result of the above developments the overall wealth grew rapidly as did the disparity between rural and urban areas.

As a result, the Chinese government is focussing on the new strategy which is to obtain a balanced development between the cities and countryside. Government therefore allocated 13.4 billion Yuan (US$1.675 billion) to poverty reduction in 2006 alone and the amount will increase in subsequent years.

The Agriculture Technology Extension System case study in rural China

The ATES was established in the early 1950s by the Chinese government. Their purpose is to assist peasants to fight poverty through capacity building in rural areas. During the initiative 185 000 extension agencies and over 1.3 million people were employed.

There is an extension agency at each level from central government to the townships. There are also 180 484 villages with technology service teams made up of 700 000 technicians. In addition, there are almost 150 000 specialist associates with five million member households with 2% of all rural households in the countryside.

ATES is managed by the Chinese government. Most of its employees are graduates from professional training schools, colleges and universities that offer agriculture as a major course. It has three funding sources: government, project funds and income generated by enterprises set up by ATES agencies.

The approaches and methods used by ATES can be divided into individual approaches, group methods and mass extension methods. Individual approaches include interviewing peasants, consulting, working with model households.

Group methods include training classes and workshops, experience exchange, on-site meetings, field visits, competitions, technology contracting, project-based extensions, township group meetings and village technology meetings.

Mass extension includes radio and television broadcasts, movies, videos, slide shows, magazines, technical information dissemination, newspapers, books, issuing instruction cards or booklets, advertisements and exhibitions.

Achievements of ATES

In the four years of Northwest China Agricultural Development Project, ATES has introduced and developed almost 100 agricultural technologies suited to arid lands, provided agricultural training to almost 80% of the peasants in the project area and 100 000 farming households received direct benefits.

The use of soil moisture increased by 24%, whilst infestation of arable land by pests decreased by between 20 to 40%.

There are still some other impressive achievements such as the increase of productivity and economic value of agriculture products. Also the income of peasants has been significantly improved.

Lessons from the China experience

The first lesson is that there has to be broad participation on matters regarding rural poverty reduction in China. Government took a leadership role in this initiative through the Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development with a hierarchical structure at national, provincial, prefecture and county government levels.

Poverty alleviation is therefore an important part of the overall economic and social strategies of different levels of government. This has resulted in increased investment in poverty alleviation initiatives. For example, between 1986 and 2004 total budget support to poverty alleviation reached 112.6 billion Yuan.

There also has to be social participa-
tion and international cooperation. For example, in China 15 eastern provinces and cities support 11 poor provinces in the west. Furthermore, 116 national organ and 156 state firms support 481 key poor counties.

There are projects that have become very famous like the Glorious Enterprises Programme, Hope Project, Happiness Project and the Women-oriented Poverty Alleviation Programme.

The third lesson is that our poverty alleviation initiative has encouraged self-reliance and orientation towards economic development. We instilled this idea in order to overcome the “wait, depend on and ask” phenomenon. We therefore encourage and establish a spirit of self-reliance and hard work.

To cement this, the state council certified 30 state-level training bases to help the labour from agriculture to non-agriculture sectors. As a result, more than 90% of peasants trained so far have found non-agriculture employment.

The fourth lesson is that there has to be an integrated development approach towards capacity building. Poverty alleviation has to be integrated with development of science, education, health and culture to improve the capability of the poor.

Nine-year compulsory education has to be universalised and illiteracy has to be eradicated among middle-aged and young people.

The fifth lesson is that in order to reduce poverty faster, you need to begin with agricultural reforms. The sixth lesson is that science and technology should be sent directly to the rural poor. One village should at least have college graduates and youth volunteers to serve in rural education which is aimed at promoting knowledge levels in rural areas and enhancing their self-reliance and self-development capabilities.

**Conclusion**

The experience and practice of poverty alleviation through capacity building in rural China conforms to the special conditions of China. The theory of Chinese experience perhaps could be learned by other countries. However, it is not a good idea to simply copy the Chinese model. China would like to share the experience with any other countries to fight against poverty and would like to make a contribution in assisting other developing countries, especially African friends, to realise the Millennium Development Goals.

We believe that the Summit of China-Africa will strengthen the Sino-Africa relations, especially in the areas of poverty alleviation.
Professor Richard M Levin: Director-General, Department of Public Service and Administration, said the SMS conference was as an opportunity to build broader understanding among the SMS of the organisational capacity needs of the developmental state.

I wish to focus on some of the challenges facing our senior management service in the current epoch. Particular emphasis will be placed on the capacity challenges facing the SMS to manage the delivery of quality services to the public and the leadership qualities required to achieve this.

We also need to ensure that we are able to meet the capacity requirements for the implementation of the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGISA).

The role of the Senior Management Services

The SMS was created six years ago in response to the challenges facing the public service. The creation of the SMS was a huge milestone in the history of our public service which was intended in particular to solve the problem of attracting and retaining effective leaders.

There is no question about the important role of SMS members as champions of service delivery who must ensure effi-
cient implementation of government’s programme of action.

Nevertheless, in spite of the tremendous progress that has been made over the years there are still a number of challenges that confront our Senior Management Service. Some of these include:

- Lack of relevant skills for the post in which one is incumbent. (For example, a manager with a professional degree but in a largely administrative job, which has no or limited links with their professional skills and competence. This reflects a problem of an absence of a professional service, which forces professionals to become managers in order to secure career progression. In many cases we lose a professional and gain a poor manager.)
- Lack of skills to recruit and select proper personnel.
- Lack of proper training and development to enhance performance. Once the manager is in the position often they don’t undertake training to further sharpen their skills. Indeed the question of management development is far from settled and hopefully will be discussed extensively during the course of this conference.
- Non-compliance with policy. Non-adherence to performance agreements and proper utilisation of performance management tools to enhance performance in the workplace.

The SMS conference offers the opportunity to focus our attention on important challenges that we face and exchange some lessons and good practice on how to deal with these challenges. It also offers an important platform to reaffirm our role in meeting government objectives; the implementation of which rests squarely on us as senior managers.

It also offers us the opportunity as public service leaders to look at ourselves critically and ask whether we have the necessary leadership skills and capacity to drive the public service towards attaining the goals of the developmental state.

Writing in 1978, Burns distinguished between transactional and transformational leadership. He argued that transactional leadership is characterised by interactions where valued things are exchanged without any mutual pursuit of a higher goal. In contrast, transformational leadership is characterised by engagements where “leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of understanding and morality”. Bass and Avolio argued in 1994 that transformational leaders achieve superior results through:

- being role models for their followers;
- motivating and inspiring followers by providing meaning and challenge to their work;
- stimulating intellect by instilling innovation and creativity; and
- focusing on individual needs for achievement and growth.

One of the major aims of the SMS conferences must be to develop transformational and inspired leadership that is able to innovate and think “out of the box” in order to lead the delivery of
quality services that will contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the developmental state.

This year’s conference deals with the need to enhance capacity in order to strengthen and accelerate service delivery. This happens against the backdrop of increasing pressure to improve government services and modernise our operations.

This conference therefore should serve as an opportunity to build broader understanding among the SMS of the organisational capacity needs of the developmental state. It should also lead to a direct improvement in government’s capacity to deliver on its objectives.

**Building capacity for accelerated service delivery**

There is acknowledgement that the capacity of the public service to deliver on its objectives is seriously underdeveloped and constrained by a range of factors including: human resource management, planning and development, widespread gaps in quality and relevance of training and institutions, poor linkages and partnerships between government and training providers and an inadequate focus on norms, values attitudes and orientation of public officials.

Addressing the issue of training in the public service in March 2006, President Mbeki said, “In the coming year, the Governance and Administration cluster will focus on addressing those factors that are militating against successful skills formation and elimination of skills shortages in the public sector. Training is very often of doubtful relevance, rarely focused on carry-through impact, rarely accompanied by post-course support and implementation; and often facilitated or taught by people who have a very limited understanding of the public sector.”

Building effective implementation requires an appropriate and sensitive public sector Human Resource and Development strategy. This should refine and accelerate implementation of government’s comprehensive, credible and outcomes-focused programme for capacity development within the framework of the public sector HRD strategy.

It should also improve the coherence, co-ordination and efficacy of all government’s policies, institutions and mechanisms involved in training and capacity development of the public sector.

**Clearly, if we want to deliver efficiently and effectively we need to manage our organisational structures more rigorously and continue to ensure maximum alignment between structures, people and development goals**

While the emphasis in building capacity is largely focused on skills development, we need to remember that capacity is not only about skills. There are other key factors that can contribute positively to the dream of a more effective public service.

One of these factors is putting in place sound regulatory frameworks that ensure stability and efficiency in the public service without creating unnecessary red tape and service process blockages.

For example, one of our original public service reforms involved the decentralisation of the HR framework as articulated in the White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997. This move was seen as a progressive step away from the centralised control of the apartheid state and was intended to empower managers to take the critical decisions that would lead to efficiency and effectiveness by unlocking rule-bound bureaucratic culture we inherited.

However, with the benefit of hindsight we discovered that decentralisation in, for example, determining sectoral job grading results in discrepancies and unnecessary internal competition as well as inconsistencies in salary determination for similar jobs so that the principle of “equal pay for equal work” is undermined.

These problems occurred not only due to lack of proper regulatory framework but also due to the absence of enforcement tools or punitive measures for non-compliance.

The absence of proper norms and standards across the public service which has arisen out of the decentralised Human Resource Management function, including a decentralised job grading system, has led to problems. For example, it has promoted job-hopping and internal competition between departments and provinces in the recruitment and retention of staff performing the same job functions.

The creation of and adherence to norms and standards in areas like the job grading system will undoubtedly add to the stabilisation of the public service and enhance our capacity to deliver.

The regulatory framework is often cited as a reason for slow service delivery, as red tape and bureaucracy slow down implementation processes. Supply chain management has been identified as a delaying factor in the implementation framework, either because the regulations themselves are not fully understood, or because they are in themselves
too cumbersome.

Environmental Impact Assessments were also seen as slowing down and compromising local economic development projects and processes, but the Department of Environment and Tourism has streamlined the regulations in order to speed up development processes.

Another constraint on our capacity to deliver lies in inappropriate organisational structures. Structures are often created on the basis of the need to perform certain functions without sufficient attention being paid to service delivery processes. Many departments have not designed and documented their service delivery models, which should inform their organisational structures.

In addition to this, organisational structures are not well maintained or rigorously managed. Vacancies arise, new posts are created without the abolition of old posts and departments end up having numerous so-called unfunded vacancies. Personnel budgets are fully expended, but the Auditor General’s reports identify high vacancy levels arising out of these so-called unfunded vacancies.

Clearly, if we want to deliver efficiently and effectively we need to manage our organisational structures more rigorously and continue to ensure maximum alignment between structures, people and development goals.

Another important factor that can constrain or enhance the capacity of the state to deliver is integration and co-ordination. The fragmentation of service processes has long been recognised as an impediment to effective and efficient service delivery. Hence government has seen the need to develop Multi-purpose Community Centres (MPCCs) in order to speed up development processes.

We also need to create cooperative and inter-organisational networks that will improve service delivery.

The Single Public Service initiative is aimed at improving service integration through a comprehensive access strategy that aims at bringing service closer to the people in a coordinated way through back and front office coordination. We need to ensure that we make optimal use of technologies in order to accelerate the delivery of services to our people.

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Another important factor that can constrain or enhance the capacity of the state to deliver is integration and co-ordination. The fragmentation of service processes has long been recognised as an impediment to effective and efficient service delivery. Hence government has seen the need to develop Multi-purpose Community Centres (MPCCs) in order to speed up development processes.

Conclusion

There is an old African proverb which says: “When the sun comes up, the gazelle wakes up knowing that it must outrun the fastest lion or it will be eaten. The lion knows that it must outrun the slowest gazelle or it will starve to death. So it doesn’t matter if you are a gazelle or a lion when the sun comes up, you had better be running.”

This proverb might be used to describe the public service. The increased demand for efficiency and the swift delivery of services to our people demands that as senior managers every day “when the sun comes up we had better be running”.

Even though acquiring speed in the context of the public service is not as straightforward as the Serengeti, the goals we set for ourselves in terms of meeting government objectives require us to move faster.

We also need to take responsibility as leaders of the public service for embracing a transformational culture that encourages innovation and motivates workers. Above all, we need to remember who it is that we serve.

One of our key strategic objectives for the decade is to halve unemployment and poverty by 2014. As managers and leaders in the public service we are uniquely placed to make this ideal a reality.

As public service leaders, we need to learn to serve with pride and humility. In the last six years we have travelled a long way trying to change and improve the way we do our work and the way we conduct ourselves when carrying out our duties. The challenge we are facing now is to work better and faster so that we can succeed in developing our country. We should work with pride, humility and honesty.

Endnotes:
On planning and strategies

The case of eThekweni Municipality

I have divided this paper into two sections. The first section deals with the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). As municipalities, our challenge is to fit our IDPs into provincial and national priorities. The second section will touch on some of the strategic issues that are facing us in our municipality.

Long term development framework

The work that we have been doing as senior managers in our city is really planning within our terms of office. We have five-year contracts, so we say we have a five-year plan and we build that plan around ourselves. This is a wrong way to do planning.

What we have been doing over the last 18 months are studies into long-term issues.

We posed the question: What will the city be dealing with in the year 2100? And then from that point we work backwards and try to understand how we deal with the big picture issues. Certainly in 2100 there will be three or four issues, that if we do not start addressing them now, a city manager in 2100 will struggle.

The first of these issues is the issue of food security. This is because there is an increasing number of people in our country and southern Africa who do not have enough food.

The second issue is clearly around climate change. We are seeing that happening already. Rain patterns are going to be much more intense in our city with other parts of the country getting dry which means we will have more people coming to the eThekweni as well as one or two other cities in our country.
The whole urban infrastructure has to change because of peak flows. Those peak flows will change dramatically as we get intensive rainfall over shorter periods and much wetter climates in the city. The rise in the sea level is going to impact in the next 60 to 70 years along our coastline.

The third issue has to do with the growing gap between the rich and the poor. This is a worldwide trend. Those of us who have jobs are lucky enough to have jobs. We know that there are a number of people outside of that regular job.

The fourth dimension of the 2100 perspective is the issue of energy. We live in a world where almost 60% of the energy source comes from oil. In the next few years we have got to shift to energy systems that are not dependant on oil.

These four issues, in the big picture, are matters that we have to begin dealing with now. We have started saying that our service delivery programmes must be thinking about the issue of food security, climate change, the growing gap between the rich and poor, and the issue of energy. We have therefore realised that there are eight issues that we must confront.

**Municipal strategic issues to be confronted**

The first issue is what we see as the key programme of sustainability. Our approach to housing development over the last 10 years on the one hand has been very successful (more than a million houses built) but on the other hand it has been unsuccessful because we have conflicts at a public transport level. Taxis put up prices because housing is located too far away from the city, violence erupts and the communities turn around to the city and say we want rail, buses and we do not want taxis in our neighbourhood.

So a densification strategy is very important. For sustainability, we also need to have a bulk infrastructure plan. Unless we deal with that densification, public transport and bulk infrastructures holistically, we will not have a sustainable city.

In our city we have identified about 16 areas including the Central Business District where we are saying anything from 200 000 to 300 000 households must be housed in dense settlements in inner-city areas.

Of course conflict will emerge because there will be more black and poor people living places such as Umhlanga.
in Umhlanga as servants, but now none of them live there anymore. We have to start creating, in such neighbourhoods, much more integrated housing. We have identified about 16 parts of the city where we have to densify.

The second strategy is the economic strategy where we are focusing on six areas. First, the port of eThekwini contributes 63% of the imports and exports coming into southern Africa. So it is hugely important to the southern African economy.

But there are all sorts of conflicts around it. Trucks are always found in the wrong places of our city. So how do we get a better port/city plan going?

The second area is the promotion of an eco-friendly tourism strategy. How do we make sure that our tourism is ecologically sustainable, and not the kind of tourism that we promote today which is unsustainable?

Thirdly, the 2012 soccer World Cup is the biggest event Africa will have within our lifetime. About 30 to 40 billion people will be watching South Africa for six weeks in three years’ time. It is the biggest thing that all of us will be faced with delivering on.

In KwaZulu-Natal, about R10 billion additional public funds will be spent on infrastructure because of the World Cup. This raises the whole level of what we have to do and we need service delivery plans around that.

The fourth strategy is around industrial land which is hugely important. eThekwini is one of the few cities in the country where manufacturing has increased in employment terms over the past 10 years. This has been declining in other parts of the country. Since we do not have enough industrial land available, we need to develop strategies to deal with this.

The fifth strategy focuses on the issue of renewable energies. How do we shift people from reliance on oil to a reliance on other forms of energy?

The last strategy under the economic strategy is the logistics plans. The 2010 World Cup will expose South Africa to millions of people who will come to the country during and after the event. This needs a lot of infrastructure development in the city, in stadiums, heritage parks, heroes’ acres, all will be part of the up-scaling of public transport, ports facilities, ICT development in and around the city.

The third strategy is about improving living environments. This includes street naming which gives people an identity. Today many of our former township areas are still named in the old apartheid system. This will also assist us in Batho Pele when we know where people in our city live.

How do we make sure that our tourism is ecologically sustainable, and not the kind of tourism that we promote today which is unsustainable?

It also includes the greening strategy where we want to make sure that we have a city that is much greener. We also have a housing strategy where we need at least another 220 000 houses to be built for the true poor, let alone the young professionals who are earning between R3 500 and R10 000 a month where there is no housing stock available for them. The living environments strategy also includes backlogs strategy.

Safety and health is the fourth of these strategies. We deal with HIV and Aids and TB in particular which have a huge impact on our citizens. We are also keen on how we can use CCTV, not to catch criminals, but to manage our city in a better way by using them, for example, to identify if lights are going out and when municipal workers are not working.

Lastly, disaster management is a critical part of what we do in all of our cities.

The fifth strategy involves empowering citizens. We have set three critical focal points in order to empower our citizens.

The first is to create what we call a “learning city”. Most of our relationships now are geared towards skills development. It is also about turning the city into a centre of learning. On a daily basis we have delegates coming from cities and countries around the world who talk to us about a range of issues and experiences.

Most important here is how we bridge the digital divide. In our city, for example, we want poor people to have access to Internet connections. This will improve the skills base.

The sixth issue is around governance and there are two critical areas to focus on here. They include building a municipal court so that we start having a different kind of punitive system in our country so that it is not about jailing petty offenders, but getting corrective behaviour going.

The governance strategy also includes the creation of systems to deal with maladministration and corruption. This is because we know that this continues. We need to be sure that we are monitoring what is happening.

The seventh is the finance strategy. This includes the valuation of properties and dealing with what is called “green procurement”. We are much more conscious of procuring in a way that does not destroy the environment.

Conclusion

Clearly there is still a long way to go for eThekwini. However, we hope that with the plans and strategies that we have put in place we will be able to confront issues that are facing us and make sure that, come 2100, eThekwini will be in a position to effectively deal with challenges that will emerge during this period. This said, the present is also very important.
In India they have a very large public service, but have a particular category of the public service called the Covenanted Public Servants. It is an elite group, more like the Senior Management Services (SMS). In fact you have to write an examination in order to become a Covenanted Public Servant.

The notion of “covenanted” is very important as most of us know the term from a religious sense of a real, solid compact with a higher authority in some way. The key question in the examination to become a member of the Covenanted Public Service is simply, “Do you enjoy the exercise of power?” If you answer yes to this question, then you are out of contention. They said, “We don’t want people who enjoy the exercise of power. We want people who exercise power because of obligation, duty and sacrifices.”

It is an extraordinary thing and I am not sure if we want to go that route in South Africa. With this as an introduction, we need to ask, what is the nature of our senior management? Who are we serving and how are we doing it? We need to ask ourselves if we do enjoy the exercise of power, and if we do, whether we are in the right place in our SMS.

Targeting goals under our control

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are important targets we have set and agreed to. We should note that MDGs can mean different things to different people and are certainly open to interpretation. I am therefore not sure that they provide us with the focus they need at this stage as a country.

One of the goals is halving poverty. This usually triggers debates about poverty, its meaning etc. How will we measure if we have halved poverty? It is a very difficult thing to try to do.

It is a lesson that we learned from managing the Human Resources Development Strategy (HRDS) for the country which was launched in 2003. In that HRDS we set two overarching
goals – to improve the Human Development Index (HDI) and to strive to decrease the Gross Domestic coefficient within South Africa which is particularly high. The difficulty of course is that these two things are dependant on a range of variables. Many of these variables are not necessarily under our control.

As a result, in a particular year we thought we had made some advances – we anticipated that South Africa’s ranking in the HDI would improve dramatically, but were disappointed. This was because although there were incredible gains that we had made, there were other factors such as the prevalence of HIV and Aids in the country which drew us down a couple of positions in that HDI.

We realised then that setting high targets which are in a sense not in your own hands to either achieve or not achieve is a good thing but it is not sufficient. We recognise this and the review of the HRDS is now focused on targeted goals where we can make a difference towards achieving or not achieving, and can be held accountable when those goals are measured.

What I want to do now is pick up two phrases from the title of this paper and discuss them. The first one is the phrase “moving towards” and the issue of skills shortage which is the responsibility of the Department of Education in particular.

**Unpacking “moving towards”**

The issue of “moving forward” is one that we acknowledge as a critical issue in all our planning processes. We need to be able to measure whether or not we are moving forward and the pace involved. We do need to have focus, an idea of where we want to go and as I said the MDGs keep us pointed in the right direction. That is a good starting point, but certainly not enough.

The MDGs give us direction and make us know where we are going, but we also need a much more systematic approach in how we move towards the targeted goals rather than leaving it to 2015.

Over the last 10 years we as government have learnt a lot about strategic planning and I believe we need to use these lessons to ensure that we continue with that movement in the right direction using mechanisms such as Programmes of Action, government-wide monitoring and evaluation system as well as our own departmental monitoring and evaluation exercises.

At the Department of Education we are doing our work with the MDGs in mind. However, we are doing so at a very detailed sector level. In our sector we had the advantage of the declarations and commitments that were made in Dakar in the year 2000. This committed us to a number of specific items within education that would contribute towards the achievement of the MDGs which included universal primary education and gender parity in schools.

On most of these issues South Africa has advanced indeed. We certainly have universal primary enrolment. We also have 85% enrolment in our secondary schools and gender parity is addressed. These are helping us to translate the big vision of the MDGs into something specific.

In a quantitative sense we have been able to address many of the issues that are confronting us. However, there is a shift, not just here in South Africa but universally in the education domain, to look at issues of quality.

Critical here is what is the quality of the schooling system? What we need is a different understanding of how we can achieve these goals.

So let us not just look at the numbers of enrolments, the participation of females in schools, but let us examine what is happening within these schools – the issue of skills development more specifically.

**Confronting the issue of skills development**

In the area of skills development there are also very important interpretive, qualitative and quality issues around the understanding of what this issue is all about. It is particularly relevant to understand quality not only in terms of standards, but also relevance.

A critical question here is what is the context in which such skills are being developed and how relevant are they in addressing that particular context?

We need to deliberate on this because this thing called skills shortage is a very popular term at the moment with everyone throwing it around every time there is a constraint anywhere. The worrying thing is that it has become too easy to understand skills shortage in a very narrow sense.

People in the streets tend to think of skills shortage as a shortage of, for example, welders, electricians, plumbers, etc. If you ask senior managers in the public service, they will tell you about the shortage of skilled managers, skilled administrators, and even the need for skilled typists.

This starts to broaden our understanding of this thing called a skills shortage because we start to understand that it covers the entire scope of the employment sector.

More recently, the DoE has been talking to big business and trying to understand what they see as skills shortage. We have also had the opportunity at the President’s International Advisory Committee on ICTs to talk to international businesses about their understanding of the issue of skills shortage.

One common thread that comes through all these consultations is an emphasis on fundamentals. There are two things that are needed from an employee: good communication skills and good problem solving skills.

If an employee has these two fundamental skills, they say, you do not have to teach them the rest – laying a brick, typing, even managing.

I just want to share a brief vignette about bricklayers in South Africa. The world average for laying bricks is about 2000 bricks a day. In South Africa the national average is about 500 bricks a day. Clearly there is a productivity problem.
There are, however, some bricklayers who are laying 2 000 bricks a day. The bricklaying industry decided to establish what makes someone lay 2 000 bricks as opposed to 500. The assumption was the ones that do more are the ones that had been laying bricks for a number of years and have gained enough experience.

The results of this investigation were shocking. They showed that the only thing that made the difference was the level of education. The bricklayer with a matric level is likely to lay more bricks than the one who does not have this level of education. The issue here had nothing to do with bricklaying, but problem solving.

It is a very important story that helps us to understand that the only skills South Africa needs is more and better education.

This is not a new idea. If you recall the HRDS conceptualisation was that human resource development is dependant on the foundational stages of education. In any house if the foundation is not solid, the house simply will not stand.

As a result the DoE paid attention to early childhood development programmes. I am happy to say that 70% of our five-year-olds are attending Grade R. All the international evidence states that this has enormous benefits. As government we have developed a plan for integrated childhood development where we want to ensure that children in age nought to four are getting mental stimulation, physical activity etc.

That is what they need in order to develop later in life. It might seem low on skills development, but there is where the actual skills development takes place particularly the conceptual and language skills.

Schools, of course, continue this particular process through a lot of programmes that we are trying to get schools into. One of the big programmes is the Improvement and Development Strategy which is an affirmative programme for schools. It is an investment into the quality levers in our schools. It focusses on things that make a difference to quality. It might include a photocopier, administrative staff, secretary – it is different things in different schools that make that difference.

We want to work with schools in order to establish what things they need in order to make that difference.

The crucial difference that we have learnt is that it is not about putting money into schools, but also demanding something back from schools. It is a contract with schools where we offer resources but demand improved performance in return. We are building a notion of accountability that goes hand in hand with resources that we provide.

The most dramatic area that highlights the whole question of the narrow skills notion versus the bigger fundamentals notion is in our Further Education and Training (FET) sector, in grades 10 to 11 in schools as well as our FET colleges.

In schools we have introduced the new Curriculum Statement which is much tougher with two crucial elements in it. The first one is that Maths Literacy is a compulsory subject. Every child emerging from the schooling system by 2008 will have either Maths or Maths Literacy as a compulsory subject.

Maths Literacy is about taking simple Maths and applying it to complex human situations and that is a difficult process.

The other compulsory subject is Life Orientation which takes the form of career guidance. So every learner in these grades is coming out with a full package of two languages, Maths or Maths Literacy and a good sense of the market and career guidance.

Beyond this there are three other subjects which are not compulsory. This is to ensure children are not already starting to specialise into narrow directions but are keeping a broad notion of the fundamentals at this stage.

We have done the same thing in our FET colleges which involve a huge investment. We have developed 13 scarce skills programmes. Colleges will select from a number of these programmes.

Each of the programmes has a set of fundamentals which are non-negotiable. Even if a student is in construction, he/she must learn Maths and language.

We have invested very heavily in the targeted recapitalisation of FET colleges. I am happy to say that the private sector has come to the party. Our goal for these colleges is that we move from the current involvement of 400 000 up to one million students.

We also want colleges to operate at night and not just during the day. If they can do this, they will be able to absorb one million students.

Higher education is part of the skills development. The DoE has allocated R48 million to engineering faculties in four institutions. These are faculties that have been chosen precisely they are producing black and women engineers.

**Conclusion**

What I have been discussing is certainly applicable to other sectors in government. I used the DoE here just as an example. What we can possibly say is three things. Each of the initiatives I have spoken about in the DoE is first backed by a plan which was not there 10 years ago.

Secondly, these initiatives with Heads of Department are supported by institutions that are much stronger than they were 10 years ago. Institutionally, our capacity assessment has demonstrated that we have made significant progress in building the institutions of state that conduct these initiatives.

Lastly, I believe we have built a much stronger social consensus about what needs to be done in this country. We were heavily contested as government in the last 10 years. Today, the focus on jobs and poverty are things that the population as a whole is supporting us on.

I therefore believe that the conditions are a lot more favourable for us to move forward towards the achievement of the MDGs in 2015 and also our own goals of growing the economy and sharing the benefits of this growth throughout the country.
Repositioning the government machinery for poverty alleviation and unemployment relief

I want to start this paper by indicating the important role of the public service in the broader economy. In South Africa, the public service, including parastals, contributes 40% to our economy. If we want to economically compete with other countries, the public service has to contribute 40% to our competitiveness.

What if the economy wants to grow and the 40% does not play its part? This will cause problems for the economy. It is very important to see the role of the public service in this context. If the public sector fails to play its part, the private sector gets over-stretched and has to do more.

Growing the economy is a collective challenge that we all have to deal with and play our parts effectively by delivering the necessary services to our citizens so that we can attract foreign investment and effectively compete with other countries.

There are two major strategic challenges facing governments: getting fiscal “allocative efficiency” right and ensuring operational efficiency in public service delivery. In terms of allocative efficiency, we are close to the best countries. For example, we have a social development share which is at around 36%. We also have protection services which remain high at 29% in 2005 compared to 37% in 2004.

Furthermore, economic services and infrastructure get the residual. South Africa, indeed, has become a destination for foreign investment as a result of positive macro-policies which have resulted in such allocations.

What is important to note is that these allocations indicate that the allocative efficiency is pro-poor, hence funds to alleviate poverty are available – so where does the problem lie as poverty still persists?

Despite the successes at macro level, South Africa remains trapped in various poverty. These include the
poverty of health, poverty of education, poverty of safety, poverty of jobs, poverty of public administration, and poverty of local governance.

Unemployment remains inextricably linked to the skills profile and the education system. Notably, none of these traps can self-correct. All require political will, funding, effective systems, and experienced management. The latter two have been missing and continue to be a problem.

Our major strategic challenge remains operational efficiency. I will develop this paper around this challenge. I therefore want to look at some critical examples and remaining fault-lines.

**Some critical examples and remaining fault-lines**

One of the areas of concern is safety and security, which to me is a prerequisite for poverty alleviation. Currently the police are not as effective as they should be in dealing with issues of safety and security. This is because basic elements of policing are missing.

This is further compounded by the fact that the general public’s confidence in the policing system is lacking. There has been too much talk and too little action with regard to microeconomic foundations of combating crime as it affects the ordinary citizens.

We need to ensure that the culture of violence does not become the norm like in Brazil or Latin America in general.

The other area of concern is local governance. Our local government remains our weakest link. We are witnessing an inadequate infrastructure. Generally our cities have a tired and decaying infrastructure with low operational efficiency. This deprives the urban poor access to areas of business activities with income generating prospects.

Of major concern is that the country’s global competitiveness is bound to suffer if our cities are not rescued soon. Maybe more depressing is the fact that the poor and unemployed bear the brunt of our urban malfunctioning.

**Possible interventions and concluding remarks**

Generally, the policy framework is fine. Only implementation remains a challenge. Funds are available to meet social needs, but the problem lies with institutional efficiency in delivering such services.

I must also state that some constraints in service delivery cannot be overcome in the short term, as skill acquisition and management efficiency may take time. Looking back, much has been achieved, but more still needs to be done to see a remarkable change in employment and poverty situation.

The business of service delivery is not run like a business. It is managed more like a policy process, or public administration. This needs to be addressed urgently. Furthermore, the management structures in government departments lack consistency and operational focus. Policy and delivery functions need to be separated, with a rising focus on delivery.

In order to achieve this, criteria for key position selection should emphasise experience in service delivery. Coupling with this, performance emphasis should shift to delivery capability rather than administration skills, process management skills, policy and networking.

We need to be careful that the culture of public service inefficiency does not become the norm. Inefficiency should be discouraged whenever it manifests itself. Over the past decade, focus on macro-policy, and policy modernisation have taken attention away from operational efficiency.

We also need a sustained drive to re-focus government departments on “quality service delivery”. At the same time, we need to re-focus the Auditor General’s office to place emphasis on “non-financial performance” as much as it does on financial indicators.
Part of this paper is to try and get us to come up with the definition of the public service. We have largely relied on the Max Weberian theory from the aspect of state administration in relation to what constitutes a bureaucracy which is extremely Eurocentric.

For an African context within the developmental state we need to start redefining what kind of issues we are dealing with within the South African and African context. How can we borrow best practices within the Weberian context? And how can we redefine organically our own brand of leadership within our development context?

**Background**

Professionalism is subjective because our socialisation will determine what that professionalism is all about. We all come from a very textured history; have our own value systems, cultures and norms. As a result, the way in which we have been schooled affects us – and very few were schooled to become leaders and managers. This is in the context of our current bureaucracy.

Post-1994 we have relied on how organically we have evolved as those particular managers and leaders. It is time that we look back and examine our mistakes in relation to that type of leadership and find out if there is something that we are missing with regard to our recruitment process, how we deal with promotions, and how we validate certain types of leadership.

This might lead to other organisations getting dysfunctional. We need to examine how many of our departments and
units that we are in charge of are showing signs of dysfunctionality because of some sort of dysfunctional group effect in that particular organisation?

One thing I want us to start looking at which we have not been looking at carefully in the public service, is that all organisations have got life cycles. These life cycles need different types of managers.

Big companies such as IBM which have a policy that as a manager you will not spend more than 1 000 days (equivalent to three working years) in a management position because thereafter you stop adding value, become dysfunctional and might actually start being a problem when you have not taken care of your own growth process or believe that the organisation is not giving you the opportunity to grow.

As human beings we all have our own developmental cycles. As managers we need to be in touch with our developmental cycles. If we have not dealt with this, we can actually be damagers rather than managers in the positions that we are in, in a sense that we have not dealt with our own ghosts.

**Life cycle phases need a different skills set**

In terms of the life cycles analogy that I want to use, which I do not attribute to anybody because it was something that organically developed over the years in organisations that I was in, you can actually see organisations that are in the embryonic phase, developmental phase, mature phase and those that are in declining phase.

You then start to realise that we need different types of leaders for different types of phases that your organisation is in. Hence you need to have clear indicators that determine the phase in which the organisation is in.

For example, in the embryonic phase you need managers that are going to dirty their hands by going into interventions and working on the ashes which are a result of the previous decline phase.

Embryonic phase is also suitable for planners, architects and structural engineers. These managers, however, might not be the right people to lead the organisation during its developmental stage.

