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Integrating government systems and personnel to facilitate the provision of seamless public service is a goal that government has been working towards for several years, and soon this vision could become a reality. But the “seamless” service will certainly require plenty of stitching behind the scenes. The joining together of national, provincial and local government to form a single public service cannot be achieved without hard work to overcome the many problems and challenges that the task is bound to entail. From legal frameworks to harmonization of conditions of service for personnel there is a myriad of issues to be sorted out.

But a single public service is a key objective of government because it is how the various spheres and structures can be integrated to form one efficient system that helps to achieve the developmental goals. Many of the issues surrounding the single public service were discussed at the last SMS Conference, and the three papers we publish in this edition provide valuable input on how to provide the elusive seamless service.

There is no doubt that corruption in all its forms hinders progress in providing an efficient comprehensive services for all South Africa’s citizens, especially those in the rural areas. So the contributions featured in this edition from the Third Anti-Corruption Summit can also be linked to the quest for seamless service. And the 6th Pan African Conference of Ministers of Public Administration (also featured in this edition) provides some valuable input on developing and improving public service capacity throughout Africa. No doubt there are valuable lessons to be learned from other countries on the continent.

As can be seen, there are many elements that need to be joined together to provide seamless service. And the most important element, of course, is the citizens who benefit from the service. Reaching out to citizens – in all corners of South Africa – is vital. Not only with the provision of services, but also ensuring the full participation of communities in the provision of these services.

Thusong Centres, community development workers, Izimbizo and the “Know Your Service Rights” campaign are some of the community outreach initiatives already in use. Their success in keeping communities informed about services available, and what services they are entitled to, is essential if we are to achieve a better life for all.

As Minister Masenyani Baloyi says in his Letter from Tshwane, “We will remember that an informed civil society is a defence mechanism and a source of stability in a democracy. They say that knowledge is strength, and that fully aware of their rights and responsibilities, no one can mislead the communities to a point where they take to the streets at the slightest provocation.

“Similarly, with knowledge of what to expect from government, where, when and of what quality, the communities will not be held to ransom by irresponsible public officials. The issue is that we are all together in the delivery of services, and the consumption thereof, in the spirit of Batho Pele policy.”

Christian Stephen
I want to first congratulate the new Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration of Parliament’s National Assembly, Comrade Jane Matsomela. Your appointment and your role in leading the portfolio committee, as well as mine in leading the department, will no doubt go a long way to cement the complimentary relationship between Parliament and the Executive.

It is in the nature of all true democracies that we not only talk about the separation of powers in the trias politika doctrine, but we also have the converse side of it, and that is power relations. I believe together we will create the space to have that shining as successfully as we have learnt from our predecessors and colleagues from the current pool of leadership.

In this letter, I want to reflect on Batho Pele, since a large part of this edition is devoted to it.

We can say without doubt that all in the public service and private sector are familiar with what the Batho Pele policy on service delivery is all about, and the kinds of actions and activities they are accordingly called upon to undertake in the context of the people’s contract theory and practice. And as we confirm this, clearly what we should be understood to be implying is that people know about the following principles of service delivery as enshrined in the Batho Pele policy, as well as where, when and how to comply with these principles:

- That citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of public services they receive and, where possible, should be given a choice about the services that are offered;
- That citizens should be told what level and quality of public services they will receive so that they are aware of what to expect;
- That all citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled;
- That citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration;
- That citizens should be given full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive;
- That citizens should be told how national and provincial departments are run, how much they cost and who is in charge;
- That if the promised standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and speedy and effective remedy, and when complaints are made, citizens should receive sympathetic positive response; and
- That public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best positive value for money.

What we believe in is that through the Batho Pele learning networks and engagements, the South African public service will make it their culture to embody these principles in thoughts and in action.

But what is critical to me is a situation where the public is not left out in the speed at which the public servants move on the journey of Batho Pele, nor that they have to always depend on the public servants to have these principles interpreted at frontline offices with a high possibility of misrepresentation and deliberate distortion.

The public service has Batho Pele Learning Networks that are hosted annually by the DPSA. I know that both organs of people’s government and organs of civil society are invited to such learning networks and that they participate in discussions, but the question is: who is setting the tone?

I would prefer, in my tenure as minister, to see a situation where NGO-driven Batho Pele learning networks take place, with the following objectives:

- To communicate to what extent they understand the real meaning of Batho Pele;
- To share their understanding of government’s intentions with the development of the Batho Pele policy;
- To share views on whether they think there are serious government initiatives and programmes of action to deliver services the Batho Pele way; and
- To share and learn from each other what the real impact of the Batho Pele policy is on their interactions with government’s service delivery sites, and to identify weak links and success stories in the Batho Pele implementation programmes.

An arrangement like this will get civil society at the same level of consciousness on the Batho Pele policy, which will be a useful anchor for our democracy and our accountable and responsive culture of service delivery. We will remember that an informed civil society is a defence mechanism and a source of stability in a democracy. They say that knowledge is strength, and that fully aware of their rights and responsibilities, no one can mislead the communities to a point where they take to the streets at the slightest provocation.

Similarly, with knowledge of what to expect from government, where, when and of what quality, the communities will not be held to ransom by irresponsible public officials. The issue is that we are all together in the delivery of services, and the consumption thereof, in the spirit of Batho Pele policy.

Notwithstanding this observation and a priority to take the awareness campaign to the receivers of service, to date the Batho Pele Learning Network, driven by the government, has generated interest in the public service and has become a well-known and much-liked platform of engagement.
Global economic slowdown favouring 2-3% interest rate cut in ’09

The massive slowdown in the United States economy which led to over 2.6 million job cuts in 2008 brought the global economy to its knees, threatening local economic growth in South Africa and ushering in possible interest rate cuts, writes Michael Appel. Economists seem to be in agreement that 2009 is going to be the year for significant interest rate cuts in South Africa.

Driven by a contraction in demand, the significantly lower oil price, which has fed through to quite substantial fuel price cuts, lends positively to a lower risk of inflation which the South African Reserve Bank is mandated to combat.

Weakening global demand for commodities such as gold and platinum, however, means less capital is flowing into South Africa, threatening not only South Africa’s expected Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth, but also the current account deficit.

In the face of shrinking GDP growth, the central bank is likely to drop interest rates, freeing up much needed money to boost the local economy.

The central bank’s Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) lowered the repo rate by half a percent when it last met in December 2008, which was the first such drop in the interest rate following a number of consecutive rate hikes since June 2006.

“...We are likely to see steady interest rate cuts all the way through to the middle of this year... but there are still possible inflation risks such as a weakening Rand which will make the Reserve Bank cautious,” believes economist at Econometrix Treasury Management (ETM), Russell Lamberti.

Mr Lamberti said that if 2007 was the year the cracks started appearing in the global economy, and 2008 was the financial year of reckoning, then 2009 will be the year when the economic crisis really hits home in the real economy.

If 2007 was the year the cracks started appearing in the global economy, and 2008 was the financial year of reckoning, then 2009 will be the year when the economic crisis really hits home in the real economy.

2009,” he said.

Effectively this means growth and investment in developing economies will be significantly scaled down as investors focus on saving and rehabilitating developed markets.

Director at the Bureau for Economic Research, Professor Benjamin Smit, said their official forecast is for a 250 basis point or 2.5 percent cut in the interest rate.

After the successive interest rate cuts, the repo will remain stable for some time, said Professor Smit.

Investment Strategist at Investec Asset Management, Michael Power, similarly believes there will be an interest rate cut of between 2 and 3 percent in 2009.

Inflation has been outside the Reserve Bank’s inflation target band of 3-6 percent since an inflationary cycle began in June 2006, but Sanlam economist Jac Laubscher told BuaNews he believes it will fall below 6 percent by the third quarter of 2009.

“We believe that inflation will move back below the 6 percent mark by the third quarter of this year which will create room for interest rates to come down by between 250 and 300 basis points,” Mr Laubscher said.

Chief Economist at Nedbank Dennis Dykes, believes there will be a cumulative drop in interest rates of 300 basis points, which will bring commercial banks’ prime lending rates down to 12 percent by the end of the year.

“Risks to inflation throughout the year will be the strength of the Rand, administrative prices such as Eskom’s increasing cost of electricity, and a possible resurgence in the price of oil,” said Mr Dykes.

The repo rate, which is the rate at which the Reserve Bank lends money to commercial banks, is currently sitting at 11.5 percent, while the prime lending rate, which is the interest rate consumers are charged for borrowing from commercial banks, is presently 15 percent. - BuaNews

Gauteng hospitals, government buildings get 200 new lifts

Johannesburg - The massive job of replacing 200 old lifts in Gauteng hospitals and government buildings was begun recently.

The lift replacement programme was announced by the Department of Public Transport, Roads and Works late last year as many of the lifts were more than 30 years old and in a poor condition.

The department said contractors were already on site to start with the stripping of the old lifts’ infrastructure, which would be followed by the installation of the new ones.

“Priority has been given to buildings such as former Johannesburg General Hospital now Charlotte Maxeke, Rahima Moosa Mother and Child, formerly known as Coronation Hospital, and Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital,” the department said.

The programme will also cover other buildings like the Tambo Memorial Hospital, Edenvale Hospital, Tshwane Hospital Complex, Maitloho House Extension, No 69 President Street, No 78 Market Street and the Golden Oaks Building.

The whole programme is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

The department has apologised for any inconvenience that might be caused while work is being done and also appealed for patience from the public. “The project will significantly enhance service delivery at public service points for the benefit of the residents of Gauteng,” the department said. - Gabi Khumalo/BuaNews
Developing countries suffering capital outflows - Manuel

Cape Town - The global economic recession, affecting the United States in particular, is causing significant outflows of capital as investors retreat to pump money into their domestic markets, says Finance Minister Trevor Manuel.

"Increasingly, African states are encountering significant fiscal pressures as our revenue sources dry up, as expenditures rise to meet the most elementary levels of service provision and as we battle to retain expenditure levels in the face of significantly reduced GDP growth."

"We are witnessing that the export markets, developed with enormous sacrifice, are suddenly closed to imports from our countries, as a result of falling consumer demand and increased protectionism," said Mr Manuel at the Committee of 10 recently.

The C10 is a meeting of African Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors who gathered to take stock of the impact of the current global economic recession on Africa.

Mr Manuel said South Africa and Africa were living through intense liquidity pressures as the domestic banking sector battles to secure finance.

Many countries are witnessing the drying up of remittance flows which have, over the past number of years, been a reliable source of finance which offsets impact to the skills drain.

"We are seeing the first wave of unemployment as many foreign direct investors scale back or shut down their operations."

"We are likely to witness a continuing decline in Overseas Development Aid flows to support, among other things, the delivery of the Millennium Development Goals."

"Already there is a cumulative shortfall of $240 billion on the Gleneagles commitments," said Mr Manuel. The effect of recent developments on sectors such as tourism can already be seen in the declining number of tourists traveling to Africa.

South Africa, he said, has not yet recovered from the severe impact of the high food and fuel prices of the last 15 months.

"Ours is a history of a battle for a fairer, more equitable world. This period is one where we must amplify the call - neither for alms nor charity, but for an opportunity to deliver to our citizens that which they deserve," Mr Manuel said.

To attain this South Africa and Africa must evaluate every aspect of what is done, each institution that takes decisions that affect people's lives, and make the case for fairness and opportunity. - BuaNews

New institute in KZN to advance science, technology studies

The KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government has launched a unique science and engineering training institute, the Moses Kotane Institute, to improve the science and technology fields in the province.

Speaking at the launch in Durban, Premier Sibusiso Ndebele said mathematics, science and technology programmes, to be rolled-out by the institute, will be consistent with pro-growth policies.

"Science and technology represent a major opportunity for world development," he said.

"However, if not consistent with pro-poor policies, science and technology may increase rather than diminish the existing inequalities."

The premier said the institute comprehensively supports the government's Agrarian Revolution by offering broad modules on agricultural science. He said the BSC4 programme offered by the institute will target students from disadvantaged schools who attained full matric exemption, but do not meet the requirements to be admitted directly into the science or agriculture faculties at tertiary institutions.

These students would have done mathematics and science (physical science or biology or agricultural science) at secondary school.

"If not consistent with pro-poor policies, science and technology may increase rather than diminish the existing inequalities."

The new Moses Kotane Institute is "a unique science and engineering training institute" that would specialise mainly in building the skills of historically disadvantaged students.

The premier said science and technology should be used to assist South Africa to develop the know-how and expertise to be able to predict the build-up and onset of natural disasters. He said this will nurture enough expertise to track weather patterns as they develop in the earth's atmosphere, and take pre-emptive action to minimise their disastrous effects on communities.

The institute, he said, has forged formal links with the National Department of Education which will officially regulate all programmes. The eThekwini FET College, universities of KwaZulu-Natal and Pretoria respectively, will work closely with the institute by offering some parts of the modules.

The institute was named after struggle veteran Moses Kotane, who made an enormous contribution to educating South African freedom fighters who were based in the former Soviet Union and Tanzania.

Mr Kotane was a self-taught ruling party stalwart known worldwide for his meaningful contribution to the fight against apartheid. - Professor Ndawonde/BuaNews
Strengthening the three spheres of government through a seamless (single) public service

The ongoing transformation of the state in line with the imperatives for a single public service will require bolder action to ensure greater coherence between the different spheres of government in the delivery of services, writes Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, former Minister for Public Service and Administration.

In our quest to make democracy and freedom from economic oppression and poverty a reality, we have had to ensure an accountable government whose public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources, and guarantee the realization of human rights with due regard for the rule of law.

Our democracy is characterised by participation, transparency, responsiveness, consensus, equity, inclusiveness, effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability. We have uncompromisingly improved all facets of governance, public administration and management. But I would like to challenge you as to whether public institutions are working as constitutionally expected.

Have you, as Senior Management Service (SMS) members, delivered on the people's contract for a better life for all? We have to continuously reflect on what is working and what is not. Let me remind you that we formally launched the SMS initiative and the first SMS conference in 2002, with the theme “Moving the Public Service from Policy to Implementation”. This conference dealt extensively with the issues of e-Government with particular focus on cost effective ways of improving service delivery for the benefit of the citizenry.

The 2008 SMS conference, of which the theme was “Delivering on the People’s Contract through a Seamless Public Service”, was a culmination of the debates of the second SMS conference, hosted here in PE in 2003, of which the theme was “Towards an Integrated Public Service”. We are therefore conceiving and putting into action the issues raised during that conference.

A number of SMS conferences that followed thereafter focused on building capacity for sustainable development in a developmental state, which South Africa is striving to achieve. During the 2007 SMS conference we consulted you on the Leadership Development Management Strategic Framework (LDMSF). The LDMSF is a response to the SMS Review that was done in 2005 and the past SMS conferences of capacity development. This is to say that the SMS conferences are not just mere talk shops but robust debates that culminate in something concrete.

We also become deeply introspective, critically reviewing the state of our nation and the capability of our state in having delivered on the people’s contract promise of “a better life for all”.

The topic that I’ve selected, “Strengthening the three spheres of government through a seamless (single) public service”, is one whose intent goes to the centre of this debate. It is most opportune because it gives us a chance to reflect on the capability of the state in meeting its developmental objectives, and taking stock of how the state, through its government machinery, encompassing all three spheres of government, can be strengthened in order to do things better in the method of “business unusual”.

Public administration and management, human resource management and development, organisational structuring and development are critical areas which all of you are involved in need to address to ensure that the basic public services are taken to the people who need them most.

We have introduced certain strategies and mechanisms to achieve the tenets of our democracy as articulated above. Thusong Centres, community development workers, Izimbizo, the “Know Your Service Rights” campaign, and Batho Pele Principles are some of our community outreach strategies.

The anti-corruption strategy, which requires SMS members to be custodians and implementers thereof, will enhance our rating in the Africa Peer Review Mechanism. We have achieved more in a few (15) years than the previous government. Let us therefore not go back but strive to put South Africa on the map of world envy and be proud to protect our democracy and our beloved country’s achievements.

Let me argue for a move toward a Single Public Service (SPS) as a vehicle and a mechanism that will strengthen the three spheres of government. Before I do that, it is important to understand the socio-political context that informs government’s approach.

Political imperatives

In 1955 at Kliptown, the African National Congress spearheaded the adoption of the Freedom Charter, which reflected our commitment to create an equal and just society. Hardly 50 years later, government has built a democratic society in which all South Africans have the right to vote, to live where they wish, to move freely around the country, enjoying a wide range of natural rights and freedoms.

Since 1994, the government has strived to build a “developmental state”. In this vein, the ANC’s 51st conference held in Stellenbosch in 2002 expressed the view that: “We seek to build a developmental state”.

The idea of a “developmental state” is not new, but is a development of the state vision we espoused in 1994.

The present state vision is a direct result of the socio-political context we find ourselves in. It is a vision that has evolved from the ANC’s 51st conference held in Stellenbosch in 2002.

Among the resolutions taken under this heading were:

- To continue strengthening, developing and refining the system of intergovernmental relations between the three spheres of government that has evolved;
- The pace of transformation be accelerated through the creation of a single development-oriented integrated system of public administration; and
- That the move towards a single public service should not be seen as an administrative process, and should incorporate the move
towards integrated service delivery including single service access points for citizens. This will result in greater access to services for rural communities.

The ANC’s 2004 Election Manifesto, The People’s Contract, makes a call for the establishment of a common system of public services. This common system, a single public service, is a key objective of government because ultimately it is about the way in which the spheres and structures work together within a framework of integration in particular areas to achieve developmental goals as a coherent whole.

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

The 52nd ANC Conference, in Polokwane, re-affirmed the decisions regarding the single public service, recognising that “one of the most pervasive challenges facing our country as a developmental state is … best addressed through a concerted effort by government in all spheres to work together and to integrate as far as possible their actions in the provision of services, the alleviation of poverty and the development of the people and the country.”

The developmental state and integrated service delivery

It is clear from the above that improving the performance of the state is central to meeting national socio-economic objectives and building a better life for all. On the one hand this must involve substantially increasing the coherence of the state to ensure better co-ordination of efforts in the delivery of services across the three spheres. On the other hand it also means building government institutions across the three spheres which are centres of excellence, robust and flexible enough to respond to different needs and contexts as well as ensuring sufficient, capable human and other capacity.

As government we are unapologetic that we are in the process of building a developmental state which is pro-poor and intervenes decisively and coherently in the economy and society to address social and economic goals. It is seen as an appropriate vehicle to overcome the large social and economic backlogs we have inherited over centuries of illegitimate and unconstitutional rule, and to ensure a sustainable future for all South Africans.

Our Constitution requires cooperative and effective government while recognising that government in the national, provincial and local spheres is “distinctive, interdependent and interrelated” (section 40(1)). Together the three spheres of government are required to provide effective, transparent, accountable and coherent government for our country. This requires that the spheres respect each other’s territory and powers and functions while striving to work together in a meaningful way to improve service delivery to the public.

The drive towards coordinated government has been at the heart

of government’s transformation and reform programmes for the last ten years. In 1998, the Presidential Review Commission advised government that coordination at the centre of government was weak, and that intergovernmental relations needed to be improved. As a result government reconfigured its cabinet committees to facilitate coordination in particular sectors, namely the governance, economic, social, justice and international clusters. Similar clusters of directors-general were created. These measures supported a horizontal integration among national departments.

To complement this horizontal integration, a system of vertical integration was developed by the establishment of a framework for national, provincial and local governments to promote and facilitate intergovernmental relations, which is regulated in the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005 (Act No 13 of 2005). Despite the positive changes that have been introduced over the last ten years, there is room for improvement in public service delivery. Government does not present itself as a coordinated front, but in many instances as a myriad of national, regional, provincial and municipal offices, each with a separate identity, each operating in its own silo.

The lack of coordination between the different spheres of government has hindered service delivery with people often being forced to visit more than one office or make multiple visits in respect of a single service. People are often expected to travel great distances to obtain the services they need. Most services are available only during office hours, forcing people to interact with government during their productive time. It is not just a burden on the people; it is a duplication and bureaucratisation of resources.

Integration of government services, systems and personnel would assist in addressing these challenges. This is a massive task, requiring extensive change throughout public administration and encompassing a change in mindset as much as legislative and institutional change.

One of Batho Pele’s principles is that the state should interact with citizens, but many public servants still treat citizens as if they are doing them a favour.

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Integrated service delivery

Research has shown that many people have difficulty accessing government services, often because transport costs are prohibitive. Some people are not even aware of the benefits and services to which they are entitled. To respond to these challenges, it is necessary that government organises itself in such a way that as many government services as possible are concentrated in a single location, and that the single location be as close to the people as possible.

From the citizen’s perspective, the state is constitutionally bound to ensure that services are in fact delivered to the citizens, and that these are of a high quality and conveniently delivered. This challenge the state to find the most effective methods and channels to deliver these services within the system of government.

It calls for a decisive break from the old-fashioned “single department, single service, single service point” model of service delivery toward a dynamic, modern delivery model and system that begins to cluster these services, to the convenience of the citizen, through a “single window”. This is a physical structure or on the Internet.

Many people would argue that illiterate citizens would not be able to benefit from this, but that is why we have established Thusong Service Centres, which have facilitators to ensure that there is service delivery. In this respect, the institutions across the three spheres that comprise the machinery of state have to be strategically aligned and harmonised to complement one another so as to more effectively fulfill the needs of South African society.

Such arrangements will enhance government’s service delivery approach as one sovereign entity, rather than conceived as separate institutions serving the people.

The Thusong Service Centres (formally known as MPCCs) are good examples of integrated service delivery, as they deliver the services of all spheres of government from a single location. They are located in townships and rural areas, close to communities which have previously been marginalised.

The establishment of the centres gives rise to the need for cooperative institutional arrangements. For instance, officials staffing these centres will in time need to take responsibility for delivering services other than those of their immediate department. Another important requirement, not currently in place, is a streamlined financing mechanism for jointly run service delivery initiatives such as these.

Plans are underway to establish urban government service delivery malls to complement the Thusong Service Centre initiative. Integrated service delivery centres such as these have been established in the state of Bahia in Brazil and over the past two years in Canada. They offer a one-stop service in a pleasant, professional environment, with flexible hours of business and well-trained staff.

Such innovations in service delivery will be facilitated by institutional integration, especially between and amongst the spheres of government.

To strengthen work that has been done in this area, and to ensure that roles and responsibilities are clarified, a regulatory framework has been provided for in the Public Administration and Management Bill, which will require the determination of a framework for service centres across the country as sites to enhance accessibility, convenience and effectiveness of services.

Given the potential for integration offered by information and communication technologies, it may in future be possible to apply for an ID book at a clinic, or to pay your traffic fine at a supermarket.

Mobility of staff

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

Numerous complications have arisen in transferring personnel between the spheres. The conditions of service in the public service and local government are significantly different. This makes the transfer of staff very complex, given that overall conditions of service must be retained.

Add to this the fact that transferring employees are likely to have to resign from their pension funds, to their detriment, and may have to join a different medical aid. Their union might not be represented in the bargaining council of the sphere to which they have moved.

Two strategies must be employed. Firstly, mechanisms must be found in the short term to make the transfers easier within the existing constraints. Secondly, conditions of service must be harmonised as far as possible to ensure mobility. This is a central objective of the single public service.

Attitudes and professional ethos

Archbishop Desmond Tutu once commented that civil servants are neither civil nor are they servants of the public. This view is supported by several government and independent reports, which point out that government institutions are not citizen-friendly and that the Batho Pele principles are not implemented correctly.

Perhaps this is attributable to a sense that some public servants in service delivery institutions do not take pride in their work. It may also in part be based on the outdated view that jobs in the public service are guaranteed for life.

One of Batho Pele’s principles is that the state should interact with citizens, but many public servants still treat citizens as if they are doing them a favour. Changing this attitude requires a change in the mindset of public servants but it is also necessary to transform the material conditions under which people work. Many public servants are expected to work in workplaces that are drab and depressing, impacting negatively on their morale.

In conclusion

The Senior Management Service cadre must lead the seamless service delivery required by our nation. The mandarins must be able and willing to make the changes required and to be a government institution that represents and is responsive to the needs of the people of South Africa.

As we consider these challenges we must remind ourselves that the transformation of our country is not negotiable and our engagement must always reflect our commitment to the social contract we have with the people of South Africa.

Let us transform ourselves to ensure that we serve the people of South Africa, rather than expecting the people to transform themselves so that we can serve them.
SALGA A’s action plan in promoting a seamless public service

S Somyo, of the South African Local Government Association, outlines the results of a study conducted on the single public service and the plan for seamless service

Former president Thabo Mbeki, in his 11 February 2003 State of the Nation Address, announced that “…we will this year also finalise the proposal for the harmonisation of systems, conditions of service and norms between the public service in the national and provincial spheres on the one hand, and municipalities on the other hand”.

And on 9 February 2006 he highlighted the complexity of the matter and the “need to secure the agreement of all relevant stakeholders”. SALGA’s position was informed and made to be in line with the above. The input on seamlessness needs to be anchored on a clear understanding of where SALGA stands and where she comes from on Single Public Service (SPS).

Background
SALGA, having been invited, formed part of the conceptualisation of the integrated public service (SPS) at the ANC’s 2002 Stellenbosch Conference. Equally, SALGA formed part of and participated in, among others, processes leading to the adoption of the current ANC Polokwane Resolution on SPS. The communication of developments from these and other stages of the evolution of the programme took place through conferences, consultative summits, workshops and our PEC and NEC meetings etc., the genesis and exodus of which is as outlined below.

SALGA conference resolutions
SALGA’s NCG of 2002-2003 resolved that “SALGA should be an equal partner with DPSA and DPLG in the development of policy and framework legislation around the integration of the public sector” and further that “the constitutional status of local government as a sphere rather than a tier of government needs to be protected” (See SALGA’s NCG Resolutions/Declaration, 2004, page 32).


Lastly, the 2004, SNC raised the fact that public service legislation should be an overarching legislation “aimed at instituting common norms and standards whilst separate legislation should govern sector-specific issues”, and further that “the current bargaining arrangements should be maintained within the context of common norms and standards which would be set by the public service” (ibid, 5.4 (2) and (4) page 86).

The SALGA National Conference of April 2007, in terms of the Single Public Service, resolved that SALGA shall:

- Develop and roll out a programme for the achievement of the SPS; communicate effectively on SPS to its stakeholders to eliminate possible confusion and anxiety; consult on SPS with the various stakeholders, which include the relevant public service and local government trade unions; further research the impact of integration on local government; and ensure that it is an equal partner in driving the integration of the public service.

Process steps to 2007 conference
The minister for Public Service and Administration made a presentation to the NEC of SALGA in May/June 2006 on the SPS concept. Furthermore, the NEC August 2006 Lekgotla resolved to contribute to and support the government programme of integrating the public service with special regard to, inter alia, development of framework legislation on the integration of the public service and framework for alignment of conditions of service and remuneration practices between local government and the public sector as well as the e-Governance and ICT stream of the work.

The NEC dispatched SALGA officials to serve on the five different work streams, i.e. anti-corruption, Thusong centres, legal drafting and HRD work streams. SALGA then developed a discussion or position paper for provincial members assemblies/conferences for discussions during January/February 2007. Inputs from provinces were incorporated in discussion or position papers for SALGA National Conference of April 2007, for discussion or consideration in the conference, in conjunction with a presentation from the minister.

Discussion
In making the single public service a reality, it must cover critical areas necessary for ensuring the existence of capable and sustainable service delivery institutions in all spheres of government. Areas that are important to foster the single/integrated public service include:

- Provide for the mobility of staff between and within the spheres of government and public entities;
- Stabilise and improve intergovernmental relations;
- Facilitation and transformation of systems and mechanisms for service delivery such that there is smooth and seamless service delivery at and between all institutions of government;
- Clearly defined Human Resource Framework that covers all employees; including but not limited to realisation of RSA ILO obligation on “equal pay for work of equal value”;
- Clearly defined Labour Relations Framework and the resultant mandating arrangements; and
- The alignment of sphere-specific legislation as well as clearly defined roles and responsibilities, accountability and funding arrangements.

Framework legislation for a single public service
From the onset the development of the draft legislation was premised on constitutional imperatives that the three spheres of government are distinctive, interdependent and interrelated. Also, that all spheres have an obligation to individually and collectively secure the well-being of the people and to provide effective, trans-
parent, accountable and coherent government; cooperate with one another by assisting and supporting one another and coordinating their actions accordingly; and basic values and principles governing public administration. Legislation regulating public administration may differentiate between different sectors, administrations or institutions, and local government-specific provisions which state that the municipality has a constitutional executive and legislative right to govern the affairs of its community, subject to national and provincial legislation.

Matters in respect of local government not dealt with in the constitution may be prescribed by national legislation.

Objectives of the legislation
The overarching goal of legislation is to improve service delivery by creating a common culture of service delivery based on Baldo Pelle principles and stabilising and strengthening intergovernmental relations. It seeks to achieve more coherent government, integrated planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; and establish norms and standards for employment in the public administration, including employment practices and employee relations and mandating arrangements for collective bargaining.

Further objectives are to create a framework for remuneration and other conditions of service to be informed by the outcome of the impact study and actuarial evaluation on medical and pension arrangements, human resource development strategy and the development of integrated skills database; formulate mechanism to transfer staff between institutions and spheres; and adhere and uphold government's anti corruption strategy and standards of conduct.

Post-conference work and results thereof
NEC’s HRMWG adopted terms of reference on the study of impact of SPS on local government and commissioned a study on:
- Constitutionality of the Bill;
- Impact on SALGA as Employer Body;
- Impact on municipalities;
- Impact on organised labour (trade unions) in LG;
- Impact on the SALGBC;
- Impact on LGSETA; and
- Proposed different SPS models.

A possible position on the Bill was adopted and used as means to obtain mandate from municipalities and facilitate their discussion in preparation for the national consultative workshop in mid-October 2007. The possible position was premised on three key issues emanating from previous conference resolutions and other practical considerations: that local government must remain a separate bargaining council as local government issues will receive no focus if SALGA is one of 36 employers in the Public Service Co-coordinating Council, let alone that “a future public service strike – otherwise it is pointless for SALGA to continue to exist”.

They expressed the hope that the equality that constitutionally must exist between the three spheres will indeed exist as, per the explanatory note to the 8th draft SPS, “no sphere will manage the other”. They raised the following questions and concerns:
- Will budget cycle be aligned?
- Sections 151, 154,156 (5),160,163 of Constitution not be undermined;
- Must not undermine gains made in local government since Structures Act, retirement age must be 60 not 65; and
- Why exclude municipal entities?

Commissioned study and results thereof
The full report of the study was received in October 2007. It premised its input on a desktop study of relevant local and comparative literature as well as relevant policy documents. The study highlights that in the past 20 years developed and developing countries, including in Africa, show trends towards decentralisation to local government. It also states that the integration of personnel with central government being, as the Bill stands, a strong determiner of issues (e.g. Norms and Standards and service conditions, including the percentage of salary increases and mandating of SALGA on what to go and negotiate on) seems to be in direct contradiction to the decentralisation of power emerging from the ruling party policy documents where provinces need to be given appointment powers rather than a concentration of these to national structures.

The results of the study also revealed that strong local government is an important component of South Africa’s new democracy with the current constitution signifying a move towards a stronger separate personnel system with section 160(1) (d) thereof empowering a municipal council to “employ personnel that are necessary for the effective performance of its functions”.

The need for concurrence between SALGA and DPSA is meant to avoid erosion of this point. It advises against a micromanagement of municipalities by MPSA as that would amount to encroachment into the constitutional integrity of local government to govern its affairs and it cautions against forced deployment/secondment of personnel, in the name of an undefined “public interest” or generally, as that may lead to a loss of or inability to attract skilled staff.

A further caution against an introduction of a system where those who appoint staff, municipalities in our case, do not enjoy accountability of the staff they employed as same may be caused to focus on central government rather than the municipality; and advocates for the existence of a separate local government pension fund than, as the Bill (Schedule 3) purports, membership of the government employees’ pension fund.

The study also advocates the retention of a separate bargaining council as local government issues will receive no focus if SALGA is one of 36 employers in the Public Service Co-coordinating Council, let alone that “a future public service strike including local government could bring the country to a standstill” - otherwise it is pointless for SALGA to continue to exist.

On the risks to local government, the study points to the need to lobby (Treasury) for retention of section 10 of the Systems Act which, to avoid unfunded mandates, if a power is to be assigned to a municipality, whoever requires same must submit a memo to Treasury, inter alia, giving at least a three-year projection of the financial implications of the function or power; disclosing any financial risks or liabilities to municipality post the function and
indicating how any additional expenditure by the municipality will be funded. Examples of issues with funding concerns in the Bill are transfers and secondment of staff and the Thosung centres, the pay incentives and regulated bonuses, and minimum interoperability standards on uniform HRD systems.

The study compares the proposed SPS model with four that are popular in the world. There is the Separate Model which is similar to what presently obtains. Local government is separate to other spheres with no transfer from, within and to itself. It has space for nepotism, corruption and dismissal of senior staff by councils if they do not toe the line or are opposed to certain unwelcome actions. SALGA (2007 NC) asked if there is no need to change these rules and conventions. Poorer Municipalities find it difficult to attract scarce and skilled personnel.

The second model is the Integration Model which is similar to what is being proposed in the Bill. The major criticism of this model is that it "could be more rule-driven and bureaucratic than the more flexible local government system whereby each municipality is an employer. This could conversely lead to more red tape and slower service delivery." It also has a top-down development approach which "in Africa in the 1970s and 1980s failed spectacularly because of lack of popular participation". Section 152 (1) of the constitution requires local government to encourage involvement of local communities in affairs of municipalities, including its performance management. This is a variant of the French Model where if staff lose jobs in one sphere, they are kept in a deployment list. It is good as it avoids skilled staff to all spheres.

There is also the Unified Model – which means the introduction of a central local government commission. Under this model transfers of staff would happen among municipalities but not national and provincial government – the Systems Act is modelled around this. This model is criticised as it does not live up to the seamless and one-stop service notions as well as deploying human resources where they are most needed – notion that are so laudable about the SPS initiative.

The last model is the Hybrid Model – this is similar to a Kenyan Model where only senior level employees are potentially transferable. "The advantage of this model is that it is less disruptive to local government given that the vast majority of staff would remain permanent employees of local government. There are limited skills at local government level that are potentially transferable." This model is a restricted version of the integrated (French Model) as it only transfers between and within employers, the senior management staff.

Conclusion and recommendation of the study
The study recommends that the SPS process needs to be linked with the white paper review process as that will set the strategy and the SPS structure. This is more so that an organisational overload is imminent – structural reforms (twice), territorial changes (twice), new management structures, developmental local government, new forms of service delivery and PMs all introduced in the last 10 years. Staff morale and consequent poor service delivery is a real risk.

The study reveals that the SPS process has profound potential negative effects on local government and consideration should be given to considering alternatives, e.g. make transferability at top level only.

It also recommended that a feasibility of transferring only senior level and technical staff should be given (mindful of the dual loyalty problems). This will also protect the bargaining arrangement as only unions in the sector will continue operating there rather than local
Tips for creating a public sector leadership development programme

Professor Jerry Kuye, of the University of Pretoria, provides 10 insights as guidance to public sector organisations interested in developing their own leadership development programmes.

The first tip involves basing the programme on a competency model. This looks at whether your organisation has an established competency model that is used throughout your human resource programming or not. It is critical to spend some time defining the skills that leadership development programme participants are expected to develop.

The second tip involves allowing participants to self-select. Each agency must determine for itself the best method for selecting leadership development programme participants. Factors including collective bargaining influences, time and the intended target audience may impact on the process you use to identify participants. Some organisations are targeting potential future executives only, while others are offering leadership development opportunities organisation-wide.

The third tip is about involving executives and elected officials in the development and implementation of the programme. It has been said in numerous articles about employee and leadership development that without the full support and involvement of the executive leadership team, the programme will fail. Top management must be involved in the development of the curriculum, the selection of the attendees, and in the presentation of the programme. Their support is critical for the success and long-term viability of any leadership development programme.

The fourth tip is about using 360-degree feedback, individual development planning and coaching as the core around which other development opportunities revolve. The 360-degree survey tools provide feedback, enabling leaders to realise strengths and areas for development that without the full support and involvement of the organisation, even as the organisation changes. In every leadership development programme I have developed and managed, the agenda and curriculum is modified during the programme and after graduation to reflect the changing needs of the participants and the organisation. It is critical to be flexible and to listen to the programme participants and their managers in order to ensure the programme continuously improves and maintains its credibility and relevance.

Tip number nine is about celebrating the achievement. A learning opportunity such as a leadership academy or leadership development programme requires a commitment of time and resources, not only on the part of the coordinators, but on the part of management and the participants.

A graduation or other public celebration is critical to recognise the achievements of all the parties involved. The graduation does not need to be elaborate or lengthy. A brief lunch with informal presentations will do the trick. Nevertheless, finishing a programme like this without some recognition is like going to a movie that does not include the credits at the end.

The last tip is that you must measure and track outcomes. While each organisation determines the level and extent to which the results of a leadership development programme are measured, a variety of tools can be used to determine the impact of the programme. Such measures include knowledge of leadership concepts as measured via a pre- and post-assessment tool; perceived change in selected leadership skills as measured by a multi-rater, 360-degree feedback tool administered at the beginning of the effort and again one year later; and number of participants retained over one, three and five years.

Conclusion
If your organisation has not yet embarked on a leadership development effort, it is likely that you will in the near future. Changing demographics, an impending “brain drain” and a need to enhance retention levels are driving public organisations of all sizes to explore tools for ensuring the stability of their workforce. And while many organisations are exploring these efforts, each must find a solution that works best for their organisation’s culture and goals.

The elements presented in this article reflect the common practices in public sector leadership development efforts today.
The Public Administration and Management Bill

By Adv E. Van Schoor, Department of Public Service and Administration

The Constitution provides that South Africa is one sovereign, democratic state and that government is constituted as national, provincial and local spheres of government which are distinctive, interdependent and interrelated. It determines basic values and principles governing public administration; and requires all spheres of government to provide effective, efficient, transparent, accountable and coherent government to secure the well-being of people and progressive realisation of their constitutional rights.

During the February 2007 State of the Nation Address, the former President stated that it would take 18 months to complete legislation on single public service. A Bill was drafted to create legal framework for co-ordinated public administration in three spheres. There was wide-ranging information sharing and consultation was undertaken. This involved: provincial intergovernmental relation (IGR) forums, municipalities, organised labour and the Public Service Commission. In April 2008 a revised draft Bill was published for public comment. Thereafter the Bill was revised on the advice of external constitutional and labour lawyers. The Bill was approved by Cabinet on 28 May 2008 and was introduced in Parliament in June 2008 (B 47-2008). Subsequently, after the SMS Conference, the Bill was withdrawn in November 2008 for further consultation. This paper is based on the Bill as introduced in Parliament.

- 1st draft – provincial IGR forums, municipalities, organised labour, Public Service Commission
- Revised draft Bill published for public comment on 9 April 2008
- Draft Bill revised on advice of external constitutional and labour lawyers
- The Bill was approved by Cabinet on 28 May 2008 and was introduced in Parliament in June 2008 (B 47-2008).

The draft Bill respects powers vested by Constitution in municipalities. In the Bill, municipalities appoint and dismiss their employees within a national framework of norms and standards. Incircumscribed instances, the Minister for Public Service and Administration (MPSA) is enabled to set limits on terms and conditions of employment in the three spheres and to address unjustifiable disparities. Where municipalities' interests are affected, the Bill requires the concurrence of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA)'s concurrence as representing national organised local government and consultation with Minister for Provincial and Local Government (MPLG).

Scope and service charters and centres
The scope of the Bill proposes to cover the current public service, which consists of national and provincial departments, and government components. It also covers municipalities and municipal government components. The term “institution” in the Bill includes a national or provincial department or a municipality. Provision is made for all institutions to have the service charters to set standards for services they are to deliver. It is proposed that municipalities therefore need to include their charters in their integrated development plans.

The purpose of Thusong Service Centres are to deliver certain services from the three spheres of government. The Bill proposes the regulation of these centres through a framework determined by relevant Ministers, role-players and as well as an implementation protocol for each centre. The Bill also provides for a framework for the use of ICT to improve service delivery.

Terms and conditions of employees
The Bill proposes that collective bargaining to continue in the current bargaining councils for public service (Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council – PSCBC) and local government (South African Local Government Bargaining Council – SALGBC). Such bargaining is constrained by a ministerial power to remove or prevent unjustifiable disparities by tabling proposals in the relevant bargaining council/s and requiring that employer parties must obtain a mandate or authorisation before concluding collective agreements falling outside a prescribed pre-determined framework.

For members of Senior Management Service the Bill proposes that the Minister for Public Service and Administration (MPSA) is to determine a framework of minimum and maximum remuneration levels, and also the norms and standards on conditions of service. The MPSA must obtain SALGA’s concurrence and consult the MPLG in this regard.

Alignment of conditions of service
The harmonisation of conditions of service will take place through collective bargaining. For those outside collective bargaining, it will take place via ministerial determinations. A remuneration framework (including implementation costs) was developed based on a cost-benefit analysis that was conducted. There are some potential alignment scenarios for remuneration and conditions of service, medical assistance and pensions which are identified in the framework, namely:

- Adjusted conditions for new employees only;
- Hybrid entitlement approach;
- Public Service entitlement approach;
- Local Government entitlement approach; and
- Best market practice.

Vesting of HR powers
Clause 13 of The Bill provides that the political head (e.g. a municipal council) is to appoint the administrative head of an institution (e.g. a municipality) and all managers reporting to that head. The administrative head has to appoint the remainder of staff and determine organisational structure of the institution. The Bill specifically states that the municipality is the employer of all its employees.

Deployments
According to the Bill, it is only possible to transfer/secondment an employee without the individual’s consent only if it is fair, taking into account the operational requirements of the affected institutions. Operational requirements here include whether secondment would...
address requirements, and also the employee's representations.

Transfer/secondment to and from municipalities or provincial departments must be as a result of agreement between the affected municipality or provincial departments. The Bill also contains a tailor-made section 197 of the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (LRA) for staff transfers in case of function transfers. Lastly, provision is also made for expedited procedures for disputes about fairness of transfers and secondment.

Post employment restriction
The Bill proposes a cooling off period for 12 months for employees involved in procurement. These employees may not accept employment with a successful service provider. If an employee, former employee or service provider contravenes this provision they are guilty of a criminal offence and if convicted, he or she may be liable to a fine of up to R1 million. A contravention would also constitute good cause for cancelling the contract with the service provider in question.

Miscellaneous
In the area of training, the Bill recognizes the Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA, formerly SAMDI) and other training institutions in provincial and local government spheres. It also calls for provisions for compulsory training, the registration of training standards and the accreditation of training providers.

Employees may be candidates for legislatures, meaning they may be candidates for political positions subject to a code of conduct and prescribed limits. Once elected, their employment contract automatically terminates. The Bill proposes that employees are also not permitted to be part-time municipal councilors.

Furthermore, according to the Bill, when a person applies for a post, they must disclose any prior actions on grounds of misconduct, ill health or poor performance and any known pending actions against him or her.

The Bill also allows for the continuation of incomplete disciplinary or other actions when an employee leaves an institution and joins another government institution falling under the Bill's scope. Provision is made for determining the period within which re-employment of employees found guilty of misconduct is prohibited. Lastly, when contraventions of this Bill (if it becomes law) occur, the relevant authority is compelled to discipline employees and to keep records thereof.

Regulation-making powers
According to the Bill, the MPSA has to set norms and standards on personnel and public administration practices, procedures and systems through making regulations. The making of regulations is to be preceded by a notice and comment process. There also has to be concurrence of SALGA and consultation with MPLG. If a regulation concerns local government, the concurrence of SALGA and consultation with the MPLG is required. If the regulation concerns matters of mutual interest, the MPSA or any party to bargaining council may table it for negotiation in the relevant bargaining council.

Jurisdiction of Labour Court
The Bill proposes exclusive jurisdiction for the Labour Court for all employment and labour matters pertaining to employers and employees.

The Bill also proposes the extension of Public Service Commission's mandate to local government (Schedule 3, Part A, item 3). It proposes the repeal of Public Service Act, 1994 and the amendment/ or repeal of only those HR related provisions in the Municipal Structures Act, 1998, and Municipal Systems Act, 2000, which deal with human resource matters.
Reflection on the National Anti-Corruption Forum

Professor Stan Sangweni, Chairman of the Public Service Commission, outlines some of the successes of the NACF and the challenges that must be addressed.

South Africa has a past that is characterised by unequal treatment, unequal distribution of resources and services, and limited transparency. In leaving its discriminatory past behind, the presence of corruption had to be addressed and the democratic South African government has therefore made a concerted effort to further the fight against corruption.

In developing its strategy in the fight against corruption, government soon realised that it could not effectively fight corruption on its own, as corruption affects all spheres of society. It therefore decided that a multi-stakeholder approach in dealing with corruption was necessary.

In order to give effect to this decision, government assigned the responsibility to plan and coordinate the establishment of a cross-sectoral body in the fight against corruption for South Africa to the Public Service Commission (PSC), an independent body established in terms of the Constitution, 1996, to provide oversight over public administration. The process embarked upon by the PSC ultimately resulted in the creation of the National Anti-Corruption Forum (NACF).

The NACF decided that as part of this summit’s discussion on Institutional Arrangements to Prevent and Combat Corruption, a reflection on the NACF as multi-stakeholder coalition in the fight against corruption should be provided. Given the PSC’s involvement leading up to the establishment of the NACF and its role as secretariat, it is ideally placed to provide such a reflection. With this paper, I intend to provide background to the establishment of the NACF, the journey traveled in galvanising the NACF into action, its successes and the challenges that must be addressed.

Background to the establishment of the NACF

A national dialogue of all stakeholders involved in anti-corruption efforts was convened by the PSC in 1998 in the form of a Public Sector Anti-Corruption Conference, calling for a national approach to the problem of corruption. This call was heeded through the adoption of the NACF the three sectors recognised the serious nature and extent of the problem of corruption in our society and committed themselves to develop a culture of zero tolerance for corruption.

The Memorandum of Understanding signed on 15 June 2001 provides that the National Anti-Corruption Forum is established:

- To advise government on national initiatives on the implementation of strategies to combat corruption;
- To share information and best practice on sectoral anti-corruption work; and
- To advise sectors on the improvement of sectoral anti-corruption strategies.

The forum consists of 30 members on the basis of 10 representatives from each of the sectors. In terms of the Memorandum of Understanding, the PSC serves as secretariat to the NACF.

Galvanising the NACF into action

The task of getting three diverse sectors to work together can never be without its challenges. After the initial enthusiasm for the NACF, it took almost two years for it to become active. The inaugural meeting was held on 19 July 2001 and it was agreed that the chairpersonship of the NACF would be held on a rotational basis by the three sectors.

However, another 16 months passed before the next meeting of the NACF was held in November 2002. It was only after this meeting, where government took over the chair from civil society, that the NACF started gathering momentum.

The period from the inception of the NACF to the hosting of the Second National Anti-Corruption Summit in March 2005, was characterised by the NACF being reduced to mainly a talk-shop with very few tangible outcomes being produced.

The theme of the Second National Anti-Corruption Summit held in March 2005 focused on “Fighting corruption together: Past achievements, future challenges”. Delegates adopted a wide range of resolutions centering on ethics and awareness, combating corruption, transparency, and oversight and accountability.

A key development of this summit was that it was agreed to translate the resolutions into a programme of action within three months of the summit to ensure that the NACF’s activities yield tangible results and, as a result, achieve the desired levels of impact as envisaged through its creation. This was achieved through the adoption...
of a National Anti-Corruption Programme (NACP) at a special meeting held on 24 June 2005.

The focus of the NACP was to yield "quick wins", to enhance the profile of the NACP and to give results that were measurable and practical. The NACP only focused on joint projects, i.e. those which involved all three sectors.4

An Implementation Committee chaired by the Director-General of the Department of Public Service and Administration and comprising representatives of business and civil society was appointed to oversee the implementation of the NACP.

Since the development of the NACP the pace of the NACP's activities has noticeably accelerated. This is largely because activities were structured with defined time-frames, and sectors were held accountable for their undertakings. The NACP had, through the NACP, evolved from a talk-shop to a coalition that produced tangible and visible results.

Reflection on the NACF as a multi-stakeholder coalition

Having briefly touched on the historical context of the NACF it is opportune at this time to reflect on the achievements of the NACF and the challenges that confront it. In order to provide such an assessment, the PSC conducted an internal reflection of its role as secretariat and considered the challenges and opportunities of the NACF.

The findings of a case-study on the NACF, commissioned by the Secretariat and compiled by M's Odette Ramsingh, Director-General of the Office of the Public Service Commission, and Mr Chris Dobie of Ethics South Africa, for purposes of presentation to the Global Compact Learning Workshop held in Accra, Ghana during 2006, were also considered.

Achievements

Establishing a multi-stakeholder coalition against corruption is an achievement on its own. Prior to the establishment of democratic government in South Africa there was a great deal of distrust in the bona fides of government by business and civil society. Even after the democratic elections, the legacy that was left by the previous regime continued to create doubt amongst leaders in business and civil society about the extent to which government would take their concerns to heart and cooperate with them in the interests of society at large. When the idea of setting up a multi-sectoral coalition in the fight against corruption was raised, a lot of cynicism on the part of civil society and business could therefore have been expected.

Although the process of establishing the coalition was protracted and challenging, the cynicism that could have been present was soon replaced by real enthusiasm for the prospect of dealing collectively with corruption as one of the major stumbling blocks in creating the South Africa that its citizens are aspiring to. The creation of the NACF by pulling together the interests and beliefs of three diverse sectors should, in itself, therefore be viewed as a major achievement.5

The NACP achievements

The following results have already been achieved through the NACP:

- A new website (www.nacf.org.za) and logo were launched;
- An Integrity Pledge was adopted and signed by the leaders of the various sectors represented on the NACF;
- The NACF hosted a roundtable on the Prohibition of Corrupt Persons and Businesses;
- South Africa's Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act was popularised by simplifying it through a guide, both in terms of language and through the use of illustrations; and
- A national communication campaign highlighting the public's rights in reporting corruption and explaining legislation designed to further the fight against corruption was launched.6

Resolutions of the Second National Anti-Corruption Summit have been taken on board by government in policy development

The resolutions adopted at the second National Anti-Corruption Summit address a broad range of matters that have been taken on board by the government in policy development. The following synopsis gives examples of some of the resolutions which have been acted upon at the level of policy:

- The summit resolved that ethics training must form part of ethics awareness in all sectors including in school curricula. A scan of professional ethics in education was conducted in pursuance of this resolution and will form the basis of a special panel discussion.
- The summit further resolved that the Financial Disclosure Framework for senior managers should be reviewed to ensure greater compliance and improved procedures. The PSC, which is responsible for the management of the framework, made comprehensive recommendations in this regard which are currently being addressed through policy development by government.
- It was resolved that post-public sector employment should be regulated to ensure "cooling off" periods to avoid conflicts of interest. Following recommendations of the PSC, government is currently at an advanced stage in developing a policy to address post-public sector employment.

Based on the few examples provided, it is clear that government has appreciation for the recommendations of the NACF and that these are considered in policy development.

Challenges

Despite the successes of the NACF there are a number of challenges and threats that currently hamper the effectiveness of the NACF and may have negative consequences if not addressed.

Lack of cohesion and commitment between and within sectors

Although the NACP has produced positive results through joint projects, levels of cooperation, cohesion and commitment among the sectoral members have been problematic. When inputs are requested, especially from civil society, target dates are not met with the result that project time-frames are not adhered to. Aligning diaries to secure dates for meetings also remains problematic and meetings sometimes have to be arranged at very short notice. Civil society still appears to be fragmented and obtaining a coordinated response from this sector remains a challenge.

Although the attendance of business at meetings of the implementation committee has improved there still appears to be a lack of commitment by key stakeholders in this sector to the objectives of the NACF. This is evidenced by the poor attendance at NACF meetings. Financial support that had been anticipated from this sector for the proper functioning of the NACF has not been forthcoming.
The public sector’s representation on the NACF has largely been carried by the Minister for Public Service and Administration. NACF meetings are very seldom attended by other members of the executive, raising questions about that sector’s commitment to the objectives of the NACF.

**Funding for the NACF is only provided by government**

Since the inception of the NACF, funding has only been provided by government and by foreign donor agencies. Neither business nor civil society as equal partners in the coalition have contributed to the NACF by providing funding for joint projects or meetings and workshops. Although financial constraints apply to civil society, the same cannot be said in respect of business. Despite several calls for funding from the business sector, such calls have not been heeded, raising concerns about the commitment of the sector to the NACF.

**Marginalisation of the PSC as secretariat**

The PSC’s role has been reduced to menial secretarial or auxiliary functions such as arranging meetings, taking minutes at meetings, making logistical arrangements and sourcing funding.

The PSC’s ability to contribute at a strategic and conceptual level has been curtailed. Given the extent of the PSC’s involvement in the establishment of the NACF and its prominent role in anti-corruption initiatives, the question may rightly be asked if it is the proper cost effective way to use the PSC’s resources in this fashion.

**Limited involvement of provinces and no programme for moving forward with the creation of provincial structures**

The NACF is a national structure and needs to ensure that its resolutions and programme of action find application at both national and provincial level. However, liaison with provinces has been very limited despite correspondence from the chairperson of the NACF to premiers encouraging the establishment of provincial structures. Only three provinces have established provincial fora: the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and the Western Cape.

**Lack of follow-through on decisions of the NACF**

At the first meeting of the NACF held on 19 July 2001, it was decided that the chairpersonship of the NACF will be held on a rotational basis by the three sectors for terms of two years at a time. The first chairperson, Adv Dali Mpofu represented civil society and held office from July 2001 to November 2002 when the Minister for Public Service and Administration was elected chairperson.

Since then the chairpersonship of the NACF was never again raised by any of the sectors. The fact that government has held the chairpersonship for more than five years raises concerns about the importance that the sectors, especially business and civil society, place on the partnership entered into through the NACF. The fact that neither business nor civil society has raised the issue of a rotational chairpersonship could also be interpreted as an indication of indifference to this matter of principle.

**The NACF is not a statutory body and therefore commitment to the implementation of its decisions may be lacking**

The decision to establish the NACF as an advisory rather than a statutory body may have impacted negatively in the participation of sectors. The level of engagement of sectors in the NACF is not remotely comparable with an institution such as Nedlac where there is vibrant discourse by all involved and follow-through on decisions taken. This could be attributed to the fact that Nedlac is a statutory body.

**Opportunities**

The spirit that came with the establishment of the NACF needs to be pursued vigorously by all involved and the successes achieved through the NACP must be built on. The following could be considered moving forward:

- **Statutory status for the NACF**
  The possibility of providing statutory status to the NACF may need to be further explored. This would, in my opinion, improve the commitment of the sectors as decisions would have a more binding effect.

- **Sharing the financial commitments of the NACF amongst sectors**
  As indicated, funding for the NACF has predominantly been provided by government with contributions by donor agencies. A greater level of financial commitment should be displayed by especially the business sector to ensure that the ideals of an equal partnership are realised.

- **Building on the successes of the NACP**
  The resolutions of the Third National Anti-Corruption Programme must be translated as soon as possible into a plan of action for the NACF to ensure that the momentum created through the NACP is maintained and further improved upon.

- **Strengthening the role of the Secretariat**
  The role of the secretariat has, as indicated, been reduced to menial administrative tasks. The PSC, given its historical involvement in the establishment of the NACF, its independence and its role in the promotion of professional ethics, can play a much more active role in driving the agenda of the NACF. The PSC’s role should be realigned to include the following:

  - Provide strategic research and advise the NACF on the prevention and combating of corruption;
  - Provide strategic direction to the NACF in terms of the latest trends with respect to the prevention and combating of corruption;
  - Drive the content of NACF meetings through the research conducted;
  - Directly manage projects of the National Anti-Corruption Programme (NACP);
  - Represent the NACF at anti-corruption forums, conferences and workshops when the need arises; and
  - Drive the establishment of regionally based anti-corruption fora in the provinces.

- **Increasing commitment to the NACF**
  As indicated the attendance of NACF meetings by all sectors has not been satisfactory. A renewed commitment by all sectors is required if the objectives of the NACF are to be achieved in the long term.

**Conclusion**

The NACF has reached a stage where there is engagement from all parties. As indicated in my presentation there is, however, a need to
Further strengthened this engagement and improve on the commitment of sectors to the objectives of the NACF. By seizing the opportunities that present themselves, the NACF will further entrench itself as a good practice example of multi-sectoral cooperation against corruption. I am confident that the resolutions emanating from this summit will provide a sound basis for the NACF to further improve upon the visible impact that it has achieved since the Second National Anti-Corruption Summit.

**Endnotes**

1 Presentation by Ms OR Ramsingh, Director-General of the Office of the Public Service Commission to the Eschborn Dialogue held in Germany, 10 June 2008.
2 Presentation by Ms OR Ramsingh, Director-General of the Office of the Public Service Commission to the Eschborn Dialogue held in Germany, 10 June 2008.
4 Case Study on the National Anti-Corruption Forum, Ms OR Ramsingh and Mr C Dobie, 2006.
5 Case Study on the National Anti-Corruption Forum, Ms OR Ramsingh and Mr C Dobie, 2006.
6 Case Study on the National Anti-Corruption Forum, Ms OR Ramsingh and Mr C Dobie, 2006.
7 Presentation by Ms OR Ramsingh, Director-General of the Office of the Public Service Commission to the Eschborn Dialogue held in Germany, 10 June 2008.
8 Presentation by Ms OR Ramsingh, Director-General of the Office of the Public Service Commission to the Eschborn Dialogue held in Germany, 10 June 2008.

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**Highly fixed and artificial prices**

By Nkosikhulule Nyembezi of the Black Sash calls for strong legislative action and checks and balances to prevent price-fixing and collusion

As the Black Sash we believe that the greatest deterrent to cartels should be the likelihood that offenders at company and individual level will be apprehended, penalised and even punished through heavy fines, loss of future state tenders and tax incentives.

There is no dispute that cartels destroy competition and are causing serious harm to the economy and consumers. This unscrupulous practice clearly pushed up the price of basic food items and medicinal items to the detriment of consumers, but more disconcerting is the fact that these practices extended across the country for over 12 years.

It is important to remember that price-fixing and cartel activity takes place in an environment of high levels of unemployment, low wages, the sharp decline in purchasing power, rising fuel prices, rising energy prices, high interest rates and chronic poverty. It takes place in an environment where food security in poor households is declining. There is a significant increase in the price of basic foodstuff, particularly affecting those at the lower end of the socioeconomic scale for whom these food items are staple food.

The artificially high prices imposed on consumers through price-fixing have hurt ordinary people in our communities, especially those in LSM 1-5, and increasingly the middle-income earners.

So serious is the impact on poor communities that government has recognised the close link between social security and the price of food. Finance Minister Trevor Manuel’s medium-term budget policy statement in 2007 set aside about R4.3-billion of public money to compensate pensioners and social grant beneficiaries for rising food prices and other cost-of-living increases.

This is based on the government’s recognition that social grants are significantly and positively associated with a greater share of household expenditure on food.

We continue to ask ourselves, how many loaves of bread has this cartel activity taken away from the mouths of school children who are dependent on the school feeding scheme for a daily meal? How many households had to go hungry for days because there was not enough money to afford basic foodstuffs as a result of this activity?

Price-fixing has affected the health of ordinary people as it has been noted in various studies that poor people with HIV/AIDS or TB benefit more from their treatment if they have the necessary nutrition to support the medication they receive.

The high levels of poverty in South Africa are linked to structural unemployment and perpetuate the inequalities of the past. Cartels undermine the efforts of government to provide comprehensive social security and employment opportunities.

We need to support legislative and other measures to ensure that companies guilty of collusion, particularly where this affects state resources and essential services, be excluded from state tenders for a determined period as a matter of principle. We also call on this summit to support legislative and other measures to ensure that government awards corporate tax relief only to those companies that practice good corporate governance by excluding companies guilty of collusion from this benefit.

The Black Sash calls for strong legislative measures to ensure that government departments, including the State Tender Board, involved in issuing and adjudicating of state tenders are better equipped to prevent corruption and deal with companies involved in collusion. In an environment where government is involved in the procurement of goods and services, and where possibility for collusion and uncompetitive behaviour by companies applying for tenders is high, it is important that strong institutional checks and balances are in place.

**Conclusion**

Referring back to the strong legislative measures and that checks and balances we are calling for, companies and other stakeholders should not merely seek to promote compliance with certain guidelines or some pieces of legislation, but to promote a human rights culture through good corporate governance practice.
The Batho Pele principle represents “a better life for all South Africans by putting people first”. The act of corruption, or price-fixing, as we are discussing in this session, serves self-interest above the interests of others.

Not only is price-fixing and cartel-forming criminalised by the Competition Act, but the damage done and the detrimental impact on communities is significant. Price-fixing and corruption slows much-needed economic development by stifling fair and free competition. When companies form cartels, market dominance is achieved and often maintained for lengthy periods - the smaller businessman is effectively eliminated.

Entrance into the market by new role players is more difficult because of the monopoly held by the cartel. Consumers do not have access to and cannot freely select the quality and variety of goods and services they desire, as is stipulated in the preamble of the Competition Act 89 of 1998. Local communities have to pay more for products and services because the price is artificially manipulated. The fixing of the price of a product causes prejudice or harm to broader society and sadly it is most often the poorest of the poor who suffer most.

These practices are immoral and unethical. It is not good, right or responsible behaviour and compromises the universal values of integrity, honesty, transparency and fairness. Price-fixing is in direct opposition to the principles of corporate social responsibility and good corporate citizenship as promoted in the well-known King 2 report on corporate governance.

Doing business in an ethical way pays in the long run. Ethical companies attract and retain better talent, protect their reputation more easily, build trust in the community and are more profitable and sustainable.