In the developmental phase, we are looking for builders that are going to interpret the plan. Here you need specialists as plumbers and electricians, to continue with the analogy. They will make sure that the building is built according to specification and are able to determine what those specifications are.

In the mature phase, you want a building that is going to last for 100 years for our generation and the next generation. The phase needs maintenance managers. These maintenance managers, unfortunately, somewhere in their previous life cycles should have been a planner and builder, in order to understand what it means to be a maintenance manager.

It will help the manager in making particular decisions that are going to assist in terms of maintaining the building.

In the decline phase managers need a different type of skill. You need a manager who is an assessor or evaluator. You also need a quantity surveyor that is going to assist you in making competent decisions with regard to that particular building, whether it needs to be demolished.

If you look at this analogy for your own organisation it is extremely important because there is a specific type of leadership skill that is needed to be able to make those competent decisions in terms of changing organisations and maintaining them within specific phases in their life cycle.

**Organisational types within bureaucracies**

Generally, there are three types of categories in organisations. There are managers that love to belong to the organisation. They enjoy being part of that organisation. You do not see them or hear them. They have been with the organisation for years.

There are also managers who are achievers. They are the ones who do the dirty work. They are always the ones who are part of task teams and always give direction without knowing it.

There are also managers who are power-mongers. These are hugely responsible for the dysfunctionality of our organisations. The power-mongers are further divided into three categories. There are those who have the acumen and disposition to carry through the position of power with a mandate and generally know what the agenda of government is and deliver on that.

Then there is a second category within the power-mongers which is able to appropriate the discourse and get promoted along the way. This does not necessarily assist in the leadership and management because if managers have not gone through the developmental cycle in terms of understanding the rules of management, then there will be risks in the perpetuation of the dysfunctional group thing within the management echelon of the organisation.

The last group of power-mongers are the sociopaths who, unfortunately, want to have that position because they enjoy exercising power just for the need to exercise it. Such individuals can lead an organisation into dysfunctionality because individuals will identify with the dysfunctional group thing just in order to survive.

The problem is that smart people will leave the organisation because of this dysfunctionality.

**Understanding leadership**

Let us go back to the generic understanding of leadership, particularly the word “leading”. What is leading? Leading is a process of influencing people so that they will remain contributing and productive employees for the organisation and group goals and objectives.

Effective managers draw from various theories and experiences in their efforts to harmonise individual and organisational objectives, which is the key to leading. Go to the people, learn...
Issues

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from them, value them, start with what they know, and build on what they have.

But, of the best leaders, when the work is done, and the task is accomplished, the people will say “we did it ourselves because we have been empowered”.

This particular generic definition of leading assists in getting us to understand our role in terms of defining the leadership that we are moving towards. The role of leading is part of a manager’s generic function, parallel to planning, controlling and organising.

Within that leading role, you are actually directing processes and influencing task-related activities of group members. You also have the prerogative to exercise legitimate power. It involves other people, mainly the subordinates.

But, what makes a good leader? It is the ability to use power effectively and in a responsible manner. It is the ability to comprehend that human beings have differing motivation forces at different times and in different situations.

The leader must have the ability to inspire people. The leader must act in a manner that will develop a climate that is conducive to responding to and arousing motivations.

There are a range of influences on effective leadership. These include the superior’s expectations and behaviour; leader’s personality, past experiences, and expectations; organisational culture and policies; subordinate’s characteristics, expectations and behaviour; task requirements; and peers’ expectations and behaviour.

There is a need to balance elements of leadership. These elements include authority which is the right to do something; power which is the ability to do something; responsibility which is the obligation to do something; and accountability which requires a person to answer for his/her actions. All this is within the context of empowerment and this has to be balanced.

If you look at managerial skills from the lower level in the organisation right up to the top level, you find that the need for technical skills gets less. The need for interpersonal skills and intergroup skills become more necessary.

At the lower levels intra-group skills are more in demand as one is engaging within the sub-directorate. With conceptual abilities – meaning the ability to cope with uncertainty, contingency views and strategic decisions – their amount of freedom that you are giving to subordinates? This determines whether you are going towards a subordinates-centred leadership or management-centred leadership.

Will you rely on your power and influence (which is not sufficient)? You need to be clear on how you will effect the balance in terms of the degree of freedom that you are giving versus the use of authority that you have.

Challenges of leadership

Leadership style is normally according to organisational life cycle. You have to diagnose the leadership style according to the lifestyle of the organisation. This is because the focus cannot be on personalities, it has to be on principles that you are looking for in relation to different roles for particular positions.

As a result, ethically challenged leaders do not deal with principles. They cannot understand others’ values and cultures. They undermine others and have their own ghosts to exorcise.

You have to start by knowing yourself. You cannot manage other people if you cannot manage yourself. There also has to be a level of appropriateness which has to be in accordance with your maturation level.

How do we move from the self-centredness? I am asking because self-centredness, according to Carl Jung, is the root of all our problems when we are dealing with people and having to manage them.

But how do we evolve into what can be seen as an acceptable person in order to be the desired person to hold that position? This is what can be described as a maturation process. The whole issue of positional power is how your subordinates see you in that particular position and they confer on you the actual leadership.

Within the maturation process you go through the “athlete phase” where it is all about you, your self-centredness, physical appearance and attention seeking – you need the best and must have what you want at all costs.
Everything is about you at all costs. In the meetings you must have your say and your opinion matters to you.

When you move on, you move to the adventurer phase where you start realising it is no longer about you. You start wanting to acquire new skills whether practical or academic. You meditate and may want to climb Kilimanjaro mountain or start playing golf. You may also start searching for higher meaning in work and life.

The desired stage is the statesman stage. Here you have acquired wisdom used for the good of others and not for yourself. Here you start doing things for others rather than yourself.

You display gravitas and gravitas is the seriousness of your position. You become a natural social leader. In communities you are the one that addresses weddings and funerals. You are the one that gets invited to play the role when the community starts realising that you have that particular gravitas.

At this particular stage you also have considered opinion. You know how to mediate and sanitise. The last stage of the maturation process which a few of us reach is the spiritualist phase. In this stage, you display reverence and serenity. You exude calmness and presence. You are likened to the Dalai Lama, Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Theresa and Nelson Mandela.

One hopes that all Directors-General within the public service have reached this particular phase in their maturation process.

In order to go through this maturation process, you have to go through a change process. Most managers will look back on their years as managers and know the defining moment when they experienced a meltdown process. The meltdown process has to happen in order for you to realise where you come from and where you are heading.

The caterpillar phase involves not knowing where one is going even when aware of the purpose. It is a very long road and a struggle. The caterpillar phase gives way to the imago phase which gives way to the butterfly.

This is extremely important because some of you may have had nasty experiences in the work life. When you look back you will realise that this was the turning point in your development as leaders.

**Types of leadership**

We have two kinds of leaders – transactional and transformational. The essence of a transformational leader is very important in terms of the direction we want to take. As public managers we have to look at another way as of thinking within the developmental state framework.

We have to quit playing God in the public service. We need to look at transactional leader before we explore this developmental state framework and the relevance of transformational leadership in it.

The transactional leader looks at exchange valued goods. It allows for a wooden, positivistic, parochial and dictatorial paradigm. It is based on one dimensional thinking based on results.

It also allows us to display a lot of shenpa. Shenpa characteristics involve being a chief critic. In shenpa, the opinions are ours, the committee and nobody else’s because we are the manager or leader.

People who do not hold our opinions are isolated. Shenpa is a desire to be right, have an opinion, a desire to show that you are in charge and in control. When we go into service delivery points within the public service, there is a lot of shenpa displayed by our staff.

I decided to raise this because I have not found any equivalent English word to describe the aspect of shenpa.

Transformational leaders become role models for their followers. They motivate and inspire followers by providing meaning and challenge to their work. They stimulate intellect by instilling innovation and creativity.

Lastly, they focus on individual needs for achievement and growth.

**Conclusion**

The reason why I am putting this forward is that when we define what a quintessential public servant should be, we need to start looking for answers within the transformational leadership paradigm. I think it is where we should be going as a country in the way we are managing our staff.

We should therefore start defining what a “quintessential Afrocrat” (“Afro” – from Africa, “crat” – anyone that serves the public). The challenge for us is to start determining the leadership within the context of the quintessential Afrocrat because we cannot keep on relying on the Max Weberian definition of what a bureaucrat is because it may not fit our context.

We have to start thinking about this within our own developmental state.

Our home-grown definition of a quintessential Afrocrat should be contributing and productive practicing academic within a potjiekos organisation. A potjiekos organisation is a home-grown organisation in the South African context.

We have been doing things differently and not according to the rules. If you cook food in a stove, there are rules that you will not mix meat with the fish. If you cook potjiekos you throw everything in and everything is served together.

You save on time, energy and increase socialisation time. That is a potjiekos organisation where you are thinking outside the cube in the way you achieve your goals. In so doing you are going to take the good in what already exists and let go of things that you were tied to and were not helping in your delivery of goals.
Investigating the criminal justice system

The criminal justice process begins when a crime is committed. This is followed by an intervention by the South African Police Services (SAPS) through an investigation into a crime committed. This is followed by the involvement of the DO and CD which involves the court process through prosecution and judiciary. This is followed by the intervention of the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) through detention during and post trial.

During this phase, the roles of the Department of Health (DoH), Department of Social Development (DSD) and Department of Education (DoE) are important. In between the SAPS intervention and DCS, processes can run concurrently, they don’t have to follow the neat sequence outlined above.

The objective of the Justice and Constitutional Development Cluster is to reduce crime and the transformation of all the departments involved in the criminal justice process, including the way they operate and process cases. Transformation, for me, is about questioning the status quo. It is about assessing whether our current operations, abilities and processes assist or hinder our delivery of services. It is, therefore, beyond issues of race.

**Capacity requirements for effective and efficient delivery**

There is a need for an identification of relevant processes at each stage of the criminal justice system chain outlined above. We need to establish how efficient the processes in the chain are. If you look at the relativity of crimes com-
mitted to the number of detectives who investigate those crimes, you will notice that there are problems in the system. The number of crimes to be investigated outnumbers the available number of investigators to carry out such investigations.

Similarly with justice, prosecutors get overworked because of the number of cases they work on. As a result the system is not as effective as intended. This opens up holes which might lead to improper prosecution of criminals.

We must think about getting more prosecutors into the system. Essentially what is required is the identification of required capacity. In the process we need to identify where capacity is required. This might not necessarily include bringing in new officials.

We also need to set performance measurements and targets for each criminal justice process. We need to confront questions such as keeping juveniles in prison. We need to ask ourselves (especially since they should not be there) who is responsible for taking care of juvenile offenders? We need to figure out who is responsible for this within the system.

**Organised aggravated robberies: The case of the Oliver Tambo International Airport heist**

One of the major challenges facing the criminal justice system is dealing appropriately with organised aggravated robberies. In recent years we have witnessed organised robberies in casinos, banks and cash in transit vehicles. Widely publicised was the heist carried out at the Oliver Tambo International Airport in March 2006.

Before I highlight aspects of this heist, I want to offer a brief description of the nature of these organised crime activities. These activities tend to be well planned and well executed. They involve long-term planning which involves various intense planning sessions by perpetrators in order to finalise recruitment and execution of robberies. Members are handpicked for specific skills/knowledge. Some members are used by more than one grouping and this recruiting takes place country-wide.

In short, like us, they explore their capacity needs. So it is not uncommon that police take longer to investigate because these criminals tend to leave no trace. Some of these criminals work like consultants because they change syndicates.

Coming back to the airport heist, armed robbers seized at least $16.5 million as the money was offloaded from an aircraft. Four men and one woman, including three employees of management firm Airports Company South Africa, were arrested in connection with the robbery.

During the investigation of this case it was discovered that safe houses and secret meeting places were used, with key
role players having separate meetings.

The investigation also uncovered that
the operation displayed knowledge of
the SAPS working procedures. During
the robbery, SAPS radio frequencies
were utilised.

Clearly these criminals are organised
in that they also employ the on-the-job
training strategy. They do dummy runs.
What further concerns us is that experi-
enced suspects bear knowledge of evi-
dence gathering and leave little physical
clues. This makes it difficult for us to
prosecute them.

**Linking processes to PoA**

In the light of the above discussion, we
need to ask ourselves if the stated exist-
ing processes result in the desired out-
comes in the PoA. We need to ask what
needs to be done in order to improve the
situation. My immediate thoughts here
are that we must link all the processes to
the cluster’s programme of action. Some
of the criminal cases have been thrown
out because of holes in the process. For
example, some cases depend on DNA
samples for conclusion. When this is the
case, there are immediate doubts as the
prosecutor usually cannot go forward
with the case.

For the police, the handling of evi-
dence is an important step therefore they
need to be properly trained in this as evi-
dence usually decides the strength of the
case. Furthermore, in district courts
prosecutors rarely have more than two
years’ experience. This poses questions
about the prosecution of cases.

In addition, prosecutors usually leave
the profession because they are under-
paid. They earn less than what a deputy
director earns in our government
departments. As a result, in their search
for greener pastures, they become man-
gers with the National Prosecuting
Authority (NPA).

We are also having problems in the
judiciary. Magistrates throw out cases
which they feel are not strong enough.
This has implications for the whole
criminal justice system. To add salt to
the wound, correctional services is fac-
ing the problem of awaiting trial
detainees. Correctional services officials
are not trained to deal with this group of
detainees which is distinct from other
groups of detainees in that they have all
the rights that we all have. The differ-
ence is that they are in an institution.
Their only limitation is the freedom of
movement.

**Conclusion**

Immediately we can see a problem in the
criminal justice system. Let us look at
the people that are awaiting trial and ask
why are they there? Some of them have
committed petty crimes such as urinat-
ing in a public place. Does it make sense
to put someone who urinated in public
in a correctional services institution?
Usually they cannot afford to pay bail
fees.

The problem with this is that they get
recruited by more experienced criminals
during their time in the holding cells.
We might blame poverty for producing
criminals as people go there for petty
offences and come out worse. If their
bail is reviewed and they are taken out
the public will complain.

I think we need to move beyond theo-
rising as it does not solve problems that
are faced by correctional services. Why
can’t we use the system of “admission of
guilt” the way we do it in the traffic sys-
tem. This will save us from accommo-
dating people who committed petty
crimes which is costly for the state.

The 2006 July Cabinet Lekgotla dealt
with juvenile detainees. What can we
come up with that will give the Cabinet
a solution to the problem? We may also
ask to what extent we are using the
capacity that we have. I am certain there
are answers to these questions. For
example, the police should also be tak-
ing bail. People do not necessarily have
to pay bail only in court. This can solve
an aspect of the capacity problem in the
criminal justice system.
Some thoughts on the governance and administration cluster

Derek Powell, Deputy Director-General, Department of Local Government, examines issues affecting the Governance and Administration Cluster

This paper does not intend to provide answers to a range of questions that confront the cluster. Rather, it seeks to stimulate discussion by providing a perspective on some of the key issues and some suggestions. This is because the more I think about government, the more I realise that I understand government more shallowly and have more questions than answers. I do not offer ready made answers to critical questions.

Let us put this in context of our main national debates. Our target of halving poverty and unemployment by 2014 is the main national context that I want to highlight here. President Thabo Mbeki, during the Budget Vote of the Presidency in 2000, said, “The system of governance we are working to create … is targeted at helping us meet the provisions laid down in our Constitution of ‘improving the quality of life of all citizens and freeing the potential of each person’. Accordingly ours must be a truly developmental state.”

He further stated that “one of the most important challenges this throws up is the need for us sharply to improve professional competence of members of the public service and otherwise increase this capacity within the public service”.

If you look at this quotation by the President when the cluster system was first introduced in 2000 you will notice that even then he was talking about the importance of a capable public service and its role in the developmental state.

Last year, during the launch of JIPSA, Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka articulated the many challenges facing us as a country, particularly scarce skills in our economy. She stated that “nothing short of a skills revolution by a nation united will extricate us from the crisis we face. We are addressing logjams, some of which are systemic and therefore entrenched even in post-apartheid South Africa. The systemic nature of some of our challenges undermines our excellent new policies, at least in the short term, hence the need for interventions such as JIPSA to enhance implementation of our policies.” This frames the context of the rest of the paper but at an institutional level.

It is always useful when dealing with a government institution to go back and look at some of the original objectives and decisions that have been made – in this case, it is more the history of the cluster. Also, the two main roles of the cluster which are to support cabinet decision-making and coordinate implementation of the Programme of Action.

What is the role of the cluster relative to departments and spheres? Is the cluster organised to meet its priorities? What core skills/capacities are needed in the system to improve service delivery? These are questions that we should be constantly asking ourselves within the cluster. They have considerable strategic importance.

Purpose of cluster integration 1999-2006

The cluster system, as I have stated, seeks to improve cabinet decision-making processes relating to strategy and fundamental policy. It also seeks to improve interdepartmental co-ordination of implementation of policy. It is about improving better cooperative governance between the three spheres of government.

Ultimately the aim is to have effective democracy which means “listening and then responding with appropriate action to what the people are saying” – in short, responsive government.

Functioning, priorities and processes

The practical work of the cluster breaks down into three key strategic priorities: capability needs for the developmental
state; macro-organisation of the state; and planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation under which we have included local government in the national cluster.

There are 57 programmes in the cluster and there are a variety of joint task teams (for joint programmes) that give effect to these programmes. The cluster is not about managing bureaucracy. It is about putting government and the country on the fast track.

I mentioned integration as one of the objectives of the cluster. I would like to state that integration in practice is a very complex issue. The Constitution created a series of concurrent and exclusive functions between the three spheres of government. These functions are allocated to particular organs of state and the whole budget system is structured around that and public accountability is structured around that. It is the nature of democratic accountability.

On the other side of the equation there are modern policy (development) issues that cut across mandats, portfolios and spheres of government. This is the basis of integration.

There are risks to both. The risk with democratic accountability is that because functions are allocated to organs of state, silos usually get created and you get a high degree of fragmentation. On the other hand, if you take integration to its ultimate conclusion you are going to have decision paralysis because everybody is responsible for everything. It is really about balancing these two systems through effective and efficient administration mechanisms.

In terms of priorities and processes of the cluster, we have cluster POA which focuses on the three strategic priorities, cluster programmes and joint task teams which are the machinery of the G&A cluster.

Some of the outcomes for integration that we are looking for include joint work and appraisal, coordination of implementation, greater efficiency, and economies of scale. We also need to take into account some of the risks involved. Once you start talking about programmes (and report on them), the cluster tends to take on an operational focus.

You also need to look at the link between cluster priorities and sphere functions and accountabilities. For example, most of the functions of local and provincial government do not focus on G&A functions, in fact they are in the social and economic sectors.

So when you ask the province to report on the G&A cluster, you need to think about what kind of discrimination you are making in terms of actual functional responsibilities. The G&A is actually a regulatory type of cluster so we need to take note of that.

There is also the risk of information overload. Instead of achieving integration, the Cabinet gets too much information which is not properly analysed. There is also information asymmetry which is a key challenge that we face at the Department of Local Government.

Task teams are a useful way of bringing people together, but they may not contain the forces that shape policy. Policy does not sit between nice cycles and does not contain itself to key decision makers that are within the task team. There are multiple influences on policy and they need to be engaged.

Task teams and reporting cycles may not contain complexity and time sequences that are involved in policy management. I think that is why traditionally we have been doing white papers so that a maximum number of stakeholders are brought in to the table.

The cluster system is also a weak filter for intergovernmental policy and long-term planning. That is because not every policy goes through the cluster. So how do we deal with the problem of unfunded mandates? These are some of the risks we need to look at and something that we need to be conscious of when we move forward.

Suggested G&A cluster core competences

The core cluster mandates include envisioning and managing public sector change and culture which is basically Batho Pele. The cluster also assesses intergovernmental implications of policy. It monitors and assesses performance of the public sector across government.

It is mandated to boost capability and performance of public service and public sector professionals and managers. The cluster proposes policy and other interventions such as Single Public Service, alignment of spatial plans, and deconcentration.

The last core cluster mandate is building public confidence in government and public service.

Since G&A is a regulatory and oversight cluster, the skills (core cluster competencies) required are:

- strategic, policy and finance expertise;
- sound data (statistically), information, knowledge;
- problem solving;
- monitoring and evaluation specialists;
- negotiation and process management; and
- communicators.

Recommendations and suggestions

Cluster processes should focus on strategic areas where coherence requires integration, as distinguished from what should be left to departments. The processes that set POA should be refined and should be tailored to provincial and local functions.

There also has to be a realistic monitoring and evaluation system for government as a whole, and information flows linked to streamline reporting. Medium Term Strategic Frameworks need to be complied for the cluster.

Cluster processes have to provide an appropriate institutional filter for policy and legislation impacting on intergovernmental relations. Focus groups with external role players need to be held.

Finally, cluster processes have to drive a practical de-concentrated approach for aligning national and provincial departments with local government.
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is fast becoming the basis for economic development. Those countries which fail to participate in such developments risk increasing marginalisation.

In order to address this problem governments have increasingly incorporated ICT policies and initiatives into their economic development strategies.

While public policy and academic literature frequently tout substantial progress in bridging the digital divide, over half of the world’s population does not presently have access to even a public telephone, let alone the Internet.

Even within the United States there is substantial disparity in access to information and communication technologies. For example, within the US, those living in families with lower income, with less education, are substantially less likely to have access to the basic information and communication technologies than others.

The uneven availability of access to information and communication technologies among the world’s population has great importance to public policy and the well-being of nations and individuals worldwide.

Of particular importance, from a global “public welfare” perspective, is unrealised potential economic and human development that could be achieved through information communication technologies.

On an individual basis, this foregone development activity translates into higher rates of poverty, poorer health, and lower literacy and quality life than is necessary.
With these important implications, it is not surprising that the connection between the expansion of ICTs and economic development is currently receiving considerable attention by practitioners, policy makers, researchers and funding organisations.

ICT can be framed and applied as a potent tool in reducing poverty, extending health services, expanding educational opportunities and generally improving the quality of life for many of the world's disadvantaged populations. However, it is critical that such framing recognises that desired outcomes are only plausible when ICT deployment is accompanied by concurrent public policies supporting equitable access to social institutions such as health care, education, government, and other benefits potentially available through the application of digital tools and telecommunications. ICT is an important tool but not a solution in itself for social and economic problems.

Defining ICT

The term ICT refers to the following three broad categories: Information, Communication and Technology. In terms of unpacking these terms ICT is thus comprised of the following components: hardware, software and telecommunications.

The importance of ICT is contained in the information part of the broad term.

It comprises technologies that can process different kinds of information (voice, video, text and data) and facilitate different forms of communication among human agents and information systems.

ICTs such as radio, television, telephones, computers and the Internet can provide access to knowledge in sectors such as agriculture, micro enterprise, education and human rights, offering a new realm of choices that enable the poor to improve their quality of life.

ICT and economic growth opportunities

There is evidence that proves the positive impact of ICT on economic growth and productivity in a number of developed countries in the 1990s. There are few studies which estimate the contribution of ICT to growth and productivity in post-communist, transitional and developing economies.
Aside from the US, the use of ICT has contributed to an increase in the rate of productivity and economic growth in Australia, Sweden, Finland, Poland. Among the developing countries, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, South Korea and Taiwan benefited from the production of ICT (IMF 2001).

The world has evolved to a power-rich information society where daily decisions are made based on the best available information. It is precisely this demand for information that benefits some industries more than others.

The big question, however, is how ICT can provide opportunities for economic growth. Research indicates that the use of ICT as an enabler has significantly changed or totally transformed the economic growth of some countries. However, evidence differs from country to country.

In Poland, for instance ICT, investment contributed on average 0.47 of a percentage point or 8.9% of GDP growth and 12.7% or 0.65 of a percentage point contribution to labour productivity between 1995 and 2000 according to a study by Coleccia and Schreyer (2001) cited by Kanamori et al (2004).

The obvious answer to the question is the fact that developed countries are in a better position to provide evidence of the positive impact on the economic growth of ICT than in less developed or developing countries.

ICT provides opportunities for countries to develop goods and services at faster rates through computerised processes and procedures. Evidence of this is the fact that things such as building a motor car can be done efficiently through the use of robot technology coupled with computer programming.

ICT is associated with major cost implications. However, technologies such as cellphones, telephones, computers and network connectivity are becoming cheaper. Still, this phenomenon is more accurate for developed countries than developing countries.

Data evaluation of Grameen Cellphone programme have shown that while the non-poor users in rural Bangladesh use cellphones to keep in touch with loved ones (a luxury motive), the poor typically use cellphone access as a production input (to keep with real-time market developments).

Also, evaluations have shown that the poor users of cellphones register a greater effect on their producers’ surplus due to the cellphone access, than do non-poor users (Bayes, Von Brawn and Akhtar, 1999). This means that a poverty targeted provision of informational infrastructure in Bangladesh will have a greater aggregate return across the board.

Poverty reduction should be a central component of any ICT strategy. Increasing equal access to, control of and the ability to derive benefits from socio-political and economic information can contribute to the reduction of poverty, giving individuals and communities the opportunity to expand their choices and improve their livelihoods.

The information may range from financially viable markets and income generation opportunities to the availability of government services and issues of governance to information on health care and delivery, HIV and Aids care and prevention, education and skill development programmes.

New and powerful technologies can also promote efficiency of enterprises competing in the global economy and public sector service delivery. While the impact of ICT investments on productivity remains a subject of debate, ICT is now a standard operating tool in today’s information society and the information ICTs carry is increasingly becoming an important factor in production.

In adopting the African Information Society Initiative (AISI) in 1996 the objective was to have an African information infrastructure through access to global information infrastructure for development needs and to build national information and communication infrastructures.

Other opportunities provided by ICT to support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals of developing a global partnership for development include:

• to enable less developing landlocked countries and islands to link up with global markets to accelerate their full integration into the global economy;
• distance work facilitated by ICT opens up opportunities to create service sector jobs in developing countries such as call centres, data entry and processing and software development;
• telecentres open access to telecommunications and create direct employment for men and women;
• improve youth learning skills, employability to meet the challenges of the knowledge-based economy of the 21st century; and
• develop a critical mass of knowledge workers with the technical abilities to provide and maintain the infrastructure.

Recommendations

The most effective roles for the private sector are to support investments to build ICT infrastructure (which tends to be capital intensive), operate ICT networks and deliver ICT services. Therefore a fair and transparent regulatory and policy framework is necessary to secure and promote private sector involvement.

The most effective role of government is to establish well regulated and competitive environments conducive to private investment and innovation. The elaboration of a policy is a major determining factor in setting up the underlying supporting infrastructure and enhancing the
optimal use of technology.

Once established it should embrace strategies and action programmes which will ensure the building of information, knowledge and decision support system to enhance the country’s socio-economic growth and policy formulation utilising information, and communication technologies (Griffiths, 1998).

The ASGISA broad plans to be implemented in electronic communication demonstrate the commitment of the South African government to facilitate the contribution of ICT in growing the economy and sharing that growth. These are:

• implementation of a strategy to rapidly grow South Africa’s broadband network;
• implementation of the plan to reduce telephony costs more rapidly;
• completion of the submarine cable project that will provide competitive and reliable international access especially Africa and Asia; and
• provision of telecommunications and labour intensive businesses in poor areas.

Human resources

Whereas technological infrastructure has traditionally been regarded as the most critical component, human resources have been seen as a constraint in the effective deployment if ICT.

Preparing Africa for the information age primarily necessitates appropriate investment in its human resources. Training, education and promotion will be the cornerstone of Africa’s new society.

Development of human resources also requires having a new profile of management/labour forces; the ability to adapt, adopt and exploit new technologies and to manage the change; and creating new job markets where skills and knowledge learned can be applied.

Capacity building programmes should be developed and tailored to the needs of each user. AISI, in its human resources development programme, has identified the following main users: decision makers, businesses community, researchers and students, skilled workers, the general public, information systems specialists, information service providers, telecommunication and networking specialists.

Each of the above users needs a specific programme to be able to benefit from the information society.

Appropriate technologies

ICTs can serve as a tool for sharing knowledge and promoting development. While they are an important driver of economic growth, they should not be used as a panacea. It is equally necessary to assess which type of technology is the most effective and appropriate to achieve specific objectives.

Various countries and regions have different goals and needs regarding ICT. For example, in reaching rural populations simple technology such as radio may perform the task more effectively than more complicated high technology solutions requiring large capital costs.

Sustainable ICT projects are those that are locally owned and accompanied by human capacity development to ensure the ability of individuals and communities to use, maintain and benefit fully from ICTs.

The role of the Eastern Cape Provincial Government (ECPA)

The Eastern Cape adopted a co-ordinated approach in the acquisition of ICT infrastructure to ensure value-for-money, efficiency and cost effectiveness. To this end the province has ensured that costs of ICT infrastructure are centrally negotiated.

This has led to a lot of savings in technology costs and released funds to be spent on other important projects.

The metropolitan area network allows for connecting all government buildings under the leadership of the Office of the Premier with direct benefit of cost reduction due to economies of scale.

This also provides easy access to standardised technologies like virus protection, network security etc. The ECPA spends approximately R10 million on ICT investment. The province is currently exploring having an East Africa Submarine System (EASSY dock) to connect east coast of Africa to the rest of the world.

This is linked to the province-wide ICT strategy underway. Some of the ICT opportunities as revealed by the Eastern Cape Information Technology Incubator (ECITI) project include:

• two IDZs in the region;
• local call centres have spare capacity – and want to use it;
• ECDC will be driving the call centre initiative;
• assistance to equip the province’s 6 000 schools with IT hardware, software and support services;
• the province is encouraging open sourcing;
• Eastern Cape is a haven for manufacturing and agricultural SMMEs;
• only a handful (literally) of black, women-owned ICT businesses;
• alter the profile of South Africa’s ICT industry to encourage more black and women practitioners;
• supply SADC with hardware, software and related ICT services;
• tourism industry is gearing up to grow; and
• provincial and local government need more applications and more support as they deliver more services.

Conclusion

ICT does provide the potential for economic growth. The success of economic growth is determined by those industries or governments who possess the boldness to invest in ICT.

There should be a distinct plan in place so that ICT is not just implemented out of context. ICT has to be contextualised for it to be sustainable. This should be coupled with human capacity development. This should be done to ensure that people are able to use and maintain such infrastructure.
Towards accelerated growth and development: Infrastructure investment roll-out challenges

For a few decades the South African government did not invest enough in infrastructure maintenance and expansion. The Nationalist government spent valuable resources in propping up a collapsing system of apartheid, particularly the Bantustan system. Resources were channeled to consumption spending.

As a result of this ugly and difficult past the new democratic government inherited an economy that was not performing, an infrastructure network that was in a state of decay and a huge budget deficit. Over the first decade of democracy we did not see any investment in infrastructure. Without expressing a view I must highlight that the emphasis shifted to the reduction of budget deficit and the broader stabilisation of the economy.

The government, in the Accelerated Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA) framework, is unashamedly accepting that this was a mistake that needs urgent attention. Two of the six inhibiting constraints to the country achieving the set objectives are infrastructure focused, those of 6% plus economic growth between 2010 and 2014, and halving unemployment and poverty by 2014.

These constraints are stated in ASGISA framework as cost and efficiency of national logistics system and some infrastructure; and deficiencies in state capacity and strategic leadership impacting on delivery. This confirms that the aging infrastructure has become a bottleneck to delivery.

The disaster in waiting is the aging local government infrastructure. The electricity blackouts in some cities are early signals. When this trend spills over to sewerage and water reticulation networks the cities will have to deal with a massive disaster that nobody bothers to talk about.

What do we mean by infrastructure?

The infrastructure can be divided into three categories – economic infrastructure, social infrastructure and institutional infrastructure. Economic infrastructure can be characterised as physical stock that facilitates economic pro-
duction and services, serves as input to production and is consumed by households.

The social infrastructure can be characterised as the network that impacts directly and indirectly on the quality of life, provides universal access to social services, improves productivity in the economy and increases economic activity, job creation and reduction of poverty.

Institutional infrastructure is critical for the overall performance of the economy. It entails efficient and effective management of both the economic and social infrastructure. It is the institutional failure that makes it expensive to do business in South Africa. It is central to the failure to spend in areas where there is a desperate need for the delivery of basic services.

**Towards accelerated growth**

To achieve the set growth objectives, infrastructure development, expansion and maintenance must be seen as part of an integrated programme. There must be a link to other interventions like the industrial strategy, the skills and education strategy, interventions in the second economy and reviewing macroeconomic framework from time to time.

Infrastructure roll-out should facilitate effective implementation of these interventions. We have a rare opportunity of validating the theoretical framework of government investment spending growing-in private sector investment. In five year’s time we can be cited as another example of successful state-led economic growth. Let us look at a few examples of mega projects underway.

Many South Africans think of stadiums when they think of World Cup 2010. The biggest legacy World Cup 2010 can leave behind is an efficient infrastructure network ranging from an efficient public transport system to dependable sewerage networks right through to the development of economic corridors and nodes.

The second major project is the building of new electricity capacity. The project is not only about new power stations, it is also about broad infrastructure roll-out. It is not only about Eskom’s capacity and ability to build new power sta-

tions, it is about transport networks, new water and sewer networks and new economic infrastructure.

There is also a project that focuses on investment in the South African rail system which is about lowering the cost of doing business. It is about unblocking the bottlenecks in taking bulk commodities to the ports for export.

Lastly, our involvement in NEPAD must include investing in the much-needed infrastructure to unleash the potential of the continent.

**Role of development finance institutions**

Of the about R370 billion government infrastructure spending, the envisaged spending by development finance institutions is about 3%-5%, compared to 50% by the three tiers of government, 40% state-owned enterprises and about 5% through public-private partnership. This reflects the negative view about the role of the DFIs in South Africa.

DFIs must be reaffirmed as development tools in the hands of the state. They must be used more effectively in areas such as research and knowledge management, disbursement on behalf of government, development of smart partnerships, funding specific projects; the contribution can be much higher than 5%.

**Conclusion**

Government must take an active interest in the development and improvement of this capacity. It must invest resources and time in this important resource base. They must be partners of government as first choice. If there are weaknesses and gaps identified they must not be whispered, the DFIs must be informed and be directed to implement corrective actions.

The combined capacity of DFIs can be used more effectively to mitigate the risk that the private sector would not ordinarily have an appetite for. This requires dynamic engagement between DFIs and government.
Is government optimally poised to achieve set objectives and targets in time?