Our hands are not tied and there are many existing structures and initiatives in the market which we can utilise to curb corruption.

prices in the market which we can utilise to curb corruption.

Transparency International. The IP is a tool aimed at preventing corruption in public procurement. It contains rights and obligations to the effect that neither side will pay, offer, demand or accept bribes, or collude with competitors to obtain a contract or engage in such abuses while carrying it out. The IP provides companies with a level playing field where all competitors are bound by the same rules, thereby discouraging bribes.

There is also the World Economic Forum-initiated Partnership Against Corruption Initiative (PACI) which began as a sector-specific project for the engineering and construction industry, as a practical step towards implementation of anti-corruption measures. Many companies in South Africa have signed PACI.

The other example is the International Business Leaders Forum and the China Business Leaders Forum where companies partner to promote transparency.

The US Federal Sentencing Guidelines, first published in 1991 and updated in 2004, encourage ethical conduct in US corporations. Businesses have to “ensure that they have an effective compliance and ethics programme; evaluate periodically the effectiveness of the organisation’s compliance and ethics programme; and periodically assess the risk of criminal conduct and ... take appropriate steps to design, implement, or modify each requirement ... to reduce the risk of criminal conduct identified through this process”.

The Federal Sentencing Guidelines have been incorporated into the South African King 2 report on corporate governance as part of corporate-ethics management recommendations and they will be strengthened in the King 3 report (to be published early in 2009).

Organisations can take internal steps to combat corrupt practices. For example, by adopting a code of ethics with a set of chosen values and incorporating it into the strategy and daily operations of the organisation.

They can also follow the code up with training and ongoing awareness. Continuous efforts need to be made to ensure that principles and codes are integrated into other management systems.

Lastly, they can implement a reporting facility or a “hotline” where employees and stakeholders can safely report crime and irregularities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Business Unity South Africa and its members support free and fair competition and we will continue to endorse the efforts of the Competition Commission and take part in collaborative anti-corruption initiatives such as this Summit and the Anti-corruption Forum. We applaud the valuable work done by the Competition Commission and we trust that the recent successes of this watchdog body will serve as a stern warning to potential transgressors.
Governance and accountability in civil society: A perspective from the religious sector

Fr Michael Deeb OP, Coordinator, Justice and Peace Department, Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference, looks at transparency and accountability among NGOs today

In our search for mechanisms that will promote transparency and accountability in the civil society sector, I will attempt to share with you some reflections on what is happening in the world of NGOs. In the limited time I had to prepare this presentation, I consulted several NGOs operating mainly (but not only) within the religious sector, as well as a number of consultants who have worked extensively with NGOs throughout the country.

By bouncing all their experiences off my own, I will begin by identifying a few particular aspects of the reality of transparency and accountability among NGOs today. I will then suggest a few mechanisms whose adoption may help us to reduce corrupt practices in the civil society sector.

What is the reality of transparency and accountability among NGOs today?

Many NGOs are struggling to adapt from pre- to post-1994 conditions.

Pre-1994 there were many donors who didn’t ask too many questions. Then post-1994, many donors turned to government or changed focus and looked elsewhere. Accountability of NGOs is nowadays largely funder-driven: NGOs are expected to be as accountable to donors and to the public as corporations are to their shareholders; and they are evaluated in terms of effectiveness and not just goodwill. There is now no longer a presumption of the good intentions of NGOs. Many NGOs have found the new approach and requirements of funders uncomfortable and irksome.

Most NGOs are struggling to find funding. The resulting lack of resources frequently leads to, inter alia: duties, which should normally be segregated among different people to avoid abuse, often being centralised into the hands of a few individuals; and reduced accountability, since it takes a lot of time (reports, etc) which many NGOs are often unable (and sometimes unwilling) to adjust to.

The relationship between civil society governance and state governance NGOs should be a critical voice - the conscience - of our society, a role many are succeeding in playing. However, many others are prevented from playing this role by getting too close to government through dependence on government for funding and in seeing their NGO as a stepping-stone to getting into government.

NGOs are thus often a school for public governance. Where a pre-1994 “struggle” culture and accounting is still prevalent (characterised by a lack of clear policies and procedures), a similar mentality can thus still be operating when such people move to government.

A tolerance towards various forms of corruption which are seen as normal

Some forms of corruption are even seen as a value - normally in such small actions as seeking favours from friends in positions of authority, or tax evasion, or claiming bigger reimbursements than one has spent. It is not infrequent for one to be regarded as a fool if one does not take such a chance! If I have engaged in corruption, I cannot afford to accuse another!

Nepotism is an easy temptation, since primacy of the family or tribal thinking or “looking after my own” is often regarded as normal.

Whistle-blowing on evidence of corruption is often regarded as betrayal and can lead to marginalisation - especially if friends or brothers/sisters are involved. Such fear of breaking trust thus enables a culture of tolerance towards corruption to grow, which in turn influences the broader culture.

Leaders can normally only lead effectively by example. So if they reflect a tolerance towards corruption, no matter how small, this can strongly influence the way society sees it. Often not enough care is taken to guard against a conflict of interests in the governing structures. Consequently, personal interest often dominates.

Accountable structures are not taken seriously - with ignorance about how to develop them

Do governing boards have real authority - or are they just flowerpots? Often they are just family and friends of the director and there is no effective overseeing of the organisation.

It is important for managers to have the appropriate skills. However, people with no idea are often brought on to boards simply to satisfy the legal requirements. This clearly results in bad governance. Membership organisations often have difficulty in developing structures of accountability: few of these structures have the time and capacity to closely monitor what their executives are doing.

What governance and accountability mechanisms need to be adopted to promote transparency and accountability in the civil society sector?

Training of NGO leaders in accounting practices needs to be provided. Funders especially should invest in this. Clear policies and procedures need to be drawn up and followed.

Care needs to be taken that there are no conflicts of interest. This should be included in the policies. There needs to be a continual regular focus on the ethos, mission and vision of the organisation for all levels (board, staff, membership).

Care should be taken that board members are recruited from those people with the necessary skills and motivation, that they receive the necessary training in their role, and that they are held accountable - even if they are volunteers.

Conclusion

I have largely focused on the internal standards in combating corruption within NGOs since this is vital to enable them to play the critical role in society that befits them. If there are any external complaints or allegations of corruption leveled against them, it would seem most appropriate for them to be dealt with by the same institution that is dealing with the other sectors since they all fall in the same criminal realm.
I want to open this paper by quoting from The Ethics in Education Review published in December 2007 and sponsored by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and our own National Anti-Corruption Forum, as I believe it serves as an appropriate introduction:

“The values crises in schools are to a significant degree a reflection of the larger moral malaise in South African society, which has historical roots and contemporary causes. South Africa’s history is one of exploitation and dispossession that still casts its shadow over the present. But equally, the country’s more recent political and economic transformation has superimposed a rights culture upon a social base that does not equally recognise an accompanying culture of responsibility, as well as upon a material base of persisting poverty and powerlessness.”

This short contribution will focus on three aspects: firstly, and obviously, the challenge faced by teachers; secondly a reminder that the primary educator is not the school or teacher; and finally the impact of the moral “malaise” in which we find ourselves.

Ethics in education is not a simple issue and incorporating ethics into education is complex. There are different ways of doing it, but the outcomes, and the process of internalising ethics into the behaviour of individuals, is never guaranteed. For the teaching profession the approaches include adhering absolutely to our professional code of ethics and incorporating ethics into a curriculum both formally as well as informally, and in so doing infusing ethics into the practice of teaching.

To further reinforce the intention of the Constitution, codes of conduct for various sectors are crafted, such as the South African Council for Educators’ Code of Conduct for teachers, which I will refer to shortly. Also, in corporate South Africa, King I (1994) and King II (2002) were attempts to overhaul codes of ethics and influence legislation. However, there is little evidence that these have had a significant impact. The answers, then, do not necessarily lie in tighter regulation and enforcement strategies, as it appears that legislation and codes have not succeeded in countering the moral erosion that is being reported on daily basis, and that is increasingly becoming a feature of South African society.

The fact that legislation alone does not seem to halt the erosion of morality in society necessitates looking at the role of education more closely. Any educational strategy that does not take into account our unique complexities will be in vain.

It is no surprise that in the Executive Summary of the Ethics in Education - Review the following statement is made: “The research results show that South Africa’s educational institutions face formidable capacity challenges in pursuit of promoting core ethical values. There is evidence that values education and training go wrong right from the primary school, and that the unacceptable consequences of a failure to inculcate ethical values impact forcefully, and tragically, on secondary schools.”

A curriculum designed to address ethics often emphasises technical skills and knowledge of the rules. Perhaps this is so because imparting knowledge about the rules is the easy part: write it into the curriculum, train teachers to deliver and assess it and assume, with a clear conscience, that ethics has been dealt with, and that this will change the morality of society.

This is clearly a worrying assumption as the success of teaching ethics can only be measured by measuring the change in behavior and not by assessing knowledge of the rules.

What education can do
The question, then, is what education can do to contribute to changing the behaviour of individuals.

“Educational institutions are microcosms of the culture and the society that supports them” and, clearly, the ethics curriculum which provides for knowing about the rules is, as has been stated, only one aspect. More importantly, each classroom becomes a laboratory of the process of decision making, and of critically examining choices and examining relationships as well as individual and personal lives. Teachers must play an important role in assisting learners to view ethical choices as a vital part of every aspect of their lives.

Macfarlane (2004) emphasises that it is important for teachers to develop “professional virtues, such as duty to learners and genuinely critical self-reflection as opposed to adopting prescriptive solutions to moral dilemmas”. A teacher is a leader and must lead by example.

It is important, then, to reflect on the circumstances that arise in schools in which teachers could be setting the example for ethical behaviour by the choices that they make in order to influence learners into making ethical choices … over and above “teaching a course on ethics”.

Teachers who live by the following points are best able to promote core ethical values (these points, by the way, are from our code of conduct as teachers):

- acknowledges the noble calling of their profession to educate and train the learners of our country;
- acknowledges that the attitude, dedication, self-discipline, ideals, training and conduct of the teaching profession determine the quality of education in this country;
- acknowledges, upholds and promotes basic human rights, as embodied in the Constitution of South Africa;
- commits themselves to do all within their power, in the exercising of their professional duties, to act in accordance with the ideals of their profession, as expressed in their Code;
- are not negligent or indolent in the performance of their professional duties;
- recognises the parents as partners in education, and promotes a harmonious relationship with them; and
- strives to enable learners to develop a set of values consistent with the fundamental rights contained in the Constitution of South Africa.

The “hidden curriculum” in my opinion is at the heart of the transfer of ethics and values and is epitomised by the actions and
example set by the teacher. An integral part therefore of what each teacher does every day, as well as those seemingly trivial incidents in which the teacher’s behaviour and ethical choices impact on what learners will come to be perceived as being the “right behavior”.

The value of daily examples of the correct choices, both big and small (and mostly made without even thinking about alternatives), cannot be overestimated. To do this teachers themselves must be “ethically conscious” before it will be possible for them to apply the professional ethics used by the profession itself to regulate its registered members. In order to influence learners, teachers will have to be comfortable with and act comfortably within their own ethical frameworks.

It is behaviour and example that counts. It is the presence of the teacher and the effect of this presence that counts. We as teachers must win back our PRESENCE where and if we have lost it.

The review indicates though that where we have the appropriate presence, and where we are teaching the appropriate ethics, the success rate is not what we would expect because “it is confidently deduced that the discrepancy between values taught at school and values lived in the communities of which learners are members significantly undermines the effectiveness and credibility of the values component of the Life Orientation programme”.

Given the realities of modern social order then, as well as the complexities of our South African society, it would be unrealistic to place the burden of changing the very fabric and morality of society solely on the shoulders of education. Sadly, and no doubt for a multitude of reasons, the majority of parents do not see themselves as the “primary educators” and as a consequence more and more of the imperatives for the holistic development and education of children, particularly around ethics and values, have been directed to the school, and ultimately the teacher.

We are all aware of the many challenges teachers face in schools and just how demanding the job actually is – a position by the way that is supported by the review – and it is because of the size as well as the importance of the challenge that we are calling for a radical change in approach.

The most successful teaching model is that of the triangle with the child, the parent and the teacher working together. When the appropriate relationship has been established, the child, both young and not so young, knows that a “team” is in place to support him or her which brings in a level of accountability from each of the partners. Accountability in our present system is not as vigorously pursued as it ought to be but when correctly applied by both parent and school we have improvements in levels of discipline, work ethic, respect and responsibility, and most important of all it provides a base for the inculcation of appropriate values and ethics.

Parental involvement

Our call then is that mechanisms are put into place that establish the necessity of parental involvement in the education of their children. This we believe warrants research or an investigation to establish how best to achieve this. To continue as we are will mean that it will remain extremely difficult to maintain present standards of discipline, work ethic, respect and responsibility, and most important of all it provides a base for the inculcation of appropriate values and ethics.
The review states that “there are a number of strong indicators, mostly of violence in its various forms, which are seriously undermining education in our schools. Theft at school, violence in the community and pervasive bullying have a detrimental impact on the quality and effectiveness of learning.”

We cannot afford further impediments in the classroom situation as we are already performing well below par, in fact embarrassingly so, but that debate will have to stand over for another time. Suffice to say that teachers alone will not be able to solve, address or eradicate violence in schools without the assistance of parents and the community.

Irrespective of how conscientious either the parents or the school are in attempting to inculcate the core ethical values, the impact of what is seen in broad society will play a decisive role in the mind of the child.

I would like to quote a number of excerpts from Mamphela Ramphele’s book Laying Ghosts to Rest which are self-explanatory in the context of our moral malaise:

“The so-called Travelgate scandal involved 40 members of parliament. Parliamentarians earn over R500 000 per year and enjoy pension and travel allowances, yet these members of an institution that is meant to enforce good governance, helped themselves to more public money by colluding with travel agents to make false travel claims. “Even more disturbing has been the embarrassing tardiness in dealing with this matter over the last five years or so since the scandal broke. Political parties involved, with the notable exception of one party, have failed to demonstrate their abhorrence of fraud and corruption by expelling those involved.

“Corruption on the scale suggested by these examples and others reported in our media suggests that we as a society are ensnared in a political culture that tolerates corruption.”

“Ethical politics is not an option in a democracy; it is a requirement. In a democracy governed by ethics one need not fear opposition party victories or changes in leadership. What would matter would be the extent to which those standing for public office are able to advance the common good.”

The solutions to our “moral agony” lie not only in the hands of the powerful who decide what passes for “good” or “bad”. Morality and choices about ethical behaviour are in the hands of ordinary people, particularly teachers and parents, who lead by setting the example of doing the right thing, in the right way ... even when no one is looking.

Conclusion
In conclusion it is essential that all players review their roles and if we are not inculcating the necessary values and ethics into the minds and hearts of the children of our country then let us take remedial action. The stakes are too high – we cannot fail the youth of our country.

Governance and accountability in the civil society sector: a trade union perspective

D de Villiers, of FEDUSA, looks at the current legislative landscape and the internal capacity and problems experienced by trade unions in relation to governance and accountability

The civil society sector is a very diverse and disparate sector, consisting of a wide range of bodies and associations, from chambers of commerce, churches and trade unions to community-based organisations. My input is important because of the pure nature and content of the subject, but also contentious because why would one have to debate the issue of governance and accountability in the civil society in the first place?

Analysts of civil society have resorted to two defining characteristics for the sector: its intentional commitment not to seek political office and its intentional commitment to the public good, broadly defined.

Now, in my thinking, if anyone has the intentional commitment to the public good, why would you then not follow governance principles and accept the accountability that comes with that role?

The question is: what are you doing when no one is watching? From time to time many organisations are put to this test. And many fail miserably. It is a test that comes in many forms. Some members are being dishonest by awarding contracts to service providers without following due process, projects are identified and implemented for personal gain, others commit fraud, donor agendas are being embraced for expediency to ensure the next funding
Current legislative landscape

One of the purposes of the Labour Relations Act, 1995 as amended (LRA) is “to provide for a simplified procedure for the registration of trade unions and employers’ organisations, and to provide for their regulation to ensure democratic practices and proper financial control”. The negative aspect of the LRA in relation to this purpose is that it is not compulsory for all trade unions to register. Anybody can set up a trade union and operate as such without being obliged to register.

Registered trade unions obviously have more rights in terms of the provisions of the LRA but they also have to comply with more onerous requirements in terms of record keeping and reporting to the Department of Labour, a responsibility which is necessary and important.

For unions and employer organisations (which could arguably also be seen as part of civil society) to be regarded as “genuine”, they are required to comply with, inter alia, the provisions of section 98, 99 and 100 of the LRA, which stipulate an annual submission of audited financial statements and record keeping in respect of member details, minutes of meetings and ballots.

Members of a trade union may lodge a complaint with the Registrar of Labour Relations for investigation in cases where mismanagement, corruption or non-compliance with the trade unions constitution is suspected.

The LRA stipulates that the Registrar of Labour Relations may cancel the registration of a trade union or employers’ organisation by removing its name from the appropriate register, if he or she is satisfied that the trade union or employers’ organisation has ceased to be compliant with the requirements of the LRA. The Registrar will then publish a notice to that effect in the Government Gazette. That, however, does not mean that the trade union must cease operating. In order for workers to enjoy the full protection of labour legislation, it is vital for them to belong to legitimate, registered trade unions.

I believe that you will agree that the current legislative framework goes a long way towards creating an environment which promotes transparency and governance in registered trade unions.

However, it does not go far enough to ensure that all trade unions are registered and comply with the LRA to protect members. This creates a vacuum in the legislative framework limiting the promotion of governance and accountability within certain trade unions, which we as registered trade unions need to take up to ensure that the vacuum is removed.

Internal mechanisms

Trade unions are by their very nature democratic, and therefore political organisations. Members elect shop stewards to represent them at workplace level, regional and national representatives and also national office bearers. During these election processes lobbying takes place as part of the democratic process.

The capacity and knowledge of candidates does not necessarily play a role in these election processes other than the intentional commitment to act for the good of the members. And here I am by no means casting a reflection on any trade union’s representative or office bearer.

Why is this important within the context of our current discussion? It is important because these elected representatives have to fulfil a role similar to that of trustees, by representing the interest of members, being accountable for collection and expenditure of the contributions, and ensuring compliance with the trade union constitution as registered in terms of the LRA. In other words they are the custodians of governance principles on behalf of the members.

What many do not understand is that as soon as they start serving on the structures and as national office bearers, they are entrusted with a power that can make or break the trade union. Along with this power comes the responsibility of governance and accountability. Many times the office bearers are confronted with a conflict between their trade union obligations towards the members and the governance role they need to fulfill.

Governance is based around four primary pillars: transparency, accountability, responsibility and fairness.

Within the trade union environment we can raise the following issues in respect of the four pillars.

Transparency: The common view is that trade unions are in essence democratic and the principle of transparency is applied to all the affairs and activities of the trade union. However, this is not always the case. Transparency means that the activities of the trade union are open and accessible to scrutiny by its members which includes the audited financial statements, procurement policy, the process and allocation of contracts to service providers.

Accountability: One of the challenges within the trade union environment is to allocate accountability as in many cases decisions are to be taken on a consensus or majority basis within a committee structure and driven by the interests of the members.

Responsibility: The paid official’s responsibility of managing the affairs of the trade union should pertain to behaviour that allows for corrective action and for penalising mismanagement.

Fairness: Systems and policies that exist within the trade union should be balanced in taking account of all those who have a stake in the trade union and its future.

These four pillars are clearly underpinning the purpose as set out in the current legislative framework of “providing for their regulation to ensure democratic processes and proper financial control”.

The role of office bearers and paid officials serving on the trade union structures should be to ensure that these pillars are vigorously pursued and implemented.

Trade unions should ensure that:
- Principles of corporate governance are applied with the necessary adjustments applicable to trade union structures;
- There is disclosure on prudent financial expenditure financed through membership contributions, grants, donors and any other forms of income;
- Paid officials and office bearers are held accountable for all actions; and
- Capacity is built within the structures so office bearers understand their role and responsibilities.

At the end of the day, with an effective legislative framework and vigorous internal governance and accountability structures and processes, fighting corruption is still dependent on the people holding the positions. Integrity is crucial to the whole process and that is something which we need to develop as a social culture within society starting at the youngest age possible.

I want to conclude by quoting President Vladimir Putin of Russia, during his televised question and answer phone-in with the public on 11 October 2007: “We need to improve the legislative framework; we must work with society to reduce tolerance of corruption, from small bribes on the road to big commercial corruption.”
Developing the public service and administrative capacity of the state in Africa

Capable states are developmental states that are able to intervene effectively in order to confront the key political, economic, environmental and social challenges of the 21st century, writes Professor Richard Levin, Department of Public Service and Administration.

A draft resolution of the 7th session of the United Nations Committee of Experts encouraged member states to continue strengthening their capacities to better utilise the various aid modalities and to disseminate the understanding and implementation of capacity-building as a judicious combination of institution building and human resource development, whereby people, organisations, states and society as a whole develop and maintain their ability to manage their public affairs successfully through, among other means: fostering public participation in governance and development processes; harnessing the potential of information and communications technology to promote people-centred development; effectively combining decentralisation and centralisation policies; and forging regional and national partnerships with institutions of public administration to provide needed training.

The African Union (AU) has, since its inception, highlighted the need for capacity building. The 5th Declaration of the AU at its first ordinary session of the Assembly proclaimed 2002-2011 the Decade for Capacity Building in Africa. At the same session, the Assembly passed a Declaration on the Implementation of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and encouraged member states to adopt the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance, and accede to the African Peer Review Mechanism.

In 2005 the Executive Council of the AU endorsed the Addis Ababa Declaration of the 5th Pan-African Conference of Ministers of Public Service, which affirmed the ministers’ commitment to ensuring that the necessary mechanisms and capacities for accelerated programme delivery are in place. Inspired by this framework and vision, the deliberations of the 6th Conference of the Pan-African Ministers of Public Service include a special focus on developing public service and administrative capacity of the state in Africa.

Due to internal and external factors, the post-colonial state in Africa has undergone remarkable transformation. It is common knowledge that typically the post-colonial history has been marked by abysmal developmental failures, including socio-economic crises as well as governance and institutional deficits. It is therefore no surprise that the continent is the least developed region in the world; dependent on the primary sector – agriculture and mineral wealth (and consequently a low industrial base); dependent on foreign aid; and has the lowest fixed capital formation. In addition, the majority of Africa’s people (about 70%) live below the poverty line. Their existence is marked by poverty, inequality and disease, and a lack of access to basic social and physical infrastructure.

These social crises are coupled with governance deficits invariably resulting from years of civil wars, one-party rule and military dictatorships. All these factors gave rise to the African state essentially being written off as an effective engine to advance development. This provided a ready excuse for its curtailment as from the 1980s, following the imposition by the World Bank and the IMF of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) on most African countries. A central component of SAPs, in line with the prevailing neo-liberal sympathies of the era, was an emphasis on a lean and hollowed-out state. Following the implementation of SAPs and the subsequent emphasis on good governance, African states were perpetually involved in right-sizing and down-sizing initiatives.

At the same time, the role of the African state in social and economic activities was considerably diminished. In fact, this led to a steady erosion of the state in favour of privatised entities, public private partnerships, outsourcing and other forms of alternative service delivery. These were largely in line with the new hegemonic discourse of New Public Management, which gave expression to the dominant global discourse of free market development, good governance and efficient and economic modern states.

One of the consequences of the above was that some of the embryonic development of institutions and their administrative capacities that were beginning to take root in the continent between the 1960s and 1970s were dismantled. In part, this contributed to an erosion of the regulatory capacity of the state as well as its capacity to intervene in the economy to achieve its developmental goals.

As from the late 1990s, however, a realisation emerged that the market has not been able to address Africa’s development crisis. If anything, the two decades of adherence to market fundamentalism have been dubbed the lost decades. Hence policy-makers, development agencies and scholars began to again stress the importance of state capacity.

Unfortunately the down-sized African state that has been stripped of any meaningful role in socio-economic development was ill-equipped for the tasks at hand. In view of this, at the beginning of the 21st century, there emerged a discussion about what form of state is required to tackle Africa’s developmental crisis.

It is in this context that scholars, development agencies and African policy-makers began to search for successful states from which Africa could draw some lessons. In this regard, the successful East Asian countries, with their developmental states (DSs) became the prime candidates. There is thus increasing focus on the concept of the DS.

The capacity of African governments to deliver varies greatly across the continent. Even where there has been significant improvement in performance, state capacity and capability remain limited at all levels, particularly with regard to technical and implementation capacity. Across the continent, the state must be systematically strengthened; the role of the administrative apparatuses of the state is paramount in achieving developmental objectives.

The achievement of these objectives requires a bold reassertion of
the need to build strong capable developmental states. This requires state restructuring, which is an ongoing, enduring task needing dedicated attention. There must be a renewed focus on changing government culture and mobilising public servants at all levels of spheres of government for transformation and social development. The creation of the African Peer Review Mechanism provides an opportunity to create shared continental benchmarks of good government, which have been indigenously generated, shared and peer reviewed.

The African Charter for Public Service and Administration provides a sound framework for ethical government driven by the imperatives of peoples’ needs and service delivery. Successful implementation of the charter, however, will require a concerted effort to build, in a sustainable way, the capacity of public servants, systems, institutions and appropriate technology. This paper examines the challenges and opportunities presented by this new conjuncture of state development on the continent.

In the remainder of this paper, the concept of the DS is defined. On the basis of the discussion, some of key administrative attributes that African states need to develop if they are to become DSs are elaborated. These attributes will enable governments to address the crisis of high unemployment, poverty and inequality.

In addition, some of the administrative capacity discussed in this paper will be important for Africa to be able to transform the structures of its economies to support global competitiveness. Global competitiveness of African economies will be significantly dependent on the African state acquiring such administrative capacity. Following this discussion, some recommendations are made in the final section of the paper.

**Good governance and capable states**

Good governance has proven to be resource intensive and beyond the capability of rationalised states. Under the banner of “good governance”, a “laundry list of what needs to be done by states” led to an increase in tasks which states were expected to perform without commensurate resources. Promoting professional ethics, fighting corruption; building efficiency, economy and effectiveness; promoting participatory practices; and developing a service ethos underpinned by sound public service, administration and human resource management requires a new set of skills, competencies, systems, institutional transformation and application of technologies that have forced states to go back to the drawing board in order to develop the requisite capacity to implement.

Establishing good governance has also led to a reinvention of the state. Increasingly in the new millennium this reinvention has been conceptualised as a search for “capable states”. Capable states are seen as those that are able, inter alia, to implement the Millennium Development Goals, fight poverty, establish a sound macro-economic framework, conduct democratic elections, fight corruption and establish people-centred decentralised service delivery mechanisms underpinned by sound systems of public administration.

Capable states can take different forms in different contexts, and some may, like developmental states, be more authoritarian and less democratic than others.

**Some contradictions in the good governance discourse**

The metamorphosis of the state has not been free of contradiction. Structural adjustment and good governance advocated rationalised lean states and state effectiveness. The reality, however, is that lean states have been unable to provide efficient and effective relief for the key challenges of poverty, displacement of populations and implementation of sustainable development. Moreover, successful macro-economic stabilisation has not generally been accompanied by successful implementation of micro-economic policies that have transformed the livelihoods of the masses of the African people. This has also meant that macro-economic stability has benefited the upper echelons of society but not the poor.

Another contradiction in the discourse of good governance and macro-economic stabilisation has centred on the question of market regulation. Free markets have been prescribed for Africa, Asia and Latin America, while market protection in Europe and North America has been the hallmark of late capitalist development in the era of globalisation. Protectionism in agriculture in particular has led to an inability of small farmers to compete in world and even local markets, and has therefore reproduced the cycle of dependency and underdevelopment of African countries and the majority of the peasantry on the continent.

Further contradictions can be discerned in the dominant discourse of the international donor community, which increasingly talks of partnerships for development. The partnership discourse is a response to assertions by the developing world of the need for greater autonomy and a break with historical relationships of dependency.

Multilateral institutions and donors have increasingly begun to speak of partnerships – as reflected in the Paris Declaration – in order for developing and African countries to declare ownership of development programmes. Nevertheless, donors often promote their own interpretation of the requirements of good governance, and methodologies that have succeeded in their own settings. African states need to assert their own policy vision and home-grown approach to public administration and service delivery.

**Building democratic developmental states for 21st century development in Africa**

The development challenges and opportunities of the 21st century are complex and include harnessing technology, managing climate change, fostering global competitiveness, enhancing human capabilities, dealing with natural resource scarcity (particularly energy) as well as social challenges including religious fundamentalism. This requires states that are developmental, democratic and socially inclusive.

In effect, the developmental challenge facing the continent requires democratic developmental states. In general, DSs are able to foster a national process of economic and social development by, among other things, being able to articulate a national vision of transformation and mobilising society around that vision. Most DSs
have two main characteristics: possessing a political class with a developmentalist ideology and the establishment of the requisite institutional arrangements to be able to pursue that agenda.

Developmentalist ideology means that the state aims to achieve economic development through pursuing appropriate economic policies while simultaneously “implementing policies to redistribute income (intended to minimise unequal distribution resulting from industrialisation), to promote education, and to achieve other social and political goals (Murakami, 1992: xxiii). In effect, economic development is a key objective and outcome of DSs.

One of the characteristics of DSs is that the state establishes internal institutional arrangements that enable it to behave as a coherent and collective actor. On the basis of such internal organisational structure, the DS is able to engage with non-state actors to promote its transformative agenda without being captured by interest groups. Peter Evans (1995) has coined the term embedded autonomy to describe the institutional and organisational characteristics of a DS.

Thandika Mkandiware’s definition is apt in this regard. According to him, a DS is “one whose ideological underpinnings are developmental and one that seriously attempts to construct and deploy its administrative and political resources to the task of economic development”.

Consequently, in DSs, the government leads a strong, concerted drive for economic development; ensuring the mobilisation of national resources towards development goals. Although a developmental state prioritises and promotes development, it is a conjunctural configuration whose route and approaches are contingent on national history and the choices made by citizens and leaders.

Many countries are examples of the developmental state, including Germany under the Marshall Plan, the Scandinavian states (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden), the “Asian tigers” (South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong). Those with a longer view of history include 16th century Netherlands and England, and Germany between the 1848 revolution and the First World War.

It is important to note that the concept of the DS gained world attention following the successful economic performance of the East Asian states. It can be, and has recently been, applied to other contexts as indicated above.

Fritz and Rocha Menocal, drawing on Johnson, Deyo and Evans, consider the developmental state to exist “when the state possesses the vision, leadership and capacity to bring about a positive transformation of society within a condensed period of time”. Developmental states are often characterised by visionary leaders who are highly nationalistic and patriotic, a professional and competent bureaucracy, a dominant political class, close ties between government and business, protectionism and a massive investment in social infrastructure. Developmental states have been able to contend with global economic, social and political forces that are often inimical to their interests. They have been able to do this through flexible central planning (I will return to this point shortly).

As noted previously, DSs always place great emphasis on the capacity of the state and the creation of social capital with the aim of achieving economic and human development. Consequently, to achieve the latter, social policy occupies a prime place in the important policy arsenal of DSs.
Some scholars and policy-makers might argue that DSs are no longer possible because of the recent wave of globalisation. However, it needs to be recognised that for late developers like Africa, what is important is to draw lessons from the DSs and not to replicate those experiences. In the 21st century there is a more urgent need for DSs, especially for countries that want to catch up. It is one way to overcome rising inequalities within and among countries, and to bridge the rising digital divide between the developed North and the developing South.

In fact, leading development scholars like Peter Evans argue that globalisation, while making the construction of DSs more difficult, is a necessary imperative. In his view, there cannot be development without DSs in the 21st century. In fact, the DS is indispensable for developing countries that want to catch up. Adrian Leftwich has argued that “it seems unlikely that it is possible in the modern world for any society to make a speedy and successful transition from poverty without a state that in some respects corresponds to this model of a developmental state”.

This view is supported by Bagchi: “I conclude by observing that if today’s underdeveloped countries are to provide decent standards of living to their citizens, construction of viable developmental states, consciously integrated with other similarly placed developmental states, will have to remain high on their agenda.”

In drawing lessons from the Asian DSs, Africa needs to avoid their pitfalls, namely their authoritarian characters. As Edigheji (2008) argues, authoritarian DSs are unstable in the long run. Hence, he argues, in Africa, the DS has to be predicated on the principles of democratic governance. Accordingly, Edigheji, among others, notes that the democratic developmental state embodies the principles (and practices) of electoral democracy and ensures citizen participation “… in the development and governance processes.”

Edigheji also notes that the developmental state is one that “can also foster economic growth and development”, has clearly defined “socio-economic objectives that require state intervention” (including poverty reduction and eradication, social justice, reduction in income and asset gaps between rich and poor); and places a premium on “…its institutional and organisational … structures that enable it to promote and achieve better economic performance.”

As argued above, the DS is conjunctural, although most have exhibited common institutional characteristics, some of which I have alluded to above. It is not an ideal typical construct that exists in the same form in different places in different time periods. It is historically contingent. A key feature of developmental states is that their accumulation and legitimisation functions are jointly executed to simultaneously stimulate sustainable growth and reduce market-generated inequalities. In effect, most developmental states aim to achieve equitable growth (E-growth). Hence trying to socialise the risks associated with economic transformation and sharing the benefits of economic growth preoccupies the minds of political leaders and the core bureaucratic elites.

The point, therefore, is that its social objective is one of the DS’s key distinguishing features. To achieve the goal of economic transformation, DSs must develop capacity to regulate private agents, and in most cases discipline capital. Such states are also able to mobilise poorer segments of society to support their developmental project. The latter is achieved partly through visible wealth sharing mechanisms, which in turn legitimise the state’s developmental agenda.

Africa can learn from countries that have successfully implemented development programmes where appropriate institutional structures were socially created and did not always exist. It may be argued that social, economic and political conditions have changed in a globalising world, making the task of constructing a DS more difficult. This notwithstanding, Africa can draw lessons from the experiences of the East Asian and Scandinavian countries.

Thandika Mkandawire points to such lessons when he notes that: “Lessons from other parts of the world clearly suggest that appropriate institutional structures did not always exist, but that they could be socially engineered. The aprioristic dismissal of possibilities of developmental states can only be attributed to prejudice or “mood”. The experience elsewhere is that developmental states are social constructs consciously brought about by states and societies. As difficult as the political and economic task of establishing such states may be, it is within the reach of many countries struggling against the ravages of poverty and underdevelopment.” (Own emphasis)

In Africa’s quest for DSs, a number of issues, including the following, need to be given policy consideration:

- Development and service delivery;
- Human resources;
- Policy management and co-ordination;
- Organisational and institutional development;
- National development framework;
- Developing capacity for resource mobilisation; and
- Monitoring and evaluation.

**Development and service delivery**

**Building a development vision, policy and co-ordinated planning**

A national vision of development around which the state attempts to mobilise society has been central to the success of DSs in other parts of the world. This is one of the lessons that Africa needs to learn in its quest for DDSSS. This requires that states on the continent should strive to build broad political consensus on their national development strategies. This would include the roles and responsibilities of different social sectors. It must identify the risks and possible solutions in order to mobilise efforts in a focused manner. This vision statement would have to operate at the levels of generality and specificity. This overarching vision must permeate the practices of policy formulation, planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting.

The developmental state needs a strong centre complemented by capable administrative apparatuses that are able to work in unison towards common socio-economic and political objectives. In a context of limited resources, co-ordinated but flexible planning with devolved implementation is critical to getting the right mix between centralised and decentralised authority and policy execution.

Co-ordinated planning as an instrument of development can only succeed when the central vision articulates with provincial/regional and local processes which will adapt the vision in line with their own conditions and priorities with the necessary implementation discretion. It must be able to respond to contextual changes and uncertainty in the environment. Co-ordinated planning can only therefore succeed within systems which grant the necessary discretion to other levels or spheres of government for implementation shaped by local needs. However, this needs to be done in...
largely possible only through physical interaction with officials at government services. This is because across Africa service delivery is not in itself transform service delivery and improve access to government services. This may require the establishment of special cadres of public servants who operate at the community level to link up citizens and governments.

Hence embeddedness is fundamental to the success of DSs. In fact, without embeddedness, the state is blind. It is important to stress that the practical requirements for public participation would have to be harmonised with the process of co-ordinated planning.

Government intervention in the economy to promote development requires 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 developmental agenda the collaboration between government and business is critical, because information exchange is a prerequisite for effective policy formation and implementation.

To become DSs, African states will have to ensure that the incentives to the private sector are tied to performance targets, unlike the current situation where such targets are left unstated. This will ensure that the private sector supports other policy objectives of the state, e.g. making a significant contribution to technological upgrading, employment creation and reduction of poverty and inequality.

Capacity for service delivery
The majority of African people do not have access to government services. Developing capacity for the provision of public goods - education, healthcare, social insurance, and so on - requires a transparent and service-oriented public service culture. This requires a fresh approach to service delivery: an approach which puts pressure on systems, procedures, attitudes and behaviour within the public service and reorients them towards placing citizens at the centre of service delivery.

This will involve creating a framework for the delivery of public goods which confers rights on citizens and enables them to hold public servants accountable for the service they receive. This calls for public servants to adopt problem-solving and appreciative approaches, unlike the current obstructionism that characterises their engagement with citizens.

While changing the attitudes of public servants is critical, this will not in itself transform service delivery and improve access to government services. This is because across Africa service delivery is largely possible only through physical interaction with officials at traditional departmental offices. Expanding access to services therefore inevitably means the establishment of new offices in some areas as well as introducing more innovative and flexible service delivery channels.

Budgetary constraints frequently restrict such expansion of infrastructure and a growing number of service delivery institutions in Africa are creating more innovative approaches to improving access to services. However, in spite of these efforts there is evidence to the effect that access problems need to be addressed in an integrated and holistic way. This requires an integrated approach that links the different tiers, levels or spheres of government in a concerted effort to meet the needs of citizens.

Notably, governments have generally not yet achieved “seamless service delivery” due to the persistent “silo mentality”, the characteristic traditional mentality of institutional turf which plagues the realisation of progressive government agendas.

Capacity for service delivery also requires predictability and the setting of reliable service standards. Indeed, not only must they be reliable, but they must be shown to be reliable through ongoing systematic monitoring. Ultimately these standards must also be improved through innovation and re-engineering of processes.

To become DSs, the states on the continent need to put mechanisms in place to ensure that citizens understand and make use of the opportunities that are open to them in terms of government services. This may require the establishment of special cadres of public servants who operate at the community level to link up citizens and governments.

In pursuing a developmental agenda the collaboration between government and business is critical, because information exchange is a prerequisite for effective policy formation and implementation.

Developing human resources capacity
Human resource management and development
The evolution of a capable developmental state is dependent upon the strength and competency of individual public servants, as well as the coherence of the bureaucracy as a whole. This is important because it is public servants who will convert stated developmental goals into reality, and if state agencies cannot act as a coherent and collective entity, any developmental project will founder.

Public servants in the 21st century are increasingly confronted with a range of demands as public policy and governance becomes more complex and contested. They therefore have to possess appropriate skills that will enable them to effectively formulate and implement policies that will enable the state to achieve its developmental goals. Attracting the necessary skills to the public service becomes a key determinant of success.

Governments must also create a working environment that makes the best use of available human resources, to enable it to transform the country as a whole. This requires a more sophisticated approach to human resource management than personnel administration, and also requires meeting the development and training needs of public servants in a strategic manner.

Facilitation of public participation also requires new skills and
competencies that many existing public servants lack (both globally and on the continent). Of course these must also go beyond facilitation itself and must include the incorporation of inputs and suggestions by the people into policy and implementation processes that add value to service delivery.

Skills gaps are likely to include technical skills ("hard" skills such as project management and "soft" skills such as conflict management) and sector-specific skills associated with particular job profiles or occupation categories.

In South Africa, for example, there are high-level skills shortages in the following areas:
- Health (doctors and dentists, theatre nurses, infection control specialists, nursing educators);
- Criminal justice (state prosecutors, interpreters, court managers);
- Education (mathematics and science teachers);
- Local government (engineers and technologists, financial managers, town and regional planners);
- Police services (forensic scientists, crime investigators);
- Trade and industry (economists and trade specialists, policy analysts); and
- Crosscutting ICT (systems analysts, database administrators).17

There is no evidence that the situation is better in other African countries. The skills shortage in Africa, especially in its public sector, has been exacerbated by global mobility of sought after and scarce human resources. In this context, creating a conducive environment for the attraction and retention of skilled personnel to the public service becomes an urgent imperative in Africa’s quest for DSs (I will return to this point in the next section).

It is, however, important to note that it is not all about narrow, technical and ideologically trained economists, as the East Asian DSs have shown. In these countries, economists did not play a central role.18 This may or may not be a moot point in the African context; different states may require different imperatives and skills to drive both macro-economic and micro-economic development within individual African contexts.

State capacity and remuneration and conditions of service

Capable states must be able to retain their public servants. Remuneration of professionals and other human resource management practices such as recruitment, succession and career planning, employment equity, reward and recognition, and employee relations are factors that impact significantly on the retention of public servants.

Key characteristics of DSs in Asia and Scandinavian countries include meritocratic recruitments and rewarding long-term careers for civil servants. This is unlike the situation in most African countries where recruitment to and promotion in the bureaucracy are based not necessarily on merit and performance but on patronage as well as ethnic and religious considerations.

This undermines a central component of a DS, namely esprit de corps, which is essential to its success. This is a factor that enables the state to act as a coherent and collective entity. In the absence of esprit de corps the state becomes characterised by individual empires and the loyalty of civil servants is to their patrons. In addition, the emphasis on performance-based short-term contracts for civil servants, as part of the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm that has shaped the public sector on the continent, is against the grain of long-term careers that allowed public servants in DSs to tie their individual success to the success of the state’s project.

In effect, because they recognised that the success of the state’s project will have positive effects on their careers, it elicited greater commitment from them in the performance of their duties. This is unlikely in the case of short-term performance-based contracts.

A professional, merit-based bureaucracy is a key condition for preventing collaboration between the various sectors from degenerating into collusion and corruption. The bureaucracy itself must 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.

In Africa, causes of dissatisfaction in the public service also include the absence of career paths, and the fair application of performance management systems and other human resource practices. Where the application of job evaluation systems and selection processes is perceived to be unfair, the result will be capacity drainage to the private sector.

In order to limit this drainage, remuneration policies must include specific dispensations for professionals.19 In countries like Singapore, for example, top bureaucrats are as well remunerated as their counterparts in the private sector. As a result, most civil servants want to remain employed in the state and those that move to the private sector do so for reasons other than remuneration. In contrast, the flight of skills from the public service to the private sector in most countries on the continent is mainly manifest among the professional cadre who often are able to secure more favourable salaries and conditions of service in the private sector. Consequently, remuneration strategies to retain quality managers in the public service must be developed.

The senior management cadre plays a critical role in the pursuit of an effective developmental agenda. Their leadership role, skills and experience will be critical in the medium term to embed and implement a progressive developmental agenda. Red tape, the absence of delegations and the time taken for decisions to be made are also factors that will undermine public servant retention. Capable states must take steps to detect and address those factors that alienate the workforce, especially where they can be minimised or avoided.

Management and leadership development

A number of competencies are required in developing management and leadership capacity. The capacity to be flexible and agile; an ability to develop an analysis of the macro/global situation and its...
relationship to micro/local conditions; and being able to generate a variety of solutions and possibilities in diverse situations, are fundamental. Leaders must be able to implement innovative interventions that offer sustainable solutions. They must also understand the socio-economic and political contexts in which they operate and how they articulate with the complexity and diversity of global governance systems in order to develop international competitiveness.

Leadership development also requires enhancement of the capacity to inspire, motivate, and manage change in order to formulate new perspectives on governance, leadership and organisational effectiveness. Managing performance, and especially the self-reflective ability to assess one’s own performance as a public sector leader, is an important management and leadership skill.

**Developing gender equality and equity**
Developing policies and practices to implement gender equality and equity are central to the transformation of the public service. True transformation in this area requires a practical approach to mainstreaming gender in order to strengthen organisational capacity to create the conditions for female and male public servants to enjoy the benefits of development and security in the workplace. It includes the ability for women and men to reach their full human potential and participate, as equals, in serving their societies, sharing equal opportunities and, where appropriate, affirmation in order to achieve parity.

Clear targets for gender equity across the public service and in management must be set and implemented relentlessly. At the same time, gender sensitive workplaces need to be developed in order to ensure that all forms of discrimination based on gender are eradicated and sexual harassment, in any form, is dealt with decisively. These are prerequisites for the pursuit of gender equality to make certain that gender equity is accompanied by genuine empowerment of women. In the absence of a concerted effort, gender equity may amount to counting numbers rather than transforming workplace relations to ensure that both women and men lead and drive the process of transformation of the public service.

**Organisational and institutional capacity**

**State capacity to fight corruption and safeguard integrity**
Developing state capacity to fight corruption and safeguard integrity requires the implementation of a number of interrelated activities. These include:

- The prompt ratification and accession to international, regional and continental anti-corruption instruments;
- The design and implementation of national integrity systems underpinned by values of accountability, transparency, the rule of law and fundamental rights and freedoms;
- The creation of inclusive partnerships which define the roles and responsibilities of all parties, and build linkages among them in the prevention of, and fight against, corruption;
- The co-ordination and harmonisation of reporting requirements and responsibilities regarding multilateral and regional instruments;
- The enactment, implementation and application of laws that give effect to international, continental and regional anti-corruption instruments;
- The creation of legal and institutional frameworks that prohibit and deter the concealment of illicitly acquired assets and adopting multi-lateral, bilateral and other arrangements to facilitate international co-operation for asset recovery;
- The creation and strengthening of national agencies that have anti-corruption responsibilities including specialised prevention, investigative, prosecutorial and anti-money laundering agencies;
- The development or improvement of training and research programmes;
- The establishment of transparent, objective methods which go beyond perceptions to assess the prevalence of corruption and anti-corruption efforts; and
- Building capacity within public service departments to fight internal corruption.

A professional meritocratic public service is fundamental to anti-corruption. However, developing the capacity to fight corruption requires not only state capability and capacity but also requires the participation of all sectors of society including the media and organisations of civil society, the private sector, trade unions and faith-based organisations, all of whom have a responsibility to educate and promote the values of anti-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. However, linking the extent of state intervention or the scale of state participation in the economy to corruption is highly problematic. Corruption is more likely to thrive in highly privatised, deregulated environments. Inefficiencies exist in both. The most important factor in counteracting corruption is guaranteed accountability.

There are objective factors which determine the levels of corruption beyond the simplistic notion 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.

**Transforming values and culture through a National Integrity System**

The concept of a National Integrity System is critical to the development of anti-corruption capacity. 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.

At the African Forum on Fighting Corruption, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi of South Africa elaborated on the values and principles of the National Integrity 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, developmentism, and fundamental rights and freedoms including freedom of speech,
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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 the leadership needs to voluntarily submit 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 and without direction or purpose. Ethical behaviour, while highly desirable, respected and valued, cannot be assumed. This is why the capacity to develop specific measures and institutions to safeguard integrity and to promote ethics is necessary.

Transforming the public service through the management and use of information technology: towards e-government

Public services require sufficient numbers of public servants, an appropriate physical infrastructure, adequate policy and legal frameworks. Where the basic requirements are in place, information technology provides huge opportunities for the improvement of service delivery, internal management operations and knowledge management systems. Efficiency gains are often exponential with the use of information technology, although the initial implementation costs may be high.

Information technology projects are frequently the least successful in public services, or suffer the longest delays. This is because information technology is not purely about systems, but requires thoroughgoing change management programmes to change the way public servants operate, including teaching them new skills and techniques.

Public services need to develop policy on the management and use of information and communication technologies. An e-government strategy should ensure that government receives a return on investment for its information technology expenditure, by setting requirements for information technology procurement as well as maintaining an inventory of government information systems, in order to reduce duplication and ensure economies of scale.

The strategy should determine interoperability requirements for all new purchases and processes to integrate legacy systems. Regulations regarding information security should be promulgated as part of the strategy.

Integrated service delivery benefits profoundly from the harnessing of technology. Traditionally government services are offered in a silo fashion, from different offices in different locations, requiring citizens to travel from one service point to the other, even in pursuit of a single service.

African public services are striving to provide a range of services from a single location, situating the service point close to where the poor and disadvantaged citizens live. It is possible to create a one-stop shop with a unified front office by doing so. Harnessing information technology to its full extent would require the back office systems of government to be integrated to enable truly seamless service delivery.

Government information portals provide access for citizens to an integrated information system. Harnessing information technology to its full extent would require the back office systems of government to be integrated to enable truly seamless service delivery.

Government information portals provide access for citizens to an integrated information system. In Africa, where access to the internet is not widespread, it is necessary to offer this service in a way which does not disadvantage the majority of users. A call centre may be deployed to allow citizens to interface with government information through an intermediary. Similarly, an intermediary may provide assistance at service delivery points, also printing information for citizens. A process should be initiated to "e-enable" government services, making it possible for citizens to complete a transaction online.

E-government can also be deployed for citizen relationship management by offering citizens a convenient medium with which to engage government on service delivery issues. Widespread access to mobile technology on the continent provides an opportunity for citizens to be e-enabled.

In South Africa, for example, a "Track and Trace" system for ID documentation has been established. This allows citizens to make enquiries on the status of their applications. Successful deployment of IT and e-government requires substantial back office re-engineering and change management for public servants.

National development framework

Predicating public finance management on a national development framework

One of the consequences of the implementation of SAPs on the continent was the abandonment of national development frameworks as overarching development strategies. Therefore, in most African countries, national budgets became the main planning tool with the ministries of finance dominating public policy, and in most instances having a veto power over other ministries.

Because of the focus on macro-economic stability in the context of an absence of overarching national development frameworks, public policies in most African countries have not been able to respond to the needs of the African people and have not been able to transform the structural base of African economies. The African situation is in contrast to the East Asian developmental states, where national budgets were undertaken in the context of an overarching developmental strategy. In fact, in countries like Korea and Singapore, the national budgets were allocative mechanisms to meet government goals as set out in their national developmental strategic framework.

As Africa aspires to construct developmental states, public finance management needs to be underpinned by and predicated on a comprehensive medium-term strategic planning framework. It has to have clear targets, which will enable government to access progress. The annual budget and medium-term budgetary framework have to be linked with the overarching development framework.
In effect the medium-term development strategy sets out government's programme and it informs the budget. The medium-term strategy should be a public document, emphasising measures to promote the priorities of the developmental state including sustainable development and economic growth, social programmes, internal security and crime initiatives, strengthened international relations and governance initiatives designed to increase the effectiveness of the state machinery.

To achieve the above requires a reconfiguration of state apparatuses. In fact, it requires removing the locus of power from ministries of finance to super-ministries – ministries of planning or planning commissions, which need to be adequately resourced to be able to co-ordinate government programmes and policies.

In East Asia, including Korea and Singapore,22 and Malaysia, the finance ministries played a lesser role in public policy. All these countries had planning commissions, known as the Economic Planning Board (EPB) in Korea, Economic Development Board (EDB) in Singapore and Economic Planning Unit (EPU) in Malaysia. These agencies were located in the office of the head of state and headed by the prime minister or deputy prime minister. Because of this positioning at the centre, they were able to ensure that policies and programmes of line-ministries are in line with the overarching government development policies and programmes.

These planning agencies were dominant in public policies, including economy policies. The EPB is a good example in this regard.23 As Edigheji (2007: 133) notes, "It had a broad mandate over planning, budgetary and economic management. This enabled it to ensure that government's policies, programmes and spending were synchronised, thereby avoiding an overheating of the economy."

It is important that national development planning frameworks are accompanied by sound financial management which is ethical, transparent and effective. Mastery of the basics is often lacking in developing countries. This would include a strong system of financial audits and reporting in the public service.

Experience on the continent suggests that the quality and timeliness in the submission of annual financial statements could be vastly improved, especially at local government level where difficulties in complying with deadlines are experienced. Public financial management compliance continues to be a challenge as the number of qualified auditors in the public service suggests that capacity is inadequate to cope with the task that needs to be performed. Moreover, weak financial reporting undermines effective monitoring of public expenditures.

It is important also to ensure that consultation on budgeting processes is strengthened. The quality and frequency of engagement by citizens in these processes is inadequate and often inhibits and prevents substantive input from a wide range of stakeholders. In order to foster improvement in these areas and develop public finance management capacity, the oversight role of parliament needs to be strengthened. This may require the enactment of legislation in order to ensure that national and provincial legislators are empowered to monitor and evaluate public expenditure and hold government departments accountable for poor quality activity reports.

Developing capacity for resource mobilisation

Developing capacity for domestic resource mobilization for national development, and controlling the banks

Most African countries have limited capacity to mobilise domestic resources for national development, especially industrial development and the enhancement of human capabilities. This is amply demonstrated by the fact that most agencies responsible for tax collection are ill-equipped, and in some cases corrupt. They are unable to fulfil their constitutional obligation. As a result most taxable citizens and businesses do not pay their taxes. This in part explains the reliance on foreign donors.

In addition, there is a poorly developed private sector tax base given the weak development of the formal business sector in most African countries.

However, Africa's quest for DSs requires that countries on the continent are able to strengthen their capacities for domestic resource mobilisation. It will mean that the banking sector be restructured to encourage savings.

An important source for domestic resource mobilisation is remittances. Millions of African professionals are overseas and regularly send money to their families that remain at home. However, the African banking sector does not generate sufficient trust. Remittances are sent through non-banking channels with several adverse effects on the fiscus.

First, remittances through the non-banking channels do not allow for easy taxation. Second, the African banking sector does not create the investment outlets for remittance, hence most are channelled into support for families and informal sector activities. The positive economic multiplier effects that are associated with remittances in other parts of the world are lost to the continent.

The above discussion points to the need to enhance the capacity for domestic resource mobilisation. Two critical factors that require urgent attention are the need to strengthen our revenue collection agencies and the restructuring of the banking sector, as well as the need for the state to create a climate for industrial investment.

In this respect Africa can draw lessons from the Asian developmental states and the Scandinavian democratic developmental states (DDSs). In both experiences, states either owned the banks or controlled them. This enabled the state to ensure that it was able to steer the banks to advance loans to projects and sectors that will promote the development agenda of the state.

In effect, in both the Nordic DDSs and the Asian DDSs, state capacity to regulate the banks was critical to their successes. Left to their own devices, banks in Africa and elsewhere will not make significant contributions to the real economy as they will prefer short-term investment in speculative activities.

A key lesson for Africa from the developmental states in Asia and Scandinavian is the state capacity to control and regulate the banking sectors. If, after such regulation, the banks are still unable to provide loans to sectors, areas and priorities of the state, African states should consider the establishment of national development banks.

To achieve its goal, the state in Africa needs to set performance targets for the banks. Those that meet set targets have to be rewarded through incentives and those who failed punished through withdrawal of state support. In effect, the carrot and stick approach that is prevalent in DSs is an important policy consideration in Africa's quest for DDSs.

Developing capacity to manage donor partnerships

The role of donors in African development cannot be underestimat-
Many African countries face challenges in mobilising financial resources and are recipients of substantial foreign aid which helps fund significant proportions of a country’s imports, as well as most of its public investment and budget deficit.

Foreign investment is frequently negligible, with significant amounts of domestic public investment dependent on the public development aid provided by countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and multilateral agencies. Dependence on foreign aid and donor partnerships is a grave concern on the continent despite the contribution they have made to improvements in sectors like health and education.

There is a growing awareness of the challenge and countries have taken measures to increase domestic resource mobilisation. In Uganda, for example, the share of donor funding in national development programmes was reduced from 60 per cent in 2004/5 to 40 per cent in 2007/8.

Countries like Nigeria, which has recently freed itself of debt obligations – including those of the Paris and London Clubs of Creditors, multilateral and promissory note creditors as well as bilateral and private sector creditors – have seen a positive impact on investment and growth. Improved sovereign credit ratings have also enabled Nigerian and other African businesses to have easier and more affordable access to international finance and capital markets.

The challenge of foreign debt and challenges and opportunities provided by development assistance have generally not received prominent attention in the APRM reports, but the peer review process provides an ideal platform to share experiences and good practice around these issues across the continent.

It is also critical to develop capacity within the public service to manage and co-ordinate donor partnerships. The use of donor funding to impose particular forms of administrative decentralisation and service delivery must be considered vigilantly. This is a critical area which has the potential to develop and transform African society, but it is one which must be genuinely owned by Africans.

State capacity and monitoring and evaluation

Standards, principles and practices

Building on the foundation of an appropriate system for planning, monitoring and evaluation standards and principles, and associated capacity, must be developed in the context of African cultures and reflect the experiences of the continent. The basic values and principles governing public service and administration are articulated in the Draft African Charter on the Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration, and include accountability and transparency to the public fostered through provision of timely, accessible and accurate information.

Monitoring and evaluation standards and principles need to identify key groups and persons involved in or affected by the evaluation, and public servants or other persons conducting the evaluation should be both trustworthy and competent to perform the evaluation, so that the findings achieve maximum credibility and acceptance.

Information collected should be responsive to the needs and interests of citizens and the people more broadly as well as other specified stakeholders. The perspectives, procedures and rationale used to interpret the findings should be carefully described so that
the bases for value judgments are clear.

Evaluation reports should clearly describe the issues being evaluated, including context, and the purposes, procedures, and findings of the evaluation, so that essential information is provided and easily understood.

Significant interim findings and evaluation reports should be disseminated to intended users, so that they can be utilized in a timely fashion and evaluations should be planned, conducted, and reported in ways that encourage follow-through by stakeholders, so that the likelihood that the evaluation will be used is increased.

Feasibility principles should ensure that evaluations will be realistic, prudent, diplomatic, and frugal, while evaluation procedures should be practical. At the same time evaluations should be planned and conducted with anticipation of the different positions of various interest groups, so that their co-operation may be obtained, and so that possible attempts by any of these groups to curtail evaluation operations or to bias or misapply the results can be averted or counteracted.

Propriety standards are intended to ensure that evaluations will be conducted legally, ethically and with due regard for those involved in the evaluation, as well as those affected by its results. They should also be people-centred and service oriented to ensure all who are engaged in development are empowered by the information produced. At the same time, monitoring and evaluations should be designed and conducted to respect and protect the rights and welfare of human subjects.

Monitoring and evaluation should be objective and fair in its examination and recording of strengths and weaknesses of the issues being evaluated, so that strengths can be built upon and problem areas addressed. It is also incumbent on evaluators to ensure that the full set of evaluation findings, along with pertinent limitations, are made accessible to the persons affected by the evaluation.

Accuracy standards must be developed to ensure that an evaluation will reveal and convey technically adequate information, and reporting should guard against distortion caused by subjective feelings and biases of any party to the evaluation, so that evaluation reports fairly reflect the evaluation findings. The conclusions reached in an evaluation should be explicitly justified, so that people can readily assess them.

What gets measured is what gets done

Successful sustainable development requires strong systems of monitoring and evaluation, which in turn require statistical capability with integrity. Indeed, in order for democracy to work, support is needed for processes and institutions that promote transparency, accountability and efficiency.

In the absence of national integrated statistical, monitoring and evaluation systems, across the continent, many government departments have designed their own monitoring and evaluation systems, often using consultants and drawing on support from other government structures. This makes it advisable to consider the development of national frameworks that can harness the existing systems in support of a national integrated system.

Monitoring and evaluation systems need to be integrated across the tiers or spheres of government, because monitoring service delivery at a local level is critical to improved service delivery. The integration and co-ordination of systems and the standardization of key features such as performance indicators all need to be addressed.

Monitoring is generally undertaken to promote financial accountability, but there is a widespread failure to address issues of impact or effectiveness. Where programme content is reflected in monitoring systems it usually takes the form of records of events undertaken, rather than reporting on outputs or outcomes.

Measuring impact is one of the more sophisticated and difficult aspects of monitoring and evaluation. The absence of baseline statistics and control groups makes impact assessments with respect to public goods very difficult, if not impossible. There is still inadequate awareness of the need to carefully measure the impact of government work on citizens and to critically assess what the overall benefits are.

National treasuries and planning institutions must ensure that departments monitor financial expenditure, and this needs to be extended to performance management and impact assessment.

Monitoring activities are often not integrated into programme and project management activities, and project-level staff still often see monitoring as a burden, required by senior levels who want forms filled in, rather than as a useful implementation management tool. The people responsible for monitoring and evaluation are often not those responsible for implementation, and this division will have to be overcome in time.

An exacerbating factor is that monitoring and evaluation is rarely budgeted for, so project staff members are often reluctant to spend more than the minimal time inputting data and operating systems.

There does, however, still appear to be a growing awareness of the importance of effective monitoring and evaluation and a growing commitment to addressing the shortcomings of existing systems.

Within civil society, academic institutions have had to respond to the country's transformation agenda. New policies required skills which could not be provided within the framework of existing institutional structures and programmes. Accordingly new courses on public management should be developed that include modules on monitoring and evaluation.

The African media also has a role to play through responsible reporting by raising public consciousness about evaluation, and through its own evaluative reporting. However, often the quality and reliability of these initiatives is of concern. Nevertheless, this could play a critical role in promoting a public awareness and discourse on evaluation. Training networks across the continent would be critical, and AM DIN has a key role to play in this regard (see the paper "Improving Public Sector Capacity Development in Africa by Strengthening African MDIs").
Developing a culture of learning and innovation in the public service

Learning and innovation in the public service is enabled by effective leadership, where responsible risk-taking is encouraged, especially at the front lines, and there is openness to new ideas whether emanating from citizens, inside the government or from other governments. It is also impossible to introduce innovation in the public service without continuously upgrading employees’ knowledge and skills, and allowing them access to recent developments in their respective areas of expertise. Dedicated innovation hubs should be established to identify and incubate innovation within the public service.