The World Development Report of 2007 describes state capacity as “the ability of the state to undertake collective actions at least costs to society”. This is broader than administrative or technical capacities of civil servants. It entails, also, “institutional mechanisms that give politicians and civil servants the flexibility, rules, and restraints to enable them to act in the collective interest”.

This resonates with some researchers' conceptualisation of state capacity along four dimensions: ideational, political, technical and implementational. Sally Cummings and Ole Norgaard (Journal of Political Studies Vol 52, 2004) define ideational state capacity as the degree to which the state – its actors, role and policies – is legitimated and embedded in state institutions.

Political state capacity refers to effectiveness of state institutions in terms of governance structures and technical and implementational state capacities refer to administrative capacity.

Key planning mechanisms

It is unquestionable that the Presidency and its Policy Co-ordination and Advisory Services (PCAS), the National Treasury (NT), the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), as well as other relevant organs of the state, are playing important roles in establishing an institutional base in government to drive and co-ordinate long-term economic growth and development.

Largely, prioritising within the context of long-term developmental planning implies that civil servants must think differently about challenges facing our society; that implementation plans...
must be conceptualised differently and that intensity of implementing is handled differently.

This is easier said than done. Even comparable countries with developmental plans, such as India, Brazil, South Korea, Malaysia and Chile, remain challenged.

I am deliberately avoiding elaborating specific functions pertaining to planning, by PCAS, DPLG, NT and DPSA (and other relevant institutions), lest I repeat the obvious. Suffice to say that these departments have various planning instruments and tools mainly focussed on medium-term planning, not long-term developmental planning.

The PCAS is presently considering long-term developmental planning. It should be acknowledge that PCAS, DPLG, NT and DPSA (and other relevant institutions) are addressing respective capacity constraints in order to strengthen requisite state capacities for driving and coordinating long-term economic growth and development.

**The role of the PCAS**

For the benefit of those not familiar with the PCAS, it provides research, analytical, advisory, policy, project/programme and strategic support to the Presidency and government as a whole on matters of socio-economic development, justice, governance and international affairs.

It is comprised of five sectors: the Economic Sector; the Social Sector; Justice, Crime Prevention and Security; International Relations; and Governance and Administration. There are three additional directorates: Monitoring and Evaluation; Planning and Programmes (which deal with issues related to Gender, Disability and Children’s Rights).

There is also a Youth Desk, housed within the Social Sector. Lastly, there is also a Forum of South African Directors-General (FOSAD) Secretariat. We are also in the process of establishing a Programme Coordination Unit (mainly dealing with socio-economic research to inform evidence-based policy making) to be located within the Social Sector.

The PCAS works very closely with the Directors-General Clusters and acts as a link between the Cabinet Committees and the appropriate DGs Clusters. Over and above analytical and advisory activities, ensuring effective implementation of the planning framework, integrated policy and programme formulation and implementation facilitation and coordination as well as monitoring and evaluation, the PCAS supports and facilitates key (analytical and
institutional) projects of the Presidency.

Let me now dwell on the subject of this think piece. That is, whether government is appropriately poised to do what is expected of it. Tackling this question is undoubtedly a tall order. I have had to draw some strength and courage, from my brief experience as a public servant, to wrestle with this matter.

**Probing the abilities of the state machinery**

Our Minister of Finance, addressing the 2004 SMS conference, argued that senior managers are “custodians of a value system that defines our objective as demonstrating every single day that we are a caring democracy”. The key issue in the Minister’s address, in my reading and interpretation, is whether, as Amartya Sen (1999) puts it, are we enhancing and expanding human capabilities?

As Sen teaches us, human capabilities refer to a set of valued things that it is feasible for a person to do – from dependable access to adequate nourishment to having the possibility of being a respected participant in community life. Human capabilities define the extent to which people can lead the kind of lives they value – and have reason to value.

In my view, this is what Richard Levin, writing in SDR Vol. 3 in 2004, argued when he said, “A fundamental feature of the South African developmental state is that it must be people-centred and capable of addressing the socio-economic needs of its entire population.”

In relation to “addressing socio-economic needs”, it may be useful to juxtapose this captivating question with the main conclusion of the Ten Year Review.

The review concluded, among other things, that if government continued delivering services at the same pace, weaknesses could precipitate a vicious circle that ultimately sets back the gains of the first decade of democracy.

The Macro-Social Report (A Nation in the Making Discussion Document) takes the review conclusions further and delves deeply into the society we are becoming. The report also points out that although there is an improving sense of an overarching national identity, inherited fault lines have been slower to heal than hoped.

In a nutshell, the challenge of eradicating poverty and other social ills is compounded by societal dynamics set in motion in part by the transition itself. Some of the negative trends exacerbate the challenges for government as a whole.

Furthermore, as President Mbeki argued in his recent Nelson Mandela Lecture, there is a need to mediate or rather negotiate the tension between a market-based economic system premised on competition and the desire to build a caring society based on human solidarity.

Peter Evans, Professor of Sociology at the University of California (Berkeley),
addressing a seminar in South Africa recently, argued that the main structural characteristic of the 20th century developmental state was “embedded-autonomy”.

Evans contends that the 21st century syllogism, however, calls for greater demands on the state: “demands for a capable, coherent state apparatus are even greater, and the need for embeddedness is accentuated”. As such, maintaining the contradictory amalgam of autonomy and embeddedness is a serious challenge to managers of the 21st century developmental state.

As suggested in Elhanan Helpman’s *Mystery of Economic Growth*, there are many tasks that rest on the shoulders of a (developmental) state. The same line of thinking can be discerned in Jeffery Sach’s *End of Poverty*.

In our context, for example, it is incontrovertible that the development of the second economy and the eradication of poverty have to be carried out almost exclusively by the democratic (developmental) state.

As argued elsewhere, the level of underdevelopment of the second economy and the small size of its market makes it an unattractive target for the first economy. In a sense, the existence of the second economy is a reflection of both the legacy of apartheid colonialism and market failures which render the first economy incapable, on its own volition, of contributing to the elimination of the “two economies” divide.

It has been estimated that about one third of South Africans are trapped in the second economy. As most would have read, some researchers argue that approximately two-thirds of our people are trapped in poverty (using headcount money-metric measures).

In addition, although government has made significant progress in bettering the lives of many, because of huge historical backlogs there is still a lot more to be done if we are to make a notable dent in poverty and underdevelopment.

There are many compounding factors, in relation to our nation building agenda broadly. For instance, we are also dealing with two interrelated intricate factors: deep-seated psychosocial pathologies and accumulated disadvantages which jointly strain our social fabric resulting to social distress that we see and experience as a society.

So, given the magnitude of the myriad challenges that we face as a country, can we confidently say that our civil service, especially its managers, is well placed to tackle them head-on?

This is obviously an intriguing question, which can take books to sufficiently address. It has been argued that despite major challenges that the government still needs to overcome in the delivery of services, one can confidently conclude that South Africa is well on course to achieve targets set in the Millennium Declaration.

For those remaining, the necessary foundation has been firmly put in place for their attainment. However, given other factors that compound the challenge of addressing challenges confronting speedy service delivery, do we fully believe that we are on course?

For instance, the social distress, referred to above, ravaging our communities, families and compatriots could work against the noble programmes that government tirelessly and rigorously pursues. Addressing a Parliamentary question on the provision of basic services recently the President emphasised that improving service delivery, to realise a better life for all, is not only about improved access to basic services, it is also about the soul of our nation. The social disintegration (including fragmentation taking place in our communities) manifesting itself in various ways such as reported increases in levels of domestic violence, levels of criminality, teenage pregnancy, observed decline in social values of mutual respect and common decency, declining levels of social solidarity and other behaviors that reflect a spirit of community could set back the unparalleled gains of our encouraging young democracy. Within this context, President Mbeki in his February 2007 State of the Nation address has restated the urgency to “finalise the strategy and programmes to address matters of social cohesion, including the comprehensive integrated anti-poverty strategy…”.

Such should culminate us as a nation to a “rallying point”, what Montesquieu called vertu – the substantive commonality between people in a democratic state.

We have to finally heed and succumb to the plea to “seize the time to define for ourselves what we want to make of our shared destiny”, as called upon by the first President of a Democratic South Africa.

**Conclusion**

I conclude by reiterating a well-known quotation of Julius Nyerere that “to plan is to choose”. Our medium-term planning instruments such as the Medium-Term Strategic Framework and others are about choices.

A long-term developmental plan would equally be about choices. Such choices, accompanied by commensurate effort, would result in a particular nation. Perhaps we need to answer for ourselves: What is South Africa really a case of?

President Mbeki said, at the sunset of our first decade of democracy, that “we must advance the struggle against poverty, while we continue to transform our country into a non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous democracy”.

As the current business of government and its social partners demonstrates, the struggle against poverty continues and it is intensifying further as we enter the last two years of the current government term. We remain challenged to speedily ameliorate material conditions of the many and also expedite nation building.

This moment, rare opportunity in our history, calls for resolution, boldness, courage and urgency. Otherwise, the immense and imminent possibilities of this great land of ours cannot, sadly and painfully, be realised.
JIPSA’s role in the broader ASGISA programme

The main objective of ASGISA is the elimination of the second economy. This will be achieved through the expansion of the Expanded Public Works Programme through bigger rural road projects, a focus on maintenance and a roll-out of the Early Childhood Development component.

The second economy will also be eliminated through the strengthening of microfinance initiatives, especially loans between R10 000 and R250 000. It will further be eliminated through targeted initiatives for women and youths, realisation of “dead” assets, improving the regulatory environment for SMMEs and instilling developmental elements in all sector strategies.

**JIPSA and its strategies**

JIPSA was established in March 2006. It consists of a Technical Team with a representation from business, academia and government. Its objective is to coordinate and ensure that South Africa has the needed skills for accelerated growth in the country.

An arm of JIPSA is the Skills Acquisition and Placement Programme (SAPP) which is the implementation arm of JIPSA Technical Team. It seeks to address problems facing the unemployed, focusing on graduates, ungraduated technikon “graduates”, inexperienced professionals and matriculants.

SAPP also seeks to address gaps between institutions of higher learning and corporates.

JIPSA’s SAPP programme strategy involves placement of candidates with corporates in this country and abroad. It also seeks to eliminate the unemployed database hosted by the Umsobomvu Youth Fund.

It also coordinates government departments’ training efforts, coordinates donor funding nationally and provides input towards JIPSA research.
JIPSA-SAPP progress highlights

With regard to placement of candidates with corporates in the country and abroad, there has been placement of women and youth with multinationals on a cost sharing basis. There are also skills training sessions for the above-mentioned groups that last from six to 12 months. Some candidates have had employment opportunities due to the initiative.

On the coordination of government departments training efforts, there are scholarship programmes for this training. There was also a workshop with all government International Liaison Directors.

With regard to the elimination of the unemployed in the Umsobomvu database, some graduates have already been placed with corporates. The databases for the unemployed will be interfaced into a melting pot. A Job Search hub for graduates is being explored.

There was a national workshop to discuss the coordination of donor funding nationally for placement programmes. However, more important is the need to determine how the funds are spread and an exploration of the ways to maximise value.

Lastly, there is input towards JIPSA research on: the types of institutions and degrees obtained and demand from corporates; the impact of unaccredited institutions to unemployment; job mobility for placed candidates; and trends of corporate sector demands.

Conclusion

The ASGISA programme seeks to make sure that there are effective partnerships between government, labour and business. As a national shared growth strategy, the whole ASGISA initiative is not about government, it is about us as a nation sharing our efforts so that we can make sure that we address our concerns together. There has to be that coordinated effort.
The purpose of this paper is to contribute to the on-going dialogue around building a competent, responsive and representative public service labour force and to explore the equitability, practicability and implementability of these Employment Acts as they purport to protect the rights of public service employees.

The thrust of the argument follows that non-compliance with these Acts, (ignorantly or purposefully) does not only result in people finding themselves on the wrong side of the law, but also leaves employees unduly prejudiced and their rights infringed. In this paper, both labour relations practitioners and scholars are challenged to revisit those Acts and to popularise the matter of a competent, responsive and representative labour force in the public service in various ways so that all employees should be sensitised and made aware of what is authentically within their rights when it comes to employment policy frameworks and guidelines.

Addressing key questions

In order to actively and meaningfully engage this matter, maybe five simple questions need to be asked: Do we really need labour laws in the public service? Why do we need them? Who are supposed to be the implementers of such laws? Is there any methodology of implementation that we can suggest? What is it that impedes compliance with such laws?

A lawless society in our era would definitely not be feasible. Imagine a public service without laws, in particular labour laws. Yes, we do need labour laws in the public service. Contrary to what many perceive the purpose of law to be, the primary focus of law is to regulate relationships, and secondly to serve as a deterrent in the event that non-compliance rears its ugly head.

Managers are central to the implementation of laws in the public service and have to play a pivotal role in seeing that laws are complied with by employees.

There is, however, no common methodology that managers can rely on in their task of seeing to the implementation and monitoring of legislation, policies and strategic plans. We will either have a positivistic or a naturalistic manager.

A positivistic manager believes in the letter of the law. It does not matter how
unfair or wrong the law may be, he will apply it as it is. He believes in the Latin maxim: “Dicere non facere.”. A naturalistic manager believes not in the letter of the law, but in what the law should be. They believe in the higher law (the law of God).

It is the existence of these two groups of managers that is the reason why the public service looks mosaic-like, inconsistent and somewhat confusing.

The uncertainty with which managers in the public service find themselves having to deal with the multifarious legislative frameworks leads to turnaround problems due to dubious or delayed decision-making, low morale of staff and fear which either culminates in non-compliance with policy frameworks or the excision of the previously disadvantaged groups.

When fear creeps in, rationale wears thin. What causes fear? Fear is caused by uncertainty. Uncertainty itself is caused by many things, e.g. tradition, religion, cultural practices, law, and above all, insecurity.

When the apartheid regime promulgated laws that restricted people’s movements, association and gathering, including loving each other, it was because of the insecurity in the white minority which made them uncertain of their future with their black compatriots. The same applies to men. Today, when gender issues are raised, some men want to stand against the wall and defend to death that which is not worth defending.

The Beijing conference has now become a thorn wherewith women are subjected to daily torture by men. Some men are so scared of gender issues that they see themselves as an endangered species. Just like the apartheid regime felt insecure when black people gathered or moved into urban areas in big numbers, men today are scared of women gathering. Some even suggest that if women have “a woman’s day” they also must have “a man’s day”.

The disability of the conscience

Unfortunately, all of the above are not an exception to people with disabilities. The plight of people with disabilities is aggravated by communities in which they live. They are viewed as people who lack aspirations to lead fulfilling lives with dignity like everybody else. They are viewed as people who lack talents and skills, incapable of taking full responsibility for their livelihood.

One clever speaker addressing an HIV and Aids awareness conference stunned her audience when she said: “We are all HIV in this house. The difference is that some are HIV positive and some are HIV negative.” Allow me to use her phrase and say: “Let us not forget that we are all disabled in this house. The difference is the type and degree of the disability. Some of us might be physically disabled while some are consciously disabled.”

It is this disability of the conscience which causes people with physical disabilities to suffer neglect and prejudice. This disability of the conscience has succeeded at all material times to sow insecurity, uncertainty and fear of the physically disabled people in the human race. That is why we hear of this saying, “fear of the unknown”.

Society must be reminded that it has a responsibility imposed on itself by the dictates of social justice to acknowledge the rights of people with disabilities as fellow citizens and to integrate them in all developmental processes wherein society is involved.

Remember, real empowerment is that which starts from the bottom up, i.e. it must start from the previously disadvantaged. My warning today is that an attitude towards people with disabilities is both our biggest barrier, in fact it is a class suicide”.

Conclusion

I want to conclude by quoting Ms Berenice de Lily who asked, “If you fail to see a person, but only the disability, who is blind? If you cannot hear your brother’s cry for justice, who is deaf? If you do not communicate with your sister, but separate her from yourself, who is disabled? If your heart or mind cannot reach out to your neighbour, who is intellectually disabled? If you do not stand up for the rights of all people, who is physically disabled? •
The business sector’s role in accelerating growth

Improving the lives of all South Africans is everybody’s business, and retaining and developing a skilled labour force is vital to this, writes Sanlam’s Temba Mvusi

The private sector has made it clear that it will not leave the social responsibility of building “a better South Africa for all” to government alone, but would contribute by playing an active role in reforming the economy of South Africa.

There is no doubt that the private and public sectors, given their relative sizes, are significant and the one simply cannot ignore the other. This is why we as business generally do not object to being regulated by the state (in fact, we often need the certainty of a sound regulatory environment to proceed with our business), but effectiveness, efficiency and consistency in implementation is of the utmost importance.

However, we do know, as we have quickly learned in the financial sector, that economic change comes with an elevated demand on the level and quality of skills operating in the economy. We simply have to develop a sound labour force that is highly skilled.

**Broader public sector challenges**

Challenges that face the economy are numerous, but a critical one that we need to jointly deal with is the ability of the state to retain skills. While we have experiences of massive skills migration from the South African economy to the rest of the world, of equal concern is the migration of skills from the public to the private sector.

Noting that government is the nerve-centre of any economy, any loss of efficiency and productivity in the public sector will necessarily have a ripple effect across the rest of the economy.

However, herein lies a challenge. As the economy continues to grow, as it has been doing uninterruptedly since 1993, and as the financial sector grows to meet new demands arising from this performance, it will suck in more skilled individuals. This will of course increase the internal competition for these finite skills.

As the private sector sucks in more skilled labour, the challenge facing us as an economy is how to preserve the capacity of the state by retaining the much-needed skilled manpower within government? As a sector, we cannot purport to have an answer to this difficult and daunting question.

Some of us may already be saying, “What is the point?” The point is simple: until we, together as a country, develop seamless institutions that will allow for a balanced flow of skills between the public and private sector, we will forever experience a weakening of the public sector during economic upswings. This is clearly not sustainable.

How do we convince private sector experts to join government periodically. Instead of people taking their sabbatical leave in London or New York, how can we get them to want to spend this time doing productive work in government? And how do we conscientise public employees joining the private sector
with no long-term desire to stay in the private sector? We need to find answers to these difficult questions as they are crucial to the health of both the economy and our businesses.

**Business in the “Age of Hope”**

Although indirectly, the business sector is just as dependent on all levels of government being effective in delivering services to the public at large. The general public after all forms our client base, and business can only thrive if its clients are in a sound position.

The “Age of Hope”, as articulated by President Thabo Mbeki, can be given concrete content by the active support and involvement of the private sector. In a business context, hope is synonymous with growth – any business that stagnates will eventually die. This also applies to every individual, with growth being much more than physical growth.

We especially owe it to the poor of South Africa to give them a real opportunity of growing out of their present predicament.

The current emphasis on raising service delivery to the poor is of particular relevance because of the priority that access to financial services enjoys. Financial institutions generally view the entry-level market, consisting of people who have never before used financial services, as potentially the biggest growth market of the future.

Sanlam is itself targeting the entry level of the market, and it stands to reason that improved service delivery to this section of our population will expand our potential client base and ease our access to them. We of course recognise that we together with the state are partners in this endeavour, and we are therefore committed to enhancing access to our products and services, and improving the financial literacy of the population through education and training.

The full spectrum of government activity presently takes place within the context of the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative, ASGISA. Although ASGISA is limited in nature, and government has gone out of its way to state that it should not be regarded as a new set of comprehensive policies (GEAR II, so to speak), it has come the closest yet to defining a national vision for South Africa with which all sections of society can identify.

The ideals of halving unemployment and poverty by 2014 will continue to focus our minds, as challenging as these ideals may be.

The business sector has certainly accepted the framework spelled out in ASGISA as an anchor for its own plans and deliberations. For example, the simplicity of the 6% growth target makes it easy to identify with. By setting this goal, government has created a framework within which business can develop their expansion plans.

The aim of ASGISA is to identify key constraints that are holding economic growth and development back, and that are preventing the benefits of growth from being shared by all our citizens. As a starting point for a growth and development strategy, this approach cannot be faulted.

Among the six binding constraints listed by ASGISA, two stand out as being of particular relevance to this conference: firstly, a shortage of skilled labour in the South African economy in the public as well as the private sectors, including at a managerial level; and, secondly, deficiencies in state organisation, capacity and leadership.

Without the removal of these two constraints, the other constraints listed will be extremely difficult to address, for example the dire need to expand our infrastructure over a broad spectrum.

It can generally be said that South Africa is served by a good set of policies. If we compare ourselves to countries faced with challenges that are similar to our own, for example in the rest of Africa and in South America, we can rightfully claim to be leaders in policy making.

In fact, it is striking that those countries that have been able to improve their positions meaningfully in recent years (for example, Brazil), have by and large put in place the package of policies South Africa had implemented in the latter half of the 1990s.

While good policies are a necessary condition for economic development, they can only be as good as their implementation. Indeed, successful countries distinguish themselves from the pack through good implementation of their policies. A crucial component of policy implementation is capacity building.

The way I see it, capacity building is about the following:

- ensuring that the right man or woman is in the right job;
- ensuring that everybody is heading in the right direction, viz. that there is consensus on what the national project entails;
- ensuring that the necessary resources are available throughout the organization;
- creating the right incentives for all civil servants to perform to the best of their abilities;
- being dynamic and adaptable, learning as we go along;
- being transparent and accountable;
- being dedicated and prepared to make sacrifices; and
- being incorruptible, committed to the general welfare and not one’s own welfare, something to which President Mbeki alluded recently.

I am convinced that if we concentrate on the right things service delivery can be improved to such an extent that we will truly achieve accelerated and shared growth like never before.

**Conclusion**

Sanlam would like to commit itself to supporting the Senior Management Service conference, organised by the Department of Public Service and Administration, for the next three years. We trust that this long-term commitment, reflecting Sanlam’s faith in the value of this initiative, will go some way towards helping to ensure the success of JIPSA, ASGISA and other similar government initiatives.
The imperative of Batho Pele in a pot of transitions

It was not by accident that the national Cabinet endorsed the eight Batho Pele principles in 2004. I think it was a deliberative strategy following the Ten Year Review about what was working and not working.

The Ten Year Review was a moment of growing introspection for all South Africans, particularly government of South Africa. We asked ourselves what did we do right in the first ten years and where did we fall short.

If we had the opportunity to improve things, where would we improve them? If we had the opportunity to make further transitions in South African society and its governance, then where would we make those transitions?

I think the endorsement by Cabinet in 2004 was deliberative decision because the idea of “putting people first” was one of those things that we may not have always perfected in the first ten years of freedom and democracy.

It was not because we were malicious, out of touch and did not care about our people. It was because we sometimes got pre-occupied and prioritised so many different things in such a way that “caring for people” and “putting people first” was such a taken-for-granted notion. We thought we were doing it yet in the experience of people this was not what we were doing. Moving to Batho Pele was, therefore, one of the many transitions that were made in 2004.

### Shifting to the socio-economic

One of the transitions we made after 2004 as a result of the Ten Year Review was a shift from an emphasis (in the first
ten years) on the socio-political to the socio-economic.

In the first ten years we understood that we simply had to deal with the pervasive poverty that our people faced as a result of apartheid. We needed to make sure that services such as water reach our people because the overwhelming majority had no access to running water.

Electricity was also expanded because under apartheid the majority of our people did not have access to it. There was also a focus on building as many housing structures as was possible because housing was one of the major services where our people were denied access.

We also had to consolidate our democracy. We had the Constitution but we had to consolidate it so that people understood their rights and saw themselves as free. The first ten years, therefore, was largely about the social – getting in place things that our people required to move away from poverty.

It was also about the political which mainly meant consolidating the political process, making sure that there is no counter-revolution and the rights way of culture took root even in the face of great provocation by criminals who try to push us away from the human rights orientation by making it tempting for us to hang them.

In the first ten years we also had to ensure that our economy did not implode. We were not even at a space where we wanted to expand our economy. We had to maintain what we had before we could begin to expand our economy. So the first transition was from the socio-political now to the socio-economic.

On the socio-economic, we speak about those things that we must continue to do particularly in housing, water, electricity and other basic services. Where we make the major transition is towards the economic.

For the first time we have a Growth and Development Strategy. We have got ASGISA that is meant to kick-start economic growth. We also have possibilities of creating more jobs than ever before, and are training skilled people through changes in the education system.

So the transition I want to emphasise here is a transition from the socio-political in the first ten years, to the socio-economic in the second ten years. Batho Pele starts with you recognising that you are part of this transition that is being made in society. If our public service does not understand this, it does not understand its goal.

The value of quality

The second transition that I think spills off the first transition is the transition from the quantitative to the qualitative. In the first ten years we chased numbers. We needed to give five million people access to running water, two million people access to electricity, six million people access to telephones, one million people houses (in the first five years), etc.

In the first ten years, we were in a sense concerned with the figures that we had put into the public arena about what we would achieve. We were all dominated by the need to chase these numbers to ensure the quantification of change that we needed to make.

It was important for the credibility of government and the public service that we delivered on these numbers. It was
also important for the patience of our people that we delivered on these numbers.

The second transition meant that we needed to move from the obsession with numbers. We soon realised that we might have reached our quantitative targets, for example, with regard to housing, but we realised that the houses built were very small and were not of the kind of quality that we wanted.

So we did reach our quantitative targets, but did we get quality that we wanted out of it?

This second transition from quantity to quality has a direct bearing on Batho Pele because it was in the human interaction that we understood that quality was assured. It was what happened between a teacher and a learner, doctor and a patient that was important for quality. This was a key informant to the issue of Batho Pele.

**Obsessing with the public**

The third transition is the transition from government being internally focused, to government being externally focused. There was a shift from obsession with ourselves to a care and focus on our clients.

The first ten years was all about the three ‘r’s after our transformation: rationalisation, restructuring and representativity. These were the three ‘r’s that dominated government life in the first ten years of democracy.

The public service changed its face dramatically. It was necessary because you cannot be a representative state if you are not representative of the people. You cannot assume that the organograms that worked under apartheid should continue to do good things under democracy. They had to be changed.

The point that I am making is that we needed to shift, not because it was wrong, but because we had succeeded in our internal focus and in 2004 we needed to make a shift towards a focus on the community – hence the idea of “people first”.

In the second decade of freedom and democracy we were going to “put people first” and were going to change our focus from internal to external caring.

These were the three major transitions that we made in 2004. As a result, the approval of Batho Pele in 2004 was not an accident. It was a result of a big introspection about what we needed to do.

If there is any other lesson that we have learnt, it is that our public service across the country is a microcosm of our society. To a large extent, what we do in the public service will be reflected to society. What we experience in the public service will easily be experienced in society.

In the spirit of “charity begins at home”, we needed to get things right amongst ourselves in order to get it right in society. We therefore need to understand that Batho Pele is not simply an attempt to get public servants to care. Batho Pele is an attempt to genuinely treat the public service as the sample of society. We need to inculcate caring behaviours amongst us in order that they can naturally exude from you as you go about doing your work.

**Other mini-transitions**

We needed within the public service, to make a mini-transition from difference to diversity. The first ten years was a public service of different people – those that were inherited from apartheid and those that came in during democracy.

There were different languages, races, and cultural groups. They just worked, continued being different whilst sharing the same space. The transition we needed to make after the first ten years was to change the “difference” into “diversity”.

What diversity says is that we are all united by one or sets of umbilical cords of the South African nation and the public service, but at the same time we could be proud of the things that make us diverse. This takes us away from managing difference to utilising diversity because when we come together in our diversity, the diversity becomes the engine of creativity, new ideas and innovation.

Batho Pele premised itself on how you interact with those that are different to you within the public service and if it is easy in the public service when a different person comes to you as a client to serve them with care.

The second mini-transition that had to be made is a transition from cooperation to trust. We did not simply want the public service to follow instructions and cooperate with each other. We wanted public servants to reciprocate with each other. We needed public servants to understand that they are interdependent of each other. Trust should be as a result of recognition of each other’s competence and expertise which when joined together produces positive results.

We want to extend this between the spheres of government through the idea of the Single Public Service (SPS). The SPS will ensure the existence of trust between the three spheres of government.

We should avoid passing responsibility and blaming each other if things do not go as planned. Unfortunately, this is currently the norm especially in the relationship between the spheres of government.

Batho Pele is therefore first about us trusting each other so that we can engender trust with the public. We tend to badmouth each other in front of the public. This is because we do not recognise each other’s competence and try to pass the buck so that when blame points, it does not point at us.

**Conclusion**

The last of these mini-transitions, as a way of conclusion, is also to move from efficiency to caring and empathy. We have got to continue to be efficient, but at the same time we have got to be able to be empathetic in the way that we do our work.

This is so that when people come to us for services, they must not only judge us on our efficiency but the dignity with which the service is provided.
The Batho Pele Learning Network, which has been in existence for the past few years, is one of our many platforms that provide space for rigorous and robust debate and discussions on the best practices, lessons and experiences gathered as we grapple with our mandate of delivering quality services to the citizens of our country.

This year’s Learning Network has been more inclusive as we have managed to draw in some of our colleagues from Local Government. We acknowledge with deep appreciation the presence of different Municipal Managers who under difficult circumstances have left their highly demanding schedules to come and attend this occasion. This, I believe is in response to the invitation extended to them.

It is a great achievement as we move towards a Single Public Service (SPS), which seeks to truly integrate our many different systems of delivering services.

The Single Public Service and Batho Pele

For some of you, this will be the first time that you hear about what we call the “Single Public Service initiative”. The main aim of the SPS initiative is to integrate the delivery of public services across all spheres of government. This initiative has been approved by Cabinet and we are preparing the relevant legislative framework to enable its smooth implementation.

A number of work-streams have been identified, ranging from the harmonisation of conditions of service across all three spheres of government, HRD, ICT, to the creation of enabling legislation to ensure the realisation of the SPS, and the overarching access strategy for citizens.

Remember there is a general perception that Batho Pele is non-existent at Local Government, a perception one would caution against. The case study
from the Ethekwini Municipality and municipalities within the Western Cape and other provinces bear testament to the reality of a gradual and consistent cascading of Batho Pele to Local Government.

**Continuity in the use of case studies**

The two-day programme reflects a strong continuation to some of the case studies presented in the previous occasions of a similar nature. This type of continuity needs to be maintained to ensure that the public service is a learning organisation where learning leads to tangible results.

We cannot afford to have case study after case study and nothing happens thereafter. We need to ensure visible tracking of issues debated and resolved until we are satisfied that we have taken a step forward towards better service delivery for all.

Nor can we have a situation where every case study constitutes a baseline without a cumulative building on what already exists.

**Service Delivery Improvement Plans**

Another milestone we have achieved to date is to set in motion wheels geared towards the actual development of Service Delivery Improvement Plans (SDIP). As you are aware, the implementation of the Batho Pele programme occupies centre stage in government. This became even clearer during the President’s State of the Nation Address delivered in February 2006.

The Minister for Public Service and Administration (MPSA) further stressed the importance of the Batho Pele programme in her Budget Vote Speech of May 2006.

In line with this Cabinet has endorsed a strategy to revitalise Batho Pele, the central focus of which is the improvement of service delivery. The development of SDIPs as required by the Public Service Regulations (1999) should be prioritised in the public service.

In view of this, the Minister for the Public Service and Administration has set a target for the development of SDIP for implementation by all departments in 1 April 2007. To ensure that this happens, the DPSA has established a team to assist departments.

Many departments have already made use of the DPSA’s offer of assistance. Those who have not done so yet, and require assistance, should contact the DPSA team as soon as possible to arrange an appointment.

Once the SDIPs are in place and functional, the implementation of various Batho Pele initiatives will be strengthened. You will agree with me that unless we have credible and functioning SDIPs, there is no way in which we will be able to deliver improved services to the citizen.

The notion behind SDIPs is that you cannot improve what you cannot measure. An SDIP identifies areas of improvement. The next step will be the annual assessment of performance against standards stipulated in the SDIPs.

As we engage in our daily activities, we should remember the challenges lying ahead of us as public servants. To mention just a few, the 2010 World Cup and next year’s Anti-Corruption Summit (Global Forum V) come to South Africa as a test, in particular to us as public servants.

They are a test for our capability to sustain our record of successfully hosting international events. I want to urge you to prepare thoroughly for these and other challenges. I do not doubt the capacity that prevails among us.

This preparation also entails changing our mindset and becoming brand champions for selling South Africa as a destination of choice because South Africa is “Alive with Possibilities”.

**Conclusion**

The culture of learning, sharing and collaboration takes centre stage within our service delivery value chain. This cannot be over emphasized as I am convinced that colleagues will agree with me that only collective efforts will take us where we want to find ourselves.
Creating a centre for excellence

“Creating a centre for excellence!” was a statement that was made by the Director of Safety and Compliance, Nomagcisa Tsipa-Sipoyo, at a meeting that we had with the Head of Department. This became a slogan with which we try to achieve our service delivery goals.

The purpose of the Public Transport Centre is to create a transformed centre where the public will have access to efficient information services, that adheres to service standards and therefore addresses the creation of the centre for excellence.

At the end of a day we try to achieve the implementation of client-focused business processes and procedures in alignment with legislation. The important thing here is to manage the process from start to end, and not to see the process as little silos. We look at what the client wants and not at what the organisation wants.

We are also looking at the enhancement of the workplace – that it should be aligned with and promote the service delivery that we want to achieve. The third important part is addressing low staff morale. At least you can expect that, especially since people have been going through a four-year-long process of change which had resulted in very low staff morale.

Background

Our problem statement was that the Public Transport Centre operated within a business environment which did not
promote service delivery and therefore led to low staff morale and poor service delivery.

The centre operates within the three major functions. Firstly, the registration of all taxi routes, associations, members, drivers and vehicles. This was done by the Provincial Operating Registrar.

The second function is the administration of applications (in the back office) for taxi operating licenses and licenses for all modes of transport. This takes place through a close committee process.

The third function is the execution of special projects. This includes the current conversion and recapitalisation process. Currently, this is supported by a full back office administration in the three contact centres (Cape Town, George and Piketberg).

The major clients within the public transport industry in the centre are associations, operators, drivers, local authorities, taxi councils, meter taxis and the public itself. The basic business process is the administration of all the applications.

For each mode of motor transport there are at least 11 applications which vary from long distance licenses, licenses for special occasions, the bus licensing (e.g. for school buses), mini buses and tourism transport.