Innovations are often incremental and involve small continuous improvements in the services and processes of institutions. Public service institutions that achieve excellence through incremental improvement often fail to acknowledge the need for a more far-reaching transformational change.24

Indeed innovation, when fully embraced, does involve fundamental transformation of the organisation. Learning and innovation require a mind-set, or organisational culture transformation, which emphasises thinking about possible solutions rather than on the obstacles encountered in tackling specific problems. This transformation of mind-set should be promoted through different mechanisms including recruitment mechanisms, socialisation upon entry to the public service, training, a fair performance-appraisal system, rewards, recognition and freedom to experiment. While individual excellence must always be encouraged, the importance of teamwork and partnership in transforming public service culture cannot be overemphasised. Teams facilitate the breaking down of barriers between genders, age groups, races, ethnic groups, and geographic biases. Building trust, legitimacy and partnerships are critical to the feasibility and sustainability of innovations in government.

Innovation must also be oriented to achieving measurable progress. Without a well-planned and well-managed approach, the routine of day-to-day operations takes over. One response to this may be developing benchmarks against which to judge the success of innovation efforts.

Formal education and training is also fundamental and it is important to include innovation in executive programmes. University curricula should expose and encourage innovation. It is also crucial to improve the body of knowledge about innovation and public sector challenges.

In addition, knowledge-sharing which is facilitated by information portals such as the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN) is key to ongoing learning and innovation.

In order to foster the development of capacity for a learning and innovation culture on the continent, a research culture in African Network (UNPAN) is key to ongoing learning and innovation. Involving countries. The context in which the state reasserts its central role in the 21st century differs from that of the latter half of the 20th century.

Strengthening the state and asserting its developmental role does not mean recreating inappropriate state structures like those inherited in the post-colonial period and the re-establishment of an inflexible bureaucracy. Clearly, the form of the state must be transformed in order to develop the necessary capacity to implement new developmental priorities. This would entail developing flexible administrative apparatus capable of implementing in practice the people-centred democratic values and principles of public service and administration enshrined in the Africa Charter on the Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration.

Where and if appropriate in specific contexts, this may involve outsourcing, public-private partnerships or innovative service delivery forms that improve the lives of the people without compromising the values and principles and state directed development.

Strong developmental states are essential for Africa to confront and solve the key challenges of poverty, underdevelopment, economic development, governance, peace and security. Resolution of the key challenges requires capable developmental states with strong systems of public service and administration. The test of a true capable developmental state is whether a government has been able to effectively transform society within set time-frames that are relatively short and agreed in contracts with the people through election manifestos.

In order to achieve this goal, each state must develop its capacity and capability to regulate society, deliver services and engage with its citizens regarding policy and its implementation. Ministers of public service should focus on the key elements of capacity identified in this paper, including planning, monitoring and evaluation as systems requiring popular participation, financial management, human resource management, anti-corruption, service delivery improvement and innovation, e-government and the management of donors.

The additional dimension of capability can only be enhanced by drawing on the experiences of public services across Africa, to identify and share successful indigenous strategies to address the daunting challenges that face the continent.  

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Management development institutes: roles and recommendations

Hanlie Van Dyk-Robertson and Professor Sheikh A Abdullah, Africa Management Development Institutes’ Network (AMDIN) examine the role of management development institutes in Africa

The paper sets out to briefly establish the importance and relevance of the capacity agenda, drawing the connections between capacity, development, the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) process, good governance, effective institutions and people. It proceeds to make some cursory comments on the current status of African public sector capacity, the continued gap between what we need and what we actually have, as well as putting forward some of the most common reasons for the continued existence of such discrepancies between what is intended, desired and real.

The paper then shifts its emphasis to the MDIs themselves: outlining what potential roles the MDIs can play and acknowledging that capacity development is much more than only training. The paper shows how MDIs see themselves contributing more successfully to developing public sector capacity (and to a lesser degree in other sectors) by re-asserting their roles in terms of consulting/organisational development, as well as in the critical area of (applied/policy) research.

The paper would be misleading if it does not include an honest reflection on the current capacity of the MDIs themselves and flag some of the most important impediments that are preventing MDIs from giving optimal effect to their potential role. However, the option of sideling the existing institutions because of their shortcomings in favour of embarking on a programme of establishing new capacity development or leadership development institutions will be counterproductive.

The paper argues that should the same amount of resources, energy and goodwill be channelled to the existing, but struggling, institutions than what new organisations will demand, the results will be exponentially better and the institutions will more likely be more efficient and effective. It simply makes more sense improving what we have already invested in, rather than starting all over again, with no guarantees of better results.

Finally, the paper sets out to focus the discussion by listing recommendations within the domain of this paper that were previously made and that could be considered by the Conference of Ministers. Similarly, some suggestions emanating from the AMDIN consultative process which would require commitment by the ministers, either as a collective or in their respective national settings, are outlined.

The paper is reflective of many limitations. Obviously the area under discussion is huge and cannot be dealt with comprehensively in a single paper. However, the most important limitation that requires flagging is that we depart from an understanding that optimal performance can only take place when competence, motivation and opportunity intersect. Therefore, although the role of MDIs in improving public sector performance is crucial, it is not exclusive.

All problems associated with capacity cannot be attributed to the MDIs. Note, for example, that a review of Ghana’s capacity found: “Ghana possesses considerable human capacity. Talented individuals are found in government, non-governmental organisations, educational institutions and the private sector, and at all levels — national, district and community. An institutional framework of under-performing organisations, poor policies and a fractious polity has often stifled their talents.”

Much of the policy and operational environments needed to ensure a motivated public sector workforce that is appropriately utilised fall largely outside the purview of MDIs. They can, at best, advise governments on some of these aspects, and, as far as possible, sensitise managers as to how best to achieve ideal situations in the workplace. But they certainly cannot take the decisions, nor on a daily basis implement those decisions and create a workplace that brings the best out of public servants.

Salary reforms, better public sector infrastructure and working conditions, merit appointments and sound performance management practices belong to government in general and to the policy departments responsible for public sector reform and management of the line departments specifically.

MDIs are not in control of the environment in which new learning imparted by the MDI will be applied in practice. The point in theory is very clear that, unless a base can be established for the transfer of learning between what takes place on a training course and what can be applied within the “sending” organisation’s context, any training efforts’ impact is fundamentally compromised. By focusing on the MDIs, the paper by no means wants to create the impression of MDIs being the saviour to all capacity problems; all the above issues need to be taken into consideration if headway is to be made in respect of capacity development.

Why is capacity such an important issue in African situations?

There is an often expressed connection made in literature regarding the critical relationship between capacity and development. The capacity building approach of the World Bank of the early 1990s emphasised that one of the root causes of poverty, illiteracy and ill health was lack of capacity in two domains (i) in government, to design and implement proper development strategies, and (ii) in society, to hold government accountable for its actions.

The World Bank approach also identified capacity development as a goal in its own right, and cautioned that it should not be treated as a means to an end only (i.e. economic and social development).

Much of the existing literature emphasises the importance of public sector capacity. The conclusion of Webb et al. (2008) after considering the work of Bates (2001); Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi (2005); Przeworski and colleagues (2000); and van de Walle (2001) is an example of this orientation:

"... the quality of the public sector— accountability, efficiency in
service delivery, transparency, and so forth—correlates strongly with—and is thought by many to contribute to—long-term growth and poverty reduction."

In terms of the international community and multilateral organisations, there is also agreement on this connection. Note, for example, the statement by the IMF that the experience of its member countries leaves no doubt that strong domestic institutional capacity is a pre-condition for economic and social development and for effective public policy making. It is generally agreed that an organisation has capacity when it can:

- identify, plan, prioritise, implement, monitor and learn from specific courses of action;
- mobilise, deploy and, where necessary, motivate resources (assets, people, money and information) consistently and continuously on agreed priorities; and
- discipline a heavily constrained system to pursue agreed objectives collectively.

Capacity constraints feature constantly in assessments regarding countries' ability (or inability) to achieve the MDGs, increasing the urgency of the entire capacity development agenda. Note, for example, the UNDP's Kermit Desir's 2005 statement on this issue:

"Clearly, there are capacity implications for implementing an MDG-based development strategy in relation to the ability of countries to manage the scale-up needed to achieve the goals in the time left before 2015, while at the same time expanding the delivery of essential services. From public sector management and administration, to human resources and infrastructure, the need to strengthen the ability of countries to absorb additional resources and at the same time build their own national and local capacity has never been so important to achieving sustainable development outcomes."

In its 2003 publication, the Economic Commission of Africa (ECA) supports this notion by stating:

"... the endurance and viability of the democratic exercise in Africa in the long term will be determined by the effectiveness, fairness and public accountability of its political and public sector institutions" (ECA 2003: 31).

The ECA goes further, placing particular importance on the people in the public service, arguing that mobilisation and harnessing of this resource is critical and that the building of essential institutional capacities (of which human resources is an integral part) is a pre-requisite for the continent to succeed in its battle against underdevelopment and poverty (2003:32).

The importance of human resources in any organisation, their value orientation and the associated competence and technical training of employees have over decades been emphasised by different international leaders. For example, Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary General to the UN during the period 1953–1963, put it as follows:

"Fundamentally, man is the key to all problems, not money. Funds are valuable only when used by trained, experienced and devoted men and women. Such people, on the other hand, can work miracles even with small resources and draw wealth out of a barren land."

Half a century later Kofi Anan mirrored the same sympathies when he said:

"Just as investment in physical capital is necessary to generate economic growth, so investment in human resources must be recognised not merely as a by-product of economic growth but as a driving force for development ... Technical and professional training lays an essential foundation for the acquisition of skills and for renewing, adapting or changing those skills to better suit the evolving needs of individuals and societies."

Bourguignon et al. (2008) agrees with shifting the emphasis away from financial and economic considerations, placing the policy and institutional environments on equal par with that of public resources or financial assistance in terms of successfully achieving the MDGs. It must be stressed that human resources and skills development of individuals are widely seen as an integral part of institutions, since all institutional and structural arrangements can only be operationalised by human beings.

A further aspect that is closely tied to capacity and human resource is the issue of the learning organisation, and the associated field of knowledge management. Jain (2006) shows that knowledge management is progressively gaining higher reputation today because of the recognition of the importance of human capital. "To say that knowing is a human act is to highlight the fact that knowledge involves humans who do the knowing" (Lang, cited in Jain, 2006).

This highlights the intrinsic nature of knowledge, therefore defining people as the centre of the knowledge management process. Since public sector organisations in the prevailing environment are seen as knowledge and learning organisations, it follows that the development of its human capacity in this terrain is critical for the foreseeable future. James Wolfensohn, for example, points out:

"A key element for development effectiveness is the enhanced capacity of developing countries to formulate, execute and evaluate the outcomes of their own development strategies. This requires capacity to access knowledge, drawing from multiple sources and adapting them to local conditions, and to tap opportunities offered by new information technology..."

It is now widely acknowledged that in the prevailing global context the competitiveness of countries and regions is hugely informed by their orientation to knowledge. This is an even more important factor to achieve competitive advantage and realise economic growth than traditional economic factors such as land, capital, labour and climate. Given the under-developed market and third sector in the African context, strengthening the knowledge management aspects of the public sector is likely to be a beneficial lever to catapult African societies in general onto a higher trajectory, joining the post-industrial brigade, without necessarily moving through a period of industrial development. This is the only way in which Africa could become competitive with other regions in the global set-up.

Good governance, development and capacity are closely associated in the literature and agendas of many of the multilateral institutions. In its 2005 African Governance Report the ECA closed the loop between these three constructs.

The report states: "... in order for the institutions of governance to perform their functions efficiently and effectively they must be endowed with the appropriate capacities. Good governance is a development issue with capacity-building ramifications" (2005: 197).

The capacity development agenda

There is no shortage of evidence for high-level discussions, debates
and, in some instances, commitments or plans in international and multilateral bodies with respect to capacity development in general, but also Africa specifically. A few examples, which are not comprehensive by any stretch of the imagination, should suffice to provide an indication of these.

In 1997 the UN held a meeting with the focus on “Redesigning the State for socio-economic development and change”. Five specific issues were identified as being of particular importance under that theme. The majority of these were directly related to issues of government capacity. The five themes were: enhancing the professionalism and ethical values and image of the public service; rethinking the state for socio-economic development; creating an enabling environment for private sector development; promoting an enabling environment for sound governance; and strengthening government capacity in the mobilisation, management and accountability of financial resources.

Within the UN, the UNDP has always played a particularly visible role with respect to the capacity development agenda. In Southern Africa, until the end of 2007, for example, the Southern Africa Capacity Initiative (SACI) undertook an extensive programme aimed at capacity development in the sub-region.

During the 2002 meeting of the African Union Assembly held in Durban, a resolution was considered to proclaim a capacity-building decade in Africa, lasting until 2011, placing us already past the halfway mark in this particular decade. This step was taken in response to the determination of African Heads of State and Government to eradicate poverty and commit the continent to a path of sustainable growth and development, while at the same time being part of the global economy and its decision-making structures.

While doing so, the assembly immediately juxtaposed this desire with the recognition of the enormous capacity needs in all the sectors in their respective countries, and that such capacity limitations pose a major impediment to the desired development, since capacity constitutes a critical element to move to the effective implementation of any development strategies on the continent.

To this effect it was proposed that the AU Assembly proclaim 2002–2011 the “decade for capacity building in Africa” and undertake to ensure that local capacity building features prominently in the development policies of our respective countries. It further proposed the demonstration of greater commitment to capacity building on the continent by pooling African resources and capacities, and allowing the African people to take ownership of their development processes and to promote the multilateral organisations, particularly those based in Africa, whose task is to strengthen and develop capacities on the continent. 13

The Fourth Pan-African Conference of Ministers of Public Service held in 2003 identified a number of issues to be addressed should better progress need to be made with respect to HRD in African public services. Amongst these were the following:

- Adequate budgetary allocations to capacity building efforts. Budgetary allocations for human resources development in the public service in general have not only been very low but also extremely vulnerable to reductions and re-allocation. The general recommendation was to earmark 20% of personnel costs for staff training.
- Adequate funding of training/educational institutions. MDIs in all their manifestations should be funded adequately to meet the expectations of the public service. It was inter alia argued that adequate funding will enable them to maintain their facilities, and to acquire sufficient teaching and learning materials and equipment to allow them to function as institutions where public servants will aspire to receive training from.
- Institutional relations between governments and their public sector training institutions. A position was advocated for a defined relationship and effective coordination between the various national agencies responsible for implementing public service reforms and the MDIs. A strong formal institutional relationship between the reformed focal point and capacity building institutions was deemed crucial in building the requisite and effective institutional capacity within the public service for formulation and implementation of appropriate strategies for public service reforms.

For the past three years the AU-NEPAD has been working on a Capacity Development Strategic Framework (CDSF) for the continent. The framework is developed around six cornerstones: leadership transformation; citizen transformation; knowledge based and innovation-driven decision and development processes; utilising African potentials, skills and resources for development; capacity of the capacity builders; and integrated planning and implementation approaches and continuous improvement processes.

Presently the main vehicle to operationalise the capacity development strategic framework is the NEPAD Capacity Development Initiative and the processes are designed bearing in mind the African Peer Review Mechanism processes as well as the requirements of the Regional Economic Communities. The framework has been piloted in a small number of countries during last year, and in July a further consultative meeting was held with key stakeholders to further discuss issues of implementation.

Under the auspices of the World Bank Group’s Africa Action Plan, one of the strongest alignments of development partners’ initiatives is taking place around capacity development. The Capacity Development Management Action Plan (CDMAP) was launched in July 2006, bringing together the AfDB, EU, DFID, French Cooperation, USAID, NORAD and GTZ. Based on extensive consultation, the CDMAP emphasises delivering results by creating space for learning by doing. It embodies 20 actions focused on five goals and outcomes: more reliable and accountable public financial management systems; improved capacity for effective delivery of public services; better and more appropriate skills to support growth and competitiveness; capacity to deliver essential services in post-conflict countries; and improved capacity for country leadership for more effective management and monitoring of results. CDMAP covers 43 countries, and was forecasted to, by this financial year, account for 38% of the World Bank’s portfolio. 14

African public administration, public sector performance and the public sector capacity gap

Notwithstanding significant efforts in capacity development and some increases in growth in Africa, few African countries are positioned to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. As it is, the overall real GDP growth rate of 5.7% in 2006 (compared with very similar rates during the previous two years) are attributed to strong global demand for key African export commodities and, in part, to improvements in macroeconomic management (OECD: 2007). 15

Continued public sector capacity gaps are frequently cited as one
of the most important reasons for Africa's desperate state in human development, slow economic growth and poor governance record. In a short but highly critical paragraph the ECA captured many of the varied dimensions of the capacity and skills shortage in their 2003 report:

"In the case of the civil service, the mandate of civil servants is to manage the institutions of governance, and also advise ministers on a wide range of issues such as health, education, transport, economic growth and poverty reduction. They also assist in the design and delivery of public services, and in the drafting of rules and regulations. However, most of the public servants lack the ability to formulate, implement and monitor policies, programmes and strategies focused on economic growth and sustainable development. In addition, they do not have adequate physical infrastructure, office equipment and other facilities to perform their duties in a professional manner. Many civil services lack motivation and are most of the time demoralised due to low salaries, poor working conditions, and appointment based on criteria other than merit." (ECA 2003: 32)

This extract already points to some of the contributing factors: demoralisation and low levels of motivation due to the remuneration regime, less-than-conducive working conditions and appointment systems that undermine the concepts of professionalism and merit which are closely associated with public service as a profession of choice. Below is a further elaboration on some of the underlying reasons and contributory factors for this continued gap.

African public administrations have neither been shielded from overall developments in the public administration field, nor escaped the influence of different models that periodically emerge and are advocated directly and indirectly by, for example, international organisations.

As a consequence of the continent's colonial history, but in more recent years also the excessive use of consultants and heavy reliance on conditional technical assistance, public administration in Africa is a conglomeration of ideas, initiatives, tools and techniques influenced and underpinned by very different philosophical and normative stances. As such it is often incoherent, or at least plagued by serious internal tensions that hinders effective performance.

Some of this is reflected in the discussions regarding finding a public administration that is reflective of intrinsic and well-recognised African values, rather than the transferred administrative models with their roots in the former colonising countries. However, in more recent years the tension is also to be detected in the wide prevalence of neo-liberal thinking exerted through the spread of the New Public Management paradigm and all its associated tools and techniques, while at the same time searching for solutions within the realm of the developmental state, the thinking which is closely associated with the successes of the East Asian tigers and cubs.

 Whereas neo-liberal thinking has notions of liberal democracy and minimalist perspective of state as some of its core features, the experience of the developmental state in the Asian context points to a curtailing of individual and group rights, e.g. through unionisation and significant levels of regulation - both aspects to be frowned upon in neo-liberal thinking.

Those success stories under the rubric of the developmental state relied on strong, capable states with substantial and powerful public administrations to support implementation of public policy,
backed up by potent regulatory capacity in the state to guide and direct existing markets, ameliorating the worst excesses of free-marketing and prioritising the development goals of the state.28

The African reality will pose serious challenges to the direct and uncritical transfer of either of these models, yet many are running directly into this trap.

African public service capacity has been severely compromised through pressure put on governments to cut back on the number of public servants in order to balance the salaries and wage bills in economies that clearly suffered from serious structural defects. For example, in 1998 the ILO reported that in sub-Saharan Africa the ratio of public service employment to population was falling. In 1996 less than 1% of the population was on average employed by the public service, compared to about 3% in other developing countries.27 Developed countries, on average, at that stage had 10.9% of their population in public employment, while transitional economies (Eastern Europe) had 16%. African countries had by far the lowest ratio of public servant to population, notwithstanding the enormous need for, and reliance on, the state to provide public services and a safety net in the absence of a functioning market, and yet it was pressurised as part of lending conditionalities to cut it back even further.

In the African context, Botswana is often cited as a good example of an effective African public administration. However, the ratio of public servants to population in that country is 5:1:1 000, a ratio significantly higher than for most of the rest of Africa south of the Sahara (excluding the Seychelles). These figures clearly point to the need for a higher number of public servants, rather than cutting back. The issue of a feasible remuneration dispensation in the absence of viable tax bases in many African countries needs to be separated from the discussion regarding an optimal size of public administration for effective public sector capacity. Capacity development efforts have been criticised and found wanting in terms of lasting impact. They have been described as suffering from being piecemeal, poorly sequenced and not adequately underpinned by programme design, monitoring and evaluation.29 It is imperative that we must adopt a long-term perspective with regard to the capacity development agenda on the continent.

Impatience for results, signalled by too many, too frequent and premature changes in terms of policies, programmatic initiatives, organisational role players and so forth is counterproductive. Commitments made in terms of strategic directions to pursue, or organisations to establish/revitalise, need to go beyond the lifespan of individual role players and they must reach beyond changes in leadership or decision-makers.

In his recent book, State Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century, Francis Fukuyama engages with the question of whether or not there can be a general theory of capacity development or state building that can provide a basis for policy guidance in developing countries. The answer he gives is mainly no, but partly yes. His book reflects on the fact that part of this difficulty sits in the conceptual confusion, but also that capacity development requires a series of inter-related, technically complex, organisationally challenging and politically risky changes to the way any state conducts its business.

He clearly demonstrates that fundamental increases in state capacity, which more often than not threaten entrenched interests, need to be built over a long period of time. For example, it took the United Kingdom almost a century and a half to give meaning to the Northcote-Trevylen reforms.

A very honest self-reflection undertaken by some of the development partner community in 2002 came to the conclusion that developing national capacity remains an elusive goal. Notwithstanding the training of thousands as well as deployment of large cohorts of technical experts, the desired goals have not been met, and quite often shown perverse and unintended results:

"Educational attainments have increased dramatically, to the point where unemployed graduates resort to driving taxis while others join the 'brain drain'. Yet development undertakings have constantly faced a lack of necessary skills and weak institutions. Donors can ship out four-wheel-drive vehicles, or textbooks, or computers; they can dispatch expatriate experts, whether on long-term secondment or on short-term consultancies. But they have not really appeared to transfer knowledge - or at least not in the catalytic way that might ignite a positive chain reaction throughout developing societies... There have been positive micro-improvements, but not the kind of macro-impacts that build and sustain national capacity for development."30 (Fukuda-Parr 2002: 3)

A similar exercise during the mid-1990s focused on capacity building, supported by the UNDP, the WBI and the AfDB. It drew an equally pessimistic conclusion:

"Generally, however, the capacity building-oriented PSRPs did not to [sic] have any perceptible impact on service delivery in the CEI [Country Engagement Initiative] countries. In addition, the capacity building measures were in many instances piecemeal and fragmented. One singularly significant shortcoming was the conspicuous absence of effective pay and incentives reform, which remain critical to sustainable capacity building."31 (Kiragu 2002: 6)

African public sector capacity is further challenged, both on the demand and the supply sides, by the HIV and AIDS pandemic. For example, the ILO estimated that in Malawi between 1990 and 2000 deaths among public service workers increased tenfold. As a result, unfilled vacancies in national ministries of education, health, agriculture and water development stand at over 50%. The negative impact shows on the workforce supply side, as well as the simultaneous increasing burden on, or demand for, public services.
Absenteeism, higher turnover as a consequence of mortality, lower productivity, loss of motivation and distractedness are but some of the negative consequences the African public sector as employer needs to confront as a consequence of this pandemic. In addition, the cost of recruiting, replacing and training new public servants is putting strain on the already meagre human resource budgets.

African public sector capacity is not unaffected by a global and regional labour market, resulting in the so-called “brain drain”. Data on the brain drain in Africa is scarce and inconsistent; however, statistics show a continent losing the very people it needs most for economic, social, scientific and technological progress.

We know that since 1990, Africa has been losing in the region of 20 000 professionals annually. Over 300 000 professionals reside outside Africa. Ethiopia, for example, lost 75% of its skilled workforce between 1980 and 1991. It is often those who are better qualified, better trained, higher skilled, more resilient and better calculated risk-takers who take the leap to find employment elsewhere, for reasons of better work conditions, better conditions of service and more personal security. This profile includes a substantial number of public service managers, professionals and intellectuals.

Technical assistance and capacity development programmes have been criticised for reasons that the best local candidates are identified by development partners during those processes, offered jobs and, in the process, removed from the national capacity pools. Some analysts, such as Dr Lalla Ben Barka from the ECA, are particularly pessimistic about the brain-drain phenomenon, stating that “in 25 years, Africa will be empty of brain” (cited in Tebeje).

The discussion about the mobility of human resource capacity in a global set-up is, though, more complex than the above, and certainly not only having negative consequences. The circulation of global experience as an important capacity developer should not be negated, nor the positive effect of substantial foreign-earned salary remittances to countries where the economic base is seriously compromised. Exportation of human resource skill could be seen as an economic strategy, provided this is done consciously and the necessary frameworks put in place to ensure that gains indeed come to the country of origin, or where the public expense was incurred in terms of education and training.

In addition, those leaving Africa for long or indefinite periods do not have to be entirely lost to the continent. Initiatives around mobilising and tapping into the skills of those in the African diaspora are gaining ground.

Africa as a continent is still plagued by many violent conflicts or, where countries have emerged from conflict, they remain vulnerable to return to situations of conflict and instability. Countries that experience conflicts are characterised by public servants leaving in large numbers, decimating the professional public service (e.g. Uganda) and sometimes removing the infrastructure and files of government in the process, eroding the very source of power of public administrations, i.e. knowledge and information (e.g. Rwanda).

The role of the MDIs
MDIs are specialised institutions, created by governments, to contribute to human resource development, either by playing an in-service post-employment training function (much as the corporate university concept of large employers in the private sector) or by exclusively providing compulsory training prior to entry into the public service, or parts thereof. In addition, they were traditionally seen as undertaking critical work in terms of applied policy research, as well as organisational development, more broadly.

They therefore provide fertile ground for incubating new ideas, promoting discussion and changing behaviour over a large domain in the public service. They hold the potential in a healthy policy and operational environment to both stimulate debate and serve as a critical, somewhat removed, voice and, particularly through the iterative cycles of reflective practice, offer the potential for promoting critical thinking and integrating conceptual and abstract understanding with the realities of praxis and the prevailing context.

In many instances MDIs are institutional legacies of the post-independence period, where the need was recognised to leave behind vehicles which could rapidly deliver to scale indigenous professional public servants in the wake of the decolonisation process. They take on many different forms, perform different roles and display significant variance across the continent.

One of the clearest lines of distinction between these institutions can be found in whether they play an integral part of the professional preparation and are a necessary role player in entry into a country’s public service (at least for the core public administration and the management levels, if not more generally), (the so-called placement institutions, predominantly found in the form of ENAs or ENAMs in those African countries with a French colonial history) or whether they are seen as an optional extra, and increasingly deemed as one of many other providers in the national and even international training and education system, which have to undertake their tasks within a self-sustainability framework, fairly typical in countries with an Anglophone tradition or those who wholeheartedly embraced the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) of the World Bank.

Critical in this divide is the proximity of the ENA/MDI to the centre of government policy-making and transformation of the public administration, as well as the financing models. In addition, the ENAs are associated with a much stronger sense of public sector professionalism, with a pride instilled in those who went through the prestige selection and training processes.
In 2003 the ECA commented on the recognition of the importance of training as an appropriate instrument of capacity building and regarded the establishment and revival of several MDIs in Africa as evidence of this affirmation. The ECA also argued for the establishment of specialised training institutions that could take care of what it described as “the increasing need for the acquisition of specialised skills for the administration of the public service”. In its report it categorised the need to improve public service management skills as an “essential element of any public service reform programme”.

It further described training and capacity building as “the essence of human resource development” and “the aspect of public management reform that has the potential to realise results more immediately than most other mechanisms”. It therefore concludes that the logic of the centrality of training and capacity building is inescapable (ECA, 2003: 47).

Specifically in post-conflict countries, there is a pattern of prioritising the establishment of MDIs. Where they have existed before, the transformation of these institutes is prioritised and they are redeveloped. The AMDIN regional workshops registered an emerging trend of new MDIs being established – sometimes in the face of existing organisations. The rationale behind establishing these institutions, as well as the manner in which it is done, is not always convincing. What seems to be in vogue is to establish leadership training institutions alongside long-established and functioning institutions that provide management development, suggesting leadership is distinct and removed, rather than part and parcel of management of organisations and what they do.

In the process, resources and available energy are often redirected to the new initiative, making the survival of institutions that are already hamstrung in terms of available financial resources even more difficult. It could be argued that even though room exists for performance improvement by the existing organisation those problems could have been sorted out if the same resources, which are now diverted to building new institutions, were directed to the existing institutions.

Participants in the AMDIN regional workshops issued a cautionary note on this aspect: that is, that the establishment of new institutions should only be undertaken where a real organisational gap can be identified and where an existing institution cannot be strengthened in order to fill that gap.

It needs to be recognised that part of the problem with institutional capacity development in Africa is the perpetual establishment of new structures and organisations, and the withdrawal of support to existing ones on grounds that range between the whims and fads on the part of development partners and the donor community, to personality clashes between MDI leadership and government officials.

There is sometimes the deep desire of some leaders to leave behind personal legacies, in the form of organisations or even brick-and-mortar projects, without considering the larger picture. The AU-NPAD Capacity Development Strategic Framework also lists this particular issue of unending establishment of new institutions, rather than working through the implementation and performance problems experienced by existing institutions, as highly problematic.

In a 1999 discussion of public sector training institutions in a
number of African countries, Olowu and Adamolekum pointed to the following shortcomings:

- Training is often treated as a discreet event, not part of organisational improvement;
- Many trainees are selected on the basis of bureaucratic politics and patronage, rather than on the basis of addressing the greatest need;
- Competent trainers are rare; training itself is a poorly developed profession;
- Training curricula and models are usually based on borrowed models and rarely updated;
- Classroom-based, academic-style teaching dominates in most training programmes, raising serious questions regarding relevance;
- Training evaluation is limited to assessing happiness levels, rather than impact on knowledge, attitude, behaviour and job performance; and
- Most training institutions are poorly financed and managed.23

The 2003 ECA report also commented on some of the challenges faced by the MDIs. It found as follows: "In general terms, however, the standard of capacity building programmes in Africa has been compromised. Over the years, the MDIs have been excluded from the centre of advice to the periphery of government administration, and in many cases they are under-performing and/or are no longer consulted about government policy decisions. "In many cases, MDIs have been accorded low status, have insufficient human resources, suffer from high staff turnovers/brain-drain and receive inadequate funding. The deregulation of training in Africa has also led to the entry of unqualified trainers in the training field." (ECA, 2003: 45)

The AMDIN regional MDI assessment workshops held in June and July 2008, in aggregate, received feedback from about 80% of African countries’ MDIs. The findings of those workshops underscored the aforementioned criticisms and assessment. However, where the above assessments were almost wholly negative, the AMDIN workshops also found the following positive aspects to share. MDIs have survived the worst excesses of the rolling back of the state, the sacrifice of training budgets in the name of efficiency drives and the pressures of trying to behave in a self-sustainable way.

For all the hardship, many feel they have learnt valuable lessons, rethought about the product offerings and continued to renew, trying to be more responsive to the needs and demands of those they are to serve.