During the past four years there have been several interventions, of which the last one in 2006 is the most important one, where the Minister of Transport gave us the mandate to try and transform the centre into the Centre for Excellence.

When we started in 2006 there was already four years of work done. That included work done by the Organisational Development Component from the year 2000 to 2002.

The Organisational Development Component findings at that stage included the high rate of staff vacancy, especially within the management part of the organisation. That brought a lot of instability to the staff due to insecurity and lack of direction. People were just doing their jobs as they were told and when they were told what to do.

On the procedures side, there were outdated systems, no route verifications, no public transport plan, and the biggest finding was the existence of incomplete applications. As you can imagine, when an application comes into the system it has to be handled within the prescribed 90-day process prescribed in the legislation. If it is taken in wrongly, it has to go through the process and sometimes these incomplete applications (which were about 80% of them) led to a lot of process problems later on.

If we look at service delivery, between 15 000 and 20 000 applications per year went through the centre. The average waiting time for a person just to be helped was between two to six hours. Where the Act prescribed a 90-day process, the processing of applications went from six to 24 months.

There was no formal inquiries facility where low staff morale led to poor service delivery. Facilities layout was also poor. On the administration side, there were no policies in place and there was poor inventory control.

In general you could think that with low staff morale and the public having to wait for two to six hours in order to
get assistance, there was an immediate sense of aggressiveness from both staff and clients.

This led to corruption, fraud and even sabotage of the processes where we found thousands of applications lying in drawers with people not wanting to attend to them because the process was too long and they felt they were getting too behind in their work.

Also the cost of application versus the administration cost was a problem. In Cape Town an application would cost government R840, and in the George office about R4 000 and yet government only charges R25 per application.

In 2002 there was a recommendation for the implementation of the Improved National System to develop more client-focussed processes, enhanced customer interface, electronic document management system, electronic hearing system, and also refine Board responsibilities as it was determined that not all cases can be presented to the Board.

There was also a recommendation for the development and implementation of transport plans, and the importance of the role of local authorities in these plans. It was also recommended that this be supported as a proper structure, with job descriptions and a new management framework.

When the Task Team came in 2005 an intra-management team was appointed, which gave stability to the organisation. An interim process enhancement was made, with interim changes to the facility.

A call centre, help desk and bulk application desk were established. Traffic officers were appointed and the backlog in the system was reduced by 50%. However, not all recommendations were implemented at that time.

The 2006 interventions and phases of the project

The guiding concept of these interventions was to, where possible, centralise all Transport and Works-related services where they can be accessible to the general public. The objectives of this intervention were process enhancement, systems implementation and interfaces, facilities improvement, capacity and training, and communication to the community about the new services.

A special Steering Committee was established which was led by the Head of Department because buy-in from top management is very important. If you do not have buy-in from top management your intervention is destined for failure.

The Task Team (acting managers, OD), senior managers and representatives from the department were all part of the Steering Committee. We also appointed specialised consultants that dealt with Shared Service Centres, systems development, labor relations, and change management. There were also other consultants such as architects for the facilities.

The project consisted of three phases. The first phase consisted of basic buy-in and basic analysis of what the situation was at that stage. In the area of buy-in, we managed to establish political and management commitment and completed the revision process.

The structure and change management strategy was developed with posts advertised. The first phase also saw the design phase of the New Shared Service Centre. The phase also involved communication to the transport industry.

The second phase involves the detailing and roll-out of the project. It involves the development of the ideal processes including electronic document management, SMS in-contact right through the 90-day process, and a call centre. All these are in progress.

The second phase also involves data merging and go-live on NLTIS which is also in progress. The phase also involves the training of new staff, interim facility enhancement, a move to a new building, the amendment of administration fees, development of service standards, and communication to industry which is continuous.

Phase three involves the final implementation, testing and process enhancement. In this phase, there will be incorporation of all public transport related services into the New Shared Service Centre with services identified, confirmed and implemented within the Shared Service Centre.

Intervention enhancements

So far the enhancements that were done through the intervention include a contact centre which provides services to all clients. It is a one-stop contact centre. We have centralised back-office processing to bring down the costs of processing an application below R800. We have a running Electronic Process Management system which includes document scanning which has to comply with the 90-day process.

We have also implemented an on-site vehicle checking to promote safety and compliance. We found that a lot of people came in with a road worthy certificate that was issued the previous week, but the car is not road worthy. The traffic officers that we appointed deal with this immediately.

There is also electronic messaging throughout processing, a helpdesk, a clearance of backlog applications, upgraded and new facilities, a new structure and capacity.

Conclusion

Our challenge at this stage is changing the mindset of the industry, where the industry was so used to bad service to such an extent that it is difficult for them to find the New Service Centre and associate with it and the new processes that follow from this.

The achieving and maintenance of service excellence has also been a challenge. This is the case with setting a world-class standard sand being leaders for Provincial Operating Licensing Administration.

The other challenge has been implementation within the set time limit. One of our biggest challenges is the data interface and support from the national level. It has been a real battle to get this on the go.
This paper does not focus on the United Kingdom Charter Mark system, but rather on the lesson it has for the South African public service – namely the introduction of the Batho Pele National Standards.

The notion of the Batho Pele National Standards is still an idea. The reason it is presented here is because it has some ministerial approval attached to it as we are trying to make sure that we improve on Batho Pele. It is one of the ways to bring it forward for public critical commentary.

The 1997 White Paper on transforming the public service (Batho Pele) laid the foundation for a transformed public service delivery system. It transformed the public service from serving the minority to providing services to all citizens.

The White Paper is modeled on the UK’s Putting People First campaign championed by the Cabinet Office. As a White Paper, it informs part of the legislative framework for improved governance and it is complemented by other documents such as the Public Service Code of Conduct, Public Service Anti-Corruption Strategy etc.

Batho Pele Status Quo

Regular surveys conducted by the Office of the Public Service Commission (OPSC) and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) point to continued existence of the gap between policy and implementation generally. These surveys also point to the lack of management endorsement of Batho Pele with its implementation seen as the responsibility of human resources units.

There is also a lack of organisational culture necessary to promote the ethos of Batho Pele. This is coupled with fragmentation in the implementation of Batho Pele; ineffective implementation strategies (PMDS) and lack of attention to Batho Pele at local government level. Some progress has been made, but there is a need to do more.

In a 2004 media briefing Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi said, “Batho Pele cannot be owned by few and ignored by many.” This statement is testimony to a prevailing situation in many departments within the public service. It poses a challenge to us in terms of how we address this.
There is an emphasis on the need for measurement of compliance. This is what the SDIPs will attempt to do. The question is, against which performance standard? Let us explore an example that will assist us with international benchmarking.

**The UK Charter Mark System case study**

The Charter Mark is a national standard for excellent customer service in the UK public sector. It was launched initially in 1992 as an Award for Excellence. It is a quality improvement tool centred around the needs of the customer.

It links up well with other quality models like the EFQM and Balanced Scorecard. It recognises and encourages excellence and innovation with high standards delivered flexibly.

The Charter Mark is based on six criteria similar to the eight principles of Batho Pele. These six criteria include: to set standards and performing well; actively engage with your customers, partners and staff; be fair and accessible to everyone and promote choice; continuously develop and improve; use your resources effectively and imaginatively; and contribute to improving opportunities and quality of life in the communities you serve.

Each of these criteria has sub-criteria that are measured against a four-band scale of compliance:

- best practice (all criteria satisfied beyond requirements);
- full compliance (all criteria satisfied);
- partial compliance (some but not all met and those not satisfied could be put in place in three months); and
- major non-compliance (non of criteria satisfied and can be remedied in three months).

Assessment of compliance in the Charter Mark system is divided into two – internal assessment and formal assessment. Internal assessment is mainly self-assessment. It includes a web-based tool which people are free to use.

It gives an indication of the results of formal assessment (with no guarantees). It can be used as a management tool on the implementation of Batho Pele in departments.

As indicated, there are also formal assessments of compliance. This is done by accredited assessment organisations. Assessed organisations have the right to appeal the assessment results. Such results form the basis of certification of compliance.

**Interfaces with proposed national standard on Batho Pele**

By interfaces I am referring to the linkages that exist between what is intended and what is already happening. One of the major tools to foster compliance to Batho Pele are Service Delivery Improvement Plans (SDIPs) which focus mainly on setting standards but include consultative and redress arrangements.

Departments still compile SDIPs differently. For example, standards are defined differently and sometimes uninform of baseline levels and citizens’ demands. The new drive for compliance is, however, comprehensive but still without common performance indicators.

What needs to be understood is that the Batho Pele White Paper is inherently a policy framework. Because of this, it does not spell out details with regard to performance indicators. We will fill this gap through the Batho Pele national standard initiative.

There are clear linkages between what we are proposing and the Annual Report on the State of the Public Service. This OPSC document focuses on the different constitutional principles of public administration as explained in Chapter 10 of our Constitution.

With that, there are Batho Pele Audits (Citizens’ Satisfaction Surveys, Citizens’ Forums etc) which measure the extent of the implementation of Batho Pele externally. Although these are important, they do not foster the existence of the Batho Pele culture internally where managers should play an active role to promote it.

**Current developments**

The Batho Pele National Standard has been approved as a project to complement existing efforts in promoting Batho Pele. The DPSA is in a process of setting up a stakeholder team to facilitate the design and implementation of the Batho Pele national standard.

The initial design has commenced through the support of the Accelerated Development Team (Action Learning project). Ideally the design should have been completed in January 2007 with consultations for buy-in to be done in February 2007.

The final draft of the national standard should be submitted in March 2007 with preparations and launch of the standard done in April 2007.

**Conclusion**

I would like to conclude by providing the guiding principles for the implementation of Batho Pele. The implementation has to be guided by a bottom-up approach on recognition for the work already done in the promotion of Batho Pele.

This implementation also has to be developmentally orientated. It will do this by recognising different levels of development in the implementation of Batho Pele. It can also do this by striving towards getting all public sector institutions geared towards service delivery improvement through advice and support.

Another important guiding principle for implementing Batho Pele is attaining compliance with the Batho Pele policy and regulatory framework (the Batho Pele White Paper, Public Service Regulations – Part C, as well as legislation such as Promotion of Administration Justice Act, Promotion of Access to Information Act etc).

There also has to be commitment to high performance standards; and flexibility, which should be applied in the whole of the public service in the three spheres of government.
Kimberley’s Breastfeeding Mother’s Lodge

The Kimberley Hospital Complex is the only referral hospital in the Northern Province. Besides providing level one care (primary), it renders level two and three care (specialised care). It also provides paediatric care, where the services for children that we provide include medical, surgical and neonatal care.

One of the best approaches in the country is Kangaroo Mother Care. Because we are a baby-friendly hospital, we are promoting breastfeeding through the Breastfeeding Mother’s Lodge.

The hospital is located in a province that is largely rural. Communities in the area are largely poverty stricken with high unemployment, illiteracy and malnutrition rates. Perhaps more significant is that the area experiences high rates of infant mortality. You might remember that one of the Millennium Development Goals is reducing infant mortality. The Breastfeeding Mother’s Lodge needs to be understood within this broad context.

Due to the high unemployment and illiteracy rates most people who come to the hospital, outside Kimberley in particular, live in undesirable socio-economic conditions. The hospital is rendering services largely to people that come from this kind of background.

The lodge houses the mothers of children who have been admitted to the hospital. We want to ensure that the bonding between the mother and child continues uninterrupted.

We need mothers to continue breastfeeding. To us it is about caring for the infant, not necessarily a five-year-old,
but a baby that has lived for a few days with a mother discharged from hospital after giving birth.

**Problems that were faced before the initiative**

The Breastfeeding Mothers' Lodge initiative is an attempt to address a range of problems. On a monthly basis we used to admit 90 babies on average with extreme low birth weight. It is even worse now because of HIV and Aids. When we talk about children that die within five to 15 days after birth we can see if our interventions are working in terms of the stages in the development of a child.

The bed occupancy rate is also very high. This occurs when bed occupancy rate and average rate of stay is above the norm. The average length of stay for any condition in a rural setup is three to four days. Once a person stays more than this duration then there is something wrong with the system.

It could be wrong interventions, quality measures and level of competencies of both paediatricians and nurses. It might also be the result of improper monitoring of the progress of the patient.

The third problem involves the quality of care. The rate of readmission of neonates was high. If a baby is discharged after delivery and readmitted more than once, then there is a problem with clinical intervention.

Secondly, the rate of infections posed problems. In most instances people lose babies because of post-infections. Hence the issue of infection control in our hospital is critical.

The nutritional status of neonates is another area which concerned people. Lastly, the one that was most critical, was perinatal death, the death of a child after delivery.

**The nature of the lodge**

One of the initiatives that the hospital undertook in 1997 as part of the Wealth Health Organisation (WHO) and UNICEF recommendations was promoting breastfeeding and the Kangaroo Mother's Care. As a hospital we bought into this idea by providing 30 beds in the unit where we accommodate breastfeeding mothers of neonates.

The facility is managed by a health promoter with catering provided for the mothers. Basic hygiene resources such as bathrooms, soap, toothpaste etc are also provided. Security is also provided.

What is important to us in terms of the initiative is the kind of programmes that are running in the lodge One of these is promoting health, because we had to ask ourselves one question: What
are we going to do with a mother whilst the child is admitted?

In response to this question, the Paediatric Department together with the Obstetrics and Gynaecology departments, worked to teach mothers how to breastfeed and the importance of this, and on the promotion of basic hygiene.

Most of the mothers housed in the lodge are women from rural areas. They are high-risk mothers who cannot be delivered in a level one facility, they need specialist care. They move from wherever they are coming from to Kimberley. If the mother is going to be admitted for more than three days, then you need to take care of the mother. That is the rationale behind the mothers’ lodge so that a mother is able to stay to bond with the child.

The responsibility of the Paediatric Department is to ensure that the mothers get educational programmes and at the same time find a way of bonding with their children.

At certain times mothers need to go to the ward where children are to breastfeed. We encourage them to breastfeed mainly because they cannot afford to buy food for their children due to the socio-economic situation. Besides this, the best thing to do in order to nurture your child is to breastfeed.

Moreover, breastfeeding is very important in the first five days after the child is born, a period where we normally lose most children. It is a priority in the health sector that we do not lose these children, hence the emphasis on breastfeeding.

There are also skills programmes at the lodge. We have sessions where we let mothers do food gardening, hairdressing, sewing and knitting. They do all of this for their own benefit.

Resources needed to establish the lodge

What is needed is a place to accommodate mothers. There has to be a budget to provide meals. Personnel have to be available to manage the lodge. Managers have to be committed to the initiative. Support of the clinicians and nursing staff has to be solicited. The facility has to be maintained. There have to be programmes to engage mothers during their stay at the lodge.

The lodge was a management initiative so it was easy to implement. To be more precise, it was the initiative of clinicians and nursing personnel from the Paediatric Department which was supported by management, and Dietetics Department working hand in hand with the Department of Agriculture which provide the seeds for the mothers to take home when the child is discharged.

The Nutrition Department also conducted teaching sessions with the mothers and local business partners who donated soaps, toothbrushes, television etc.

Current status

The lodge is now part of the programme deliverables of the Paediatric Department. We also have scholarships for nurses. We now have two nurses who are taking care of the mothers. Their meals are now booked on-line because the catering services are also on-line.

There is also an information management structure and a reporting system in place. Quality assurance programmes are happening in the lodge and they are linked to mindset.

Conclusion

The lodge has ensured better bonding between mothers and children. Breastfeeding takes longer now, which is good for children. We are seeing a decrease in infections because of the programme. Physiologically the children are more stable and the mothers are more empowered.

Furthermore, the lodge has decreased stress in both mothers and babies. Communication between them improves. It also has a positive impact on the growth and development of the babies.

However, we do have challenges. The lodge is not within the hospital which creates security problems every time mothers have to go and breastfeed in the evening.

Continuous support for the skills programme is another challenge. It is also difficult to ensure sustainability once the child is discharged. We do not really know who provides after discharge.

It is also difficult to ensure compliance with the breastfeeding schedule. Sometimes mothers disappear on Friday and come back on Sunday.

Despite all this, we believe in the Bogota declaration of Kangaroo Mother Care of 1998 that “Kangaroo Mothers Care and Breastfeeding is a basic right of the newborn and should be an integral part of the management of low birth weight and full term newborn, in all settings and all levels of care in all countries”.

We are seeing a decrease in infections because of the programme. Physiologically the children are more stable and the mothers are more empowered.
Thabisile Mfeka, Senior Manager: Customer Services, stresses the importance of buy-in from all stakeholders and support from leaders in the implementation of Batho Pele.

The implementation of Batho Pele by the eThekwini Municipality

I want to share how we have implemented Batho Pele at eThekwini Municipality. But before I do that, I want to provide, as a way of introduction, the structure of eThekwini Municipality. The municipality has a staff complement of about 22 000 employees. It comprises seven clusters: Corporate and Human Resources; Governance; Health, Safety and Social Services; Office of the City Manager, Procurement and Infrastructure; Sustainable Development and City Enterprises; and Treasury.

Under these clusters there are various units which I will not mention here. Perhaps more relevant is that the office that deals with Batho Pele falls under Corporate and Human Resources cluster. The office of Batho Pele, therefore, reports directly to the Deputy City Manager Corporate and HR.

Background

In 1997 Batho Pele was initiated by the national government through the Batho Pele White Paper. As local government, we were not mandated to implement Batho Pele as it was targeted at provincial and national departments. However, at eThekwini Municipality we were proactive as we were impressed by Batho Pele and therefore adopted the initiative in 1998.

During this period there were no blueprints on how Batho Pele was going to be implemented. We were just doing everything positive that was done by other people. We were also not clear what was expected of us.

We therefore initiated service charts just like everyone else. Not that we knew what we were doing with them. We also had social clubs and events such...
as Batho Pele Awards and various other initiatives to promote Batho Pele.

In 2003 Batho Pele was given a home in the Corporate and HR cluster. We then held a workshop where we invited all department heads in the municipality and the City Manager. During the workshop, we engaged on what Batho Pele is and what is expected of us. A lot of questions were asked.

What role do we want Batho Pele to play in our organisation? What is our vision? On this, we saw Batho Pele as a watchdog where we can have offices where poor service delivery is reported. We are looking at Batho Pele taking this direction.

We also looked at the strategy that we had to create to ensure that we meet our objectives. We decided that we needed to develop a policy on Batho Pele beyond the White Paper. When we created this policy (as it was drafted and circulated to all the heads of department) and gave it to the Department of Public Service and Administration to make recommendations.

We also asked ourselves what impact do we want Batho Pele to create? You can have Batho Pele as a policy, but it cannot necessarily create any impact, hence our concern. The other question that we asked ourselves was what mandate will we give Batho Pele? What can the office of Batho Pele do when people bring complaints regarding poor service delivery? Will complaints be taken forward or they will just be reported without any action?

The office must have a mandate to follow-up on complaints with stated powers. We also asked which department will Batho Pele fall under? We brought it under Corporate and HR because the department caters for both internal and external customers. Lastly, we asked, what resources will we need to achieve our goal or vision?

**Implementation strategy**

Implementing was a difficult task because a few organisations had implemented Batho Pele. A lot of research was conducted to find out what other departments are doing with regard to implementing Batho Pele. We started benchmarking with other departments and other organisations on how they were implementing Batho Pele.

After the workshop mentioned above, it was decided that the first step in the implementation of Batho Pele was the appointment of a project manager or a coordinator for Batho Pele.

The project coordinator was supposed to interact with the deputy city manager and establish the scope and critical deliverables, and align strategies to support effective implementation of Batho Pele. The coordinator would also prepare and manage the business plan for the office of Batho Pele.

More importantly, the policy intended to improve service delivery and build effective relationships with the end-users of public service. It is important to mention that for this kind of policy to work, you must have total buy-in from all stakeholders. Here I am referring to councillors, city manager, and staff members from top management to general staff.

The coordinator nominated a task team to assist in the implementation of Batho Pele. The task team comprises the departments of Communication, Training, Corporate Policy Unit and Customer Services. The task team meets on a monthly basis.
The third step in the implementation involved the nomination of the Batho Pele champions by heads of department. The champions are supposed to establish if there were any bylaws and policies that contributed to the prohibition of service delivery.

For example, we found out that at the Department of Engineering their offices are closed every day at 1pm. One of the champions reported to the office of Batho Pele that this is a problem for visitors who come to the department at that time. After discussions with relevant stakeholders the offices started staying open at this time.

Champions would also identify activities which will be part of service delivery improvement. In addition, the champions would liaise with unit heads on weekly/monthly basis regarding the service delivery improvement programme. They serve to ensure that the unit heads address the concerns of staff members. They also organise in-house staff training such as cultural diversity programmes. Lastly, they identify employees who perform exceedingly well in their respective sections and advise the Batho Pele office on how they should compensate those employees.

The criteria used to nominate champions were diverse. Staff members were given a chance to volunteer. If there were no volunteers, the head of the unit would make a nomination. The champion has to be a customer service person with friendliness as an important attribute. We normally prefer somebody who is in a managerial position to be a champion mainly because we need someone who is empowered and not scared to knock on the door of the unit head to discuss concerns.

To be a champion, a person must be enthusiastic to cascade the Batho Pele information using the principles. For example, by having monthly meetings with staff.

**Batho Pele internal and external communication strategy**

Issues regarding Batho Pele should be constantly communicated with internal stakeholders. In the case of eThekwini Municipality, we engaged the city manager on a regular basis. As a result Batho Pele got onto the agenda of management’s strategic meetings. This made HoDs recognise the importance of Batho Pele.

To illustrate my point, this year we had Africa Public Service Day for the first time. In order to get buy-in we told the city manager what was happening and I was surprised that he discussed it at the management’s strategic meeting. Immediately after the meeting I got a lot of calls from HoDs asking me how they can help. So buy-in from the top is very important.

Councillors have played an important role in the implementation of Batho Pele. In order to get the Batho Pele policy adopted, I presented it in a Councillors Committee and it was adopted instantly.

The task team is also important in this internal communication strategy, as mentioned above. This was the same with unit and departmental champions (the latter represent sections in various units). We also have skills development and training as part of our internal communication strategy. Here we have a Batho Pele course on customer care.

We also do presentations at departmental level as part of the awareness programme. Events such as Public Service Week are significant vehicles for internal communication. Lastly, we use the intranet and e-mails to advance our cause.

On external communication, we feel that it is important to make our customers aware of their rights through our community mobilisers who go to communities to teach them about these rights. Also, events such as Public Service Week are a very useful external communication strategy. The Masakhane Roadshows, where all departments are participating, are also used to discuss the kinds of services we are providing to the public. We are also part of Mayoral Imbizos. Our Communications Department also published a lot on Batho Pele from eThekwini Municipality.

**Systems to improve service delivery**

There systems that we put in place to ensure that we improve service delivery. In order to achieve this, we train our staff members on customer care. There is a Batho Pele implementation progress survey that is done annually to measure our implementation progress. We have drafted our generic service standards and the document is being circulated to all stakeholders for comment. We have also established a Sizakala Customer Care Unit that is responsible for customer care line, customer satisfaction questionnaire, and decentralised customer service centres.

We have conducted surveys that have shown that the staff attitude has changed for the better and that there has been improved community participation.

**Lessons learnt**

In order to effectively implement Batho Pele, you need to get buy-in from all stakeholders. Commitment by role players is essential. Batho Pele should be institutionalised through structure in the organisation. We need to acknowledge that changing people’s mind-set is a process and must be built into organisational culture.

I must also state that Batho Pele should be championed at the highest level, by the city manager or the director-general. Lastly, Batho Pele initiatives should be tangible and be felt by the communities that we are serving.

**Conclusion**

The revitalisation of Batho Pele is a transformation process and not an event. Therefore, recognition should be made of the fact that transformation starts from within. It is not only about the skills and competencies, but about us as people.
Bheka Mnisi,
Department of Health
and Social Services,
Mpumalanga Province,
presents a turnaround
strategy on the filing
system at Rob Ferreira
Hospital

Improvement of Filing System at Rob Ferreira Hospital

Rob Ferreira Hospital was historically a segregated hospital with two different filing systems kept in two different filing rooms. In 1996 the filing system was integrated into one system using the date of birth as a key reference.

The date of birth filing system presented major challenges. For example, retrieving a file was a huge challenge. Files went missing and this impacted negatively on service delivery. Complaints were received from the public, other stakeholders and the Khaedu project participants.

A need to improve the filing system was therefore identified based on the Khaedu recommendations in order to make the hospital customer-focused.

Rationale, process and stakeholder recommendations

There were three major objectives for developing the new filing system: to improve the filing system at Rob Ferreira Hospital and to make the hospital customer friendly and accessible to the public. It was also intended to avoid the problem of missing files which impacted negatively on service delivery. The final objective was to reduce waiting times and long queues for customers.

The Khaedu Project which was commissioned by the Department of Public Service and Administration made findings on service delivery gaps at Rob Ferreira Hospital. They found that there was a poor filing system, long patient queues, loss of files and poor storage facilities.

Khaedu Project therefore recommended that the filing system and personnel management issues needed to be improved. It also recommended that queue patient management be initiated. It called for the reduction of the volume of PHC patients.

Khaedu also recommended that certain functions should be decentralised down to the hospital level. Finally, the project also called for the development of a good communication strategy with all staff members in the hospital.

The management of the hospital agreed to the implementation of the
turnaround strategy involving officials within the hospital (led by managers), service provider (Optiplan), project team (comprising different institutions), and the Department of Finance.

**Current situation, sustainability and replication**

The improvement of the filing system was prioritised as a quick win. The Optiplan Filing System has been implemented. The queuing system has been improved and patient waiting duration has decreased. Patient waiting time for doctors has also improved.

The retrieval of files has also improved with no files getting lost. Files are now linked to the PAAB electronic system. More important is that communities get the benefit of improved service delivery at Rob Ferreira through the turnaround strategy.

The Department of Health is planning to replicate the initiative in eight hospitals due to the benefits of this filing system. The system is implementable with accessories designed to meet the client’s needs.

There is, however, a plan to move the filing system to a new location, mainly because the filing space will be used for archiving purposes. There are also possibilities of linkages to electronic systems.

**Lessons learnt**

Through the new filing system we have learnt that improved service delivery initiatives can be implemented in a collaborative environment. We have also learnt that an improved filing system increases the accessibility of services to communities due to reduced patient waiting duration. The queuing system also improves.

The system also allows for enhanced service delivery initiatives which increase the volume of service recipients at Rob Ferreira Hospital. This has resulted in the hospital becoming “the hospital of choice”.

Finally, participation in the Batho Pele learning network increased knowledge capacity of management and officials at Rob Ferreira. So the learning network should be applauded for this.

**Conclusion**

Throughout the project the involvement of stakeholders is essential, especially if it is an initiative that will benefit the community. There has to be active involvement of the public service transformation and service delivery improvement unit in the Office of the Premier. Strategic partnerships with other countries can be used to the advantage of improving service delivery.
The International Marketing Council of South Africa (also known as Brand South Africa) has an annual budget of R80 million to go out to the whole world and market South Africa as a destination of choice. However, this advertising has to be linked with improvements in the actual brand. This is to ensure that when people come into the country they get the true brand experience so that the brand promise is not broken.

If you see a fantastic advert and logo, you should not have a different and unpleasant experience when you come to the country. So there is a need for representation and integration in people’s behaviour and other brand factors.

As a result, we look at all domestic mobilisation and building national pride as one of our major strategies in improving South Africa as a brand. We are therefore engaging public servants by sensitising them to the national brand and in preparing for the 2010 Fifa World Cup.

**Brand South Africa and its role**

Brand South Africa is a Presidential initiative established in August 2000 upon the realisation that it was absolutely imperative to create a positive and compelling brand image for South Africa. It is aimed at positioning South Africa to take its rightful place with regard to trade, tourism and investment.

Our key objective is to build a positive image for our country. Because we are trying to attract trade and investment into our country, it was a logical step to try to create a positive brand image of the country. This is so that Brand South Africa becomes a vehicle for most people to engage with and have packaged information about South Africa.

I must also state that a consistent brand image will create a strategic advantage for our country in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

Brand South Africa’s major role, domestically, is to drive national pride through the public service. It also seeks to assist the public service to prepare for 2010 and to define the behaviours necessary to ensure that the public service delivers on its mandate of service delivery.

As far as the DPSA is concerned we have started matching the Batho Pele principles to the values of the national brand which is a key factor for us.
Rationale for the Brand Champions Programme

Why do we need the Brand Champions Programme? The programme seeks to create brand champions out of the ordinary South Africans to represent the chosen values of the nation.

South Africa exists in a very competitive global environment. We are competing with provinces in China, cities in England, eastern Europe, Brazil etc. One clear example of this competition is that 90% of the world’s luggage is made in a town in China that is not bigger than Cape Town. So we will never be able to compete in areas that our competitors are far advanced in.

Our call to action is the depth of the spirit of our people. However, as a developing country we cannot afford to be lax and we cannot assume to be sure of the future. We are consistently under the spotlight, particularly because of the 2010 World Cup.

Just a few facts to concretise what I am saying. For every visitor that comes to our country and has a good experience, three more people are likely to come. For every visitor that comes to our country and has a bad experience, ten more people are likely not to come.

For every one person that comes to the country and has a negative brand experience either through the police, immigration officials, customs officials, hotel staff, taxi drivers, or public servants generally, that person can cause 10 potential visitors not to come to the country.

We know that 70% of customer brand perception is determined by experiences with people.

The public service which is in the frontline in terms of engagement with our country is critical in shaping perceptions about our country whether the visitor is a tourist or an investor coming to trade with us.

Just to paint the picture a bit more vividly, investors look past the clever advertising and look for quality and reliability. This is not different in terms of product branding as tourists look past the brand promise and look for depth of experience.

Being a developing economy requires us to do something special. It requires us to differentiate ourselves from the competition.

We believe that the public service mandate and our requirement from the public service has shifted. The public service, for us, is there to deliver phenomenal experiences for each and every person engaging with the South African brand before, during and after the 2010 World Cup. The South African brand experience is created by us. No one else is going to do it for us.

The importance of this is evident in other countries’ commitment to improving their branding as countries. For example, India has a budget of $300 million a year to promote tourism and investment into the country. We all know that some parts of India are worse than Alexandra township in Johannesburg, but this has not dented the image of India as the economy continues to grow and continues to be a destination for international investment and tourism.

We do not have this luxury of people hearing negative stories about South Africa and still wanting to invest or visit the country. With us, they hear one negative story and that has an effect. So no one is going to improve perceptions about our country, but us.

As Brand South Africa we would like to assist the public service to create the appropriate brand behaviour, brand discipline, brand language, brand culture, and brand leadership. This is critical in starting to create the depth of experience when people engage with our country.

Our competitors are far more advanced in terms of defining who they are, their size and scale of the economy. What is going to set us apart is the depth of experience when people come to South Africa, feeling very welcomed in the country, with us having a sense of ubuntu.

Conclusion

How can the public sector get involved? We have a team of facilitators that invite people and engage them in a half-day process on the BCP, so there is training involved. We have the budget to do this from the Presidency and have to report back to the President. We would like to report on our progress in driving national pride within the public service.
The “Mystery” of Knowledge Management

Knowledge Management (KM) is not really a mystery. Yet many experience it as such.

This is partially because of the very complex nature of the Knowledge Economy – which is where we find ourselves at this time of human history – and partially because of the highly superficial way in which KM is presented in South Africa.

Internationally public talk about KM surfaced approximately 14 years ago. In the beginning it was all about a practical response to an operational problem in the United States and Europe. It generated an avalanche of publications and a great deal of emotion.

And it quickly attracted consulting firms and librarians. Both groups, unfortunately, were and are seriously unequipped to deal with the fundamental issues of KM.

The initial practical problem was in reality just a surface expression of a fundamental and revolutionary process which is still in progress. South Africa began to take note of KM around 2000. By and large, up to now, the talk remains focussed only on the surface phenomenon. Not surprisingly it delivers little value.

But, since the initial issue was relatively simple and basically operational, it has led to the assumption that KM can be performed by anyone and consists of a set of recipes.

This is the death of KM in any organisation.

Surface KM – operational knowledge sharing

In the late 1980s a management wave of “downsizing” and “rightsizing” to drive
labour costs down started to sweep around the world’s advanced economies. In South Africa a similar process has taken place since the late-1990s, driven (mostly) by politics.

Soon it becomes clear, however, that “rightsizing” results in the loss of operational efficiency. Management wakes up to the fact that the loss of “labour”, today, actually means the loss of knowledge-able people.

In the early 1990s in Europe and the US this was a new insight. Up to then work was not associated with knowledge-ability.

When this dawns on management their question becomes: How do we reduce the number of employees, but retain the knowledge? That is normally the moment the cry for “knowledge sharing” is born. People are going to be retrenched anyway, but before that their knowledge has to be “extracted and captured”.

Since most people are not fools, they resist all sorts of attempts to “extract” their personal knowledge. The counter force of consultants, librarians and KM practitioners then spend endless hours devising strategies to entice the “sharing” and capturing of personal knowledge.

The stalemate is evident in the never-ending laments one hears when KM practitioners come together, about how “difficult” it is to get KM (defined as knowledge sharing, of course) “off the ground”.

In 1995 the Japanese author Nonaka introduced to the management world a distinction by the philosopher Michael Polanyi between “tacit” and “explicit” knowledge. Since then the terms “tacit” and “explicit” have become the signature jargon of the sharing school of KM. Some research that followed did indeed produce useful insights, in particular in respect of web-based portals, and communities of interest, practice and purpose. In the bigger scheme of the global knowledge economy, however, these contribute little value and certainly do not justify whole divisions for KM in organisations.

To see KM as knowledge sharing suffers from at least two fundamental mistakes. Number one, tacit knowledge is only useful when it is tacit. To “extract” it is like taking a heart out of a human body. Tacit knowledge is completely useless outside a knowledge-able person. Tacit knowledge is insight and skill, and that is acquired only through hard learning and not by sharing.

Secondly, knowledge sharing models of KM let themselves be taken in tow by
management’s wrong understanding of the problem. Knowledgeable people should never have been set out of the door in the first place! The root problem is simply bad overall talent management. It is not the function of KM to cover that.