Many MDIs are the site for sophisticated networking information and communication technology – offering many possibilities for the training and capacity development agenda that still needs to be exploited completely.

In many instances the current MDI leadership is highly experienced managers who have ushered their institutions through difficult times. They know where the weaknesses are, understand their institutions and national settings, and are very committed and enthusiastic to make their institutions better capacity developers for who they regard as their key “clients”: their governments.

MDIs have come together fairly organically, embraced the philosophy of the AU to pool their resources and efforts, recognise African talent and indigenous resources that will be better suited for Africans’ transformation initiatives, and are convinced that, as Africans, we need to own our development efforts.

The following challenges that emanated from the AMDIN workshops are lifted for emphasis and/or further elaboration.

Many MDIs experience problems in understanding precisely what governments require in terms of training support to public sector reform and general governance processes. This is particularly acute where a situation of “isolation” of the MDI prevails - often rooted in the low esteem in which the MDIs are held and their position on the periphery of the policy discussion. This creates a vicious cycle which is difficult to break since MDIs are neither able to organically understand what government requirements are as they are not a central part of the process, nor are they able to conduct detailed training needs analyses on a regular and ongoing basis given the resource constraints they experience. Consequently, MDIs too often make assumptions about what is required and when the resultant training does not result in tangible performance improvements, the credibility of the institution (and indeed attitudes to training in general) are negatively affected.

The difficulty of producing “customised” material in an aggressive cost-recovery/income-generating environment is a contributory factor to the bad fit between training materials and the contextual realities of a particular national setting. It is much cheaper to simply present existing material than to spend time and money on making sure that materials meet the specific and defined needs of a particular government department.

Where MDIs have been able to address these problems (NIPA, Zambia; ENA, Burkino Faso; and GIMP, Ghana, amongst others), there has been a concomitant rise in both the credibility of the institute and the level of public sector training provided.

Most African countries lacked a coherent public sector human resource development and training policy, creating an ineffective environment to give direction and provide coordinated leadership with respect to these important issues. What is desperately sought is a policy commitment by the political leadership to the importance of HRD and training, down to setting targets as to the minimum number of days of capacity development each public sector employ-
...should be exposed to as part of their performance agreements, e.g. the case of Singapore.

A tension has been identified between the objectives of financial self-sustainability, autonomy and proximity to/influence in the policy process. Initial analysis points to a trade-off in that the more autonomous the MDI - both in terms of finances and structural arrangement with the state - the less influential it becomes in terms of the policy process and the less relevant to the public sector its course and other knowledge offerings are. This is a very dangerous trend, since governments are potentially losing a very important, previously exclusively dedicated, part of the public machinery to address issues of capacity development in the public sector.

In order to ensure financial sustainability MDIs are expanding their target markets to include more lucrative audiences (e.g. private sector training) or, instead of focusing on in-service training, shifting to the offering of academic degree programmes.

Important aspects of MDIs work has been withering away due to a shortage of adequate financial and human resources, which sets in motion the progressive downward spiral of their reputation since they cannot employ the best and adequately experienced staff. This is particularly notable with respect to the research and internal government consulting functions. Notwithstanding the importance of training in the capacity development equation, as recognised by the ECA, the MDI community potentially has a much more substantial role to play than only providing training. The ECA itself argues for this, advising that “government training and capacity building institutions need to be mainstreamed into the decision-making process and the experts in the training institutions should be used as “think tanks” in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of national policies, strategies, programmes and projects” (ECA 2003: 47).

Indeed, it defines the roles of MDIs from inception to have been providing (a) training, (b) consultancy/organisational development and (c) research services to government officials (ECA 2003: 44). Olaopa (2008), drawing on the work of other international scholars, cogently argues that if MDIs “are not engaged in rigorous thinking, conceptualisation, analysis and the search for models and rules, their teaching and the learning within them will be the weaker for it”. He makes the point that in the absence of adequate research and consultancy capability the MDIs will not be able to claim the label “learning organisations”.

During the AMDIN regional workshops this aspect came up for discussion repeatedly. From some of the empirical feedback received, it is clear that MDIs are keen to broaden their activities to their teaching and the learning within them will be the weaker for it”. He makes the point that in the absence of adequate research and consultancy capability the MDIs will not be able to claim the label “learning organisations”.

Role division of MDIs: Actual and Desired (Source: AMDIN East Africa workshop)

The extension of the role of the MDIs includes moving beyond the domain of the less tangible issues of knowledge and skill, into passing on values and attitudes, thus becoming involved in the area of cultural change. In this role the MDIs become a potentially strong partner in changing public service cultures, for example, by popularising the relevant public service and professional codes, by advancing responsible risk-taking and higher tolerance of risk in order to create an environment in the public sector supportive of innovation and so forth.

Summary and recommendations

In summary, across the overall public administration analysis, capacity development gap assessment and the role of the MDIs, we find the following key dimensions underpinning the problems, and identify these as the areas that should receive attention:

**Poor anticipation of the future of (African) public administration**
- Future influenced by changes in demand; development in terms of technology; changes in PA paradigms, etc;
- Reactive, not pro-active (needs assessment methodologies); and
- Planning and futures research capability poorly developed.

**Difficulty for governments to attract and retain the best and to manage them to get the best out of them**
- Human resource management practices not adequately developed;
- Remuneration and conditions of employment not competitive;
- Brain drain international, regional and national; and
- Inadequate HR planning practices. Capacity development efforts delinked
African governments should emphasise investment in development and training policies:

- Adequate funding of training/educational institutions.
- Strong institutional relations between governments and their public sector training institutions.
- Adequate budgetary allocations to capacity building efforts.
- Adequate funding of training/educational institutions.
- Competencies to implement M&E/review/assessment properly developed and institutionalised.

Absence of national and sub-national human resource development and training policies:

- No obligation for continued HRD.
- Recognition of training institutions that meet certain standards/requirements.
- Professional requirements for placement and promotion/career progression not clear.

Much effort and resource dedicated to capacity development without being able to tell what works and what does not:

- Efforts of many agencies/role players is piecemeal and not happening in integrated framework.
- Monitoring and evaluation frameworks inadequate.
- Competencies to implement M&E/review/assessment poorly developed and institutionalised.

Capacity of the capacity developers (MDIs) have been eroded and neglected over past 30 years:

- Budget cuts and pressures for self-sustainability.
- Human resource issues in MDIs.
- Research and OD functions sacrificed.

Instead of making a completely new set of recommendations, we would recommend that the conference of Ministers in the first instance engage with, and make a commitment to, implementation, putting in place monitoring and evaluation mechanisms with respect to the areas previously considered but not decided on during the Fourth Pan-African Conference in 2003. These areas being:

- Adequate budgetary allocations to capacity building efforts.
- Adequate funding of training/educational institutions.
- Strong institutional relations between governments and their public sector training institutions.

In addition, we would recommend that the Ministers’ Conference engage and take decisions on how to implement the recommendations made by the ECA in 2003. Some of these relate to the Ministers’ Conference positions listed above. The ECA conclusions were:

- Calls for a new form of civil service and new procedures where-by the quality of services offered by public administrations is essentially put under the same scrutiny as services provided by the private sector. To respond to these requirements, the civil service should be provided with adequate material, human and financial resources.
- African governments should emphasise investment in developing human capital towards effective policy formulation, analysis, implementation and evaluation. Trained and highly developed personnel, complemented by political will and commitments, have become basic inputs into the realisation of the public sector reform agenda in Africa.
- Capacity building in policy management should be the priority of African governments, given that public service reforms depend on the policy management skills of public officials. Governments should embrace a new culture of participation, accountability and transparency. All stakeholders must be involved in the policy development process for support and ease of implementation.
- A competency-based approach to the training and development of public servants is recommended. The need to train public servants as better managers is widely recognised as an essential element of any public service reform programme.
- African public service agencies need to formulate strategic plans which should form the basis of effective public service delivery. Government should involve MDIs and allied institutions in the policy formulation process.
- African countries should commit themselves individually and collectively to taking incentive measures focused on accelerating the return home of the vast majority of their elite and scholars who are working abroad, particularly in Europe and America. (ECA 2003: 51–52)

The new recommendations AMDIN would like to make for consideration by the Ministers’ Conference under this topic pertain to the following:

- A commitment made by countries to work towards the adoption of comprehensive human resource development and training strategies for their respective countries, bearing in mind their own particular contexts. AMDIN is prepared to develop a framework document that raises the key issues for consideration by national structures and to propose a process for developing such a national policy.
- Supporting the creation of capacity within existing institutional arrangements (e.g. OFPA, the African Futures Research Institute, CAFRAD, AAPAM, AMDIN, CODESREA, etc.) that will allow the African public administration community to anticipate the future of public administration on the continent more effectively and that will permit the MDIs to work more pro-actively, rather than reactively, e.g. a futures research programme in the area of public administration and human resource planning.
- Where it does not already exist, that serious consideration be given to the devolution of authority to MDIs to select, appoint and manage their own staff, and that mechanisms be found on how to bring the practical expertise and current operational knowledge of serving public servants into the MDIs without negatively affecting the morale of either of the groups involved.
- Ensuring that capacity development initiatives, as well as policy and organisational change initiatives, be linked to national development priorities. In order to do this successfully, communication channels and platforms between the political/policy role players and the MDIs should be created and/or strengthened. Impending policy changes should be communicated early and clearly to MDIs to make the necessary adjustments in their curricula and training materials.
- That the organic relationship between the Ministers’ Conference and the organised public administration knowledge community,
including AMDIN, continues to grow and that the growth of the African MDI network continues to be supported, given AMDIN’s very important role in Africa, specific knowledge production and sharing relevant to public administration and associated areas, as well as the perpetual strengthening of capacity of the MDIs themselves. The relationship between the Minister’s Conference and other organisations in the African public administration knowledge community, such as AAPAM and CAFRAD, should likewise be maintained and strengthened.

• That monitoring and evaluation capacity is created and resourced at multiple functional nodes within the continental public administration knowledge community in order to track implementation of the initiatives agreed on, assess the impact of these initiatives and collate and extract the lessons for further improvement from all the interventions undertaken.

It will be necessary that on whichever of these the Conference agrees, a way is found to incorporate the implementation of such initiatives into the long-term strategy of the AGPAP.

Endnotes
1 The paper tends to concentrate on aspects of capacity that deal with capacity development related to core public administration, management and leadership. What is excluded, although very important, particularly bearing in mind the interests of the RECs, would be sectoral technical and professional skills, e.g. engineering, health, education, etc. This is partly to avoid the minister of public administration crossing organisational boundaries in the AU and its structures in their decisions pertaining to capacity development. It is, however, a very important aspect that should be considered if mention is made of a comprehensive public administration capacity development strategy. Thus far AMDIN has also not mobilised membership that will specifically target sectoral training institutions.
3 Scholfield 1996: 11
4 Analysis of the DAC Network on Governance’s (OECD) report, “The Challenges of Capacity Development: Working towards Good Practice”, shows that factors influencing capacity development identified are mainly linked to overall government processes, such as remuneration, performance management, organisational culture and so forth.
6 Rodrigo de Rato, Managing Director, International Monetary Fund (2005)
7 When engaging with the MDGs it must be borne in mind that for many the goals are stated as rather minimalist benchmarks and that in fact Africa’s benchmarks should be higher if it wants to compete globally.
24 One MDI spoke of problems experienced with perceptions by government that they are always “late” with their course offerings in support of new government initiatives; by the time that they have become aware of a policy direction and have developed material, the initiative is often well underway. This also highlights the problems experienced by many MDIs of long delays between training needs being identified and programmes being implemented – a general problem but one which is exacerbated by, for example, having to follow tortuous public sector procurement procedures.
25 Note the decision of the Ministers’ Conference Bureau Meeting during November 2007 in Windhoek. After considering a financial forecast based on only the current membership fee to belong to AMDIN, i.e. US $3,000, the Bureau resolved that countries should resolve to contribute additionally to AMDIN through their MDIs. This will be a necessary step if Africa ownership of AMDIN is to be sustained and donor dependency is to be avoided.
26 Note the content of the above endnote on this matter.
Long-term strategy: African Governance and Public Administration Programme

Ms Kgothatso Semelane outlines the long-term strategy to bring about public administration reform and identifies the six pillars of the strategy that promises to offer a comprehensive yet dynamic approach to transformation of the African public service.

Africa’s development challenges are well documented. These challenges are complex, historical and systemic. Hence, their eradication from the African psyche is that much more difficult. For instance, irrespective of increased efforts to meet the targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to halve poverty by 2015, much of Africa continues to experience increasing levels of poverty.

The rapid pace of globalisation and its associated negative effects strain already limited capacities and disable most countries from optimising the opportunities created by a globalised world. In addition, as African citizens have become more aware, more demanding and, in fact, more assertive in insisting on increased accountability as well as more effective participation in decision and productive processes, the pressure for new and deeper ways of ensuring that democratic practices are entrenched has heightened.

The combination of these and other factors such as shifts in the global socio-economic and trade configuration whose outcome continues to primarily entrench a marginalised Africa, and existing imperatives to govern effectively and efficiently, has created an urgency to improve the state’s capacity.

More than ever the African state is under scrutiny and pressure to demonstrate practical action to remove itself from the course of underdevelopment and stagnation onto a path of sustained development. The African state must therefore, now more than ever, be equipped with the abilities to flexibly and definitively exercise agency and proactively make definitive choices that are in the interest of its long-term and sustained development.

In the face of such a context, development, and sustainable development in particular, requires innovative policy and strategies which ensure not only economic growth, but social progress. Development requires the removal of major sources that constrain freedom; poverty as well as tyranny; poor economic opportunities as well as systematic deprivation; and neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or over-activity of repressive states.

Africa’s recent history confirms that such development is not achieved simply through the articulation of international development policy such as the MDGs, global development support partnerships or strategic state intervention through comprehensive public service reforms.

It requires the systematic and active engagement of a range of actors in global, continental and national spaces. Ensuring development that leads to freedom requires the building and resourcing of social and political spaces which significantly engage marginalised social groups in the policy development and implementation process. Access and even voice is insufficient to ensure that those historically excluded are heard and integrated into government policies and programmes in meaningful ways which address deeply entrenched poverty and marginalisation.

The political-institutional interface, captured in the notion of a developmental state, provides a space to explore the kinds of states and public service mechanisms that can build and sustain social development. It is in this often contested space that leaders, public officials, citizens and institutions negotiate the legitimacy and value of decisions and processes-related development and growth. At the heart of this process is the issue of who gets heard, in what ways and for what reasons.

Many developing countries deal with the challenge of globalisation through the choices they make about governance and development. In the African context and under the leadership of the AU, African leadership adopted its socio-economic programme, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), an attempt to create the possibility for building sustainable development through effective governance.

The establishment of the AU and the adoption of NEPAD and its related programmes such as the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) were also significant expressions of the commitment of African leaders to define and drive African development by placing countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development, and at the same time to participate actively in the world economy and body politic.

The NEPAD vision was anchored on the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of development and exclusion in a globalising world. Through the establishment of NEPAD, the APRM, as well as its attempts to engage in new and collective approaches especially with “developed” countries, the AU confirmed its appreciation of the need for Africans to articulate their own agenda and responses to the phenomenon of globalisation and Africa’s particular challenges as it strives for sustainable development.

Linked to this period of a renewed sense of vision and leadership for a prosperous future for Africa is an appreciation of the opportunity which emerged in the last decade as the continental and global discourse shifted and affirmed a greater appreciation for the relevance and necessity of a strong and effective state. The combination of a push for recognition of the centrality of capable states if sustainable development is to be advanced and also the active and consistent expressions of African political leaders’ commitment to more responsible and effective governance in Africa converged and created an enabling environment for key evolving initiatives such as the Conference of African Ministers of Public Service.

The Conference of African Ministers of Public Service has
evolved to become one of the most significant expressions of Africa's political leadership to not only define and set the agenda for Africa's development trajectory but, more significantly perhaps, take ownership and provide leadership in transforming the governance and public administration of African states. Through this it contributes to building the capability of the African state.

As early as the mid-1990s when it began to engage with the recognised need for establishing common standards and codes as part of the response to the African governance and public administration challenges, it became cognisant of the eventuality of aligning its efforts within the framework of broader continental efforts that would ensure that the decisions it took would receive the necessary coordination with other continental initiatives. The opportunity to act on this recognition in a direct manner and through a continental framework would only arise in 2003, within the context of the establishment of the AU and the NEPAD programme.

**Contextual overview: the evolution of the ministerial programme**

The commitment to work as a collective to enhance governance and public administration effectiveness across Africa was reflected through the numerous historical exchange and policy dialogue initiatives across the continent that emerged during the period from the early 1990s to the mid-1990s. For the most part, these initiatives were supported by organisations such as the African Training and Research Centre in Administration and Development (CAFRAD), the Development Policy Management Forum (DPMF) and the African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM), to name a few.6

It is significant to note that, in part, these efforts were a response to the limited visibility and collective African political action on the governance and public administration challenges faced by African states.4 Many of the commitments made through these policy dialogues and efforts translated into the establishment of learning exchange opportunities (conferences, seminars), training initiatives and the development of research projects and publications. In fact, it provided a rare African-rooted space for engagement and efforts to address governance and public administration issues.

Since the late 1990s however the momentum to build and sustain collective efforts to support national public administration effectiveness grew, in part as a response to the broader socio-economic and political changes within the African geo-political architecture. The impetus and vision that already existed within the Conference of African Ministers of Public Service for the development of a coherent, sustainable and collective African agenda for governance and public administration converged with the continental drive towards an "African renewal" or renaissance and the integration of the work of the conference into the AU.

In the collective work of the ministers was fairly broad and the need for cooperation with regional and sub-regional institutions and groupings, the Windhoek Declaration did not provide for the submission of the charter for formal adoption to the Organisation of African Unity or the AU.

The 2nd African Conference of Ministers of Public/Civil Services, which was organised by CAFRAD with the support of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations (UNDESA) and held in Rabat, Morocco, from 13 to 15 December 1998, was a landmark event for African public administration as it set the foundations for establishing and agreeing on a Charter for the Public Service in Africa. The charter was formally adopted at the 3rd Pan-African Conference of Ministers of Public Service, held on 5 and 6 February 2001, in Windhoek, Namibia. Whilst recognising the need for cooperation with regional and sub-regional institutions and groupings, the Windhoek Declaration did not provide for the submission of the charter for formal adoption to the Organisation of African Unity or the AU.

The need to broaden the work of the ministers of public service was recognised by the 4th conference of ministers, as was the urgency to ensure that the work of the conference became fully integrated into the AU.

Through the 4th conference, which took place in Stellenbosch, South Africa, from 4 to 7 May 2003, the focus rapidly shifted towards the adoption of a programme of work in capacity development and, indeed, the programme of work of the ministers broadened. More importantly, ministers reflected a commitment to ensuring that this programme of work became the basis for the conference's "agenda" for the continental efforts to strengthen governance and public administration.

In short and as reflected in the Stellenbosch Declaration, the 4th conference of ministers served to ensure integration of the ministerial work into the AU and mandated the 4th conference chairperson to submit the Stellenbosch Declaration to the Maputo Summit of Heads of State and Government in July 2003. The Stellenbosch Declaration was the catalyst to initiate processes to ensure that the integration of the work of the conference into the AU and also that future conferences would take place under the leadership and auspices of the AU.

As a strategy directed at ensuring an inclusive approach, the initial programme of work of the ministers was fairly broad and attempted to ensure that all stakeholders would be able to play a role in the collective work of the ministers of public service.

The 5th conference of ministers, which took place in December 2005, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, under the auspices of the AU, marked a significant turning point for the ministerial conference. As reflected in the Addis Ababa Declaration, the conference acknowledged that the charter was adopted by ministers of public/civil service at the 3rd conference and advocated for its refinement and adoption by the relevant policy organs of the AU.

In addition, the need for strengthening the relationship and programmatic alignment of the ministerial conference within the AU context was stressed. In particular, the process for taking forward the charter was particularly noted and, in this regard, the Ministerial
Bureau established at the conference requested that Algeria lead a review process and others that would facilitate its eventual adoption by relevant AU organs.

Through the decision of the ministers at the 5th conference the charter re-emerged as a central document for the collective efforts of the ministers.

As the momentum towards the 6th ministerial conference unfolds, it is critical that the charter is reconciled with the various programmatic initiatives and activities that emerged within the ambit of the work of the ministers. It is evident from the history and evolution of the work of the ministers of public service that future efforts must be embarked upon within the broader ambit established by the charter and that the charter should in future be the key reconciling and defining element of collective continental, regional and national engagements and reform efforts in public administration.

It is in this context that the vision of a long-term strategy for the transformation of governance and public administration in Africa views the charter as its cornerstone to ensure a common and collective path forward for African member states.

Location of public sector reform and capacity development efforts

African public administration systems face great challenges both in terms of capacity as well as in terms of structure. The demands placed on African public administration in relation to its available resources continue to be daunting. According to reports, more than 50% of the sub-Saharan population is poor, with over 60% of children living below the poverty line and amidst worsening employment scenario.

In view of the socio-economic circumstances of many African member states, African populations increasingly demand and expect public servants to implement active, transparent and well-managed public policies with a strong social emphasis. This demand and pressure, however, is faced by the real dilemma of building capable public administration systems that respond to political realities and social conditions continues to be a challenge for many developing countries and, more specifically, the African continent.

Early post-independence efforts towards reforming public administration were predicated on the belief that administrative capability needs were generic despite varying contexts and realities. As such, the tendency in approach was to import and implement tested reform models. Many of these models of reform and administration utilised were imported from colonisers.

It was generally held that with the required training efforts, public administration could be expanded to fit the new post-independence requirements and ensure delivery of services to all. One of the most serious consequences of these initial efforts was the creation of weak and inappropriately structured public administration systems that could not deliver on the needs of growing populations. Ironically, in most instances the public administration systems became a massive consumer of scarce resources that contributed very limited and often ambiguous long-term value.

The overall response to expanded and weak administrative systems was the imposition by, in many instances, the World Bank and the IMF of reform approaches directed at limiting the size of public administration and the introduction of New Public Management (NPM). The NPM served as the intellectual foundation for public administration to function along the lines of a more efficient private sector.

Sindane (2004) argues that NPM tended to perpetuate the already unacceptable level of inequalities, exclusions and poverty, rather than correcting the situation (in developing contexts). He contends that in developing nations the operating environment is hampered by acute poverty levels, low levels of education and incessant political squabbles that often degenerate into full-scale wars. More importantly, however, the resultant effect of most efforts, such as the application of the NPM methodology, has little or no direct focus on building capacity for the core public administration in African governments.

The limits of structural adjustment initiatives, their direct effect in terms of severely limiting the role of public administration and that of the introduction of NPM has long been recognised. African ministers of public service have always been central to arguing that effective public administration is essential and that the diversity of experiences across member states calls for a different approach to capacity development.

In addition to establishing a common framework for standards for cooperation, the ministers long argued that the focus on capacity development should be on the core public administration system and should be rooted in the exchange of experiences and learning from with the African context. The emphasis on knowledge exchange was further rooted in the recognition that the problems that public administration confronts are complex and cannot be resolved by the imposition of standardised prescribed and borrowed reform initiatives.

The public administration reform approach that has emerged and is currently unfolding across member states suggests a commitment towards shaping and re-shaping systems in accordance with the specific realities and challenges within each member state. However, such approaches do not discount the acceptance that specific standards and values are fundamental to effective public administration.

It is in this respect that the ministers adopted a Charter for the African Public Service. In the terrain of capacity development, there is acceptance that, as the challenges are wide in all countries, capacity development interventions are needed in all sectors and terrains. Whilst there have been coordinated attempts in the past, these have
not necessarily worked as “capacity development” is often diffused in a range of varying sectors and terrains. Rather than seeking to coordinate varying capacity development initiatives, the emerging approach has been to focus on the core public administration as a basis for influencing sector capacity development initiatives.

Models for public reform
Public sector reform has been on the agenda of many countries, both developed and developing. However, with the creation of national visions and minimum standards of performance through the Millennium Development Goals and the push for reducing poverty, reforming institutions of the public sector have recently focused on strengthening their capacities for spearheading the achievement of these goals.

In addition, the environment shaped by an increasingly globalising world is refocusing public sector reform efforts to respond to the challenges and opportunities created by globalisation. Technical cooperation efforts in this respect, especially in developing countries in Africa and other regions, support member states to reconfigure their public sector institutions to enable them to meet these challenges.

This overall context suggests that capacity requirements within public administrations are changing and diverse. Some countries need to build basic administrative capacity to ensure administrative efficiency, while others require more advanced skills for managing in the information age. Interventions to address capacity constraints range from focused training courses to long-term education and learning programmes.

The extent of success and the specific utility of these interventions varies according to context. There is also an increased utilisation of other human resource development approaches such as internships, action learning, mentoring, coaching and executive support.

The challenge of attracting, developing, utilising and retaining capable human resources in the public sector is central to the effectiveness of governments all over the world. The United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration has stressed the importance of human resource development in the struggle against poverty and put an extra accent on the critical role of senior management capacity in public sector management and overall development.

Many countries need to take up the challenge of developing human resource capacities in general, and management and leadership in particular. The substantive, normative and technical cooperation work of public administration is focused on this challenge as well.

Public sector management is increasingly seen as more than just modernising state institutions; it is also about fostering dynamic partnerships with civil society and the private sector in order to improve the quality of service delivery, enhance social responsibilities and ensure the broad participation of citizens in decision-making. This calls for increased attention to the issue of decentralised government as a means to support poverty alleviation goals and conflict prevention policies.

These trends put increased emphasis on the performance of the civil service and on the need for an effective and efficient public management that is transparent and accountable. To site an example, the UNDP takes a special interest in promoting sound public sector management as one of the key enabling factors for sustaining progress and for meeting the MDGs, national visions and national goals of countries.

Of particular importance in reflecting on public sector reform is determining the level and type of supportive activities and assistance that are most relevant from a continental and regional perspective. The achievement of national goals including the MDGs serves as a key driver for the reform process amongst member states. However, the models of reform that are utilised and that are relevant are predicated on the specific context and realities confronting a member state.

In supporting such a process, the emphasis from a continental and regional perspective needs to be responsive and serves to guide and support interventions that are determined by a member state, rather than seek to impose particular public sector reform models. Experiences of interventions that were deemed relevant in other contexts can be shared. Such sharing must be rooted in the understanding that continental and regional initiatives must respond to transformation demands and supply needs within member states.

Building on experience and lessons
The concept of a Ministers’ Programme is commendable and has inspired continental engagement around specific thematic areas within the context of public administration reforms. It is, however, evident from the initial experiences that in working as a collective in public administration at the continental level greater attention needs to be focused on national level benefits that can be derived from collective initiatives.

In particular, attention needs to be focused on, first, how the collective process can contribute to the actual transformation process in countries and, second, how collective engagements can directly contribute to improved performance and the achievement of the MDGs as a minimum standard.

In addition to demonstrating ownership over the public administration transformation process at national level, it is also necessary to ensure that continental collective activities and supportive interventions have member state ownership. In other words, member states need to determine what will be most relevant to their specific needs and the nature of the support that should be provided. The demands from member states, however, must also be predicated on agreed collective frameworks and the standards and values established through the adoption of the African Charter of the Public Service.

To ensure that there is impact and direct benefit from the collective continental and regional efforts, it is evident that the approach needs to be comprehensive and there needs to be direct linkages between different activities and projects at national, regional and continental levels. In the past, a variety of initiatives and activities were introduced, but the linkages between them was not always evident and activities were not deliberately linked to a comprehensive and agreed support approach.

Long-term strategy for the Africa Governance and Public Administration Programme
The last two decades have seen various attempts to reform and/or transform the public administration across Africa with varying degrees of success. Regrettably, however, despite bold efforts in some countries chronic development challenges remain daunting and, given its present pace of development, sub-Saharan Africa, by some
estimates, may not be able to meet the MDG targets for poverty reduction before 2147 and, for child mortality, not before 2165.

Over the past decade, Africa, like the rest of the world, has experienced phenomenal growth of information and communication technology (ICT) and with it access to continental and global information societies. Any long-term strategy towards capable developmental states has to recognise that the rapid growth in ICT continually challenges normative choices in relation to organisations, capacity, access and delivery of services and other important aspects of the public sector agenda.

Yet at the same time there are opportunities emerging across the continent related to ICT, as well as due to Africa’s own efforts to address its underlying development constraints. The achievement of developmental objectives requires a bold reassertion of the need to build strong, capable development states.

The vision of the long-term strategy is to build capable developmental states in Africa over a long-term period of ten years with a short-term goal of two years and medium-term goal of five years. The long-term strategy has a long-range trajectory of ten years, however, it will identify both short-term actions and medium-term policy decisions that will be necessary towards the capable developmental state.

Currently, many African countries display one or two of the typical features but few if any have the full range of capabilities to "qualify" as optimally functional developmental state. To produce such states in the short or long term, the agenda of the strategy has to be transformational. Unlike reform, which essentially has tended to focus on improvements and modifications in a number of critical areas, transformation requires a break with the past, a process of change and conversion that challenges the status quo.

Framework for the long-term strategy
The framework for the long-term strategy is anchored on the continental vision to build capable developmental states across Africa. The basic elements of a capable developmental state are contained in the African Charter for the Values and Principles of the African Public Service. Hence the charter is a key instrument in guiding the transformation process of the African public service.

The framework establishes key principles that permeate the public service transformation continuum. The framework has six key pillars which, though not exhaustive, represent important elements, both stating conditions and rules, of an effective state. The entire framework is underpinned by the recognition that belief systems and mindsets of public servants and the people that they serve impact significantly on the success or not of their transformation efforts.

Vision of the capable developmental state
The vision of the capable developmental state in Africa is one that is committed first to ensuring a better life for all its citizens; that promotes popular participation and the indigenous ownership of its entire development agenda; whose public service is people-oriented, based on meritocracy and driven by service to its citizenry; that has sound systems of public administration at all levels of government; has transparency and accountability to its citizenry and to its institutions as central tenets; has a sound macro-economic framework; that eradicates poverty and surpasses the minimum standards set by the MDGs; implements its continental commitments on governance and public administration; mobilises, budgets and manages its public finances effectively; and is underpinned by democratic politics.

African Charter for the Values and Principles of the African Public Service: A transformational instrument for capable developmental states in Africa
The African Charter for the Values and Principles of the African Public Service (African Charter) is an important transformational instrument for the capable developmental state that provides generic guiding values and principles of the African public service and defines a code of conduct for public servants. The charter has been developed through a “bottom up” approach, direct inputs and consultations with various member states throughout the African continent.

Unlike conventions and protocols, the charter is not meant to be a set of rigid rules and obligations but rather provides guidance that should be adapted to the particular context that countries find themselves in. The charter defines the key components of a professional and effective public service and its role in building the capable state; it introduces common measures and systems to ensure transparency and accountability in the public sector; and, it establishes a general framework of guiding principles, policies and management mechanisms to be used as a common language in the area of public service in African countries.