Parallel to the sharing school a much more sophisticated discourse on KM was established from the mid-1990s. Drawing on a combination of advanced thought derived from complexity, systems and chaos theories, computational advances, cognitive science and organisational design theory, a discourse on KM has developed with the focus on knowledge creation.

The fundamental question is to determine what you will need to know tomorrow. And then you have to mobilise activities of research and innovation, interpretation, decision-making, and even knowledge destruction in your quest to create tomorrow’s knowledge. In some circles this is now called Thought Leadership.

None of this fell from the blue sky. Let us see how it came about.

**The knowledge economy**

Why did companies want to rightsise in the first place? In hindsight rightsising was no more than a symptom of a major revolution in the making.

The gist of the revolution – through which we are all living today – is very well formulated in a popular way by Thomas Friedman in his recent book *The World is Flat*. Quoting the economist Jeffrey Sachs, he says: “Until the scientific revolution began in the 17th century, virtually everyone everywhere [in the world] was living on the edge of subsistence.

“But after three straight centuries of technological and scientific advances, subsistence is no longer the norm for everyone. Steam power, machine tools, electricity, and ultimately computers, software and the World Wide Web have produced both the Industrial Revolution and the post-industrial services revolution, enabling individuals and communities to become vastly more productive … But the tools and skills that are crucial to improving productivity, and driving our standard of living, become more and more advanced with each new generation. Therefore you need more and more knowledge to get the most out of them.

Since 2000, following the European Union, this revolution is called the Knowledge Economy. Knowledge Management is a direct descendant of the Knowledge Economy. In its purest sense KM is about the question of how organisations and societies should be structured and managed if they are knowledge-intensive organs in the knowledge economy.

The knowledge economy is driven by two factors: dynamic knowledge (read: creativity) and knowledge technology (read: computation).

**Dynamic knowledge and the science revolution**

What is dynamic knowledge? In a nutshell, it is the knowledge regime which develops when science becomes the basis of knowledge. Scientific knowledge is knowledge which is actively constructed through methods deliberately designed to discover and analyse what lies beyond that which is visible to the human eye.

Science does not rely on experience but on creative reasoning. The scientific mindset is not interested in how the world appears, but in the invisible dynamics that drive the world – and how to manage those dynamic forces to change the world to suit us better.

Science constructs knowledge, it does not inherit it. Today, for example, we know that the world is round, because science has worked it out, not because we can see it with our natural eyes.

This contrasts with traditional modes of knowledge production. For as long as human beings have lived in the world they have employed knowledge. But that knowledge was for all practical purposes acquired through experience and handed on from generation to generation.

Consequently, knowledge hardly changed, and if so it took centuries. Knowledge was inherited and perhaps tweaked, but not constructed.

The scientific knowledge revolution started 300 years ago when a few individuals started to experiment with ways to create (new) knowledge. Scientific theory and abstraction began to replace experience. Experimentation and analysis took the place of repetition.

As science grew, so did the capacity to change the world around us. Soon a physical revolution, known as Industrialisation, followed. First in Britain 200 years ago, reaching South Africa in the 1930s, scientifically constructed knowledge began to reshape the physical world.

A non-natural (industrial) world started to emerge. The world of technology, machines, infrastructure and organisations which we inhabit today is entirely the outcome of this revolution.

In what way is this knowledge dynamic?

It is dynamic because of the way it comes into being through deliberate construction. That already distinguishes the science-driven industrial age from any other one. It is also dynamic because
of what happens with the (constructed) knowledge.

In the industrial age the most important use of knowledge is to embed it in artefacts (machines) which then continue to exercise the knowledge (like your car which gets you to work). The purpose of knowledge creation is not the knowledge itself, but to apply it to our world so that our lives become easier (we hope).

In the era after the science revolution, knowledge is not primarily codified, but engineered into machines, buildings and systems. You can burn all the written manuals about your car, but as long as the car exists the knowledge exists and the car will work.

Thus the physical environment in which we live today – the buildings and systems – are the scripts of scientific knowledge in action. In every building, machine or system resides an enormous amount of knowledge.

We call this the knowledge economy today because we have come to realise that what is called economic growth by economists is nothing else than the accumulation of knowledge over time in the form of the physical constructs of our world, based on the knowledge constructed through science.

It is that knowledge that makes the world around us function.

The knowledge of the knowledge economy is dynamic for a third reason. It would be a serious mistake to view the science revolution and the industrial age as a once-off event. The history of the last 300 years shows clearly that knowledge proceeds around us, the knowledge we individually and collectively need to operate productively in such an environment undergoes revolutionary changes as well.

We find ourselves drawn into a human-side revolution to which the answer is continuous learning. Human beings are not exempt from the dynamic of knowledge!

And, indeed, an enormous body of knowledge – albeit hugely contested – about the human side has been constructed over the past century.

The central question driving the human-side knowledge construction is simple: What human structures and systems in society and in the work place fit best with the evolving dynamic of knowledge and the production processes that emanate from this?

Over the last 50 years the consensus has grown that the best macro structure is a democratic society, within which organisations function as corporate citizens, with government performing a regulatory function to smooth out imbalances.

Some societies are doing better than others in this respect. South Africa is fortunate to fall in the category of “better”. But, getting the macro structures right is only the beginning. The decisive moment comes in the micro structures and moments.

That is the point where knowledge acts, or is created. That is the point on which KM focuses in practice. How to structure and manage the organisation in the moment of actual knowledge dynamism?

Enter knowledge technologies

Since the late 1980s, as if overnight, a new technology popped up on almost everyone’s table. It was the technology of computation.

It is quite unfortunate that it has become known as Information Technology. That makes it sound as if it is a super postman that also serves you with TV and doubles as a telephone company, albeit a bit more fancy and mystical.

However, these functions are simply spin-offs. The essence of computation is that it brings new and much more advanced ways of dealing with the dynamic of knowledge. For that reason computation has increased the rate of construction of knowledge (and discarding of “old” knowledge) exponentially.

And it has given KM a “tool” which allowed it to surface as a serious discipline.

A computer is a machine with more or less sophisticated artificial intelligence capacities. Thus it is technology that supports, and sometimes substitutes, human cognition.

In the history of humanity the computer is the first knowledge technology at our disposal. It is the first machine ever to substitute for brain power. All the other machines that were invented over the last three centuries substituted for brawn power.

Computers help us remember, they calculate infinitely faster than we do, they allow us to visualise and simulate difficult ideas, and they help us communicate in ways not even dreamt of 20 years ago. (The engine of your motor car does not communicate with the engine of your neighbour’s car, but your computer does!)

But most importantly, because they are artificially intelligent, they are capable of semi-autonomous functioning.

Since the mid-1990s these computing machines have been linked up in a global web. The result is the biggest revolution in the history of the production processes of the industrial world, leading to the fundamental redesign of
organisations and a revolution in the skills and knowledges required.

Because they do not have to sleep, they are now the 24/7/365 agents running the world for us as our proxies. This means that they are also important decision-making agents in a devolved way.

The birth of knowledge sensitive and the death of bureaucratic management

A world full of linked up, semi-autonomous computers is still so new that we are struggling to understand the scope of the revolution brought about by them. But two aspects are clear.

One is that computing has brought with it a vast new set of knowledges and skills of its own. Half a generation ago words such as the following would not have meant anything: software architecture, human-machine interface, scenario building, virtual reality, distributed cognitive systems, learning organisation, ubiquitous computing, network design, document engineering, multimedia, semantic web …

Today, these skills and knowledges are becoming the basics for all levels of all organisations and production.

Secondly, that means we are living through the dying days of bureaucratic organisation. On the one hand there are the new computation-enabled knowledges which are mostly in direct conflict with bureaucratic work processes and skills. On the other hand we have massive organisational and societal structures which are the outcomes of three generations of bureaucratic evolution.

By 1880 industrial society had grown to such an extent that new modes of documented management were necessary to maintain it. The eventual result was bureaucracy: lots of people sitting in lots of offices, creating an immense number of documents (including rules about the creation of documents) and moving their paperwork up and down so-called line functions.

Scores of clerks were employed to collect and trace the data, collate them into synthesised documents and deliver that to the “top” management who were the only ones mandated to take decisions.

The British and German (and later other) governments quickly adopted this, and so the modern civil service was born, providing work for millions of people. Entire state education systems were subsequently developed to produce the millions who could read and write in bureaucratic style and format.

But the success of bureaucracy was also its downfall. By 1980 the global economy had grown in volume and complexity to such an extent that the time-consuming processes of bureaucracy had become an obstacle.

Bureaucracies are incapable of adapting to fast-changing circumstances such as we experience today. And they are notoriously incapable of taking decisions. No wonder, one after the other the state-run or managed economies collapsed. What we witness in Zimbabwe today is a sad – and belated – example.

In the last 25 years all the successful economies of the world have shifted to productivity based on agile private organisations which take rapid knowledge decisions. Parallel to this, computing has become ubiquitous, because that is the primary tool in a knowledge intensive environment. Besides, computing systems provide the capability to automate the little bit of bureaucracy still needed.

Today, the non-bureaucratic organisation in an advanced economy is of necessity a knowledge organisation. They are organised dynamically and on the core assumptions of systemic trust and individual imagination.

The work processes of such organisations are open ended to allow for the exercise of knowledge construction. Employees are not hired on the basis of rigid job descriptions but for their knowledge construction abilities, and skills to synchronise with knowledge technologies.

Overall organisational strategy provides direction, while individual creativity is encouraged. What steers the organisation is not a set of rules but mutual commitment to shared values and work is preferably performed in task teams who commit to mutually supportive personal creativity.

What bureaucratic functions remain necessary are automated through advanced information systems, thereby freeing human capacity for creative action – as opposed to perfunctory performance of standard operating procedures.

All in all, work becomes enterprise, jobs are activities of self fulfilment, being an employee means assuming responsibilities for co-team members as well as for the overall success of the organisation.

KM in a knowledge organisation

The brief outline of the factors impacting on the question how knowledge is to be managed today should make at least one point very clear: the question of knowledge management is extremely complex.

It should also be clear that KM can never be understood as a set of rules. KM can only be understood as leadership capacity capable of detecting the specific dynamics of knowledge in a given situation and the ability to mobilise the organisation to derive value from the dynamic.

Knowledge Management can only be performed on behalf of organisations by people who are thoroughly knowledgeable as Thought Leaders. If not it will remain a mystery – in the same way as the working of Koeberg Nuclear Plant remains a mystery to all of us because we are not experts in the field.

What do knowledge-able KM practitioners have to be competent in?

To manage in the knowledge economy general management needs a very clear insight into the dynamics of knowledge in general and the current trends in the knowledge economy in particular. This is the first function of a KM division – to trace and interpret for strategic purposes the global trends in this respect.

Following closely on this the KM division will compare such trends with the various dimensions and systems of
knowledge operative in the organisation, and interpret their value to the goals of the organisation when viewed against the broader global picture.

To do so requires highly theoretical knowledge about the knowledge economy, global networks, complex adaptive systems and complexity-related KM applications such as the Cynefin model of Dave Snowden. It also requires skills in social network analysis, information flow analysis and organisational sensemaking.

It might even involve the use of the tool of organisational storytelling as developed by the World Bank and some KM theoreticians.

A second type of activity one expects from a KM division relates to the design of the organisation. The dynamic of knowledge requires a dynamic organisational vehicle if it is to be productive. This entails the design of strategies to reinforce or to re-channel the dynamics of knowledge in the organisation.

It involves a host of possible interventions, but almost always organisational restructuring, or workflow changes, and intelligent reconfiguring of information systems. To do so successfully requires a deep understanding of human computer cognitive interface, organisational design and sensemaking, and product specific knowledge.

Increasingly knowledge of E-business systems and workflow is required.

The third type of activity relates to individual knowledge commitment. Knowledge organisations cannot live on structures alone. They need knowledgeable people. It is not the KM role to engender personal commitment (without which people will not offer their imagination to the organisation).

But assuming the mutual trust and commitment exists, (thanks to good management) the KM role is to provide interventions which allow for the imagination and creativity to surface. In this respect the use of knowledge technologies, such as visualisation, simulation and advanced decision-making support systems, are indispensable.

It also requires very sophisticated facilitation of scenario teasing events, rooted in a thorough understanding of organisational sense-making and shared values. Very often this type of KM activity is known as “organisational learning and intellectual capital development”.

A fourth, but related, KM field is the design and integration of knowledge-enabling systems. Too often these fail. It is no easy task to align the logic on which technological systems function (which is basically a mathematical logic) with the logic of human beings who are mostly not mathematical experts.

In the last decade or so the field of knowledge gets “old” very fast. The rate of obsolescence is in fact increasing. It is the function of KM divisions to eliminate old knowledge from the organisational systems and minds.

Finally, in the knowledge economy, knowledge is the appropriate organ to determine that.

The sixth task: Knowledge organisations – because they are not routine based, but live from creativity and imagination – are hugely vulnerable to inadequate communication. In knowledge-intensive contexts communication becomes a very complex activity.

To date most organisations manage only to perform information dissemination – and the result is information overload because information outside of a knowledge framework is meaningless. This is the antithesis of communication.

In a knowledge-intensive context communication is the ability to interpret the knowledge needs of sections of the organisation and to inform them accordingly. It is the function of KM divisions to develop communication-enhancing, discretionary information distribution systems.

**Conclusion**

Sourcing, screening and negotiating for and with talent is not a human resource function in a knowledge organisation. Talent is more than having an appropriate qualification. Talent in the knowledge organisation involves knowledge-ability. The KM division, based on a holistic understanding of knowledge, is the appropriate organ to determine that.

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In the last decade or so the field of knowledge organisation involves a live learning organisation. •
Knowledge services: The “Why” of Knowledge Management

By Dr Albert Simard, Director, Knowledge Strategies, Office of the Chief Scientist, Natural Resources, Canada

It is generally recognised that science creates new knowledge that increases the standard of living in developed societies. The same can be said for innovation that uses knowledge to develop products that satisfy the wants and needs of consumers.

At a grand scale of scientific and technological progress, it can be said that knowledge flows from its source to society. At a scale of knowledge organisations, however, the reality is that some knowledge flows: somehow, somewhere, sometime.

In a knowledge organisation, people use systems and processes to generate, manage and use knowledge to support organisational goals, learning, and adaptation. From this definition, we see that knowledge management provides a link between generating knowledge and using it and that this is done within the context of achieving organisational goals.

Goals specify what a private or public sector organisation wants to accomplish in relation to its business or mandate, respectively. This article is about the business of a knowledge organisation – transferring knowledge-based products and services to clients or citizens through knowledge markets.

Since the invention of writing, information and knowledge have been the lifeblood of organisations. Bartlet (1999) notes: “Organisations aren’t just structure. Structure is just the skeleton. Organisations also have a physiology – the flow of information and knowledge is their life blood – and a psychology, representing people’s values and how they think and act.”

Similarly, Evans and Wurster (1999) point out: “Fundamentally, information and the mechanisms for delivering it are the glue that holds together the structure of businesses.” Buckman (2004) takes the argument even further: “Ever since the first human clan enjoyed the warmth of the first tame fire, it’s been true that knowledge shared is knowledge multiplied. The more a group knows of what its members know, the better it can perform in the world.”

In essence, if the internal flow of information stops, an organisation cannot function very well.

From a broader perspective, organisations are systems that exist within the context of their socioeconomic environment. Lynch and Kordis (1988) state: “Open, or living, systems are always exchanging matter or energy with the outside environment.”

Similarly, Amidon (1997) notes that: “No enterprise is an island – especially in the knowledge economy ... The flow of knowledge must transcend traditional organisational boundaries.”

Finally, Mcgee and Prusak (1993) point
out that: “In an information economy, organisations compete on the basis of their ability to acquire, manipulate, interpret, and use information effectively. Organisations that master this information competition will be the big winners in the future, while those organisations that don’t will be quickly overtaken by their rivals.”

It is apparent that in both business and government the consequence of not providing something that markets or society want or need is that the environment will not provide the resources, in the form of profits or a budget, that the organisation needs to sustain itself.

From these arguments, it is evident that knowledge organisations must do two things well to remain relevant and sustainable – run the organisation efficiently and provide knowledge-based products and services to their clients.

As with yin and yang, neither is complete nor sufficient without the other. Without satisfied clients an organisation cannot sustain itself, and without an organisation there is no way to provide services that satisfy clients.

Yet, in an era of specialisation, those who use knowledge to serve clients and those who use other knowledge to run organisations tend not to fully appreciate the importance of, nor understand the other side of, this inseparable duality. Unless we bridge the gap between knowledge management and an organisation’s business, KM will remain a “factor of production” – a function that is poorly understood by business leaders, with costs to be minimised.

How much better for KM to be viewed as a “strategic investment” in the business – something that should be proportional to the return on that investment.

This paper presents a framework for managing organisational content (data, information and knowledge) that addresses and integrates both organisational management and client service. The framework is based on a knowledge-services system model developed by Natural Resources Canada (Simard et al., 2006). Although the model is based on government science-based organisations, it should be applicable to a broad range of knowledge organisations in both the public and private sectors.

As noted by Davenport (1998), “Although simple answers to complex problems are intuitively appealing due to their apparent clarity, knowing more usually leads to better decisions than knowing less.”

Management frameworks

The first concept that I want to define is “knowledge organisation” which is an organisation in which people use technology and processes to generate, manage, share, use and transfer knowledge to support organisational goals, learning and adaptation.

The second important concept is “knowledge services” which are programmes that produce or provide content-based outputs with embedded value, intended to be used or transferred to meet user wants or needs. “Output”, on the other hand, is a collective term for content, products, services or solutions that have been produced and transferred by an organisation to satisfy external user wants or needs.

Lastly, a “framework” is a structural outline of the essential components of an organisation, system or processes, and the relationships among them.

From these definitions, we see that a knowledge organisation produces, uses and transfers knowledge; knowledge services are the programmes through which this is done, outputs are what is produced, used and transferred, and a framework is how it all fits together.

Purpose

A framework is positioned roughly in the middle of a hierarchy of organisational processes that range from why an organisation exists to daily work activities. The business processes are: business case, vision, charter, governance, policies, strategy, framework, plans, programmes, projects and services.

A framework lists everything needed to implement an organisational strategy and describes relationships among the elements. A framework provides an outline for planning how programmes, projects and activities will be undertaken.

The position of a framework in this hierarchy is pivotal. Starting from the top leads to a results-based or demand-driven approach to managing an organisation. That is, what business are we in and how do we conduct that business?

Starting from the bottom leads to a capacity- or supply-driven approach. That is, what do we do well and how can we market what we do? Using a cooking analogy, a top-down approach involves deciding what to cook (intended result), finding a recipe that lists the ingredients (the framework) and buying the ingredients (capacity-building). By shopping first, an infinite variety of meals can be prepared.

A bottom-up approach involves searching through recipes (the framework) to find a list of ingredients that corresponds to what is available in the pantry (supply) and following the instructions for cooking that meal (plan). One can vary the meal, but the choices are limited by what is available.

Returning to our organisation, regardless of the management approach, a framework is both central and pivotal.

Frameworks serve a number of organisational roles. They provide structure in a complex environment. By revealing hidden patterns and functional relationships, a framework helps in understanding complex processes – a necessary precursor to measurement and management.

A framework also shows what the picture looks like. Like a blueprint or architectural drawing, seeing the intended end result and how individual pieces relate to that result and to each other helps to organise the many pieces of the management puzzle.

It provides a basis for planning and action. Structure and organisation provide a sound basis for selecting an approach, prioritising work and planning activities.

Framework Attributes

Desirable attributes of a service-based framework are:
• Independence – The framework should be independent of content, issues or organisation; it should be applicable to any knowledge services.
• Level – The framework should be based on a single department or enterprise; mandates, authorities and resources are tied to legally constituted organisations.
• Scalability – The framework should be scalable upwards to multiple departments or businesses and downwards to specific domains or business lines.
• Primary driver – The primary driver should be the departmental mandate or business charter because an organisation must first exist and have the means to produce outputs.
• Secondary driver – The framework should also respond to user needs for organisational outputs to reflect a demand-driven approach to services.
• Process – The framework should be based on use rather than delivery of services to actively lead to outcomes and benefits, rather than passively lead to receipt of outputs.

Framework dimensions

A service framework has four dimensions: scale, infrastructure, content and outputs. They are discussed in order of increasing relative importance for our purposes. Each framework dimension is part of all subsequent dimensions.

Thus, scale is part of infrastructure, both are part of content, and all three are necessary to manage outputs.

The four dimensions are defined below and discussed in the remainder of this section. “Scale” the spatial, temporal and organisational magnitude, span or level of outputs and their intended use. “Infrastructure” is the underlying foundation of human resources, organisational management, work processes and technology that enable organisations to generate, manage and transfer outputs. “Content” is the message or sign embedded value that is carried by objects, data, information, knowledge or wisdom. Content is the basic building block or raw material of a knowledge organization.

“Outputs” are content, products, services or solutions with embedded value, derived from, dependant on or in support of content. Simard, et al (2006) provides a detailed list of definitions and descriptions of outputs for Natural Resources Canada.

Scale

Scale is ubiquitous. It is everywhere and it affects everything, yet scale is often poorly understood, relegated to background status or omitted entirely in most systems, models or frameworks.

Scale is important as a framework dimension because it is essential that the scale of outputs be similar to that of their intended use. It is also important that the scale of multiple outputs be similar to enable their integration for combined uses.

Finally, scale considerations include techniques to integrate outputs and uses across scale boundaries or to differentiate between adjacent scales.

Lack of compatibility between the scale of outputs and uses has a number of consequences. Too much detail wastes time, resources and effort for both producing and using outputs. Too little detail may conceal processes that are essential to obtaining useful results – a key limitation of simplistic models of “knowledge cycles”.

Although a transition between adjacent scales may be possible, it is only one way. While integration is generally feasible, differentiation into component parts is often impossible.

If outputs differ by more than one scale class from the intended use, they are unlikely to be useable (Simard, 1992). National-scale outputs are poorly suited to local applications, and vice versa. Annual averages are of little value when up-to-date statistics or the weather are needed. Global climate-change models tell us little about regional impacts.

There are four aspects of scale: space, time, process and organisation. “Space” is the spatial context of outputs and intended uses. It has attributes such as place (coordinates, place names, relative locations), relative size, magnitude or extent.

Spatial classes are: point, spot, site, area, zone, region, continent and global. “Time” is the temporal context of outputs and intended uses. It has attributes such as when (clock, date, event), duration, interval and flow (delay, past, present, and future).

Temporal classes are: instant, immediate, brief, current, short-term, mid-term, seasonal and long-term. “Process” is the context of the hierarchical and management level of outputs and uses. Complexity can be classified as: static, dynamic, flow-through, feedback, learning, reasoning and goal changing.

Magnitude classes are: micro, mechanical, sensory, meso, synoptic, macro and global. “Organisation” is the context of the complexity and magnitude of outputs and intended uses. Complexity can be classified as: static, dynamic, flow-through, feedback, learning, reasoning and goal changing.

Hierarchy classes are: society, government, department, sector, branches, programmes, projects and tasks. Management classes are: business case, vision, charter, governance, framework, policies, strategy and plans.

Although scale is an essential framework dimension, it is more attribute than driver. Thus, although scale is a part of all subsequent dimensions, it is not a candidate for the primary dimension of a framework for a knowledge organisation.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure includes everything needed to manage an organisation. That is, infrastructure connects and enables people in an organisation, using technology and work processes, to produce content and provide services.

It follows, therefore, that a management infrastructure includes four components: people, the organisation, technology, and work processes. These four exist for the purpose of generating and using content and for providing content-based services.

All components are equally necessary to success. Downplay any one and organisational productivity suffers. People, in
this context, are persons and groups who perform information and knowledge work.

Information and knowledge are human constructs. People create, manage and use content to accomplish organisational goals.

Managing people involves human resource activities, such as staffing, pay, motivation and evaluation. In knowledge organisations it also involves expertise, sharing, learning and adaptation.

An organisation is a legally constituted governance, administrative and functional structure that fulfills its mandate by transforming authority, responsibility and resources into programmes that produce output and provide services. Without an organizational structure, nothing else follows.

Technology is the means of production in a knowledge organisation. It is impossible to succeed in the information society or the knowledge economy without information and communication technology. Information technology includes computers, applications, systems, communications and networks.

Process is the development, implementation and operation of methods to acquire, organise, preserve and provide access to content to enable its use or transfer. Process is the way in which information and knowledge work are done.

We will drill one level down into process. As pointed out by Galliers (1987), “Information is both elusive and illusive; [it is] difficult to define ... and deceptively easy to underestimate.”

One difficulty in developing this framework is the lack of a generally accepted vocabulary to aggregate all processes or types of content under a common term or to distinguish between overlapping but different processes or types of content.

For example, Webster’s (1991) has nine different definitions for information and 10 for knowledge, some of which are in terms of each other (not to mention data), so that either can mean almost anything. Further, authors frequently interchange terminology, which adds to the confusion.

Collections, therefore, are groups of objects or artifacts that facilitate and support the generation of content. Curators acquire, organise, preserve and provide access to collections. Collections include rocks, minerals, fossils, wood samples, insects, plant materials or diseased tissue.

Libraries are collections of intellectual property. Librarians acquire, organise, preserve and provide access to their holdings. Intellectual property (IP) includes books, publications, reports, documents, maps, photographs, images, art work and audio or video recordings. Note that libraries may not own IP rights to the material that they hold.

Data is recorded, ordered symbols or signals that carry information and patterns. Data managers acquire, organise, preserve and provide access to data and data-based products. Data is organised into elements, files, data sets, databases and statistics (data in context).

Information is meaning and context, arising from processing, interpreting or translating data to extract an underlying message or pattern. Information managers acquire, organise, preserve and provide access to information and information-based outputs. Information includes: documents, reports, images, maps, brochures, presentations or multimedia recordings.

Records are content that is specifically related to organisational management. Records managers acquire, organise, preserve and provide access to organisational records. Records include data (finance, personnel, operations), information (decisions, meeting minutes, proposals, reports) and knowledge (experience, policies, guidelines, contacts).

Knowledge is understanding arising from integration, analysis or synthesis of data or information to reveal cause and effect relationships that facilitate the explanation and prediction of natural or social phenomena.

Knowledge managers acquire, organise, preserve and provide access to knowledge and knowledge-based outputs. There are many types of knowledge, including factual, experience, skill, tacit (mental), explicit (codified or documented).

It is apparent that each type of content involves similar processes (acquire, organise, preserve and provide access). This partially explains why there is so much confusion among them. Yet, each process involves specialists who use different management practices and vocabulary.

Libraries and collections generally manage physical objects. To use information, one “only” needs to find it, access it and “read” it. To use data, one must also know its format, codes and the software that was used to prepare it, as well as be able to extract and manipulate subsets of it.

A key aspect of using knowledge is an ability to find and interact with an expert. Records are not simply a subset of information, but include organisational data and knowledge as well.

The four components of an organisation’s infrastructure all exist to enable or support the management of an organisation’s content and outputs. It is the similarity of goals rather than functions that unites the processes and requires their coordination. In the final analysis, however, although managing organisational infrastructure is necessary, it emphasises “how” an organisation does work, rather than “what” work it does or “why” it does it.

The bottom line is that clients are not interested in how work is done; rather they are interested in what outputs are produced – the subject of the next section.

Content
As indicated in the previous section, content includes much more than information. Although some classify data, knowledge and records as subsets of information, or vice-versa, we have seen that they are generated, managed and used differently. Therefore, the term content management is preferable to information, knowledge or records management.

Content is essential to managing an organisation, and generating it is the first stage of providing services. This section describes content from three perspectives – value chains, flow, and context.
Value chains

Content can be described from a value-chain perspective. Value chains are well understood in the private sector as production or distribution channels. They describe a sequence of steps in which inputs are transformed into increasingly refined and higher-value outputs that are eventually sold to consumers.

For example, a tree is cut into logs, which are transported to a mill, where they are sawn into rough lumber, which is milled into finished lumber, which is transported to a distributor and then to a retailer, where it is sold to a consumer.

Each step in the chain adds value through production or distribution, some of which can be extracted as profit.

A content value chain is the flow of content through a sequence of stages in which its form is changed and its value or utility to users are increased at each stage.

From a domain perspective (e.g., subjects, topics, issues, markets), objects are measured to yield data (a signal that is carried); data is interpreted to yield information (meaning in context); information is synthesised to yield knowledge (understanding how things work), and finally wisdom (experience and judgement) lead to the correct application of knowledge.

Note, however, that value and utility must be viewed in the context of use. For example, a manager who needs knowledge to solve a problem consults an expert rather than collecting data to study the problem. In contrast, information has less value to a scientist, because it cannot be disaggregated into its source data that are needed to create new scientific knowledge.

Flow

The flow of content integrates everything that an organisation does. As shown in Figure 4, content flows from the executive to the operational level and vice versa. This flow normally takes place through a vertically oriented infrastructure of people in programmes (e.g., science, statistics, policy), supported by technology, doing work.

Further, two types of content flow through this network – domain-related and organisational records. Finally, content also presumably flows across the organisation, as individual programme silos or production processes add value through different kinds of knowledge work.

Table 1. Comparison of Content Value-Chain Drivers for Organisations and Domain Outputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Driver</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Domain Outputs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>run the organisation</td>
<td>fulfill mandate, make a profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>laws, regulations, policies</td>
<td>market forces, domain standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>plans, management strategy</td>
<td>business case, content strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>internal needs, efficiency</td>
<td>external needs, effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>audit</td>
<td>market feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Context

Managing the flow of content is not as simple as it might, at first, appear. There are many considerations that affect government departments and/or businesses. These can be grouped into three categories: rights, strategy and management.

Rights – Many information “rights” are encoded in law. Citizens have a right to privacy with respect to personal information. Departments have a legal obligation to safeguard information relating to security, while businesses do so for competitive reasons.

Citizens have a right to access government information not excluded by the previous rights and obligations. Finally, government policies require that certain standards be followed for all information (e.g., bilingual content, common look and feel, universal accessibility).

These rights constrain what can be done and mandate what must be done with information. Further, specific rights may conflict with each other, as in individual privacy vs national security, or when access is limited because the cost of meeting required standards is prohibitive.

Strategy – Delivery strategy relates to an organisation’s natural or chosen position along a spectrum of content richness.

At the rich end of the spectrum, communication involves relatively simple messages transmitted to large, general audiences. The government as a whole and mass marketing emphasise reach. As will be shown in section four, content needs and service delivery methods at the two ends of the richness spectrum are not compatible with each other.

Management – There are many criteria and indicators of how well an organisation manages its content. Does an organisation have a formal content management infrastructure? How efficient are the content management practices?

Is there adequate technological capacity to manage organisational content? What is the quality of the content? How effective are the content management practices? Not surprisingly, content managers often have considerable difficulty in setting priorities.

Ultimately, the purpose of content management is to enable an organisation to produce outputs and provide services of interest to clients, customers, and citizens. Traditionally, organisations have tended to manage each form of content independently, within domains or markets.

But this is not enough; it emphasises what an organisation does in vertical programme silos or business lines. Outputs and the services that they support are the reason why a knowledge organisation exists; they are what clients, customers and citizens see and want.

Therefore, basing a management framework on outputs and services is preferable as such an approach directly relates to an organisation’s business.

Outputs

An organisation produces four types of...
outputs: content, products, services and solutions. Common to each type of output is the idea that it contains embedded value and that it is intended to be used by or transferred from an organisation to satisfy user wants or needs.

The definitions are limited to those outputs derived from information or knowledge work rather than those produced from physical materials. Other types of service defined by the government of Canada (2005) include transactions, intervention and interaction.

Because knowledge is often at the root of most government programmes, the framework provides for knowledge being used as an input to other types of service.

Let me briefly define the four types of outputs. Content is embedded value, in the form of the message or signal contained within all elements of the content value chain that are held or owned and intended to be transformed, used by, or transferred from an organisation to satisfy user wants or needs.

There are five types of content: objects, data, information, knowledge and wisdom. Products are tangible, storeable commodities, or merchandise wholly or partly derived from and dependant on, or in support of content, with embedded value, intended to be used by or transferred from an organisation to satisfy user wants or needs.

Products produced by Natural Resources Canada are: databases, scientific articles, technical reports, promotional material, geospatial products, statistical products, standards, policies, regulations, systems and devices.

Services are intangible, non-storeable work, functions or processes, wholly or partly derived from, dependent on, or in support of content, with embedded value and intended to be used by or transferred from an organisation to satisfy user wants or needs.

Services provided by Natural Resources Canada are: answers, advice, teaching, facilitation, support and laboratory. Solutions result from the successful use of content, products or services to embed or extract value by accomplishing organisational objectives, and intended to be transferred from an organisation to satisfy external user wants or needs.

Solutions transferred from Natural Resources Canada are: direction, operations, plans, positions, integration and results.

We can define a knowledge-services value chain as the flow of knowledge services through a knowledge services system in which value is embedded, advanced or extracted by the organisation, sectors and society.

The knowledge services value chain includes nine stages: generate, transform, manage, use internally, transfer, add value, use professionally, use personally and evaluate. As with the content value chain, downstream services generally have higher embedded value than upstream services.

The purpose of each stage of the knowledge services value chain is:

- Generate – Content with intrinsic value and potential utility must be generated as the first stage of the knowledge services value chain.
- Transform – Content may be transformed into products and services to increase its utility or value to users.
- Manage – Existing knowledge services must be preserved and their flow enabled to permit their internal use or external transfer.
- Use internally – Knowledge services may be used internally to produce solutions that accomplish organisational objectives.
- Transfer – Organisational outputs must be transferred, through transactions and interactions, to intermediaries, clients, citizens or customers to enable external use.
- Enhance – Intermediaries may increase the availability, utility, or value of knowledge services.
- Use professionally – Knowledge services may be used by clients with sector-related knowledge to benefit an identifiable sector.
- Use personally – Knowledge services may be used by citizens or customers to realise personal benefits.
- Evaluate – The system should be evaluated to improve its performance in supplying or fulfilling demands of knowledge markets.

Three stages (1, 3, and 5) are mandatory; all must function for subsequent stages of the knowledge-services value chain to function. This is good news for knowledge management (stage 3). One or more (but not all) of the other six stages may be bypassed without stopping the value chain.

However, at least one value-extraction stage (4, 7 or 8) must function for the value chain to have useful meaning.

Information and knowledge markets have been variously described as enabling, supporting or facilitating the sharing, exchange or mobilisation of information and knowledge among individuals or groups who have it and those who need it (Stewart, 1996; Davenport and Prusak, 1998; Simard, 2005).

This approach focuses on facilitating transactions and interactions through which content is transferred from providers to users. This approach generally assumes that content is, somehow, available for transfer and that it is wanted or needed for some purpose – a passive delivery approach.

Provider-user models are applicable in situations with autonomous providers and users. That is, in markets with little or no control or influence over the production and availability of content and little or no interest in how or why it is used.

A provider-user model is inadequate in situations where a provider not only controls the production and distribution of knowledge, but is also mandated to promote and facilitate outcomes and benefits for citizens, as are government agencies.

In such cases, providers and users are not simply facing each other with connecting infrastructure between them. Rather, providers and users interact at multiple points along the knowledge services value chain. The value chain allows managers to evaluate the complete sequence of transformation processes from the original generation of content to its eventual use – a proactive outcome approach.
A value-chain approach to knowledge services demonstrates a number of key principles. These principles are much richer and more complex than simply transferring knowledge from providers to users. They also include a knowledge value chain which comprises nine stages in which value is embedded, advanced or extracted at each stage.

Distinguishing between internal and external use resolves the confusion arising from providers also being users. Lastly, distinguishing between professional and personal use resolves the confusion arising from knowledge services intended for clients and those intended for citizens and customers.

Knowledge services

A “knowledge services system” provides the underlying infrastructure and processes that support the knowledge services value chain and, ultimately, knowledge markets. Yet, a knowledge services system does not actually exist as an identifiable entity in the real world.

It is an artificial construct that combines many components and flows across organisations, sectors and the society they serve. Although driven by organisational mandates, it has no place in the organisation chart and no line item in the budget.

That it has not been previously identified as an entity partially explains why no one has previously described what it does. Yet, to understand, measure and manage knowledge services, we must bring together in one place all of the many processes that collectively transform organisational outputs into benefits for citizens and customers.

We have to be able to “heat water at one end and see steam coming out at the other”.

Knowledge Services System

We begin by bending the knowledge services value chain so that it closes on itself, forming a circular value chain. We then use a framework of “who” is “working” on “what” and “why” to define three types of components and a purpose for each stage.

On “who” we are referring to persons, groups or organisations who do knowledge work. On the “work” we are looking at processes, activities or actions that embed value into, advance value or extract value from knowledge services.

Lastly, on “what” we are exploring inputs to and outputs from each stage of the knowledge services value chain.

There are 34 components of the nine stages of the knowledge services system as a cyclic flow. The cycle begins with an organisational mandate to generate content and it ends with recommendations to the organisation about the effectiveness of and need for services. The first five stages are internal to the organisation while the four remaining stages are external to the organisation.

Each stage performs one of three functions: embedding value, advancing value or extracting value.

The knowledge services system also includes parameters that interact with multiple stages of the knowledge services value chain and that notably affect the overall system (Simard et al, 2006). Parameters can be thought of as generic processes that lie in a layer above the system and that interact with it at many points. The knowledge services system includes nine parameters: channel, quality, utility, scale, intellectual property, ownership, source, criteria and indicators.

Content richness

The knowledge services system shows that a knowledge organisation may distribute outputs and provide services to any or all of six destinations (individuals are split into two groups: customers, and all residents).

These destinations can be thought of as regions of a content richness spectrum. Like colours in the electromagnetic spectrum, we can name regions of the content richness spectrum, even though we cannot precisely define boundaries between them: unique, complex, technical, specialised, simplified and mandatory (Table 2).

As with a blue-green color, sub-regions can also be identified. For example, university professors need both concepts and management practices while high-school teachers do not need professional knowledge, but they require more than a casual acquaintance.

Table 2 lists seven attributes associated with each region of the richness spectrum: system destination, audience size, market segmentation, architecture, difficulty of understanding, level of interaction, and use along with one example output or service. Each type of output is generally intended for one region of this spectrum. The terms used in each box are not categorical; rather, they are intended to show a progression from one end of the richness spectrum to the other.

The spectrum can be divided into three zones: rich, middle, and reach. Two opposing processes take place across the richness spectrum: distribution and interaction. At the rich end of the spectrum, distribution of a few copies requires only minimal effort while interaction in the form of conversations is critical to knowledge transfer.

Conversely, at the reach end, distribution to millions of customers or residents requires substantial effort while significant personal interaction is unfeasible.

The essential point is that in producing content, an organisation may assume a level of understanding appropriate to the richness region. Similarly, because all citizens or customers may access and use content in their areas of interest, content needs to be popularised and disseminated, but it does not have to be provided at the same level of simplicity and accessibility as content that all residents must access and use.

The flow to other services is closest to the “rich” end of the spectrum because it tends to be unique. It is often intended for one or two persons, is specifically tailored to a particular end use, and is often transferred through dialogue involving questions and answers.

Next, complex content flows to the pool of knowledge. It is generally conceptual in form and is transferred to scientists conducting research in related areas.
through scientific articles.

In the middle region, technical outputs are destined for a few intermediaries who add value in a variety of ways (e.g., customise, innovate, simplify, analyse) and move the enhanced content towards the reach end of the spectrum.

Continuing, specialised content is transferred to a broader group of practitioners through advice and recommended management practices to achieve sector outcomes.

Approaching the “reach” end of the spectrum, many citizens or customers use simplified outputs such as self-help guides to realise benefits in areas of personal interest. The reach end of the spectrum is the domain of government agencies who are mandated to interact with all residents, regardless of their interests.

A key strategic decision for any organisation is the positioning and distribution of its mix of outputs and services along the content richness spectrum.

**Business context**

The knowledge services framework has a number of business advantages over functional records, knowledge or even content management approaches. It helps identify important questions. Describing the components and interactions reveals key strategic patterns and relationships that underlie management issues.

It emphasises horizontal flow rather than management processes. This fosters and promotes enterprise-wide integration across organisational silos. It also supports an organisation’s business. Content management should be more successful by using a value proposition that is meaningful to senior managers.

Lastly, it promotes sector or market outcomes. Focusing on user needs rather than organisational efficiency supports an evolution to results-based management. The advantages can be grouped into four categories: the business model, service strategy, management role and attributes.

**Business Model**

Sinclair (2006) states that “KM is probably the single best hope for successfully moving the monolith of government towards a new and improved business model, one that can better respond to the information age demands of an on-line and computer-savvy generation.”

The government of Canada service transformation vision represents nothing less than a new business model for government. Although knowledge management is relegated to a functional specialty in the service framework the concept is equally applicable here.

Leonard notes that, “Companies, like individuals, compete on the basis of their ability to create and utilise knowledge; therefore, managing knowledge is as important as managing the finances. In other words, firms are knowledge, as well as financial, institutions.”

Stewart (1997) extends the argument: “Knowledge assets, like money or equipment, exist and are worth cultivating only in the context of a strategy. You cannot manage intellectual assets unless you know what you are going to do with them.”

The service-based framework is positioned in the centre of a hierarchy of business processes. Although direction flows from the business model through the content strategy to the framework, the framework should also influence the strategy and, in turn, the organisation’s business model.

For example, if an organisation is currently using a traditional vertically oriented, domain-specific, and functional business model, recommendations about its limited suitability to the information society and knowledge economy might be appropriate before starting to implement a service-based framework.

Alternatively, implementation will be limited to adapting the service framework to the existing business model, to the extent possible.
It is important to understand how the framework fits into the hierarchy of business processes. There are four content drivers: mandate, rights, policies and performance. These impact business processes, the business model, content strategy, management plans, and programmes, respectively.

From a content perspective, external drivers impact on a department or business at four different levels. At the top, the mandate defines the business, but there is considerable flexibility in interpreting how that mandate will be fulfilled.

Rights affect the content strategy, policies affect content management and performance standards affect programmes. It should be evident that this structure is fraught with opportunities for inconsistency and sub-optimal decisions.

If, for example, rights, policies or standards require content management practices that are not consistent with the business model and not budgeted at an appropriate level, the former will be difficult to implement. Clearly, the functional needs of managing an organisation’s content cannot be considered in isolation.

**Service Strategy**

Mcgee and Prusak (1993) discuss the importance of an information strategy that establishes the use of information as a strategic resource to help the organisation attain its goals. This should not be confused with a typical information management strategy that establishes how information will be managed. The former presents a business case whereas the latter is limited to functionality.

Most information management strategies begin with motherhood statements that information is important and then move directly to how it will be managed. Rarely do they show why it is important, even critical, to the business in ways that are convincing to senior managers.

Until content management (in its broadest sense) is seen as an investment in organisational success and relevance, it will be just another function whose costs should be minimised.

A content strategy is a high-level direction and approach for using content as a strategic resource to support an organisation’s business. A content strategy can be framed as a hierarchical set of issues that need to be addressed: organisational role in knowledge markets, market approach, intended audiences, richness spectrum, and finally, a management framework.

Organisational role – What is the appropriate organisational role in external (sector, national and international) information and knowledge markets? Once it is understood that external markets exist and function with or without the organisation, the question of appropriate organisational roles becomes self-evident.

There are risks associated with non-participation as well as benefits of participation. Three types of market roles need to be considered: content (provider, user, intermediary), participant (owner, partner, manager, developer, member), and support (champion, facilitator, funding, infrastructure).

Clearly, most organisations will have multiple roles in external knowledge markets. The key point is that they should be explicitly identified, selected and managed so as to support the organisation’s business.

Market approach – What is the desired organisational balance between supply- and demand-driven approaches to knowledge markets? All organisations operate somewhere between the end points of supply and demand.

Further, unless an organisation produces only one output or service, they will likely be distributed at both ends of this range. Supply vs demand has significant ramifications.

Although promoted by the government’s service transformation vision, a demand-driven approach requires shifting current organisational capacity and implementing processes to continuously adapt that capacity to shifting market demand. These may require substantial organisational transformation.

Intended audiences – What is the intended distribution of outputs among internal, professional and personal users, as well as the pool of knowledge, other services and intermediaries?

This addresses a key question of who are the clients for organisational outputs. This question relates directly to an organisation’s mandate, business and strategy. Does the business emphasise producing outputs, industry support, making a profit, sector outcomes or benefits for citizens?

As with supply and demand, most organisations will distribute their outputs among various categories and sub-categories of audiences.

Richness spectrum – What is the most effective position of organisational outputs along the content richness spectrum? This relates to the nature of the outputs and services that must be provid-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3 Hierarchy of external drivers and business processes.</th>
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<td><strong>External drivers</strong></td>
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<td>The mandate defines the business. Rights impact on the content strategy which cannot exceed the legal limits of what must and must not be done.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policies impact on content management which must implement institutional rules and procedures. Content management supports the content strategy by linking program outputs to the content strategy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance standards impact on programmes which must meet specified requirements.</td>
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International Case Study

It is important to understand how the framework fits into the hierarchy of business processes. There are four content drivers: mandate, rights, policies and performance. These impact business processes, the business model, content strategy, management plans, and programmes, respectively.

From a content perspective, external drivers impact on a department or business at four different levels. At the top, the mandate defines the business, but there is considerable flexibility in interpreting how that mandate will be fulfilled.

Rights affect the content strategy, policies affect content management and performance standards affect programmes. It should be evident that this structure is fraught with opportunities for inconsistency and sub-optimal decisions.

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groups have beliefs and values, perceptions and opinions, behavior and dynamics. They also take pride in their work and their role in the organisation.

Unlike technology, which can be centrally controlled, to the frequent annoyance of those who use it, information and knowledge cannot be conscripted; they must be volunteered. If content management portrays itself as the centre of the organisational universe, it will dissipate its energy in territorial battles rather than in serving the organisation.

Consider functionality. Content management does not generate content, except for what it needs to demonstrate its performance, as with other programmes. Similarly, it does not transform content into products and services; programme subject-matter experts do that. It also does not use content to carry out the business of the organisation; that is the mandate of other programmes.

Functionally speaking, content management is mandated to perform the critical work of enabling the rest of the organisation to achieve its mandates. Although this is no small purpose, it is a support, and not a business function.

If programmes perceive content management as “invading their space”, or a “tax” that reduces their budgets, they are likely to resist with every bureaucratic device available to them, resulting in much motion but little movement.

Conversely, if content management is perceived as supporting, facilitating and promoting programmes, they are more likely to support changes that are necessary to move the enterprise forward.

The service framework clearly distinguishes between organisational programmes that generate, transform and use content to provide services and the functional need to manage content so that it can be used for the good of the enterprise.

Service framework attributes

The knowledge services framework has a number of attributes that enhance its functionality. The systems model on which the framework is based is intended to work operationally; it is not a simplified overview that conceals more than it reveals about managing organisational services.

All necessary components and connectors are included, although assembly will be required. Although the framework does not describe what to do or how to do it, it lists everything that an organisation should consider in managing its content from a service perspective. It is therefore:

- Independent of content or issues. It should be applicable to a broad range of knowledge organisations and programmes.
- It is based on a sound logic model. There should be no “fatal flaws” or parts that don’t work to be discovered after implementation begins.
- It addresses real-world complexity. This avoids the problem of solving a problem based on its symptoms only to have another problem arise elsewhere.
- It is complete. It includes everything that an organisation should consider in managing its infrastructure, content and services as a whole.
- It is detailed. The sub-components are sufficiently detailed to permit bureaucratic identification and classification of all relevant organisational activities.
- It supports performance measurement. Criteria and indicators can be developed for evaluating any of the interactions and flows portrayed in the knowledge services system.

Conclusion

The knowledge service framework presented here goes beyond information and content management to provide a direct link to an organisation’s business. A service-based business case should be stronger and more successful than one based on functional necessity.

Further, the framework focuses on external clients, customers and citizens. Finally, the framework promotes a shift from supply-driven information and knowledge markets to demand-driven markets. Organisations that use a service framework will increasingly ask, “Can you use what we have?” and increasingly ask, “What do you need from us?”
Knowledge Management for development:
The case of the Development Bank of Southern Africa

The Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) is a parastatal. We started introducing the concept of Knowledge Management (KM) in our organisation in 1998/1999. Since then a lot has happened and KM has developed within the organisation.

DBSA’s rationale for implementing and integrating KM processes into its business processes is to maximise the leveraging of its existing and new knowledge to add value to its roles of financier, advisor, partner, implementer and integrator. In addition, it also seeks to add knowledge as a differentiating value-add to its products and services.

KM processes are significant for the DBSA mainly because they help build knowledge foundations for improved development impact. These are the three aspects of the rationale for the inclusion of KM in DBSA’s business processes.

In seeing knowledge as a value-add, the DBSA sees knowledge as an enabler to achieve organisational goals, to optimise the effectiveness of core business processes and practices, and to maximise its development impact the DBSA takes on the following knowledge thrusts:

- Use of knowledge to add value;
- Use of knowledge to build capacity;
- Use of knowledge to innovate;
- Use of knowledge to solve complex development problems;
- Use of knowledge to improve business practices and decision-making;
- Use of knowledge to improve development planning processes; and
- Use of knowledge to manage and grow a valuable knowledge asset.

On KM strategic fit, we are interested in who is going to benefit from our KM strategy (business strategy)? What knowledge adds value to business strategy (knowledge strategy)? How to man-
manager the knowledge (KM strategy)?

The business strategy is the core of KM strategic fit. It is through a business strategy that products and services are delivered. The knowledge strategy tells you whether organisational knowledge, staff knowledge, customer knowledge and market knowledge are required in order to add value to the business strategy.

The KM strategy tells you if you how you identify, capture, manage, disseminate and share knowledge.

**Knowledge strategy**

The knowledge management strategy is informed and determined by the knowledge needs of the DBSA. Our first knowledge need is knowledge of development. This is because the core strategy of the DBSA is to improve development impact through the provision of infrastructure.

An understanding of social and economic development is at the heart of knowledge management.

We also need knowledge of infrastructure because the DBSA should create, deploy and manage technical, sectoral and institutional knowledge about physical and social infrastructure with a bias towards the developmental application of such knowledge.

Knowledge to ensure additionality is also important as it necessitates knowledge of public policy and development initiatives, and of the developmental capabilities of stakeholders active in the markets in which the DBSA operates.

Linked to this is knowledge of the markets. Knowledge of the characteristics, dynamics and needs of the target market is needed if the DBSA is to identify market opportunities and design innovative products and services tailored to the needs of different segments of its market.

We also need to have knowledge for the design of products and services which includes technical knowledge for developing lending and financial instruments, asset-backed project finance, grant funding and technical assistance in different fields, knowledge and skills transfer and training, policy advice and advocacy, project design and management, and procurement amongst others.

Also on this mode is knowledge for product and service delivery which involves knowledge for the design and delivery of products and services. These include funding, marketing, project appraisal, project selection, monitoring and evaluation, and risk management.

At the DBSA there is also a need for knowledge to support organisational sustainability. Required here is informed and visionary leadership, innovative thinking and sound management which can support long-term sustainability, but requires the creation, application and management of knowledge for all key functional activities.

In the same capacity area we also need knowledge for skills transfer and development. The DBSA therefore designs and conducts training, including skills transfer and development programmes that augment the creation, application and management of knowledge.

We also need knowledge capture and archiving systems. The DBSA KM Division designs, implements and operates systems to capture and archive knowledge, ensuring that it remains relevant to the functional activities of the DBSA.

Lastly, on the need for knowledge to access and dissemination systems, the KM Division designs and operates systems and processes to access and disseminate knowledge for various functional activities of the DBSA.

**Knowledge management strategy**

In 2002 our KM strategy consisted of five “pillars”: knowledge culture, learning organisation, knowledge exchange, knowledge accounting and knowledge partnership. Knowledge culture was pushing us to capitalise on and enhance existing knowledge. The knowledge organisation pillar was intended to keep the DBSA continuously focussed on learning that builds capital.

Knowledge exchange focused on internal and external knowledge flows. Knowledge accounting insists on evaluating knowledge management efforts and resources. Lastly, knowledge partnerships encourages sustained and enhanced partnerships mutually furthering development knowledge.

In 2004 the DBSA board members said that KM is not really coming into banking and that the strategy is a bit too far off pure managing and we should focus more on managing. A decision was taken to focus on four pillars instead of five.

The first pillar was knowledge generation which focuses on identification, collecting, accessing, research, monitoring, evaluation, sector and information analysis.
The second pillar was knowledge accounting which was retained. The third pillar was knowledge application which focussed on advisory services, capacity building, training, integration of lessons learned, successes and so forth into business processes, products and services.

The last pillar was knowledge sharing which was to be achieved through conferences, dialogues, workshops, publications, case studies, portals and websites. Knowledge culture and learning organisation fell off in 2004.

Despite this, we still see the DBSA as a learning organisation. The organisation ensures continuous learning by means of the following:

- Annual personal development plans;
- Coaching, mentoring, capacity building programmes;
- Capacity needs aligned internal and external training programmes;
- Shared lessons learned and successes from monitoring and evaluations;
- Active Communities of Practice and Communities of Interest;
- Research, publications, articles;
- Brown bags, dialogues;
- Workshops, seminars, conferences; and
- Formal studies.

**KM at institutional level**

At the DBSA we have an institutional arrangement to implement KM. At the top is the Knowledge Strategy Committee of Board. It is a sub-committee of the DBSA board and was established to direct the implementation of the DBSA KM strategy. The DBSA board mandated the KSC to send a clear message that knowledge management is a DBSA-wide imperative and not the exclusive preserve of the Knowledge Division. The aim of the KSC is also that KM is driven at board level.

The next committee is called the Knowledge Management Committee which was established with the primary function of coordinating knowledge products and business support services across all divisions of the DBSA.

The last committee is the Knowledge Management Quality Assurance Meeting which was established with the primary function of quality assuring all the new knowledge products created by the DBSA.

In 2002 the KM Division of the DBSA had seven business units: Policy, Development Information, Specialists (implementers), Monitoring and Evaluation, Human Resources, Training and Development, and Employment Equity.

With the change in strategy in 2004 the number of business units was reduced to five: Policy Research, Development Information, Specialists Advisory, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Training and Development. In 2006, the number was further reduced to four: Research, Development Information, Specialists Advisory, and Monitoring and Evaluation.

**Tools, products and services**

The DBSA utilises a number of tools and systems to facilitate the flow, management and sharing of the bank’s knowledge internally and externally. These tools include knowledge portals such as intranet and portals; Local Government Resource Centre portal; Knowledge Centre or library; COPs; COIs; peer review and peer assists; brown bags and development dialogues; and our website and a number of other websites that we host.

The KM products and services that we provide include human and institutional capacity building, something we do through our Development Fund. We also provide technical and skills training through the Vulindlela Academy.

We offer project technical assistance through financial, technical and human support. Advisory services are central to our business. We therefore, offer sector and functional specific advisory support.

Through Development Report and Infrastructure Report, we offer applied research services. Where necessary, we influence policy debated and decision-making through policy advocacy. We also provide development information analysis and advice particularly through socio-economic profiling.

We also assist in monitoring and evaluation analysis and advice through the development impact indicators that we provide. We also have publications and articles as key KM products.

**Conclusion**

I want to conclude this paper by listing future KM projects in DBSA. These are the development of an internal knowledge portal; development of an external development knowledge portal; development of the KMAfrica Knowledge Hub; development of the ASGISA National Skills Database; a staff knowledge audit; development of Unit Portals; and the development of more topic specific portals (Economic Gateway Portal).
Establishing a SA National Centre for Informatics, Knowledge Management and the Knowledge Economy

This paper introduces the South African National Centre for Informatics, Knowledge Management and Knowledge Economy (SANCIKMKE) that is to be established soon. The purpose of the centre is to coordinate information and knowledge management at a national level. This paper intends to create awareness and stimulate interest from all South Africans involved in the area of informatics, knowledge management and knowledge economy including civil society and general members of the community to contribute in strengthening this national resource.

Background

The need for establishing the national centre comes as a result of a long-standing challenge of coordinating information and knowledge at a national level. A major influence on this challenge is a silo-based model in the creation of information and knowledge in the country.

This challenge is coupled with the identified need for skills development in the area of informatics and knowledge management; and poor understanding of knowledge economy in the country.

Of critical importance in coordination and managing informatics and knowledge at a national level is a shared national vision on knowledge management. Currently the country lacks the shared vision that will lead to a national policy on informatics and knowledge management.

Crucial regulations and laws are important for knowledge management over and above the existing ones such as...
the Promotion of Access to Information Act of 2000. These regulations should address the following aspects:

• National policy on knowledge economy;
• National policy on knowledge Management;
• Knowledge Management Act (to be preceded by the Bill);
• An Act on Knowledge procurement and management (broader than the IP);
• An Act on Knowledge Sharing and Transfer (Open Access and Open Access Publishing); and
• Act on Trans-border Information and Knowledge Flows.

The centre supports all the endeavours towards developing skills in the area of informatics and knowledge management including the creation of knowledge economy awareness in the country.

Creation of knowledge transfer partnerships and packaging of national knowledge into useful comprehensive assets are major functions as well. The centre is positioned to assist relevant organisations in the development of knowledge management standards, including benchmarking.

It is often difficult to measure the quality of knowledge and information in relation to improving productivity through use of such knowledge. The centre identifies six knowledge bases to draw from:

• tertiary institutions;
• research organisations;
• private institutions: business and industry;
• government organisations including departments;
• indigenous knowledge systems; and
• general public.

**Lack of a dedicated institution to measure economic gains due to ICT and KM**

Since the dawn of its democratic dispensation in 1994, South Africa has made marked strides towards the implementation of information and communication technology (ICT). These efforts have led to a massive growth in ICT, particularly in the public sector and for the general public.

Although the country has made such investments there is little evidence of the economic benefits gained from most of these. Limited documented evidence on the economic achievements attained by the mass development and implementation of ICTs in the country was one of the reasons to establish the centre.

The reason for this scant evidence is because there is no institution that is dedicated to measuring the gains. Also, information and knowledge have not been used widely to generate economic gains in the past. As a result, it is not clear to most South Africans whether the investment made in information creation, ICT and KM have shown any tangible social and economic gains.

KM is new and emerging in South Africa, perhaps as a result of the global influence surrounding the knowledge economy. In 2003 and 2005 South Africa played an important role in the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS).

**South African Presidency and its commitment to an information society**

In his address at the WSIS 2005 in Tunis, President Thabo Mbeki expressed the need to promote the use of modern information to inform decisions that are taken for the development of the oriented information society. He made an appeal to everybody to translate the concept of an information society into a practical reality and urged all stakeholders to commit themselves and take actions towards this end.

The SA National Centre for Informatics Knowledge Management and Knowledge Economy is a response to this call.

There is a need to harness efforts towards managing information and knowledge and use technologies to disseminate information to all, in the endeavour to create an information soci-
The knowledge economy is founded in the knowledge-based service, innovation and development of the 21st century versus the physical creation, manufacturing and distribution of goods of the 20th century. The knowledge economy refers to the use of knowledge to produce economic benefits. The phrase was popularised (if not invented) by Peter Drucker as the heading to chapter 12 in his book, The Age of Discontinuity (1969, Heinemann, London).

The concept came to prominence in New Zealand in the 1990s to refer to the manner in which various high-technology businesses, especially computer software, telecommunications and virtual services, as well as educational and research institutions, could contribute to a country’s economy.

However, this concept has grown and expanded beyond the definition developed by Drucker. As depicted in the diagram, the concept does not focus on IT developments or innovation only, but on a whole range of matters related to: information, information flows, information management, knowledge, knowledge flows, knowledge production, knowledge management, knowledge transfer, knowledge sharing, knowledge translation (innovation) access, knowledge institutions/industries, knowledge services, knowledge trades, research and development, education, knowledge supplies and demand and knowledge society.

The interpretation will change depending on the area of focus and issues to be addressed.

For any country to begin with matters of knowledge economy there is a need for conceptual operationalisation for different sectors. There is a need for countrywide participation and involvement; massive creation of awareness of the concept and how it applies to different sectors; and impacts on people at national and individual levels.

An important point to make is that knowledge economy does not refer to science knowledge only, but to all forms of knowledge as long as such knowledge and/or activities lead to economic growth and job creation.

A. Informatics

The concept of “informatics” is inherent to KM. Informatics is the term that is used to explain the connection of “technology”: with information, creating much synergy. Information is the foundation of knowledge creation, very little knowledge can be created without information. Knowledge is the combination of “book knowledge” with what is “in the environment” or “in people’s heads” and not research information only.

Informatics is the science that studies the collection, collation analysis, use, flow and processing of data and information and the development, implementation of ICT-related systems of information that is applied to medicine, health care, public and other sectors.

B. Knowledge management

Another factor that has emerged in different sectors of government and in the private sector is knowledge management (KM). Some government departments have established KM units or directorates to deal with KM. The philosophy of establishing these units is
contained within the concept of the knowledge economy.

Unfortunately there is no mandate given for coordination and management of knowledge at a national level, hence the centre is established to close the existing gap.

Knowledge management can be defined as the capturing, organising, packaging, disseminating, knowledge asset development and storing of rule-based/explicit knowledge and experiences of individual workers and groups (tacit knowledge) within an organisation and organisations; making this information available to others in general public organisations and using its knowledge product for economic purposes.

KM is used for: process management, organisational management and product/asset development leading to economic development.

C. Enterprise knowledge management

Enterprise knowledge management is concerned with strategies, processes and technologies to acquire, store, share and secure organisational understanding and insights into the core business of the organisation. KM at this level is closely tied to business intelligence, competitive advantage, and innovation.

D. Knowledge society

The concept “knowledge society” can have different meanings from various standpoints. For purposes of this document, the concept refers to a nation that bases its life on knowledge to develop and prosper economically and socially.

The knowledge society comprises people who have developed a culture and interest in using knowledge to prosper. Such a society tries to make effective use of the vast wealth of knowledge for the benefit of the whole nation.

This society nourishes and contributes to new areas of learning by feedback to the knowledge pool. Every society is formed around shared concepts – the concepts “information” and “knowledge” are vital to the knowledge society.

ICT unites the knowledge societies of the world into a global knowledge society, where knowledge is shared and used to create international possibilities.

Conclusion

The Informatics and Knowledge Management and Knowledge Economy Centre in South Africa is marking an important milestone in preparation towards a successful knowledge economy in the country. The centre coordinates information and knowledge of the country at a national level, a very crucial aspect in the development of the economy.

This coordination will lead to the reduction of duplicated efforts in the country which leads to waste of resources. Of importance is the development of a Bill leading to an Informatics and Knowledge Management Act.

This Act will be important in preventing theft of information and knowledge countrywide. It will be naïve to assume that information and knowledge theft is not happening in this country.

Evidence can be seen in various areas if it is searched for. One seminar in South Africa highlighted the fact that knowledge and information theft in South Africa is high and this country is regarded as a sitting duck in this regard.

It is based on these views that the South African National Centre for Informatics, Knowledge Management and Economy is established in South Africa.

References

Part of the way forward for the Indaba was the DPSA’s undertaking to finalise the draft Knowledge Management Framework (KMF) by the end of first quarter of 2007, and also to continue to provide assistance and guidance whenever required.

The challenges that confront the public service as it becomes a learning organisation may be summarised as follows:

- the entrenchment and institutionalisation of knowledge management – placing it at the centre away from the margins;
- demonstration of the value-add of knowledge management in departments and its resultant contribution to the mandate and operational effectiveness and efficiency;
- cascading of knowledge sharing and learning to lower levels, where service delivery is taking place; and
- no policy framework to give direction and guidance to government departments on application and implementation of knowledge management.

With the various changes in the public service (e.g. Single Public Service, amendment of the Public Service Act, etc.) change management becomes a critical ingredient. The DPSA is developing the KM framework and is targeting the end of first quarter of 2007 to have a draft document.

There is a challenge to secure senior management engagement in supporting the process. The Research, Learning & Knowledge Management Chief Directorate will continue to provide assistance on specific requests and continue to broker contacts between different interest groups.

The conference was also a way of reviving the learning network that was initiated some years ago.

Based on the proceedings of the conference, it is recommended that the following challenges should be addressed:

- There needs to be a re-examination of how departments’ organisational structures relate to the influential positioning of KM. Silo working arrangements should not be perpetuated. A good reference point is the packaging of three elements of the Canadian Individual Learning;
- For the provision of advisory services that ensure departmental learning, there needs to be an examination of how confidence will be gained from the public service. In addition, there should be an examination of the successes, pitfalls and working relationships with other learning and development institutions and initiatives; and
- It is suggested that the group should be widened by inviting other groupings to participate in next year’s KM forum.

Recommendations

There were a range of recommendations made during the conference. It was recommended that the Learning and Knowledge Management learning network be re-activated. Topics and specific KM areas need to be identified based on the needs of KM practitioners.

Both provincial and sectoral learning networks have to be strengthened in order to ensure continuous activity. There has to be a database of best practices. We should ensure that the Projects of Transformation database is populated and widely accessible.

In so doing, benchmark the UK Public Sector Benchmarking Service. We need to facilitate benchmarking of good practices – local and international. Study tours need to be undertaken.

The Senior Management Services cadre has to be mobilised on KM. They have to be invited to the next LKM network forum. There has to be an awareness drive in various departments. When doing this, we should look at benchmarking Canada’s Management Accountability Framework.

Furthermore, we have to quality assure customised and relevant capacity building on KM. SAMDI should collaborate and exchange expertise with the Canadian School of Public Service.

In developing the policy framework, we need to look very closely into issues of people, process, organisation and tools and mechanisms. In doing this we might have to adopt the Canadian Natural Services model on “putting the puzzle together”, and “knowledge management services”.

There has to be a partnership with DBSA and we can use their expertise in rolling out KM in the public service. Therefore we should think about a possible Memorandum of Understanding with the DBSA.

Conclusion

We need to adopt Canada’s human resources and social development vision and principles on KM as a preamble to the policy framework – outcome of commission group 1 discussions. In the ensuing period we need to advocate and lobby for strategic positioning of KM in government departments as part of corporate/organisational strategy.

In developing policy framework, we need to take cognisance of compliance and enforcement mechanisms. The notion of “cost of not knowing”. The definitions of terms and issues are very important. We need to deal with them in both the policy framework, and in awareness-raising and implementation. •
Skills development for growth
A local government perspective

E thekwini Municipality has taken the first few tentative, but exciting, steps towards becoming a knowledge-based city and a learning organisation. In the few years since the first democratic local government elections we have learnt a great deal.

We knew from the beginning that it was essential to find out as much as possible about all the citizens in the municipal area. For instance, we know that the municipality is home to over three million people, 68% of whom are African, 20% Indian, 9% white and 3% coloured. 68% of our population is under the age of 35 years and 28% of the economically active community are unemployed.

The role of the municipality is to identify the major economic, social and environmental needs of the community, and institute sustainable development programmes to address each of these.

Information alone does not bring about development. It merely provides a platform from which to direct the changes that need to be made. Different needs require different actions, certainly we have learnt that “one size does not fit all”. Nor can we be arrogant enough to believe that our programmes will immediately and directly change the lives of every individual citizen, but by the year 2020 we hope to have achieved a better life for all.

The political and administrative entities of the municipality are working strongly together towards realising the vision of Durban in 2020 as the most caring and liveable city in Africa. To achieve this title will not be an easy task. Its achievement means that, at the very least, all of its citizens will feel safe, have
access to affordable and efficient services, including those of health and welfare, and the education we provide will be of the highest standard.

The economy will be flourishing to the degree that businesses will want to invest in the city and its individual citizens will have secured a source of income.

**Linking economic development and skills development**

Achieving this vision requires a process of accelerated, sustainable economic development which, the municipality believes, can only be achieved through the joint and focussed efforts of public and private enterprises.

The national government’s Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative (ASGISA) recognised six barriers to achieving economic growth and poverty reduction, one of these being the “shortage of suitably skilled labour, amplified by the impact of apartheid spatial patterns on the cost of labour”.

Research has clearly shown that there is a link between the skills profile of an area and its economic well-being. It reasons therefore, that programmes aimed at improving the skills of the citizens of eThekwini will assist in the economic growth of the municipality.

It is for this reason that the municipality has structured its Skills Development Unit as an autonomous unit which has two focus areas. Firstly there is a department that specializes in the development of its own employees. The work of this particular department is closely aligned with that of the Human Resources Unit of the municipality. The other department in the Skills Development Unit works closely with the Economic Development Unit of the Municipality in skilling the citizens of eThekwini in order that they are able to constitute a pool of workers able to sustain existing businesses, attract potential investors to the area, or sustain their own employment.