The following key elements of the charter are in line with the vision of the capable developmental state in Africa:

- commitment to citizen-centred public service;
- commitment to efficient and quality service delivery which highlights the participation of citizens, availability, accessibility and quality of services;
- modernisation of the public service including promoting meritocracy versus patronage, and utilisation of technology;
- behaviour and rules of conduct of public servants;
- guarantees and rights of public servants;
- professionalism, ethics and integrity, conflict of interest, declaration of interests;
- human resource management and development; and
- mechanism for implementation.
An agenda for transformation

Transformation is about revolutionising the systems and processes of the public administration but, on the other hand, it is also about challenging and changing the paradigms and mindsets of public servants themselves in line with the vision of capable developmental states. Change in large-scale organisations such as states is daunting and therefore most resort to focusing on technical indicators of success that are achievable.

Yet the premier social indicator that transformation has taken place is the elimination of systemic poverty. In other words it is only when states are able to impact on improving the lives of citizens that we are sure that transformation is actually taking place.

An important element to consider in the transformation process is the role of the underpinning mindsets, culture and belief systems of public servants. The belief systems and mindsets of public servants greatly influence the decisions taken and the policies and programmes developed. To be clear, a mindset refers to a set of assumptions, methods or notations held by one or more people or groups of people, which is so established that it creates a powerful incentive within these people or groups to continue to adopt or accept prior behaviours, choices or tools.14

Historically, public service organisations have typically been bureaucratic, rigid and rules-driven organisations that are designed to provide services in a prescribed and predictable manner. The result is that while some bureaucracies have been successful in providing some services, many have been overly focused on the internal efficiencies and intrigues of the bureaucracy to the detriment of service delivery to the people.

In the context of an agenda for transformation towards the capable developmental state, existing mindsets and belief systems that inhibit effectiveness should be challenged and mechanisms established to continually examine, explore and replace mindsets that are contrary to the public service orientation with ones that will support and enhance it. Interestingly, most public sector reform efforts in the past have been focused solely on technical solutions that involve changing the structures, policies and rules of play without ever examining the underlying belief systems that determine the choice of policy or rule in a given context.

It is no coincidence that the performance of a public service is adversely affected when the politics of a country go array. In essence, the performance of a public administration, its rules, norms and culture reflects the prevailing or dominant mindset of those in power at a given moment or context. In effect, mindsets and belief systems are recognisable through the policies, rules, norms and culture of a given organisation. An important indicator of changing mindsets is the ability to resolve service delivery problems that were previously unresolved and the capability to take on new, changing and more complex tasks that lead towards the proposed capable developmental state.

The pillars of the long-term strategy

The framework highlights six pillars which, though not exhaustive, represent strategic elements of a capable state. The six pillars cover both the starting conditions (system inputs, influencing stakeholders and resources or capabilities) and the rules (planning, execution and feedback) of an effective state. They represent the key levers of a system that when transformed will go some distance to achieving the vision.

Pillar One: Service delivery and development

Development in any society entails, as its basic tenet, political will and institutional capability to deliver services to the citizenry (the concept of accountable and “responsive” government). The capable developmental state will define in each context its developmental vision and goals with the MDGs representing only the minimum standards. As states focus on building the capability for effective delivery of services a key principle will be to ensure the effective utilisation of existing indigenous resources before seeking external additions.

The main objective of this key pillar on development and service delivery is to have a state with the vision, will and ability to create a broad framework to mobilise national resources for development, while also recognising the complementary role of strong regional, continental and global instruments in the consolidation of a national development agenda.

Critical elements of development and service delivery include:

- national vision, policy capability and dynamic outcomes-based planning systems;
- coordination and coherence in policy, planning and implementation across state structures and spheres of governance;
- expanding the definition of state services to include both social services and productive services;
- popular participation, citizen engagement and feedback mechanisms; and
- principles and mechanisms to ensure ownership, independence and continental and global partnerships.

Pillar Two: Human resources

Human resources are key to the capability of any state. To ensure effective development and delivery of services the effective mobilisation, utilisation and management of human resources is critical to leverage other resources. The objective of this pillar is to produce ethical, efficient, effective and equitable human resource planning, development and management.

It is also to ensure the full utilisation of existing capacity, adequate human resource capability and competent human resource practitioners in line with the capable developmental state. In the long term this pillar will produce human resources that embrace professionalism, ethics, integrity, service and meritocracy as stated in the African Charter.
Human resources have several key elements, including:
- policy and architecture of human resources;
- capability for human resource planning, development and management;
- management and leadership development;
- remuneration and enabling environments; and
- equality and equity principles and practices, including gender.

**Pillar Three: Information and communication technology in public service**

This pillar is defined in recognition of the significant impact and role of ICT in expanding state capacity, enabling communication across countries and regions, facilitating service delivery, networking government departments and agencies, and in enhancing access to information and services by citizens.

At the continental level there exist numerous platforms to promote the knowledge economy across Africa. Key to these is the NEPAD E-Commission and expert groups convened under the umbrella of the African Information Society that guide continental policy and programmatic development.

The objective of this pillar is to ensure that ICT is fully utilised across Africa to enhance the capacity of the state and interface with the citizens and network regional and continental efforts. To do so would require that on the one hand governments develop and implement comprehensive e-government/governance strategies and on the other ensure adequate connectivity and access for citizens.

Key elements of this pillar are:
- the architecture of e-governance and ICT in line with the continental and national visions and the capable developmental state;
- moving towards integrated coordination, coherence and networked government with the use of ICT;
- ensuring broad access to all citizens to ICT;
- ICT as an enabler for service delivery; and
- training in the use of ICT emphasised and required for all public servants.

**Pillar Four: Organisational and institutional development**

This pillar is significant in the development of the capable developmental state. It encompasses all state structures (organisations) as well as the social systems and rules (institutions) that govern the public service. Therefore this pillar is concerned with building the capability of organisations to develop and implement measures, policies and institutions that promote efficient, effective, transparent public service and ethical behaviour.

Capable developmental states in Africa should seek to become learning organisations – these are organisations in which people at all levels, individually and collectively, are continually increasing their capacity to produce results they really care about. A learning organisation is an organisation that facilitates the learning of all its members and consciously transforms itself and its context.17

The objective of this pillar is to develop and enhance the capacity of state organisations to develop, implement and enforce measures and policies that promote efficient, effective governance; to enhance governance and public administration capacity and effectiveness; and to develop and strengthen systems that promote access to public services. Organisations and institutions of public service need to be dynamic and continually learning.

Key elements of the pillar are:
- policy and architecture of state structures with backward and forward linkages in line with national development vision and the capable state;
- systems of accountability and transparency including anti-corruption measures;
- continuous learning and innovation;
- e-government and ICTs to enhance organisational capability;
- culture and values of the public service and administration in line with the African Charter;
- coordination, coherence and inter-governmental partnerships - the concept of a networked government would ensure a systemic approach to development; and
- capable states ensure indigenous ownership of the development agenda.

**Pillar Five: Budget, finance and resource mobilisation**

Managing budget, finance and resource mobilisation is one of the most significant capabilities of a capable developmental state. The ultimate goal of this pillar is to foster an integrated, performance-oriented and coherent approach to public financial management.

The objective of this pillar is to entrench transparent, systemic and effective public finance management; to promote performance-oriented budgeting; to diversify and promote internal resource mobilisation mechanisms; and to redefine the nature of Africa’s engagement with donors and other international partners in relation to public service and administration.

To be consistent this pillar has to be closely linked to the others, in particular development and service delivery, and organisational and institutional development. To be effective performance-oriented budgeting has to be aligned to the national vision, development goals, the planning systems and people-centred service delivery orientation. Similarly, the public finance management system has to be developed to complement the policies and structures of state organisations as well as the accountability and transparency mechanisms.

The key elements of this pillar are:
- transparent and effective public finance management system;
- performance-based budgeting in line with national development goals;
- performance management;
- remuneration and pay reform;
- mobilising domestic and international resources for development agenda; and
- defining and managing state-donor partnerships and interface.

**Pillar Six: Monitoring and evaluation**

“What you do not measure, you do not manage.”18 To ensure that development and service delivery is people-centred requires a commitment to systematically establish and review service standards and other measurements that are critical for effective production and management of results for citizens.

Performance management systems are now more common across governments in Africa, however the measurement systems need to be developed and linked to the national development and service goals of the country, monitoring and evaluation systems integrated into the planning, measurement and management systems of states are critical to ensure continuous learning and improvement of service delivery, development planning and management.

The main goal of this pillar is to enhance public service perform-
THE SIX PILLARS OF AN EFFECTIVE STATE

- Service delivery and development
- Human resources
- Information and communication technology in public service
- Organisational and institutional development
- Budget, finance and resource mobilisation
- Monitoring and evaluation
nce through evidence-based decision-making. Its key objectives are to ensure the establishment of efficient, effective and functional monitoring and evaluation policies, systems, processes and culture; to establish measurements and service standards necessary for effective performance management; and to promote a culture of learning and innovation.

Key elements of this pillar are:
- standard setting, principles and measurement systems. These are important to establish as an integral part of the planning and management of performance across the public service;
- policies and systems for monitoring and evaluation integrated into the planning, budgeting and management of the continuum of development;
- aligning performance management with measurement, standard setting, monitoring and evaluation; and
- learning and innovation to enhance capabilities and ensure continuous improvement of services.

**Strategic approach to implementation**

To be effective, the long-term strategy for the Conference of Ministers of Public/Civil Service is proposing a transformational process that will move the African continent towards developing capable developmental states. Given that transformation processes are iterative, dynamic and subject to changes in the contexts within which they are driven, it is envisaged that even in the context of the implementation of the long-term strategy, these characteristics will emerge. In other words, the use of a transformative process ensures that at the continental, regional and member states levels proposed actions are continually subject to review, reflection and re-design with a view to moving forward collectively towards a common vision.

To re-emphasise, this again asserts the importance of the charter as the centre since it is the platform whereby the common vision is articulated for African governance and public administration. The following proposed change process, which identifies key milestones and stages that are necessary to ensure successful implementation of the long-term strategy, is informed by experience and lessons from some countries and large-scale organisations which embarked on similar transformation processes:

The first stage of the process is one of visioning, scenario-planning and consensus-building across networks, institutions and nations in Africa. It is at this stage in the transformation process when predominant mindsets and belief systems are revealed and new value systems inculcated. This stage goes on in earnest for at least the first two years of the long-term strategy but continues for its full duration.

Recognising the historical contributions and programmes over the years, this long-term strategy will be designed to build on the past, be anchored in the African Charter but also in the context of strengthened African governance architecture. Advocacy and consensus building across regions, states and within states is crucial to define, clarify and popularise the vision of the capable developmental state.

Through continuous advocacy and consensus with broad stakeholders a sense of urgency to act and commitment to the agenda is established.

Building on the lessons for the Ministers’ Programme, a guiding coalition of ministers and officials will be required to guide the process of implementation of each pillar, feedback and review. The guiding coalition should be selected based on countries commitment to transformation, appropriate representation across regions and its own capacity to engage in this process.

The guiding coalition will be complemented by the development of virtual and physical communities of practice that will ensure rigorous debate and continuously review the relevance of the long-term strategy to the global and continental practice in public service and administration. Advocacy and consensus building is not an event and therefore this stage will feature continuously throughout the implementation of the long-term strategy.

The second stage is one of developing and collating the tools for implementation and placing them in accessible locations including through a virtual portal, through existing regional and continental institutions and with member states. This stage of the process can already begin as stakeholders engage in visioning and will be continuous to allow for new experiences over the ten years. This stage, depending on the resources committed to this exercise, could take approximately two years of intense development. Maintenance will be ongoing.

To date the African public service in its totality has accumulated invaluable experiences, policies and strategies that are relevant to develop capable developmental African states. But regrettably most of this information is fragmented, is not codified or accessible, often resulting in wastage of resources.

To advance the agenda for transformation it is proposed that a generic African public service “How to” toolbox is developed, collating continental and global knowledge and placing it in a virtual depository for easy access by regions and member states. The toolbox development will be guided by the vision of the capable developmental state and the African Charter, and will be facilitated through the proposed communities of practice.

The toolbox will be dynamic through continuous review and iteration. It will be generic and designed to be applied by public servants directly or through regional and national government training institutions, management development institutes or through expert independent facilitation.

The third stage ensures support to planning, mobilisation of resources and implementation at regional and member states level, as well as in the supporting public administration knowledge community, including national and regional networks, associations and institutes in the area of public administration.
A continental master plan identifying key milestones on the road to state capability for regions and member states will be defined and disseminated. Planning and mobilising resources for state capability is certainly not the sole responsibility of the ministries of public service but should of necessity involve other central ministries such as planning and finance, and sectoral ministries that are, in effect, the clients of the public service.

At the continental level therefore it would be prudent to ensure that relationships with other sectors at the AUC engage with the public service process and should be invited to participate in the planning and implementation. A peer review mechanism would be useful here to provide continuous feedback on progress in implementation and partnerships. Advocacy and consensus building has to be continuous.

The fourth stage is peer review, learning and feedback across regions and at the continental level. There are already numerous regional governance institutions, programmes and forums that are, in one way or another, engaged with issues related to the capacity of the state. Public service learning forums should be deliberately designed in different regions on an annual basis and in the context of this long-term strategy. Africa Public Service Day could be used to popularise these forums.

Forums will be designed to review and revise the attainment of key milestones according to the scenarios developed and the master plan as well as for peer learning and knowledge exchange. Communities of practice in a number of important areas will be encouraged and supported as part of this forum to ensure that peer learning and knowledge exchange is continuous. Biennially, the forums could use that platform to prepare their lessons and reports for the conferences of ministers.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that the African Union Commission, in partnership with African ministers of public service, be mandated to:

1. Advocate for, seek consensus and popularise the vision of the capable developmental state anchored on the African Charter and proposed pillars. To do so the following actions are critical:
   a. a comprehensive visioning and scenario-development project for the capable developmental state in Africa;
   b. development of a popular version and strategy for the African Charter;
   c. development of a master plan of the key milestones towards the capable developmental state;
   d. defining an advocacy strategy and mobilising all key stakeholders in civil society, private sector and the public service itself in support of this vision; and
   e. developing a strategy for engaging with global partners on their support for the long-term agenda.

2. Facilitate the development of a continental knowledge-management architecture for public service which includes the following elements:
   a. a virtual “How to” portal toolbox which will collate existing and new policies, good practice, methods and tools in public service transformation in line with the key elements of the African Charter;
   b. strategy and tools for citizens participation and access to public services particularly through the use of ICTs;
   c. a compendium of practices that can be emulated, transferred and/or adapted in Africa Public Service made available virtually and utilising multi-media technology; and
   d. a public service research network to conduct rigorous research that will ensure evidence-based decisions and infor-
mation to stay abreast of global and continental trends that may impact on the African public service.

3. Define a strategy and work plan for each of the six pillars proposed in this strategy in line with the scenarios developed above. The six pillars are:
   a. service delivery and development;
   b. human resources;
   c. information and communication technology in public service;
   d. organisational and institutional development;
   e. budget, finance and resource mobilisation; and
   f. monitoring and evaluation.

4. Institute public service consultative forum(s) to anchor country and regional peer learning and innovation according to the master plan developed. Key activities linked to this recommendation include:
   a. defining a framework for the establishment of the “communities of practice” in public service;
   b. the Forum serve as a mechanism to monitor, review and assess progress and diagnose challenges in the implementation of the African Charter;
   c. allowing the continental and regional peer learning platforms to identify practices appropriate for sharing on Africa Public Service Day and qualify for the All Africa Public Service Innovations Awards; and
   d. developing a strategy to promote and support innovations and inculcate a culture of innovation will be developed.

5. Establish a multi-partnership framework to coordinate the mobilisation of resources in support of the AUC and the programmes of the ministers of public service.

Conclusion

The long-term strategy for the African Conference of Ministers of Public Service is defined with a ten-year trajectory at the end of which we expect to have achieved key milestones on the road to capable developmental states that provide adequate services to their citizens. The long-term strategy recognises the significant contribution already from the ministers of public service over the past five conferences and therefore seeks to build upon this.

The strategy proposes a ten-year trajectory built on the African Charter and scenarios to be developed early in the process. A key driver of change is the advent of ICT which offers immense opportunities to enhance state capability and yet, paradoxically, is generally unavailable to the large populations in Africa.

Through the six pillars identified, the strategy promises to offer a comprehensive yet dynamic approach to transformation of the African public service.

The proposed strategic orientation provides an opportunity to focus more directly on long-term capacity development and public administration transformation in a manner that is informed by the reality of the African context and challenges at the national, regional and continental levels. It balances the need for contextualised public administration responses while also ensuring that there is an overarching framework and principles that all African member states can work towards.

More importantly perhaps, the proposed strategic approach ensures that member states more directly own and drive their own public administration reform efforts while also retaining the necessary linkages with regional and the overall continental effort. In this, the programme strategy aims to ensure that it remains demand-driven, results-based and service delivery-focused.

In this regard, the African ministers of public/civil service have an opportunity to shape an approach towards capacity development for the African public administration effort which is rooted within a common framework and principles and most critically, focuses on building capable developmental states that produce concrete results for the people of Africa.

Endnotes

1 Sen, 1999; 3
2 Mc Lennan, 2005
4 It is recognised that there have been developments that have shaped the evolution of the Ministerial Programme. However, for the purposes of this document, particular attention is given to those aspects which are regarded as most relevant to the development of a comprehensive long-term strategy. Hence, the omission of other aspects is also in view of the parallel process whereby a comprehensive document specifically on the history and overall evolution of the Ministerial Programme is currently underway and will be delivered at the 6th Pan-African Conference of Ministers of Public/Civil Service.
5 AFRAID, APPAM and OFPA were established through the participation of governments and officials from across the continent to address issues of governance and public administration. These were established at a time when the OAU played a very limited role on matters of governance and public administration.
6 Although through CAFRAD, APPAM and OFPA participation was largely by governments and officials from across the continent, the leadership provided by participating governments and coherent “agenda” setting that would be expected did not sufficiently surface and instead, were only reflected through the programmatic choice of activities of the respective organisation supporting or facilitating the engagement.
7 Fako: 2
9 See “Developing the Public Service and Administrative Capacity of the State in Africa”, Presentation to the Abuja Preparatory meeting for the 6th Conference of African Ministers of Public Service and Administration.
11 Citizenship is defined broadly in this paper to include immigrants and other residents who benefit from public services provided.
17 “The Fifth Discipline”, Peter Senge, MIT School of Organisational Learning.
18 “Results Based Management in Canada”, Art Daniels, September 2007.
20 Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. See Ettienne Wenger’s Communities of Practice.
Putting gender on the SADC policy map

Ruby Marks recalls the long road travelled to the signing of the SADC Protocol on Gender - and looks ahead to the arduous journey still ahead

I am fresh from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) summit where we signed the SADC Protocol on Gender, which involved a long and arduous process of lobbying, compromising and so on. So I stand in front of you having completed the four year process with the Office on the Status of Women of making sure we speak from the same page.

I am here to share with you some of the experiences that we’ve had in trying to make sure that we get all our member states on board when it comes to the adoption of the draft protocol on gender. And so what I want to share with you are some of the challenges we have experienced around the adoption of the protocol.

Let me start off by sharing with you the fact that the SADC consists of 14 countries - the DRC, Tanzania, Angola, Zambia, Malawi, Kenya, Mauritius, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, South Africa, Namibia and Madagascar. We have one more member that has just been admitted at the summit of Heads of State and government. So Seychelles is our 15th member state.

The SADC objectives, which are really the frame within which the region’s gender vision is situated, are the following:
- The achievement of economic growth;
- The evolution of common political systems;
- Peace and security;
- Self-sustaining development;
- The harmonisation of employment opportunities;
- Complementarities between national and regional strategies;
- Natural resources management and environmental responsibility; and
- Strengthening and consolidating links between South Africa and the rest of the member regions.

The SADC gender vision is really to ensure that gender equality and development is attained so as to achieve substantive equality between men and women in the SADC region, through mainstreaming (gender) programmes into all national and regional policies, programmes and activities, and the adoption of measures to accelerate progress in this regard.

That is formal guidance from the side of member states that we would like to see the adoption of national policies that are harmonised with our own domestic legislation and the adoption of those through national plans. We have several regional instruments and we have come a long way.

I think as gender activists we have been plugging the same story for more than 15 or 20 years and have been talking about gender for a very long time. It has been part of our vision that at some point we would have institutionalised gender so completely and mainstreamed it so completely that we would have said we can actually pack up and go home now. And we find that somehow we are still talking about lack of implementation and so on.

But we are making some progress. I think what we are learning in our country is that policy is not enough to ensure that institutional transformation takes place.

The instrument that we have in SADC is the Declaration of Gender and Development. Now that particular instrument needs to be updated because at the time no mention was made of issues such as human trafficking, which is becoming a huge challenge in the region - particularly the trafficking of children into domestic service and of course sex workers as well. HIV/AIDS is also not mentioned.

Then, in 1998, the addendum on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children was adopted, and in 2007, just a year ago, there was the implementation of the SADC gender policy, which still needs resources. We have a policy but as I said to you the policy is nothing if it does not mean resource commitment as well. That policy seeks to work towards harmonisation as well between the national gender policies and the regional approach.

And finally, just recently, the heads of state signed off a protocol on gender and development, which is a legally binding instrument and represents hard work since 2005.

Challenges with regard to gender and development

After country assessments we find that progress in improving the lives of women is uneven and very patchy. Although in some instances South Africa leads the way, we still find that we have a difference. For example, Angola still has 7% of women in legislative positions and South Africa is way ahead at 48%. The issue becomes how do we set targets that are not realistic for a particular member state that may still have to do a lot of work and also, for example, the DRC is a post-conflict country which is currently in the process of reconstruction and development.

The implementation of the SADC gender commitments is very slow. At the political level there is commitment but not when it comes to resourcing those commitments. In other words we still find that we don’t have the resources to connect political will with resourcing. Newly emerging issues such as human trafficking and HIV/AIDS can also set back our fragile gains. As I said earlier, when the declaration was drawn up in 1997 there was no mention of these issues.

So it shows how the context and the economic and social conditions that member states have can influence the kind of policy commitments that we set. And that means that our policy has to be context-sensitive, context-aware and context-responsive as well, because the conditions change on the ground.

We also have very limited human and financial resources. For example, the institutional governance structure that carries gender within SADC consists of three staff members who are based in Botswana, and obviously if you are trying to reach 15 member states, with very different contexts and so on, that kind of number is not sufficient. There is also an issue with the limited mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation. And this is very important because without adequate monitoring and evaluation you actually can’t see what you are achieving.

Monitoring and evaluation systems enable us to pinpoint the
areas that need to be evaluated and track progress. I think collectively, as a mass of people concerned about gender, we can actually take heart to see that we are making progress. And I think that something that has resonance with us in South Africa is that we are thinking about increasing the number of women in decision making structures, specially achieving a 50% target in senior management positions as per directive from the DPSA.

But we also know that the numeric target is necessary, but not sufficient to create that barrier-free environment, which is acknowledging that there are still deep-seated attitudes and stereotypes that on an informal level keep women on what I call a “sticky floor”. We usually refer to a glass ceiling, but there is also a sticky floor that keeps women stuck. We have to understand what it is that keeps women stuck, why they are not progressing and how we make sure to unstick them.

Again on the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, there is an attempt between the SADC and the African Union (AU) to harmonise our systems. Clearly, if we don’t have a generic system, then we report on different indicators. We really need to harmonise what it is we are looking for which would make it easier for us to see whether we are making progress or not.

I thought it would be instructive for us to look at the position of SADC women in the public sector at SMS level, just as a way of reminding ourselves just how far we still have to go. At director-general level, Lesotho leads by 44%, followed by Mauritius at 35.5% and South Africa is at 23%. As the DPSA guidelines say we need 50% by March 2009, we can see that there is still a lot of work to do.

I think that one of the things we underestimated as feminists and activists joining government in order to help transformation and accelerate around gender empowerment is the absolute resilience and tenacity of patriarchy that can continue to exist even in the democratic form that we have in South Africa. We have democracy but what we experience is the absolute resilience of patriarchy that can reshape and reform itself, even though the political context has changed.

And indeed it is that area of patriarchy which we need to think about and describe it as an ideology of male superiority. I think that names it. I think when we name things as patriarchy it does get to the bottom of what the thing is about. Really, it is an ideology that says, and insists, that men are superior to women. And you see that reflected, maintained and sustained within institutions in South Africa and our member states.

We have all internalised the ideology that says men are superior. We have to look critically at ways in which we colluded in our own oppression, because part of the sticky floor syndrome is really about how we collude with a system that continues to promote and privilege men over women. We are not just pointing fingers at others; we are pointing figures at ourselves as well.

We need three critical things if we are serious about accelerating gender empowerment in the public service. Firstly, we need political will that is, secondly, translated into resource allocation. And thirdly, we need a group of committed people, a critical mass.

We have a critical mass in terms of the numbers we have at SMS level. However, what we want to ask strongly is the extent to which that critical mass translates into critical acts that accelerate women’s empowerment. In other words, numbers are not sufficient as an indicator of whether or not gender transformation is taking place. It is also about what those women are doing and how we are supporting them.

Again, let me touch on the recently signed SADC Protocol on Gender which has been a collaborative process that began in 2005. It has been a process of consultation, argument that takes us back in time and lots of little tensions. For example, we had a debate about double-barrelled surnames - should we inscribe it in the protocol that women have a right to have double-barrelled surnames?

And at this point I got a bit fed up because as a professional urban woman I want to have that right and I want to exercise it. But if our vision for gender mainstreaming is animated by the poorest of the poor, a poor rural woman who is dispossessed of land and rights, then really I get pragmatic and say let us forego that right to double-barrelled surnames. If it is getting us stuck, then let us go back to basics.

We had those kinds of debates, because I think when we talk about the feminist agenda, there is still a long way to go to make sure that we understand that the issue of gender is not only personal but also political.

The significant thing about the SADC Protocol on Gender is that it brings all of our existing gender commitments into one document. What is also significant about the protocol, and different from the declaration, is that for the first time we have concrete and time-bound commitments that hold governments to account and say you have to achieve these particular things by 2015. At the moment we have 16 targets that have to be met by member states by 2015 which include the adoption of domestic legislation, the implementation of time use studies so that we can begin to value what women do, issues around gender based violence, sexual violence and human trafficking.

And at this point I got a bit fed up because as a professional urban woman I want to have that right and I want to exercise it. But if our vision for gender mainstreaming is animated by the poorest of the poor, a poor rural woman who is dispossessed of land and rights, then really I get pragmatic and say let us forego that right to double-barrelled surnames. If it is getting us stuck, then let us go back to basics.

So, for the first time we are holding states to account and say we want to make sure that you know that you have to implement these policies by 2015. That for us is a huge step forward and an accounting mechanism. I think as a strategy we need to bring back some of the strategies we used in the past, and begin to make a noise if we see that people are not implementing.

What it is also does is create an institutional governing structure that talks about implementation mechanisms and allows for the sharing of best practice ideas, and deepens regional integration.

One of the things we underestimated as feminists and activists joining government in order to help transformation and accelerate around gender empowerment is the absolute resilience and tenacity of patriarchy that can continue to exist even in the democratic form that we have in South Africa.
Leadership skills: Lessons from Australia

Dr Stephen Kendal, National Institute of Governance, University of Canberra, outlines some lessons that can be learned from the Australian experience.

There is ample research and commonsense knowledge which shows that there is a continuing need for the development of practical leadership skills within business organisations, and indeed in public affairs throughout Australia, because these make possible a way forward for the institutions, business organisations and individuals throughout the community.

Businesses and public service organisations were probably the first to take time out to research the skills needed for leaders to resolve business issues for the private sector and government. The focus of this work has been to support and rejuvenate skills at the senior management and VIP level because of the need for effective and imaginative work at executive level.

It was hoped that these skills would trickle down to the middle management and lower levels for a good result. It remains to be seen whether the strategy had the intended effect.

The support available to leaders in public and private organisations has not helped sufficiently in the development of the knowledge and insight needed for middle managers.

Middle managers have been off target for the majority of leadership approaches despite the need to service the aspects of leadership especially needed for this group through mentoring. For example, to foster the personal growth skills needed to make the best of the situation and to find ways forward otherwise not possible because of the glass ceiling that the majority face within business organisations.

This often means middle management have to be satisfied with a very poor handshake from their organization, despite their talent we had 14 member states, 14 national agendas, different value systems, diverse religions and three official languages. To develop a protocol that allows these diverse contexts to speak with one voice was very challenging.

I recall that one of points of tension was our emphasis on the girl-child and Lesotho said to us, what about the boy-child. They argued that most boys in Lesotho who are herd boys are denied access to education. We reached a compromise by agreeing that we also talk about the vulnerability of the boy-child as well.

Although there were all these contextual differences, we did have one thing in common. We all had a commitment that our states adopt gender sensitive strategies that can accelerate the progress of women, and that helped a great deal because at a value level we were clear why we were there. But at the implementation level it was of course difficult because we had uneven levels of commitment from the different member states.

For us the lesson from that process is to consult, consult, consult. Consultation is absolutely critical and we were able to build a collaborative relationship with the SADC draft protocol alliance of civil society organisations from the member states. And we continue to have very collegial relationships with the draft protocol alliance.

Middle managers have been left out

A raw deal of this nature means that leadership development becomes stultified. Frustration can enter the picture and, as is well known, considerable turnover results. This often means a succession problem so senior management functions, for example, cannot be handed on to suitably competent and identified candidates. This is well known to be the case of women candidates for Secretary positions in the Australian Public Service, even though women managers are presently about 60% of APS employees.

Given the frustration of middle and lower levels of management and the resultant turnover, it appears that government in Australia cares very little about helping to resolve the mobility and relocation issues for staff of the public or private sector who need, for example, a public authority to support relocation to where they may most be needed such as one of the nation’s major regions or indeed off shore to support the growing network of Australian based government and private organisations. The current approach only encourages a mentality, which is not Australian, of every man for himself or, worse still, survival of the fittest.

Despite the obvious need for recognition and identification of top leaders, the search processes and market for such VIPs is unnecessarily shrouded in secrecy, red tape and backroom melodramas. Offline negotiations usually not known to others seem to be relied on to fix salary (especially benefit packages). There appears to be strong reliance on Wall Street-type principals of emphasising excessive masculine traits such as survival of the fittest and sport rather
than formal ethics or contract compliance evaluation (often without evidence-based material to determine success).

The market place for leaders is therefore not restricted to the public and private sectors but includes the public affairs arena also because of the tough but often acknowledged acceptance that what has been well grounded by reality (through tough tests such as management) will lead to decisions for the community, and about the public leadership needed that can be marketed clearly and not based on false priorities or misrepresentation.

**Public leadership**

It is well known that public affairs here in Australia (as indeed overseas) have continuous issues of identifying leaders and policy ideas. The policy ideas advocates are also the best ones to present the options for the community to make choices through the electoral process.

Public leaders provide options to us and are best at judging the nature of community support even in cases of widespread debate or where special knowledge or complexity make the leaders' advocacy a difficult choice.

The leadership skills of those in public affairs are therefore those that focus on community, community ideas development, public affairs debates and broadcasts for open discussion, especially of executive proposals and importantly of federal and international relations.