In its attempts towards fulfilling its vision, eThekwini Municipality has, in its Integrated Development Plan, identified eight strategic areas in which it has planned to focus its activities. One of these plans is referred to as “Empowering Citizens”.

Within this plan there are programmes and projects which have the strategic focus of Developing Human Capital or Developing the City as a Learning City. In this plan the word “citizens” refers to employees of the municipality as well as non-employees.

When considering the development of our own employees we are mindful of the need for the municipality to deliver on its constitutional mandate of delivering sustainable services to the community. For this reason the municipality offers various development opportunities to its staff in order that their competencies keep pace with the technological and other advances in the world of work.

One of the municipality’s internal, social development programmes is the provision of free basic literacy and numeracy classes for its employees, as we believe that if an employee is able, independently, to engage fully in society, his/her self-esteem will be enhanced and he/she will become a more active member of society and a more productive employee.

It is sobering to know that approximately 20% of our employees do not have the basic 12 years of schooling that is the minimum required by law today. About 732 employees are attending Adult Basic Education classes.

As part of its efforts towards encouraging lifelong learning, all staff are encouraged to improve their qualifications by taking advantage of the Assisted Education Scheme in which the municipality provides financial assistance for employees to study in their own time. About 500 employees are registered on this scheme annually.

**Partnerships and the development of the eThekwini Municipal Area (EMA)**

The national government has promulgated an inordinate number of Acts of Parliament, policies and strategy documents over the last 10 years in a valiant effort to right the wrongs of the past and improve the social and economic status of the country. None of these, however, would have produced the results they have without the efforts of local players.

Skills development should not happen in a vacuum. It should be part of the big-
ger social and economic thrusts of the country. Ethekwini municipality has many skills development projects in place and each is there to achieve a particular outcome.

All of these projects are collaborations between public and private sectors which attest to the notion that all stakeholders in the EMA have an obligation and desire to secure its future.

In the EMA the business community has risen to the challenge of meeting the objectives of the 2005-2010 National Skills Development Strategy, by opening its doors to young learners on learnership programmes.

Since August 2004 the municipality has facilitated the placement of 665 unemployed and 53 employed learners on learnerships, relating to Tourism, Early Childhood Development, Customer Management, Mixed Farming Systems, Project Management, Internal Audit, Emergency Operations and Payroll Administration etc.

This has happened despite the fact that learnerships are administratively onerous for businesses and municipalities alike. There are times when close scrutiny needs to be given to the difference between the theory of legislation or policy and its implementation at local level.

The facilitated learnerships were not chosen indiscriminately but were selected because the qualifications had been identified as needs in our area. To identify these needs the Skills Development Unit worked, and is continuing to work, closely with the municipality’s Economic Development Unit, and area-based management structures, and with the Chamber of Commerce and its members.

Using the ICT sector as a pilot project, the municipality has developed a model for identifying the immediate and long-term skills needs of an economic sector and has developed a process to address these needs.

A project management team, comprising one member of each of the Skills Development and Economic Development units of the municipality and a private ICT enterprise known as Smart Xchange, undertook research into the skills needs of the major ICT companies and ICT users in the EMA.

The same team then surveyed the service providers in the area and identified the gaps between supply and demand. The outcome of this project was the establishment of an ICT skills forum, which has the objective of closing that gap. This model established in this process will be replicated for other major economic sectors.

The Skills Development Unit of eThekwini sees it as part of their responsibility to facilitate economic growth in the area by seeing that the skills available in the EMA match the skills needs of the business community, and that the informal economy is developed to the extent that it is has the skills to develop further.

To succeed in this role three factors are essential:

• We need to know the economic status and strategies for the EMA;
• We need all public and private stakeholders in the EMA to acknowledge that their active participation in its development is essential for success; and
• We need individual citizens to realise their responsibility in the growth of the municipality.

One skills need already known to us is the need for pupils to be competent in maths and science and then for them to be encouraged to enter scarce skill vocations. Every high school in the EMA offers mathematics and science as part of their curriculum, however this does not mean that they all have teachers competent to present the programmes at matriculation level.

The Skills Development Unit is working closely with the Provincial Department of Education and the Inanda, Ntuzuma and KwaMashu ABM to provide support for the teachers and pupils of maths and science in the schools in these areas.

The municipality is also in a position to help those schools whose performance is compromised because of poor facilities. Once infrastructural needs are identified, the provincial government and the municipality can work together to prioritise the provision of these services.

Collaboration between provincial departments and the municipality is an area that needs attention. Both entities are bureaucratic by nature and a challenge for us is to find ways for both parties to speed up their transactions and increase the trust between us.

A simple example of a procedural difficulty is the fact that national and provincial departments share the same financial year which is 1 April to 31 March, whilst the local government financial year spans 1 July to 30 June. This makes planning with other government departments difficult and the synchronisation of financial years may be an issue that we have to look at to impact on service delivery.

The prospect of the 2010 World Soccer Cup is exciting for our city but we are planning skills development initiatives to take us up to and beyond 2010. For example, we are currently developing a cadre of tour guides, not just for 2010 but as a support for all our events, annual and special.

Events like the A1 race and international conferences held in our city provide potential year round employment if managed creatively.

We are exploring the skills needs of the film industry and encouraging dialogue between our FET, higher education colleges and local players in the industry to determine what skills should be taught in anticipation of a flourishing industry developing in South Africa in the next few years.

Conclusion

Although the present economic growth of the country is hampered by the lack of skills, it is hoped that the initiatives of eThekwini Municipality will go more than a little way to turning this around and that, indeed, by 2014 poverty and unemployment will have been halved.
Making a healthy hospital

It is a late summer Monday, partly cloudy and hot, when I arrive at Helene Franz Hospital in Senwabarana (previously Bochum) in Limpopo. The surroundings are not unfamiliar to me; I was here in early November during Public Service Week, and it’s a good “homecoming” for me.

I arrive at the CEO’s office at 8.45, minutes ahead of my appointment, and the hospital is already buzzing with activity. Just after 09h00 I meet the CEO, Mr Matlakala Maoto, who ushers me into his office. As we walk in I am immediately drawn by his very organised set up. The bespectacled CEO, exuding seriousness and energy, welcomes me, and asks me how my journey has been.

Mr Maoto was born in March 1947, the last born in the family. He was born 70km from Helene Franz Hospital, at a place called Brilliant Farm – and yes, he will be celebrating his 60th birthday soon he tells me. His father was a teacher. He himself is a father of two, a grown up and working son and a daughter.

He qualified as a Public Health Inspector (today termed Environmental Health Practitioner) in 1968 at Madikoti Technical College. He has always been interested in public health issues, and in fact wanted to do medicine, but because of limited funds he could not. So pursuing a career in environmental health was the next alternative.

He was first appointed in public service in February 1969 under the Regional Director State Health Services: Northern Transvaal, stationed first at Potgietersrus then Nebo and later Pietersburg at the Regional Office.

The work involved extensive travel-
ling covering areas that are today covered by a staff of well over 15 officers. Due to continued ill-health, he took a break of service and resigned and worked as a clerk grade 11 in the Department of Interior and Education in the then Lebowa homeland.

Outlining the problems and challenges that the hospital faces, Mr Maota says that Helene Franz is a rural institution with limited revenue resulting in revenue constraints as people are unemployed. It is not attractive to young professionals, resulting in a high vacancy rate. The hospital serves 20 clinics, two health centres, and 63 mobile clinics.

Shortage of key personnel creates conditions not conducive to support primary health care. Resources are limited as community needs are many, and Maoto says this is compounded by the fact that people know their rights and demand their rights.

Appointed in April 2001, he has been CEO of Helene Franz for six years now. I ask him if he has enjoyed his stay and his work, and he says with absolute certainty that he has. He acknowledges that it is a challenging work, but in a quintessential public servant way, he says, “At the end of the day you have done good for the public indirectly, and have contributed. That happiness that people have is my happiness. If I succeed, that makes me happy.”

I ask him what drives him and he comfortably responds, “The community here is needy, they need help.” Indeed here is a community person. He says the cooperation of support staff drives him, and he concedes that “we meet serious challenges, but at the end if you have resolved some, you say yes you have achieved”.

Mr Maoto attributes a large part of the success of the hospital to good relations with local and district stakeholders in the Blouberg and Capricorn area. They, together with the hospital board, make the hospital work. He also commends the provincial department, saying that despite the financial constrains, the hospital derives moral strength and valuable support from visits to the hospital by the province.

The prospect of having additional staff posted at head office in the district hospital section, as promised by the province, brings visible relief to him. However, he feels that there needs to be more involvement of stakeholders such as the private sector through PPPs.

Referring to the problem of the underutilisation of sports grounds and fields in hospitals, Mr Maoto indicates that with private sector involvement,
Profile of Helene Franz Hospital

Helene Franz Hospital was established around 1902 by the Berlin Mission in South Africa and was taken over by the Department of Health of the Republic of South Africa in 1974. The facility was handed to Lebowa Government and later taken by the democratic South African government in 1994. It is a District Hospital situated in Blouberg Municipality 96 km North West of Polokwane City. Due to its location the facility service part of Molemole, Aganang, Makhado, Magalakwena and Lephale Municipalities. According to District Health Information System; 2005 (DHIS) it serves a population of 169,073. The population served is estimated as 161,321 (census 2001). It is a referral hospital for twenty(20) Clinics, sixty (60) mobile Clinics and two(2) Health Centers, viz. Ratshaatshaa- and Blouberg. It has 149 beds, but only uses 119 beds. The spare capacity is useful for emergencies.

Its mission is to provide “accessible, affordable and equitable quality health care system”. Its mission statement states that “the institution is committed to provide comprehensive health care service that promotes healthy lifestyle through efficient hospital service delivery system”. Services rendered by the facility are as follows:

- Outpatient Department
- Casualty
- Children’s Ward
- Female Ward
- Male Ward
- Maternity Ward
- Theatre
- Poli Clinic (Service as Gateway Clinic)
- X-Ray
- Pharmacy
- Dental
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Nutrition
- Psychometric
- Medical Social Work
- Environmental Health
- Optometrist
- ARV Services

The hospital has approved 21 posts for medical staff, but only five are filled at the moment. There is also a shortage especially senior professional nurses, a 33% vacancy rate there. Overall the hospital vacancy rate is 35%.

The hospital has seen improvement in its management of finances, although there gross areas of under funding. In both 2004/5 and 2005/6 it had overspent its allocated budget at the end of the third quarter, but in 2006/7 financial, by 31 December it had spent 78% of its budget, which is very commendable. Machinery and equipment, and the maintenance thereof, continue to be budget pressure areas, where under maintenance, there is already an overspent.

In 2004/05, the revenue target was reached by 85%, in 2005/06 it was exceeded and they collected 157% of what they had set, and in 2006/7 as at the end of the third quarter it has already been met at 135% has already been collected.

During the interview, the interview the CEO was very cautious and modest about the performance of the hospital, saying that the jury on this one is still out. The average cost per patient day equivalent is R1,000, and the income R28. The average length of stay is 5.5, with December 06 showing a slight decrease – the CEO wishes to see a decrease in the average length of stay. The average useable bed utilisation rate is 70%.

including local mines in the vicinity, these could be utilised for the good of the hospital staff and surrounding communities. Referring to a recommendation from the Khederu team that the hospital involve universities to help deal with salted water reticulation problem in hospital, Mr Maoto declares that negotiations are already underway.

On staff relations, he is generally upbeat, despite some problems and differences with the unions at times. A case in hand, for instance, is when seven workers took the hospital on for not giving them performance bonuses. This, he indicates, could not hold as it emerged from the regular management walkabouts that the people concerned were seen on several occasions not working. The case is, however, still continuing.

On the positive side, he proudly singles out the recognition of excellence service that the hospital undertakes monthly. This, he declares, is paying dividends. I am told, for instance, about 10 staff members who, together with their partners, have been tipped for an outing and a small function as reward for best performance.

A veteran administrator laden with wisdom, perseverance, leadership, tenacity and resolve, Mr Maoto’s guiding motto is “adapt and listen to the next person”. This, he asserts, really and truly works. He attributes the successes and any achievements in the institution to dedication and hard work by team members as well as team work spirit, leading by example, being a good listener and adapting but still remaining firm.

He tells me he always learns from the newly appointed young people, for they have new brains fresher than his.

When I try to find out what he thinks his biggest achievement has been to date, he humbly points out that he has served the nation, and is proud of having improved the quality of life of people through his services as public health practitioner.

Referring to his leadership style, Mr Maoto thinks he has improved discipline in the institution, citing the dismissal of some people as an example.
With his sixtieth birthday in March, Mr Maoto says “the body can tell” and he thinks a young blood must take over his job soon. However, he is quick to point out that “maybe one could come back and assist like sitting on the hospital board”.

His hopes and wishes for the hospital are clear-cut. He wants a reduction in the length of stay of patients in the hospital. He also wants chronic patients to be high priority. In dealing with some of the challenges, he says they intend to have a step-down facility to deal with patients that do not require critical medical care. He mentions that the challenge is to change the community’s “I want to see a doctor” mentality.

He also believes that in extensive efforts to liaise with the community on the utilisation of primary health care facilities in order to “reduce the load” because the hospital is overstretched.

Mr Maoto values the benefits of having sound relations with local structures. Their initiative to explain to the community the benefits of paying tariffs in institutions is paying dividends as the hospital is getting more revenue. “We ask people to pay however much they have.”

Given a chance to raise a few burning issues and give suggestions to either the MEC or Minister, he says he would tell them to pump more money into the hospital revitalisation programme for hospitals like Helene Franz to benefit. He would also employ more personnel, especially midwives.

On the skills exodus in the health sector, Mr Maoto believes that the department could be missing some of the basic things. “Some of reasons could be that people may not be happy. There is still a need to go to the heart of these people.” Having better schools close by in rural areas, as is the case in urban areas, could help.

After more than an hour talking in his office we take a walkabout in the hospital, first in the main reception area which has been fitted with modern and comfortable chairs. We then proceed to the waiting rooms where Mr Maoto chats with some nursing staff. In the X-ray section, the section head proudly shows us the new equipment that they recently received and a batch of new files, and we catch up with a few nurses for a chat. In the maternity ward a nurse recounts to us the problems of staff shortages.

We move to a gateway clinic area (which attends to patients that would ordinarily be treated in the clinic). Here there are more than 60 people waiting to be attended to, mostly children with their parents.

As we do a walkabout in the female ward where new carpeting is being fitted, Mr Maoto to my surprise goes down to finger the carpet to get a feel of how the work has been done. A sudden frown creeps onto his face, as he expresses his utter dissatisfaction concerning
problems with artisan work done by some BEE companies.

He makes the point that as management they rely on supervisors and superintendents to give feedback on the quality of work done. Clearly from his sentiments and body language this has not been forthcoming.

As we move out we briefly catch up with a gentleman behind a desk, and he tells me he is one of the three wards clerks the hospital has recently hired to ease the administrative burden of the nursing staff.

We visit the laundry area which has been beset with problems. The supervisor shows us around and by the look of things the challenges are far from over. Only one washing machine works, and the ironing machine is non-functional, to say the least. Visibly disturbed, Mr Maoto is at pains to recount solutions proposed by the province to sort out this challenge. They are more in favour of outsourcing the function, which, he thinks, will come with its own challenges.

In the meantime, a temporary arrangement is required to deal with the existing challenges. He is at pains to tell me that the hospital is trying to move towards hotel services, but with problems such as the laundry, this is a challenge.

We proceed to the mortuary and as we walk he tells me of the challenges they have with the fridge not being fully functional. He is informed, in my company, that some corpses have had to be removed over the weekend to somewhere else as the fridges had stopped working and how unbearable the situation still is. For this he chides the official for not having informed him timeously.

This, he tells me, is symptomatic of serious problems with the maintenance of equipment in the hospital, citing the fact that most equipment is old and expensive to maintain.

At the boiler section, which is the last place we visit, the same problem prevails. Only one boiler machine works and the pipes that have to distribute water throughout the hospital are all fairly old and rusty. However, perhaps to reassure us, we hear from the supervisor that R215 000 has been earmarked to see to repairs.

As we proceed towards his office, I ask him what his typical day involves and he replies that it is the usual: staff, problem solving, meeting with management, dealing with personnel problems. For obvious reasons staff do come to him to air problems and issues, and he takes kindly to that. In typical modest fashion he agrees that he is, indeed, a father figure.

I ask him whether he thinks the hospital is on the right track, and he responds: “I think we are on the right track with things like monitoring and evaluation, auditing being done. Those things will tell us if we are indeed getting it right.” He is happy that the latest patient satisfaction survey rates the hospital at 64%.

It is the end the visit and he invites me for lunch. We choose to have lunch in the newly renovated boardroom where he continues to chat to me about how far they have gone to implement some of the Project Khaedzu recommendations.

A day well spent indeed, what an eye-opening visit!
Getting KZN’s arts and culture in order

I want to start by stating that in our department’s strategic planning meeting, I pointed out that the majority of KwaZulu-Natal’s legislation regulating the Department of Arts, Culture and Tourism is outdated. We have not moved any further in updating such legislation. This will have to be treated as a matter of urgency. If there are impediments, we should establish what they are as I believe this is important for any government department.

Mapping a holistic approach to arts and culture

One must appreciate the efforts that have been put into the development of arts and culture in KwaZulu-Natal. However, there is more that needs to be done in this regard. One of the components that I feel is not being afforded the status it deserves is the video and film industry. So far, I am aware of one cluster that has a programme to develop this industry.

Usually clusters function as if they are in competition with each other. Although sometimes competition can be healthy, I want to strongly advocate for doing things in an integrated manner, injecting better coordination into what we do.

For example, giving awards to best performing employees should be a departmental function, instead of something that is coordinated at cluster level. Once we better coordinate our activities, what we do will have a better impact on the customer that we are serving.

KwaZulu-Natal has an abundance of talented and experienced people who can assist in arts development. We need to draw them in so that they can impart their skills and knowledge to up-and-coming artists who want to venture into the industry.

The department should identify artists and put them through a needs-based training and development programme. This should cover all required skills areas so that the identified artists
can make a living using the acquired skills. This should culminate in a provincial festival, where the same artists participate and showcase their skills and talent.

Components such as tourism need to work with other departments such as economic development to assist with the formation of cooperatives in the industry. I am certain the same can be done by all other components, the key being a planned, properly integrated approach and sustainable programmes.

Alignment of structures and vulnerable groups

We need to allocate funding for the realignment of our structures so that they correspond with those of municipalities. I am fully aware that this is not an easy task and has serious financial implications, but we need to have a plan and timeframes as to how the process will unfold.

This will help maximise the visibility and accessibility of the department on the ground.

Our government has put vulnerable groups such as the youth, women, the elderly and people with disabilities high on its agenda. It is also vital that in our programmes we mainstream projects that are directed to these groups.

We need to be able to respond promptly when anyone asks us what we are doing for these groups. We must have a clear programme as to how we respond to such challenges. It should be something well-planned and focussed, not something that happens by default.

Supporting black economic empowerment

As government, we are custodians of black economic empowerment. In all our job-creating projects, we must be seen to be biased to the historically disadvantaged groups. For example, since we are also responsible for building libraries, it is important to see to it that local communities benefit economically in the construction of that particular structure.

This can be through employment and tender processes. We must not make excuses when it comes to the need for transformation. But where we feel that, for instance, adequate skills are lacking, we need to come up with strategies that ensure that gradually previously disadvantaged people are brought on board and benefit from the department’s programmes.

Marketing and promotion

The department’s Internet, which is an important tool for communicating, is now up and running. However, our communication directorate has not mastered the art of working together with the ministry despite many efforts to ensure this happens.

Working together will help enhance the image of the department since the right hand will know what the other one is doing. We still continue to send different messages to the outside world as if we are two different organisations competing against each other.

For example, the communication strategy of the department must be reviewed to reflect the existing structure in the ministry, and I would like to see the formation of an active communication forum consisting of all key structures, where we strongly address issues of marketing and promotion of the department.

Conclusion

We are yet to reach a stage where we can say we are working as one department, with one goal – to change the lives of the people of the province for the better. It is important for us to constantly and effectively communicate among ourselves so that all of us have an idea of what is happening in the department. We must always bear in mind that all the chief directorates are important and should be afforded equal status.
Assessing capability in the public sector

During the first ten years of our democracy we were able to put in place progressive policies and launch massive programmes to normalise society and alleviate poverty. However, not all programmes were equally successful and it was evident that questions arose around capacity. Since October 2004 (and having reviewed the first ten years of governance), the President repeatedly posed a very simple question: “Do we have the capacity to deliver on our developmental programmes?”

Furthermore, in his February 2005 State of the Nation Address President Mbeki emphasised that “there is a lack of all-round capacity and weaknesses in the implementation of certain national programmes”. He also submitted that “we need to massively improve the management, organisational, technical and other capacities of government so that it meets its objectives”.

Cabinet and the Forum of South African Directors-General (FOSAD), through the Governance and Administration Cluster, took up the challenge and initiated studies into the capacity of government to implement integrated developmental programmes. Subsequently, the DPSA embarked on a rolling programme of assessments and are reporting on a six-monthly basis to Cabinet.

This article presents the major transversal findings of the first one-and-a-half years of capacity assessments, covering diverse programmes related to service delivery: housing delivery to the poor (Department of Housing), expanded public works (Department of Public Works), expanded public works (Department of Public Works),...
hospital management (Department of Health), district management in education (Department of Education), trade and industrial development (Department of Trade and Industry, court management (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development), and freight logistics (Department of Transport).

**Capacity**

To allow for a more comprehensive assessment, capacity has been “defined” broadly to account for a myriad of factors that impact on service delivery. When talking about capacity, or capability for that matter, literature abounds. However, the bulk of the literature originates in a donor or “technical assistance” and “capacity building” environment. The UNDP (through SACI, the Southern African Capacity Initiative), the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), World Bank, IFM, and large donor organisations have all made a significant contribution to our understanding of capacity. These initiatives generally refer to capacity as it relates to organisations, institutions or governments as a whole. There is, however, limited reference to capacity as it relates to specific or integrated government programmes.

**Defining capacity**

Most definitions of capacity are general and outcomes-based. It relates to the ability to efficiently and effectively attain set objectives. However, as Peter Morgan (2005) rightly indicates, the understanding of capacity should be based on an understanding of a system as a whole, whether it is the delivery of a service through a value chain, a logistics system or supply chain or the functioning of an institution such as a hospital:

“We do not want to get into yet another fruitless effort to ‘define’ capacity and capacity development … we have used the term ‘capacity’ to mean some sort of ability to perform or to create or deliver value. In many ways, capacity is about the potential to act as opposed to performance which is about execution or implementation …

“We use the term ‘capacity’ as referring to the overall ability of a system to perform. The term ‘capability’ refers to a more specific collective ability to do something more specific such as learning. ‘Competence’ refers to individual ability or mastery.”

In the case of public organisations, additional factors (also guided by the Constitution) such as equity of services, legitimacy, responsiveness to needs and detachment from private interest also play a role in how capacity is determined. Others distinguish between administrative and policy (making) capacity.

A capacitated government programme is therefore a programme through which the participating departments, entities or officials – individually and collectively – effectively, efficiently and equitably deliver on their mandate, i.e. demonstrably, significantly and appropriately deliver services and improve the lives of citizens, especially the poor.

In order for a department or institution to deliver on its mandate, specific capacity-related elements have to be present in a programme. These elements relate to both the internal and external environment in which government operates.

The ECDPM has developed a framework for capacity evaluations, as presented in the figure. This framework is broadly adopted for the discussion below.

The “internal environment” entails all the immediate variables that are within government’s control. These include resources (financial, human, physical), institutional arrangements (structures, macro-organisation), policies, legislation, etc. These variables constitute the so-called supply-side measures.

The “external environment” consists of variables that are outside the immediate control of government. Important variables in this environment are the needs of citizens, citizen participation, partnerships and stakeholder management. This constitutes the demand side.

**Internal capacity**

Internal capacity refers to five specific issues functioning at different levels: legal and policy frameworks as enablers; budgetary support; coordination and integration; institutional capacity; and human resources.

Legal and policy frameworks as enablers: Public service-wide and sectoral-specific legislation and regulations provide an enabling (or disabling) environment for attracting, building and retaining a core of capacitated public servants. These include recruitment, remuneration and conditions of service,
procedures, and performance management. Other related policies in effect facilitate (or hinder) the achievement of particular development tasks, such as professionals policy and empowerment related policies. Enabling frameworks (such as an Outsourcing Framework) provide guidance to officials. Constitutional and other requirements define responsibilities and empowering or disempowering relationships amongst institutions, departments, spheres and other agencies.

Formal and informal power relationships can result in some departments, agencies or, on a local level, some councillors, being able to acquire more resources than others or to influence policy more effectively than others.

Budgetary support: Adequate financial and budgetary support allows departments to implement appropriate developmental programmes. Ring-fencing of funds ensures that funds are dedicated to a specific developmental goal. Even though the preference is for disbursements to provinces through the Provincial Equitable Share, there are a number of initiatives where funds are ring-fenced, notably the Provincial Conditional Grants for initiatives such as the Hospital Revitalisation Grant.

Coordination and integration: Coordinated activities within and between programmes are essential for successful projects. Within such an integrated arrangement there may be lead departments/programmes and those with a lesser role, and support institutions (ICT, training, etc.). However, departments and programmes are not always equally endowed and capacitated. Coordination and integration through an enabling network or partnership then become a critical success factor: How these networks function and the nature of formal and informal interactions amongst them may become determinants of the success or failure of a programme.

Institutional capacity: Most of what is written about capacity refers to institutional or organisational capacity. It refers to organisational structures, processes, organisational culture and management styles that influence how an individual’s competencies, and how the organisation’s skills and resources, are effectively utilised. Organisations establish programme objectives, organise work into structures, define line functions and responsibility, and incentivise the attainment of particular objectives. All of these contribute to the capacity of the organisation to deliver on its mandate.

Human resources: This dimension relates to the training, recruitment (locating and attracting specific capabilities), utilisation (deployment, responsibilities), and the retention of managerial, professional, and technical skills, especially scarce skills. Prerequisites, such as recruitment policy and practices, remuneration policy, job-evaluation and conditions of service, determine to what extent the required human resources are available to a programme.

External capacity

Organisations, the public service included, tend to limit their definition to their internal environment. However, the capacity of government to engage with issues on the demand side is of utmost importance for the success of programmes. That is, they question the capacity of government to engage in a manner that will ultimately lead to a thorough assessment of the needs of the public.

Limiting “capacity constraints” to the internal environment of government has led to short-term solutions to service delivery or misalignment between the needs of citizens and programmes. The external factors relate to, amongst others:

Partnerships: Many services are delivered within a partnership relationship with external stakeholders. These partnerships may include PPPs (Public-Private Partnerships), donor-funded programmes and initiatives where government and citizens work together towards service delivery. Examples of the latter include the PHP (People Housing Process) and the EPWP (Expanded Public Works Programme). Part of or most of the capacity to deliver in these arrangements resides in the partners.

Public participation: Public participation remains a key element of any democracy. The ability to facilitate and manage public participation is critical for the success of any developmental programme.

Stakeholder management: Apart from the citizens directly linked to a specific programme, many other sometimes very diverse role-players may have an interest in the programme. These stakeholders may include organised labour, non-governmental and community-based organisations, organised business, state-owned entities and agencies, and many others.

These stakeholders can either add valuable capacity to initiatives or frustrate delivery if their interests are not addressed.

Local and provincial practitioners view national policies as too complicated resulting in certain provisions being ignored if targets are to be met.
Transversal issues arising from the assessments

There are a range of transversal issues that arise from capacity assessments. Here we identify seven of these issues: policies, strategies, strategic leadership and direction; balancing mandates; collaboration and coordination during planning and implementation; budget allocations and financial management; optimising existing infrastructure and resources; the institutional environment; and human resources.

Policies, strategies, strategic leadership and direction

There is a broadly shared concern regarding limited capacity to translate policy into strategy and strategy into programmes and projects. One commentator states: “The fact is that government departments are led, largely, by analysts, academics and policy makers. Twelve years into the new dispensation, the focus should be less on policy development and more on implementation”.¹

Local and provincial practitioners view national policies as too complicated resulting in certain provisions being ignored if targets are to be met. These concerns are especially visible where government is reliant on agencies to deliver the services. In these cases there is consensus that the strategies are not comprehensive and a number of gaps still exist.

The need for decisiveness around key development choices and strategic direction was strongly expressed. Thus respondents pointed towards a lack of strategic leadership (to guide implementation) from the national department where the perception is that the national department does not have sufficient human capacity to drive strategies developed by themselves.

In the absence of such leadership, organisations take their own implementation decisions which may not be in line with national priorities. One of the consequences of the apparent absence of strategic leadership was pointed out as inappropriate infrastructure developments such as building new parking facilities at Durban International Airport while the airport will be decommissioned in 2009.

Poor statistics and limited knowledge of the specific needs within a specific geographical area further inhibit the formulation of sound local implementation plans.

Balancing mandates

Respondents raised concerns regarding the difficulty of balancing mandates amongst various programmes. For example, the use of labour intensive methods in the construction of houses may take longer than other methods and thus impacts on ability of government to meet set deadlines for the eradication of informal settlements.

Similar concerns were raised concerning small business development (through participation in construction) where there is a tension between the need to empower small businesses and the need to meet the deadlines and reduce costs. As a result of such tensions respondents indicated that they dedicated a lot of effort and time trying to strike a balance between these mandates.

In the absence of sympathetic policy guidelines on such matters, respondents use their discretion and compromise some of the policy objectives.

Another example of the difficulty in balancing mandates relates to the governance and oversight of public entities. For example, Transnet reports to the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) but is operating in an environment guided by Department of Transport policies. The DPE’s primary objective, as shareholder, is the profitability of the entity whilst the policy department prioritises developmental aspects. This leads to conflict between developmental initiatives (such as the reopening of branch lines) and improving the entity’s bottom line and thus a preference for continuous bulk transport (e.g. iron ore or coal).

In many cases dealing with apparent-ly opposing mandates and red tape are realities that have to be managed because of the duality of our economy and because of the presence of corruption. There should be a balanced but decisive approach in dealing with these.

Good governance does not only look at the (financial) “bottom-line” but at the “triple bottom-line” (social responsibility and environmental friendliness and profitability), with all its inherent conflicts.

For example, environmental impact assessments remain important but the bureaucratic decision-making and approval processes should be swift and efficient so as not to unduly delay development.

Collaboration and coordination during planning and implementation

It is clear that many inefficiencies relate to poorly integrated and coordinated planning. In many cases a silo mentality is institutionally entrenched. One clear example is from a respondent in the freight logistics environment: “The Unicity (Metropolitan municipality) was planning in isolation, the ports authorities were planning in isolation and both these plans looked totally different.”

Freight corridors span across local and provincial and even national borders. When planning takes place in a localised or isolated manner, the corridor cannot be optimised to serve the economy as a whole.

Nowhere is the “silo” character of the corridor more evident than in the ICT environment, especially where systems are not interoperable (even within entities) for services to be rendered efficiently and effectively.

Budget allocations and financial management

Unfunded mandates: Municipalities, referring to roles and responsibilities delineated in the Constitution, view many national and provincial development initiatives as unfunded mandates.
These are therefore not prioritised, however important they may be for the alleviation of poverty. One metro has calculated that their unfunded mandates amount to R500 million per annum.

Capacity to spend allocations: One of the persistent challenges faced by the national and provincial treasuries is underspending. This is especially true for capital spending, where the national average for the last financial year (2005/06) is 83% and the lowest province only 53% of its capital budget. However, there has been a significant improvement compared to previous years (18.5% compared to the previous financial year). Provinces and local governments who are underspending point to a lack of contract and financial management capacity. Larger metros view insufficient transfers as their major constraint, preventing them from fast-tracking development initiatives.

Regulatory constraints: Financial management processes as governed by the PFMA and MFMA (mentioned above) have made a considerable impact on countering corruption and misappropriation of funds. However, supply chain management regulations have also contributed to the delays experienced with implementation. The cumulative effect of adhering to all PFMA/MFMA-related regulations, as well as environmental impact-related processes, is that projects take extremely long to get off the ground.

**Optimising existing infrastructure and resources**

One of the best examples of inefficient use of existing infrastructure can be found in the freight transport market. Currently only 20% of freight tonnage in Southern Africa is transported by rail, whilst the rest is transported by road.

Of the 20%, half consists of bulk freight, especially coal and iron ore exports. It is therefore extremely important to ensure that government has the capacity to provide strategic direction to public-owned transport agencies and the capacity to incentivise movement of goods back to rail.

Elsewhere is referred to the fact that containers are moved at half the efficiency than that of the leading international harbours. At any given moment a number of cranes are not active, due to maintenance, insufficient operators, etc. In many cases it is thus technically possible to improve service delivery within existing capacity constraints.

**The institutional environment**

Our assessment of hospital management revealed critical capacity constraints, constraints evident in many developing countries.

For example, public hospitals have experienced substantially increased patient loads over the past decade because of rapidly growing urban populations and the associated diseases and traumas of poverty, because of the escalation of the HIV and AIDS pandemic, and because of the failure of the primary health care clinics and district hospitals to capture the patients who should not be attending secondary and tertiary institutions.

Public hospitals were described as generally highly stressed institutions due to staff shortages (of more than 40%), unmanageable workloads and management failures. The degree of stress varies between institutions, depending on the degree of staff shortage and management dynamics.

The nursing function exhibits such high levels of endemic stress due to shortstaffing that it may be regarded as a function in crisis.

Shortage of staff is a critical problem in most public hospitals, and is caused by both under-funding and a national shortage of professional skills. Shortages of support workers such as cleaners and porters exacerbate the problem of scarce skills, as nurses and doctors have to perform unskilled but essential functions.

Shortages of nurses in particular are generating a healthcare crisis in public hospitals and pose a threat to the long-term functioning of the public health sector.

The net result is that clinical and patient care outcomes are compromised. In many cases the result is increased morbidity rates, higher costs of intervention and longer hospital stays. In others it affects mortality rates.

Capacity in public institutions such as hospitals is not only hampered by staff shortages. More importantly it is hampered by dysfunctional relationships with head offices due to limited decentralisation.

The assessments found that provincial departments have centralised control over strategic, operational and detailed processes but are not always able to deliver on these. Hospital managers are feeling disempowered and are of the opinion that they cannot take full accountability for their institutions.

The structural relationship between the province and institution is thus a disincentive for managerial innovation.

Despite the limited devolution, serious capacity gaps still exist within many provincial and national departments. Local governments lack dedicated capacity in most developmental programmes.

National and provincial structures are in most cases bureaucratic and not aligned with new mandates and roles, such as contract management. Concerns were also expressed about significant duplication of structures on provincial and local levels.

The Department of Housing, for example, has realised that its service delivery model is fragmented with too much duplication. This has been reviewed and a new service delivery value chain developed in order to realign functions and structures with their delivery mandate.

Within many institutions, especially health institutions, management structures tend to be fragmented, preventing the integrated management of operations, paralysing initiative and preventing accountability.

The overall effect is pervasive disempowerment of managers and an experience of managerial vacuum on the part of staff. This gives rise to a management
culture in which administration of rules and regulations is more important than managing people and operations or solving problems.

In an environment of scarce financial and human resources it is all the more important to focus on a sustained investment in management capability so that these resources are managed in as effective a way as possible.

What is needed is a far-reaching restructuring of the relationship between distant provincial offices and institutions at the coalface in order to narrow the distance between decision-making and implementation.

Substantial empowerment of institutional management and the enhancement of management capacity, as well as innovative strategies to increase staffing levels, are required.

**Human resources**

The amalgamation of the pre-1994 administrations resulted in the dispersion of scarce skills across provincial and local departments, with many not deployed in their area of speciality. Hence, HR utilisation is not optimal.

There is a general view that in many departments capacity does exist but is not available to be utilised. This is mainly due to professionals (such as doctors and engineers) becoming managers to further their careers. These professional skills are then “lost” to the department.

The quantitative component of the assessments focussed on staffing profiles. Of particular concern was the turnover in personnel and high vacancy rates. This was illustrated by 39% of personnel in the national housing policy unit being on probation in April 2005, i.e. being less than one year in the unit, and vacancy rates of above 40% in many other programmes.

For example, the vacancies in most of the programmes in provincial health departments vary between 25% and 45%.

If vacancy rates and turnover on a vocational level is considered, it becomes clear that most capacity constraints are felt in specific professional categories. The graphs below highlight vacancies in two key areas: health services and infrastructure related services.

Of particular concern are professions where there is both a high vacancy rate and a high turnover rate such as dental practitioners and pharmacists. The absence of proper succession planning exacerbates the problem by hindering smooth transition from one official to the next when vacancies arise.

In some cases the vacancies reflect outdated staff establishments and structures not aligned to new mandates. One such an example is the Department of Transport that had (before restructuring) high vacancy rates in, amongst others, secretarial positions. However, because of the use of ICT, managers are now themselves responsible for preparing documents and correspondence, reducing the need for personal assistants on levels below chief directorates.

The limited availability of critical skills results in the outsourcing of many functions, significantly increasing the cost of development and reducing the benefits transferred to the poor.

When departments de facto decide to outsource functions it has an immediate effect on the type, mix and number of skills required internally. If in-house capacity is developed, remuneration policy (specifically job-evaluation processes, which penalises posts linked to imple-
mentation and rewards policy and strategy related positions) should be revised.

As one respondent said: “We advertise senior engineering posts on Assistant Director salary scales (lower middle management … this is far below what the private sector offers. The same engineers are then contracted at a much higher cost.”

Specific critical skills issues that were raised relate to the lack of contract management expertise and legal oversight; and limited project management and oversight skills resulting in poor quality of end-products or services.

Apart from “hard” technical skills, there is recognition for the importance of “soft” skills, in the absence of which limited community participation takes place; and where poor communication skills result in a poor understanding of specific needs, the nature and extent of backlogs and poor liaison.

Other critical skill sets identified by respondents are: logisticsupply chain management; spatial planning; financial modelling and economic forecasting; change management and communication around change management (changing mindsets); and health and education professionals.

However, despite the concerns about skills shortages, respondents have warned against a fixation on (the scarcity of) skills. They argue that the inherent weaknesses in the system are acting as a push factor for skilled staff to leave whilst creating barriers to the recruitment of appropriately skilled staff. It is therefore essential to address these weaknesses.

One CEO stated: “Fix the system and the system will find the skills.” His words were echoed by many professionals who left the health sector and stated that they did not leave for financial reasons but because the conditions under which they have to work are not conducive.

The inability of current skills development structures and approaches to provide the needed skills for a growing economy also came under the spotlight. The Skills Development Act of 1998, which proposed the establishment of sector education and training authorities (SETAs), intended to address the skills backlog faced by the country as a result of underinvestment in education and training of black South Africans.

However, these structures are perceived as not being responsive to the needs of sectors and of local government. Respondents experienced a complete inability from a number of SETAs to respond to sector-specific needs such as the development of skills for the maritime industry. This led, for example, to harbour authorities and port cities developing their own training and development institute.

Ensuring political buy-in and action

Finding solutions to these challenges are not always that straightforward, especially when dealing with entrenched practices not aligned to Batho Pele principles.

Cabinet has taken decisive action and numerous decisions were taken over the last two years, and joint task teams were appointed to prioritise the implementation of recommendations. Although some task teams are not meeting deadlines set by Cabinet, their work has had a noticeable impact on the sectors.

There is still some reluctance in departments, especially in expediting the devolution of powers to institutional level. In this regard political leadership, as was demonstrated by the Gauteng MEC for health in his 2006 budget speech, can radically speed up processes.

Some of the outcomes actioned by departments are:
- A review of the grading and job descriptions of hospital CEOs;
- The development of an implementa-
tion plan to re-open nursing colleges in order to increase the supply of nurses;
- Enhanced housing service delivery value chain, including a review and restructuring of related entities to eliminate excessive duplication;
- Critical skills analyses, recruitment strategies initiated and filling of vacancies in departments such as Trade and Industry and Justice;
- The development of a Professionals Policy based on a comprehensive Personnel Expenditure Review. This Professionals Policy addresses job grading, career pathing and salary progression for professionals in order to recruit and retain staff;
- Improved application of performance management systems for senior managers in the education sector; and
- The development of guidelines for departments to ensure that the departmental structure, post establishment and skills sets are aligned with their service delivery mandate(s).

Since the onset of the capacity assessments, the President continuously reports on the progress of the initiative and also announced key interventions such as the reopening of nursing colleges. In the 2006 State of the Nation Address he said: “As we announced last year, we have been engaged in assessing the capacity of government to discharge its responsibilities to help accelerate the process of social transformation ...[In the assessed departments] issues of skills, vacancies, delegation of responsibilities to managers of delivery agencies and relationship between national and provincial departments have emerged as being among the most critical areas requiring attention. Assessments of the other departments will be carried out.

“The government will make the necessary interventions to address the issues raised by these assessments, bearing in mind the critical role that government must play as one of our country's most important developmental agencies. We cannot allow that government departments become an obstacle to the achievement of the goal of a better life for all because of insufficient attention to the critical issue of effective and speedy delivery of services.”

In the 2007 State of the Nation, the President again announced the continuation of these assessments.

**Conclusion**

Given the level of political and administrative support, and the ongoing joint efforts, the South African Public Service is making a serious effort to identify and deal with capacity constraints. The rolling assessment programme continues and although the implementation of recommendations will remain a challenge, everything possible will be done to ensure that we all are capable of working towards a better life for all the citizens.

2. Ibrahim Khadar, 2003 “Why managers should be concerned with organisational capacity development and its evaluation” in Capacity.org Issue 17, April 2003 P5-6
Peer review and the legacy of learning from each other

Dr Mataywa Busieka of the DPSA, discusses how the peer review process helps African countries learn from each other

With the dust settling — albeit temporarily — on the otherwise intense peer review exercise, it bears to reflect on the significance of this intimately consultative process. With much fanfare South Africa’s self-assessment report was handed over to the Country Review Mission, led by the eminent Nigerian scholar Professor Adebayo Adedeji. President Thabo Mbeki, who witnessed the handover ceremony, used the opportunity to reiterate what has become peer review’s raison d’etre: that African countries should learn from each other instead of looking north for answers to essentially Africa challenges.

President Mbeki’s statement on learning exchanges among African states need not be taken at face value. There are important undertones tucked far away in this otherwise ordinary refrain. For the avoidance of doubt the Focal Point Chairperson — Minister Fraser-Moleketi — was categorical that the key objective of peer review is “to help Africans help themselves”.

She added, for good measure, that this process would help “to show ourselves and the world that we are not part of those whose mindset assumes that we need external assistance in order to grow”.

There are many ways the learning from each other can take place. If the peer review process results in common rules, as indeed President Mbeki seem to suggest, then the fear of breaching such rules is motivation enough to refrain from a particular transgressory activity. The expectation is that the negative default like shame and name sophistry that would discourage member states from diverting from the universal norm.

One such motivation is the danger of social stigma that comes with an open and unashamed breach of common rules. The challenge is to put in place monitoring systems that would report such transgressions, yet looking at the odds to surmount in the African context this becomes a tall order.

The other dilemma would be whether the cost of such transgression is sufficient enough for states to refrain from offending the common good. Peer review is essentially premised on persuasion as a tool for state compliance. The common assumption is that states may be persuaded via peer pressure to rule compliance.

The architect is that through continuous peer dialogue ultimately to lead to a redefinition of interests and identities. African states are expected to take it as a moral obligation to comply with what is voluntarily negotiated and where state sovereignty is to that extent surrendered.

This plays out a scenario where participating states as a collective are reigned in to comply with regime norms
through persuasion with a rider that it is in their own interest to do so.

Peer review is predicted on the understanding that presupposes a more issue-specific process leading to internalisation of a particular set of cognitive and normative ideas, while other norms within the same social system may still be rejected.

The learning from each other imperative is dependent on the trustworthiness and reliability of states as future cooperation partners which in itself calls into question past reputation of the reviewed state. It is in this vein that the Focal Point Chairperson noted that the achievements of South Africa would be measured against the legacy of apartheid.

What this introspective approach means is that a reputation for blatant and repeated violation of agreed norms in the past will lead to rocky future cooperation. This approach does, however, beg the question whether a non-compliant state will forego future cooperation opportunities.

As a soft instrument the African peer review process does not seek to elicit compliance through penalties, fines or other forms of sanctions, but is nonetheless designed to address regime members that are not morally motivated to follow regime norms.

The defining element in the African peer review's voluntarism lies in the fact that it is a soft compliance instrument that seeks to induce or stabilise compliant behaviour among the participating states.

In this scheme of things the material sanctioning or punishment of transgressors is ruled out. In other words, the soft instrument's architect seeks to mould behaviour by changing the orientation of peer review candidates instead of steering it through coercion and hierarchical order.

Within the African peer review inventory of soft compliance instruments state corporation and participation is at the heart of the review process. The rationale here is that soft compliance works by an evaluation of individual behaviour in the light of norms, and this evaluation must be done on the basis of shared factual knowledge about this behaviour.

The peer review processes is made easier by the non-adversarial nature of the engagement that encourages participating states to volunteer information without fear of condemnation or any such other coercive menace.

That proposition is the essence of the spirit of volunteerism. It is expected that the review process would ultimately inspire member states to pursue diligence and excellence, particularly in areas they have clearly excelled.

With regard to the South African process, for example, Minister Fraser-
Moleketi makes the point that the self-assessment report highlights the emergence of an enabling political and economic environment conducive to improving social cohesion and economic growth, transformation and empowerment.

These are benchmarks which other African other African countries can emulate, or what Professor Adedeji calls intra-African technical proficiency.

Africa, more than any other continent, has been the recipient of the worst form of publicity particularly in the Western media. The review process presents an excellent opportunity for African states to generate positive information and embrace transparency in order to counter the excessive perception of political risk in Africa.

Often the lack of credibility comes from ignorance. Greater visibility for African realities would avoid the absurd scenario where when something happens in the north of Africa it must, and often does, carry completely unjustified ripple effects in the southern hemisphere.

The peer review exercise may also play a role as a dispute settlement mechanism by encouraging dialogue among states that helps to clarify their position on contested terrain. This intervention would help to preserve peace and promote settlement to inter-state disputes on the African continent.

To understand the value of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) process for South Africa it is important to get a sense of the broader African agenda for the APRM. It has always been South Africa's foreign policy to play a leadership role in Africa's renewal and accelerated economic growth. That is why South Africa takes a keen interest in and actively participates in the APRM process.

The APRM is one of NEPAD's instruments specially tooled to revitalize Africa's institutions and revamp the dilapidated infrastructure in order to engender greater economic growth. The underlying rationale is that once NEPAD succeeds in creating viable institutions and building the right climate of positive thinking, then the rest would lie with market forces.

It is easy to see that the peer review architect did not simply emerge from yonder. This was a process painstakingly negotiated by vintage African statesmen concerned at Africa's deteriorating economic prospects and its unforgiving marginalisation in the global economic system.

Quite clearly the philosophy underpinning the setting-up of the peer review mechanism is the need to find a permitting political environment, which guarantees human rights, and the observance of the rule of law that would ensure high standards of probity and accountability, particularly on the part of those who hold public office.

The value of peer pressure for national policymakers to follow best practices resides in the reality that this incident is more likely to become a standard norm. Peer reviews have enhanced competition for better macroeconomic and trade policies among the Organisation for Economic and Cooperation Development (OECD) members.

Similar benchmarking has begun with respect to structural policies, especially those relating to the regulatory framework. The complexity implicit in such vast policy shifts renders them more susceptible to procrastination, and the same problem has been observed in the European Union (EU).

This hinders institutional change and makes corporate and political governance more difficult.

The African peer review process is anchored in the NEPAD strategic vision that dares to eradicate poverty and to place African countries, individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development, and at the same time to participate actively and on an equal footing in the world economy and body politic.

The NEPAD peer review procedure should be viewed as comprising like-minded people which carries over to that of a group of like-minded countries whose commitment to democracy, market economy and sustainable development is reinforced by mutually agreed procedures for policy review and evaluation.

Contrary to the donor-engineered label, the truth of the matter is that the African peer review audit is a veritable instrument that seeks to identify capacity deficiencies in specific thematic areas. The process further seeks to estimate the resources required to build the capacities of these critical social institutions to enable them to make and implement policies that promote good governance in each of the four realms of democracy, economic management, corporate governance and socio-economic development.

Importantly, too, this initiative would enable African countries to among themselves and within the set framework share best practices and learn from each other.

Africa’s problems are legion. There is no gainsaying that stark reality. The peer review exercise is therefore a monumental undertaking that calls for considerable human and capital resource mobilisation.

The peer review process is an audit of the entirety of a country’s national life. The peer review architect is based on the thinking that Africa is indeed an economic patient that is wallowing in the cloud of enormous potential.

The peer review mechanism is an instrument specially tooled to diagnose the malignant cancer that is gnawing away at the continent’s otherwise abundant resources. Once the cancerous tumour has been identified corrective surgery would be applied to remove the tumour and thereby throw a lifeline to a continent that has been in a deep slumber for a considerable length of time.

In areas where reviewed countries are clearly wanting in systems and delivery methods the findings of the review will be a wake-up call to that country to fight on for a better society. On the whole the review exercise is a clarion call to African countries to stop being lazy and unfocused, or paying lip service to critical governance issues.

The review process should indeed inspire African countries to diligence
and excellence; particularly in areas they had done a sterling job. In areas where the subject countries are performing poorly and deserve to be sanctioned, the review verdict will provide such countries with an honest and true assessment of their failings, whether deliberate or by negligence.

Aware of these failings, the subject country would be persuaded to take up the challenge, and fulfil its obligations and responsibilities as best as it should.

What the African peer review processes proposes to do is to audit the existing structures and systems, and subsequently reinforce them by identifying what capacity needs are required for their successful implementation. This all-encompassing exercise seeks to assess what policies and mechanisms are in place to implement the desired programmes, how effective the institutions are, and the outcome of the policies.

The next logical step would then be to identify the deficiencies and through the National Programme of Action (NPA) identify specific and clear pathways of action to fill the identified gaps. In view of these far-reaching measures the allegation that the donor community hangs over the African peer review process like the sword of Damocles is simplistic and a grossly misleading viewpoint.

The kind of products the APRM design promises are of great interest to the donor community. It is not for nothing that Africa’s development partners are keenly watching the unfolding peer review processes.

Donors may ultimately have to judge the political will and vigour evident from the APRM as part of their considerations in funding the various country action plans that will emerge from the process. It is common cause that donors have long agonised over the dilemma of finding prudent ways and means in which to lend money to African governments.

A country that receives a positive rating through the review exercise would obviously attract donor attention and possibly more project aid. Such a spin-off should then not be interpreted as the ultimate goal of these otherwise complex processes.

One of the key attractions to the success of the peer review process is the unambiguous show of political will to reform and implement commitments made in the NPA. All of these positive developments are a welcome boon for the reform-starved donors. Many donor-funded projects turned out to be white elephants; a fact that remains a sore reminder of failed programmes and money gone to waste. In the peer review process donors expect to be presented with not only rich data upon which to base funding decisions, but also an environment of willingness and even a measure of enthusiasm in implementing a focused development agenda as set out in the NPA that is the product of the collective will of the people.

Donors should therefore be seen as beneficiaries of, rather than the motivation for, the peer review process.

Highly skilled experts on various aspects of governance give leadership in and are tasked to undertake the peer review processes. The reviewed countries stand to benefit immensely from the critical mass of the assembled knowledgeable peer review assessors.

Importantly, however, once the peer review report has been submitted to the APR Forum, it will be used as a basis to mobilise resources from AU member states and the international community to help the reviewed country address the governance gaps identified during the basic and periodic review processes.

The repeated interaction that the peer review process creates among African states is important both for the institutionalisation of standards of conduct, as well as for the socialisation of possible transgressors or newcomers within the AU.

The peer review processes will also install benchmarks and discursively clarify the borderline between acceptable and inappropriate demeanour. This innovative interaction will also expose participating member states to regime norms and, by means of repeated interaction and “socialisation”, eventually to reshape their identities and preferences so that they become supporters of the normative tradition of good governance that would evolve.

More importantly for the peer review exercise, the reviewed states can be expected to avoid being shamed and to this extent forestall looming or actual shaming which may constitute a particularly powerful compliance pull.

It is appropriate to pause here and clarify that no one is under any illusion that the APRM processes would be easy sailing all through. Mistakes will be made along the way. There are plentiful opportunities in the African setting for such pitfalls to befall a process of this magnitude. Such mistakes should be acknowledged in a gracious manner and relevant lessons collected and stored in the armoury for tomorrow’s fight.

There are myriad challenges ahead for the APRM process. Such challenges are, nonetheless, not uncommon to a protracted knowledge-intensive processes of this nature.

**Conclusion**

Time has been ripe for creative ways and means to sanitise the African governance systems in order to create an investor-friendly climate where businesses would thrive. Peer review is one effort among many interventions needed to resuscitate Africa from its economic slumber.

This is a process whose net worth in terms of its potential impact on governance processes in Africa is considerable. Prudent governance practices are known to act as a magnet for local and foreign investors. This is the kind of investor-friendly climate Africa needs to be able to instill fresh impetus in local and foreign investor community.

Empty rhetoric waxing the old and tired clichés pleading with foreign investors to ride on the back of charity and come knocking will avail nothing. It is in this sense that the APRM intervention promises to yield substantial confidence building prospects for Africa.
The 2006 Public Service Week: A Batho Pele Revitalisation Initiative

Siyabonga Msimang, DPSA, looks at Public Service Week 2006 and the lessons that can be learned for 2007

The Public Service Week concept was crafted in 2001 with the objectives of establishing a platform that can be used to review imperatives and challenges related to public service delivery; enhancing the quality and efficiency of those services; and assessing the efficacy and implementation of the Batho Pele Revitalisation Programme.

Public Service Week is an annual event facilitated by the Department of Public Service and Administration, which is usually celebrated during the first week of November. The theme for 2006 was “Shona phansi msebenzi” for a seamless and efficient public service echoing a new age of hope, which encourages senior managers to get down to the coalface of service delivery.

Public Service Week is a flagship project of the Batho Pele Revitalisation Programme and is intended to reach all public servants at national, provincial and local government levels as well as all stakeholders that have direct influence on the way in which public services are delivered.

The objectives of the Public Service Week are to take the implementation of Batho Pele principles to a much higher level by encouraging public servants to continuously strive to render qualitative government services and information to the public.

Public Service Week happens in conjunction with the other Batho Pele Revitalisation flagship projects, Service Delivery Watch – Ministerial Unannounced Site Visits and Project Khaedu, which focusses mainly on equipping senior managers with effective problem diagnostic and service delivery management skills.

During Public Service Week, Khaedu-trained senior managers are deployed to the coalface of service delivery to address backlogs and other service delivery challenges. They are then expected to give feedback and come up with a plan of action to address and contribute towards improved service delivery.

In 2006 Free State, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, North West, Eastern Cape, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal took part in the celebrations.

The focus was on critical public service institutions: health care facilities (clinics, hospitals), Home Affairs offices, licensing stations, social grants pay-points and multi-purpose community centres (MPCCs). It is believed that the service beneficiaries supported the approach as the improvements made during Public Service Week will benefit them.

The Free State was identified as the DPSA’s main hub (nerve centre) for 2006.
Vignettes from the provinces

In the Eastern Cape the Public Service Week was held at Cecilia Makiwane Hospital in Mdantsane. The launch drew 1 500 participants including members of the public. Public servants handed over a memorandum to Premier Nosimo Balindlela that pronounced their commitment to service delivery.

The campaign labelled “government at work” – where civil servants engaged in activities that support the servicing of clients at that institution, including cleaning of the environment – was conducted. This was attended by political leaders of the provincial administration, the heads of departments, representatives of national departments that operate within the province, officials from the local government level, and members of the public. This assisted the province in heightening awareness regarding Public Service Week and Batho Pele in general.

As part of the launch the participating officials, including political leaders, joined the “government at work” campaign and were allocated to various work areas such as wards, administration and the hospital kitchen to render hands-on support.

In some areas such as the kitchen this exercise managed to reduce backlog on cleanliness but in some areas it provided an opportunity for engagement/discussions regarding various challenges of the work area and identifying some solutions. This further had a benefit of providing officials, in particular those coming from head office, with a full picture of the environment in which the hospital staff is operating. It is trusted that the learning about the environment will create different perspective thereby facilitating change in the manner in which the provincial Department of Health renders support to the hospital.

This was coordinated by the Office of the Premier and the deployment list was centrally-driven. Senior managers that had been trained on Khaedzu were deployed at Cecilia Makiwane Hospital to assess service delivery challenges. This team included officials from DPSA and other national departments’ officials.

During Public Service Week in the Eastern Cape we found that accessibility of front line offices, signage and way-finding both inside and outside the buildings, is relatively poor and in some instances is not available. We found that generally no information is displayed in the front office for clients and customer care desks are generally not in place.

We also discovered that most of the departments do not have suggestion boxes. In instances where they are available they are not properly managed. There is no clear maintenance policy
regarding the periodical managing of suggestions including giving feedback to complainants.

Although generally staff members do wear name tags, it was noted that national departments are taking the lead and are committed in this initiative.

The Batho Pele Principles, Service Charters and Service Standards are not visibly displayed and in most offices do not appear to exist. Still on Batho Pele issues, we found that most of the facilities do not have ramps and there is generally lack of facilities such as chairs for use while waiting to be served.

Service points, even those that serve people with disabilities such as SASSA, do not have the services of sign language interpreters. This renders the services inaccessible to the people with disabilities.

Lastly, in general, the grounds in most offices are not properly maintained. Most buildings are old and they need significant renovations in some cases, this fixing wall cracks, painting, sun shields on windows and air ventilation. There is minimal access to toilets for clients, if they are available at all. The state of cleanliness of such facilities remains an issue of concern.

Waiting areas are small and do not provide the required comfort for elderly persons who have to wait for a long time before they are served. In some service points drinking water is not readily available for clients.

In the Northern Cape Public Service Week was launched on November 6 2006 at Phillip Mpiwa Park in Galeshewe Township. The park was also used for a flurry of activities for the whole week. The Premier, who delivered the keynote address, together with Members of the Executive graced the occasion.

To ensure that citizens accessed essential services that were well coordinated and integrated, the following departments rendered services on-site:

- Health tested the blood pressure and sugar levels of members of the community as well as public servants;
- Home Affairs issued identification documents. A total of 628 IDs, death and birth certificates and passports were issued during Public Service Week;
- Community members could make enquiries and initiate the process of accessing social grants assisted by SASSA, the Department of Social Services and Population Development; and
- Departments such as Economic Affairs and the Provincial Treasury provided information on the services that they render.

In Mpumalanga three categories of service delivery points were identified: Home Affairs, Justice and Municipalities including a few MPCCs in the province. Senior managers and middle managers were deployed in 71 sites. In this province the problems experienced in most departments include the fact that they are still operating in silos, are still plagued by bureaucracy, and that public servants are discouraged and disillusioned.

It was discovered that in Mpumalanga municipalities staff members are not assessed on a regular basis and there is no proper communication between staff and management. There is a shortage of staff and computers in the licensing departments.

There is no formal service delivery culture. Office hours are not kept and there are no regular staff and feedback meetings.

In Gauteng three categories of service delivery points were identified: Home Affairs, Justice and Municipalities including a few MPCCs in the province. Senior managers and middle managers were deployed in 71 sites. In this province the problems experienced in most departments include the fact that they are still operating in silos, are still plagued by bureaucracy, and that public servants are discouraged and disillusioned.

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In the Free State, the Department of Provincial Treasury deployed two SMS members to frontline offices at the MPCC in Qwa Qwa. The centre was found to be accessible via public transport and on foot. SMS members from the Department of Agriculture visited their frontline offices in Sasolburg, Kroonstad, Welkom, Bethlehem, Qwa Qwa, Trompsburg and Thaba Nchu. It was discovered that most offices are not accessible to people with disabilities.

The Department of Local Government and Housing deployed three senior and two middle managers to Bothaville to identify service delivery challenges facing the municipality. The Department of Public Safety, Security and Liaison deployed SMS members to Kagisanong, Parkroad and Bloemspruit Police Station as well as the mobile unit dispatch in Hobhouse.

Officials at the Kagisanong Police Station complained about the building affecting their performance. Apparently it is always overcrowded and the privacy of complainants is compromised in statement taking. The investigation unit does not have a safe office that meets the standards of safety regulations for sensitive data protection.

At the Bloemspruit Police Station it was found that although it serves a large number of people it is not easily accessible.
to most community members. There is, however, good progress with regard to improving the police-community relations.

The Department of Health deployed SMS members to the MUCPP Clinic, the Emergency Medical Services, EMS Call Centre, National District Hospital Pharmacy and the Casualty Department at Pelenomi Hospital.

In Limpompo the Office of the Premier facilitated Public Service Week activities with the assistance of Batho Pele Coordinators from various departments. The targeted number of attendance was 350, however approximately 500 stakeholders attended the event.

About 114 trained SMS members were deployed in five districts concurrently. Twenty service delivery points were monitored (four per district), covering five departments i.e. Health and Social Development, Justice, Roads and Transport, Home Affairs and SAPS.

Monitoring sessions were scheduled from 6-9 November 2006.

Findings emanating from monitoring sessions were released on 10 November 2006. Issues raised during the Khaedu event were consolidated and intervention strategies were proposed. The Office of the Premier will monitor progress on implementation of proposed strategies.

Deployed SMS members in consultation with the Office of the Premier were tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that gaps identified are addressed. A proposal is to be made to the Director-General for trained and deployed SMS members to adopt institutions. A Programme of Action on issues raised during Khaedu visits was developed and will be monitored.

Data was collected (organisational data, people data, financial data and physical data) and some of the visits were conducted during the night and the early hours of the morning to check the status of delivery at all times.

Lastly, in KwaZulu-Natal we used the first day to brief deployees and to finalise logistics for the rest of the week. The briefing session was led by the Deputy Director-General in the Service Delivery Improvement branch in the Office of the Premier in the province.

Both days were used to confirm appointments at various points like Mkhanyakude District Municipality, Home Affairs in Richards Bay, Health districts offices where Mosvold and Hluhluwe hospitals are located. The MEC for Health also visited Hluhluwe hospital on the fourth day of Public Service Week.

Service Delivery Watch

Service Delivery Watch activities, including ministerial unannounced site visits, took place during Public Service Week 2006. The Service Delivery Watch to frontline offices and state institutions on 7 November was conducted by the Minister for Public Service and Administration in the West Rand region of Gauteng, and SMS members made unannounced visits to MPCCs and other service delivery points.

Challenges

Due to the usage of the already existing buildings with no budget allocated for maintenance, the general observation is that they are not disability friendly. They are not well equipped with toilets, and reception areas are not well designated. Performance Management Systems are still lacking.

The confusion around political mandates and administrative duties is still pervasive. Higher staff turnover is also evident which leads to high workloads, low staff morale and absenteeism due to sick leave taken.

We also established that there is poor coordination and integration of services by clustered departments. Examples include Home Affairs, Health, Social Development and Magistrates Courts, which operate mostly in isolation, yet their services interrelate.

Budgets allocated for staff development are inadequate. Priority in this regard is still given to managers.

Recommendations and way forward

It is recommended that the National Task Team for Public Service Week should be established at least four months before the event, and all stakeholders must be part of meetings from the initiation phase. Also important is that Khaedu training should be implemented for SMS members in the province before the forthcoming Public Service Week.

Provinces and departments must include Public Service Week in their budgets for the next financial year. It must rotate in the province to accommodate all the regions/districts and be consistent with the decision of the Executive Council. More important is that local government should be involved at an early stage of planning for Public Service Week 2007.

Moreover, departmental Batho Pele coordinators and communication officers must meet in advance when organising activities, and posters for Public Service Week in their respective departments. Furthermore, SMS members to get more involved in the activities during Public Service Week.

Lastly, all departments must submit a report on the activities held during Public Service Week as well as on service areas that need improvement.

Conclusion

Public Service Week is just one of the strategies to strengthen culture change and improvement of service delivery. Leadership is afforded the opportunity to know what challenges the clients and those operating at coalface service delivery points are experiencing in the service delivery value chain.

Critical to this aspect is to give effect to the implementation of identified challenges without delay so as to turn around the negative effects to those that are set to benefit from the service. This will be supported by the accelerated finalisation of the development of departmental Service Standards and Service Delivery Improvement Plans.
There's a Tsotsi in the Boardroom

By Muzi Kuzwayo
R148

There's a Tsotsi in the Boardroom takes bewildered advertisers and marketers on a guided tour of exactly what makes the South African market tick. It’s a story as old as history itself. Everyone wants to be a chief – whether it’s in a boardroom, a parliament, a church or on the streets. Despite the odds having been stacked against them, many people in South Africa still made it. And many more didn’t wait for opportunities to open up – they simply broke down the doors. You may find this title, at times, a little uncomfortable and a bit raw, but the author says “what do you expect? I am a product of Bantu education I can only tell it like it is. But not because my vocabulary is limited. And I don’t understand big words like ‘diplomacy’.”

The Greatness Guide

By Robin Sharma
R174

Robin Sharma, one of the world’s top success coaches and author of the international bestseller The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari, offers 10 high-impact lessons for success. The Greatness Guide is a strikingly powerful and enormously practical handbook that will inspire you to get to world class in both your personal and professional life. Written by Robin Sharma, a man whose ideas have been embraced by celebrity CEO’s, leading entrepreneurs, rock stars and royalty, as well as by many FORTUNE 500 companies, The Greatness Guide contains a proven formula that will help you meet your highest potential and live an extraordinary life. Discover the personal practices of spectacularly successful people, potent ideas to get your organisation to greatness, specific strategies to turn setbacks into opportunities, revolutionary tactics for peak performance, how to attract true wealth along with real happiness, breakthrough ideas to generate excellent health and an energy explosion, and tools for work-life balance and ways to experience a lot more fun.
As of 2007/2008 financial year our new office policy is as follows:

Dress Code:
You are advised to come to work dressed according to your salary. If we see you wearing Prada shoes and carrying a Gucci bag, we will assume you are doing well financially and therefore do not need a raise. If you dress poorly, you need to learn to manage your money better, so that you may buy nicer clothes, and therefore you do not need a raise. If you dress just right, you are right where you need to be and therefore you do not need a raise.

Sick Days:
We will no longer accept a doctor’s statement as proof of sickness. If you are able to go to the doctor; you are able to come to work.

Personal Days:
Each employee will receive 104 personal days a year. They are called Saturdays and Sundays.

Bereavement Leave:
This is no excuse for missing work. There is nothing you can do for dead friends, relatives or co-workers. Every effort should be made to have non-employees attend the funeral arrangements. In rare cases where employee involvement is necessary, the funeral should be scheduled in the late afternoon. We will be glad to allow you to work through your lunch hour and subsequently leave one hour early.

Bathroom Breaks:
Entirely too much time is being spent in the toilet. 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, the stall door will open, and a picture will be taken. After your second offense, your picture will be posted on the company bulletin board under The “Chronic Offenders” category. Anyone caught smiling in the picture will be sectioned under the company’s mental health policy.

Lunch Break:
Skinny people get 30 minutes for lunch, as they need to eat more, so that they can look healthy. Normal size people get 15 minutes for lunch to get a balanced meal to maintain their average figure. Chubby people get five minutes for lunch, because that’s all the time needed to drink a Slim-Fast.

Thank you for your loyalty to our company. We are here to provide a positive employment experience. Therefore, all questions, comments, concerns, complaints, frustrations, irritations, aggravations, insinuations, allegations, accusations, contemplations, consternation and input should be directed elsewhere.

Cordially,
Management

The reason isiZulu is a tricky language!

It is standing: iMile
It has stopped: iMile
It is stationary: iMile
It is waiting: iMile
It has paused: iMile
It is upright: iMile
It is motionless: iMile
It has halted: iMile

Invitation for contributions

The Service Delivery Review is largely seen within the public service as a tool for sharing experiences and therefore for learning. The journal is a forum for debate and continuous exchange of views. We therefore encourage public servants and beyond, to submit to us responses to articles or any other service delivery issues that they feel trigger debate and require engagement. Responses/letters should not be more than 500 words. The editor reserves the right to edit the long responses/letters.

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