If the open nature of the public arena were to suffer greatly or not operate as expected, the system of public leadership development and the electoral choice process relied on for corrections to be made to misdirected ideas and wrong decisions would suffer greatly. Australians therefore should of course be insistant that the best standards are observed otherwise freedom of discussion would suffer greatly.

**Australia's situation**

Australia's place in the world, especially since the 1980s and also due to the resources boom, means there are very strong interrelationships with the wealth and the policies and challenges of the rest of the world. People now come to live and visit from all over the world to better understand us.

However the nature of skills development in the international area appears to be of a high standard with only the few who have made it to the top of an executive tree (especially in the private sector) or of politics after a very long period of hard knocks and determined self reliance.

Australians are now well-respected and original contributors in the areas of international business (especially resources and agriculture) and politics (international peace such as Vietnam and the Middle East). We have our own national track record and are helping others develop pathways to achieve and recognise success in these areas, and therefore have the potential to offer our own understanding of leadership development.

Our academics and consultants are therefore also equipped in this area to offer great assistance to developing nations such as Indonesia and now sophisticated nations such as South Africa who need more strategic skills that would give further impetus to the country's fast-growing economy, particularly in the areas of science, engineering and project management, just to name a few, which could strategically guide and fast-track development of the economy.

**The lessons**

Some lessons have not been learned sufficiently. Important project and development work supported by Australia, for example, has supported a nation as far flung as Indonesia, with aid widely known as generous and very significant such as infrastructure for bridges (at the local level) needed to link Indonesia. Similar work is needed today, especially in Africa including South Africa.

Indeed, local government issues, especially management and leadership skills, have become prominent here as they are sufficient to resolve important regional issues and public affairs leadership, especially at state government level.

A problem like this has developed in the case of New South Wales. Consequently there has arisen a succession problem of passing on leadership within at least one of the major parties governing the state (the Australian Labor Party).

The NSW situation needs to be kept in perspective. Ideally the market for leaders in all areas of government and business would be sufficient to allow mobility from agency-to-agency and business to business nationwide, and recognise very little formal distinction between public and private business. If only there were an ideal world to make all this come true.

**Skills gaps**

Political and business change has successes but it also has its costs. Great leadership, for example concerning a controversy (something brand new but untried by many), can lead to a business or community leader losing position unless his (her) success is rewarded because the majority of those in business or the community do not accept what is rolled out for them by a proposer.

Consequently from the proposers perspective there is no closure or sale confirmed of what was offered. Therefore it is a fact of life that the skills identified of those of business and public affairs (known by consultants) do not also tell us of the need for closure and effective sales skills because these are competencies known to those who have learned from experience (especially in market driven situations) rather than the tests of literature.

In conclusion therefore it appears that the leadership development needs of the work force are unduly oriented at top management rather than resolving the frustration and turnover issues of middle and lower levels of management. It seems quite true that there is too much reliance on the market for relocation of middle managers and lower levels of management to different organisations and locations across Australia for example.

The major areas of skills deficiency in the case of Australia are the international skills now needed, especially for business organisations important for the economy and indeed, as explained, public affairs.

**Conclusion: Test of experience not recognised**

The models of leadership accepted so often do not include the street smart market-riven skills of closure and selling without which management and public affairs concerns are ineffective. Because these skills are experience-based they do not appear to be recognised by academics and consultants who are often relied on to assist with identifying, selecting and evaluating leaders. We all need to go forward by recognising this and accordingly changing what we think of leadership to include the skills of selling and closure.
While the mantra of better customer service is chanted ever more loudly in South African local government circles, it may be timely to look at the same type of experience in a political environment in New Zealand. While working for the New Zealand Parliamentary Service, I had a unique opportunity to help forge better relationships between the administrative arm of Parliament, Parliamentary Service, (PS) and their clients, Members of Parliament (MPs).

On the face of it, things should have been straightforward enough. Parliament is unicameral, there are only around 120 MPs, each has an office in the Parliamentary precinct, a specified number of staff employed by Parliamentary Service, a set budget, terms and conditions, and an office in their constituency if they are constituency MPs. There is a multi-member proportional system in New Zealand, with around 70 MPs with constituencies and the rest elected through the parties “lists” of hopefuls.

Life, especially political life, is a complex affair. Relationships between MPs and the PS are often strained. The various pieces of legislation were not easy to interpret, especially in the fast-moving sphere of technology, communications and advertising. Systems, and prior decisions, were often undocumented and many rested only in the head of the Chief Finance Officer (CFO). There were major misunderstandings as to what constituted parliamentary publicity spending, and what spending had to be borne by the MP personally or their party. The Auditor General also had his opinion, much to the dismay of both PS and its clients.

As most queries from MPs were over money, questions and complaints came to Finance. They were not the best equipped to deal with these issues. Their job was primarily a batch processing or accounting set of tasks, and responding to an irate member who was unsure of an answer. Confidence, as in the Chamber, is a cardinal virtue.

er who was unsure of an answer. Confidence, as in the Chamber, is a cardinal virtue.

We aimed, at first, to train administrative staff from all parties one-to-one training and advice around MPs’ offices, both in Wellington and the constituencies. I understand that the systems were not written down, nor were previously made decisions documented or shared with other staff within the department. Wellington and the constituencies. We made the most of one-to-one training and advice around MPs’ offices, both in Wellington and the constituencies. I understand that the systems were not written down, nor were previously made decisions documented or shared with other staff within the department.

Complaints were not centrally logged, answers were not easy to obtain, and MPs complained that they were often “fobbed off” with “whatever the question, the answer is no”. MPs took to phoning the CFO for a definitive answer to any question.

Complaints were also sent, or copied, to another arm of PS, Member and Staff Services (MaSS). There was then what amounted to a culture clash within the organisation, between MaSS, which was focused on serving the customer and worked directly with MPs through the employment of staff and their ongoing relationship with MPs, and Finance, which took the rulebook as their deskfile, and paid the bills – or posted them back to the MP to pay personally.

So what did we learn?

Something had to be done. The Auditor General issued a damning report about the state of client service within PS. This was the trigger for a new client service strategy, promulgated through MaSS, working with a service provider and with Finance to get systems documented, a CD produced, a computer-based query system instigated, training given and everyone informed of the new ways of working.

We used a basic Microsoft CRM system to document queries/complaints, had around 20 users (inputters) and two current managers to oversee the progress of queries. The system was easy to use, looked like the email system we were all used to, and worked well. There was also a new team of three: a Client Service Manager to take overall responsibility for the system and resolving queries; an advisor with great experience of Parliament and its often strange ways; and an analyst to compile reports, statistics and to document trends.

The PS were not prepared for a system as sophisticated as this, so we took a long time to get it working. Eventually, the system worked well. There was also a new team of three: a Client Service Manager to take overall responsibility for the system and resolving queries; an advisor with great experience of Parliament and its often strange ways; and an analyst to compile reports, statistics and to document trends.

We made sure the training was delivered by people who understood the system and environment. The political environment is one where some very illogical decisions may actually be the right ones. We aimed, at first, to train administrative staff from all parties together – the systems were purely administrative, so political party affiliation should be irrelevant, right? Wrong.

While some individual staff refused to attend training if other parties were also represented, it was the parliamentary party hierarchies themselves which became difficult to negotiate with. One major opposition party refused to allow their staff to be trained at all.

This meant that those who delivered the training had to be flexible and understand that they were working in a very contentious environment. Some staff being trained also seemed to take on the role of their MPs, using their time to berate any unfortunate trainer who was unsure of an answer. Confidence, as in the Chamber, is a cardinal virtue.

Finance staff are often not the best to answer MPs’ queries. We found that staff with customer service backgrounds, or at least an
attitude of service, fared much better. However, the rules are the rules. So knowledge of the legal and protocol framework was absolutely vital. Customer service staff from private industry, for example, would probably have found it hard to walk the fine line between putting the customer first and keeping within the Speaker’s Rulings, as well as the myriad of other legislation by which Parliament is bound.

Be aware there are many stakeholders, and they may not be as excited by the new opportunities as you are. While the intranet management was one where we had not expected opposition, there were others who also felt that their voice should be heard, or hadn’t been heard clearly.

Do not assume, for example, that taking a load off the Finance department’s shoulders will be universally acclaimed within that department. There was much internal political manoeuvring before specific customer service roles and responsibilities were worked out, and they are still being negotiated.

Be aware that there is often no (as yet) defined answer. When we had queries, especially around electoral finance and publicity, we presumed there was an answer out there, it was just a question of finding the person who knew it. However, we got used to queries which we sent outside the organisation to experts which were returned, “Don’t know the answer, decide for yourselves”. Or even “get a legal opinion and let us know because we don’t know either”!

Make sure there is an internally agreed position within PS, even if it changes in the light of further information, outside rulings or other influences. This reflects the problem of “no final answer” alluded to above. We set up a Client Service committee of the CFO, the head of Member Services, Legal Analyst, Chief Policy Manager, Client Service Manager and Client Service Analyst to deal with issues.

At first this committee met twice a week, but as time went on (and the number of queries dropped) the meetings could be held less often. This was an excellent forum to discuss issues, combine our experience and come to an agreed position, which could then be referred back to the MP or their staff. It also made the CFO’s lonely and possibly pre-carious position of final arbiter a little more comfortable.

Documenting the committee’s decisions on the CRM system by the client service analyst was a vital part of the knowledge management approach to client service. We always had to be able to explain our decisions – often to MPs who were seasoned lawyers.

And what do our clients think? They’re on the campaign trail again, another general election in the offering, and a new Electoral Finance Act to contend with. Just another day at the office for Client Service staff.

Contact her on sandraj@buffalocity.gov.za
Crime prevention in the Eastern Cape

By Minette Plaatjies, Department of Correctional Services, Eastern Cape reports on a crime prevention programme for school children conducted in King William's Town

Crime prevention includes all strategies aimed at assisting individuals who have never been in conflict with the law to lead a crime-free life. Crime prevention strategies can also assist individuals who have had a brush with the law to be able to abstain from criminal activities. Geason (2005:10) defines crime prevention as the major strategy of crime control.

The problem
More and more youth find themselves in conflict with the law. Schools, places where parents send their children to receive education, have become breeding grounds for criminals. Young school children commit criminal acts in their school uniform. Schools are no longer safe as children become victims of crime whilst some are even killed by their school peers at school.

Research documents, journal articles, books and newspaper articles report an alarming increase in the rate of school violence. A need was then identified in terms of preventative and remedial strategies to address the problem.

The study was targeted at high school children in urban and semi-urban areas. The consulted reading suggested that school youth crime is more prevalent in urban and semi-urban areas.

A crime prevention programme for young people in school was conducted in the urban and the semi-urban areas of King William's Town from 21 April to 12 June 2008.

Method/ intervention/ solution used
The programme was divided into two phases. The first phase was done at schools where learners were addressed during the morning assembly. During this time (45 minutes) learners were empowered with knowledge on the most common causal factors of crime; they were informed about the detrimental effects of crime which affects personal development, disrupts family bonds, the economic stability of the society and eventually leads to imprisonment. The youth were also warned to avoid crime at all costs because correctional facilities are not a conducive environment for them to grow up in.

Correctional Services officials serving within the development and care component as well as the corrections component jointly conducted the crime prevention outreach programme. SAPS crime prevention unit officials were also co-opted onto the programme. Eighteen schools in King William's Town were reached. School learners and teachers appreciated the programme.

The second phase of the programme was a two-day workshop that took place at Hemingways Guest House. Two learners from each school visited during phase one attended the workshop which was conducted in partnership with the Department of Safety and Liaison, the Department of Education; ICT College, the University of Fort Hare, the Department of Justice and the SAPS.

The programme focused on empowering the youth with information on causal factors of crime and basic information in street law. Some time was utilised to empower the youth with study skills as some writers suggest that an inability to learn may alienate the youth from their studies and render them vulnerable to bad influences from their peers. The programme also included a visit to the King Williamstown Correctional Facility.

Results achieved
The target group reported that they felt empowered and were determined to avoid criminal involvement at all costs. They also indicated interest in empowering their fellow learners with the information gained from the workshop.

Many schools situated in urban and semi-urban areas outside King William's Town showed interest in the programme and those schools falling within the broader King William's Town Magisterial District were reached. Some schools were referred to their nearest correctional facilities. Schools in rural areas also showed interest in the programme This will therefore ensure continuity of the programme beyond the scheduled period of termination.

The chief director for school management at the Department of Education showed interest in the programme and promised to convince her principals to make crime prevention the core business of their sub directorate. This would mean employment of crime prevention officials and formulation of an operational plan and the strategic plan for those officials. Above all this would mean consistent and intensified crime prevention programmes within school communities.

The Department of Safety and Liaison also indicated commitment to prioritising and intensifying school crime prevention initiatives within their department.

Lessons learnt
The involvement of young school children in criminal activities is fuelled mostly by peer pressure, substance abuse and poverty. With the increase of child-headed homes and the escalating unemployment rate, more and more children find themselves committing crimes like theft in order to sustain themselves. The abuse of drugs and alcohol also plays a major role as these are some of the factors that lead to acts of violence.

It was noted that social conditions such as housing, family income and education leave the deepest marks on children and youth. Improvements in the social conditions of young people have been shown to open up fresher outlooks for young people who might otherwise end up behind bars.

The availability and accessibility of awareness programmes is one of the key instruments in ensuring that the youth is equipped with knowledge to make the right choices.

Conclusion
The crime awareness campaign was a great vehicle for equipping learners with information and warning them against theills of committing crime thus helping to ensure a crime-free society. The youth nowadays are faced with many challenges therefore equipping them with information on the dangers of criminal acts helps to ensure that they grow up as productive individuals who will contribute to the socio-economic development of our country.
A strategy formulation paper for SETA Review Committee

Dr Sazi Kunene, From School to Work Opportunities Centre, looks at solutions to the challenges facing the skills development system

The second five-year strategic term of the SETAs is due to end in March 2010 when a new national skills development strategy, NSDS 3 (2010-2015), will be introduced. As with the NSDS 1 (2000-2005), the public debate on how to review and reposition the SETAs in preparation for the new NSDS 3 is gaining momentum and intensity.

For both policy makers and policy implementers, this provides “an encouraging time to pause and reflect”. This period of reflection has given insights into how the SETAs can improve their delivery capacity in order to ensure they fulfill their legislative mandate.

Stakeholder input has taken the form of position papers, research reports, commentary in the print media, presentations at conferences and other public forums, policy proposals, etc.

A great deal of work has been done in order to make the SETAs more successful at implementing skills development in the country. Most of the SETAs are able to meet the targets set out in the service level agreements they signed with the Department of Labour.

Our skills development system may be among the best in the world, but the reality is that some SETAs have experienced teething problems and some still continue to do so. There is a great deal of work that needs to be done to improve, refine and solidify the skills development delivery machinery.

Over the past eight years, the SETAs have engaged in numerous activities in order to ensure that they could meet the government’s targets in terms of training. Policy formulation has taken place side by side with policy implementation. Little time has been given to experimentation and pilot testing to establish the viability of such policies.

The mood has been one of panic and urgency as participants have tried hard to strike a balance between quality delivery and the tight delivery time frames set by the government. SETAs are still far from institutionalisation and, by the look of things, policy stability is a phenomenon that is alien to the SETA system.

Key challenges facing the skills development system

The SETA successes and failures, public perceptions of SETA performance and recommendations as to how to enhance skills development delivery are all fairly well documented. Some of these will be explored below as part of this input document. A number of key challenges facing the SETAs have been identified, necessitating a re-examination and an overhaul of the entire skills development system.

Conflicting objectives and approaches

The process through which the skills development framework was developed involved stakeholders and role-players who represented different sectors and interests, each with different visions and expectations.

The labour movement was interested in skills development as “providing opportunities for employment and promotion thereby supporting redress and equity”. The employers were interested in “increased productivity and profitability” as the main contribution of skills development. Educationalists were interested in issues of “portability of qualifications, recognition of prior learning and continuing learning”.

All this has resulted in a skills development environment characterised by competing interests and expectations. The unrealistically long list of objectives has become unmanageable and has exceeded the SETA capacity to deal with them. These competing interests and expectations do not sit comfortably with each other. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007; Nedlac report, 2007).

SETA scope of functions and mandate too wide

The scope of the functions and mandate of SETAs is too wide as a result of the unrealistically long list of objectives and the fact that these are equally weighted. Also, some of the functions expected of SETAs should really be the responsibility of other institutions located elsewhere in government. The SETA mandate has increased significantly since their inception and now includes functions that were previously assigned to other institutions, e.g. small business development, career guidance etc. This has resulted in a situation where the existing SETA capacity is insufficient to meet the demands of the extended mandate, which includes non-skills development functions.

Another key challenge identified here is the fact that SETAs focus more on SLA targets and NSDS objectives, which reduces the focus on sector needs. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007; Nedlac report, 2007)

SETA governance

The membership criteria for the SETA governance structures have certain weaknesses and shortcomings. The membership requirement is that members be chosen from organised labour and organised business. There are no additional qualifications for membership such as special experience and expertise. The research reports examined reveal that a wide range of issues pertaining to SETA governance, including the size of SETA boards, which are sometimes too big thereby impacting negatively on good corporate governance; clarity about roles and responsibilities; board member capacity and conflict of interests and the lack of standardised constitutional frameworks, need attention. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007; Nedlac report, 2007).

SETA operational capacity

SETA operational capacity does not match the huge scope of their responsibilities. This is true not only in terms of numbers but also more importantly in terms of the required expertise and competencies. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007; Nedlac report, 2007).

Funding and finance

The levy is still generally negatively perceived as a training tax. There is also an expectation that SETAs fund non-skills development relat-
ed activities. The realignment of the SSP and the NSDS objectives should be looked into more carefully. Evidence from the study reveals that, in certain instances, the SSP objectives have been found to fall outside the NSDS mandate. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007; Nedlac report, 2007).

Quality assurance
The skills development system has been made more complex by the proliferation of the NQF bodies and structures designed to perform quality assurance functions on behalf of SAQA. The emergence of varied assessment systems and practices has added to the complexity and duplication in the system. Some of the targets, especially those dealing with the number of registered learners, are being met at the expense of quality and the interests of the learners are thus severely prejudiced. The principle of “High Skills Equilibrium” is also being undermined as the policies used and processes followed have serious shortcomings, imperfections and inconsistencies. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007; Nedlac report, 2007; Kunene, 2006; DoL policy position input paper on SETA review, 2007).

Mandatory grant allocations
The current mandatory grant mechanism is ineffective and its overall impact on human resource development is unknown. There is no provision in the legislative and regulatory framework for SETAs to monitor the use of the mandatory grants for internally co-ordinating training by companies. This type of mandatory grant-funded training is unreported and unaccounted for. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007; Nedlac report, 2007).

Reporting and accountability
The SETAs operate within a complex reporting environment involving different reporting requirements. The research reports contend that the critical question to address here is the extent to which the reporting framework provides an integrated set of data against which to measure SETA performance. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007; Nedlac report, 2007; DoL policy position input paper on SETA review, 2007).

Incentive environment
A number of discrepancies exist between the various incentives for learnerships and apprenticeships as well as between different learning programmes. This is counter-productive and self-defeating. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007).

Learning programmes
Evidence from the research reports examined suggests that the existence of two training systems, i.e. the learnership system and the apprenticeship system, has caused a lot of confusion among learners and employers about what system is appropriate to use, for example for artisan training. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007; Kunene, 2006).

Public and stakeholder perceptions and expectations
These public stakeholder perceptions and expectations are often presented as statements of fact with little illustration or unpacking. Public stakeholder perceptions highlighted include: poor performance; poor administration; poor financial management; poor governance, etc. Public stakeholder expectations identified are linked to expectations that SETAs are responsible for job creation; job placement; and providing funding for all forms of training. (Nedlac report, 2007; DoL policy position paper on SETA review, 2007).

The critical question here is how to turn the skills development system around in order to address these perceptions and expectations, and this is precisely the focus of the SETA review debate. The Nedlac presentation argues that some of these public stakeholder perceptions and expectations may be attributed to the key challenges facing SETAs, highlighted above, which brings in issues of inconsistency between the extended scope and mandate of SETAs and the governance and operational capacity available to carry out their mandate. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007).

Recommendations
A number of key recommendations on how to improve the skills development system have been made in the stakeholder position papers and research reports examined. These recommendations consider issues ranging from the DoL’s roles and responsibilities to the governance oversight level of SETA administration, and SETA operational capacity to proposed re-demarcation models for the new SETA landscape to come into effect in March 2010. These recommendations have been synthesised and analysed for the purposes of this input document as is shown below.

Skills development objectives need to be prioritised
It is recommended that these objectives be grouped into primary objectives and secondary objectives. The SETAs will be expected to focus more on primary objectives which will fall within SETA capacity. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007; Nedlac report, 2007; DoL policy position input paper on SETA review, 2007).

The SETA mandate needs to be properly clarified
It is suggested that the roles and responsibilities of SETAs be clarified and distinguished from those of other structures. The NSDS also needs to be clarified and responsibility for its implementation appropriately allocated, whether to the SETAs or to other institutions which can be held to account for these functions. An effort must be made to keep the scope of SETA functions within the boundaries of viability. A balance should be struck between increased responsibility and increased capacity. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007; Nedlac report, 2007; DoL policy position input paper on SETA review, 2007).

Governance
The need to improve accountability is recommended. SETAs that consistently under-perform should be subjected to credible forensic audits in order to ensure proper stewardship of public financing as well as effectiveness and accountability within the system. The DoL should play a more active role in standardising various aspects related to the system and the constitutions of the SETAs. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007).

The need to improve institutional governance is also recommended. SETA boards have failed to “realise a coherent identity and continue to operate as a bargaining council”. It is recommended that government presence on the boards be strengthened. It is also recommended that membership criteria be properly clarified to include additional attributes that are required for optimal performance of the board.
It is recommended that proper criteria and processes for selection and obligatory training for board members be put in place. Boards must be smaller and more focused. Standardised constitutions, generic policies and procedures must be put in place. (Nedlac report, 2007; SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007).

The need to improve corporate function by establishing a shared internal audit facility for the SETAs is recommended. A high-level and skilled company secretary should be appointed to ensure compliance with corporate governance requirements. Such secretaries should not simply service “logistical and minute taking responsibilities.” (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007; Nedlac report, 2007; DoL policy position input paper on SETA review, 2007).

**SETA operational capacity**
It is recommended that standard competency profiles be introduced for all senior managers to ensure proper recruitment of adequately qualified staff. Generic induction programmes, degree and diploma programmes must be developed and introduced to build and enhance the capacity of all staff. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007; Nedlac report, 2007).

**Planning**
It is recommended that the NSDS targets and indicators be revised in order to ensure a credible and committed planning process for skills development within each sector. The NSDS objectives need to be reviewed and fine-tuned in order to ensure consistency with SETA strengths and implementation capacities. The SSP and SLA targets must be consistent with industry requirements rather than being a “mechanical distribution of the aggregate national figures” among SETAs, a process which does not take into account sectoral priorities.

It is recommended that SETAs should also be capacitated in terms of the application of broad forecasting methodologies. SETAs should consult widely in order to ensure more reliable data on skills shortages within the sector. (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007; Nedlac report, 2007).

**Learning programmes**
It is recommended that the relationship between the SSP process and qualification and learning programme design be made explicit in order to ensure relevance of SETA training interventions to sectoral priorities. SETAs should not select learners but rather provide greater guidance about selection matters. It is also recommended that the specific role of SETAs should be clarified in relation to different training interventions. (Learning programme type matrix). (SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007; Kunene, 2006).

**Quality assurance**
It is recommended that SETA ETQA functions be reviewed as, according to their evidence, SETAs cannot perform ETQA functions credibly. (DoL position paper on SETA review, 2007; SETA review report by the Presidency, 2007).

**Finance and funding**
The research reports recommend that the role of the mandatory grant be carefully examined. This needs to be reviewed in order to ensure that mandatory grants training remains consistent with sec-
The SETAs have had to operate on the basis of sector economic
integration, centralised control versus decentralised implementa-
tion” (DoL policy position input paper on SETA review, 2007).

Performance monitoring and management
It is recommended that “credible monitoring mechanisms should
be institutionalised with a clear distinction between primary objectives
and secondary objectives”. It is also recommended that the
roles and jurisdictional boundaries of different role players be clar-
ified in terms of SETA performance, monitoring and management.
The SETA performance management scorecard should be enhanced
by including more “impact assessment measures rather than numerical targets”.

A stakeholder structure should be established within Nedlac to
determine appropriate interventions. Such a structure should be
ascertained by the power and resources to intervene. (SETA review report
by the Presidency, 2007; Nedlac report, 2007; DoL policy position
input paper on SETA review, 2007).

A more flexible levy grant system
The International Panel on Growth (IPG’s) report recommends that
a more flexible levy-grant system be introduced. This would allow
SETAs flexibility of choice in terms of to which SETA firms pay their
levies. Businesses should also be able to belong to more than one
SETA. This proposal was rejected by the Cosatu position paper as
inappropriate and unimplementable. It contends that such an “open
architecture approach” would not only cause administrative night-
mares, but, more importantly, would lead to disconnection and dis-
junction between training interventions and key policy directives
of the government. (Cosatu comments on the IPG’s report, 2008).

On-going review and assessment
It is suggested that the skills development system “will always be
subjected to continual review and adjustment in order to ensure
alignment with the country’s socio-economic development needs”. (DoL policy position input paper on SETA review, 2007).

Broader SETA review policy principles
It is recommended that any review of the SETA landscape should be
carried out in the context of the following broader review policy principles: “primary risk – disruption of momentum; primary objective – placement creation; primary focus – more value from current resources; primary approach – consensus, public/private integration, centralised control versus decentralised implementa-
tion”. (DoL policy position input paper on SETA review, 2007).

DoL preliminary recommendations
The SETAs have had to operate on the basis of sector economic
visions. The NIPF has been developed and it is imperative to re-
align SETAs thereto and the NSA with SETA involvement must lead
such a re-alignment.

Proposed timeframes for the phasing in of the new SETA landscape
May 2007 – March 2008 (finalise new SETA landscape with imple-
mentation details); April 2009 – March 2010 (test the new
SETA landscape) and 1 April 2010 (the new SETA landscape must
be fully operational to coincide with the introduction of NSDS 3).

Conceptual and strategic premise
There is a need to overhaul the skills development system in a way that
will change and improve the SETAs as skills formation institutions. In
some of these recommendations, the need to overhaul the skills develop-
system is presented as a call for the entire nation to rally behind the government and support its efforts to make skills development, which many regard as a “national project”, one of SA’s transforma-

The SETA review committee would like to approach the SETA
review debate on the basis of the principles deliberated upon below
since these constitute the conceptual and strategic premises informing
and guiding its participation in the SETA review process. The SETA
review committee regards the SETA review process as an “implementa-
tion dip”, giving it an opportunity to pause and reflect on the SETA
journey to this point as well as look forward beyond 2010.

Adding this particular process to the NSA co-ordinated process is an
integral part of the broader SETA review processes underway. The
SETA review committee of the SETA CEO Forum will operate within
the broader SETA review process coordinated by the NSA SETA sub-
committee and suggests that this be formally approved by the NSA.

The approach adopted by the SETA review committee is
informed by the desire to add value to the process rather than be
counter-productive. Its input represents the views of a “committee
of expert practitioners”, for want of a better phrase, who are in touch
with skills development processes on the ground.

It is on this basis that the SETA CEO Forum’s SETA review com-
mittee proposes that this particular initiative be formally added to
the other seven input processes as an eighth input process co-ordi-
nated by the NSA SETA sub-committee.

There is also a need to align SETAs with the national economic
vision (NIPF and IPAP). The relevance of education and training
to the needs of employers is of the utmost importance for the
country’s economic competitiveness in this new information age.
In South Africa there is a strong determination and appreciation of
the need to bring education and training closer to the world of
work.

One of the key objectives of the new democratic government was
to focus attention on developing the human resources of the coun-
dy as it was envisaged that this would lead to economic growth and
help improve South Africa’s competitiveness in the global economic
situation. Therefore education and training were prioritised by the
new government as tools or mechanisms for human resource devel-
(NDL), which would bring about economic growth.

So, skills development exists to serve a particular socio-economic
agenda. According to the NIPF, one of the necessary conditions for
industrialisation “requires much stronger alignment between indu-

visions. The NIPF has been developed and it is imperative to re-
align SETAs thereto and the NSA with SETA involvement must lead
such a re-alignment.
The world is becoming increasingly inter-dependent and no single state can exist in isolation from the rest of the world any longer. There is movement away from a sense of individuality towards a sense of mutuality. The success of a country’s economy is now measured in terms of its success in the international economic arena. It is therefore important to share best-practice models and harmonise our skills development processes with the international community.

Do the above examples form part of the non-skills development functions of SETAs? Are they primary or secondary objectives? What are they really, i.e. non-skills development functions? Do we really need to cut out non-skills development functions? Or rather, does the government need to come up with better ways of strengthening its capacity for legislative coherence, institutional and policy equilibrium and systemic consistency?

It is recommended for purposes of the work of the review committee that the current NSDS objectives be unpacked and SETA functions defined and clarified in order that they can be used as a benchmark for the new NSDS 3. This exercise should be minutely detailed. Furthermore, this should be used as a basis to develop standardised policies, criteria and procedures for the implementation of the new NSDS 3.

The DoL has recommended a cluster model for the realignment of SETAs with the NIPF and IPAP. This suggests an institutional re-alignment model. The differences between a merger model and a cluster model are not given. The implications of these two models for the SETA administration are not given either. The SETA review committee will need this information, if available, in order to be able to make meaningful and informed input into the review process.

What are the compelling reasons for the institutional re-alignment model? What about a policy re-alignment? Wouldn’t this suffice to allow the current SETA institutional arrangement to be retained? These are the kind of questions that need further probing in order for the review committee to be able to participate meaningfully in the SETA review process.

Therefore, the critical questions to address here are as follows: Does the need for SETA realignment to the NIPF and IPAP require institutional alignment or policy alignment? What are the implications of each dimension in terms of the overall skills development system? All this will need to be explored in greater detail, and doing this in the context of the broader SETA review policy principles proposed by the DoL, i.e. disruption of momentum and consensus, among others, is vital.

**Conclusion**

Lastly, the question of the new NSDS 3 that will be linked to the NIPF and IPAP needs to be approached from an informed basis. As is proposed in the NIPF, each industry needs to commission sector-wide research to determine who it actually is, where it is located, its size and the extent to which it can contribute to the achievement of the new economic vision for SA as expressed by the NIPF, i.e. in terms of the non-traditional tradable goods and services. SETAs need to take responsibility for the co-ordination of such a sector-wide process of self-discovery on behalf of their respective sectors as the outcome of this exercise will have implications for the SETAs as skills formation institutions, i.e. in terms of the proposed re-alignment with the NIPF and IPAP.

It is a SETA function falling too much under the "institutional adaptation strategies" aspect of SETA functions.
Mohamed Byhat, Organisational Knowledge Management Systems Pty Ltd, believes a systematic approach is needed to ensure that knowledge management initiatives are successful.

Many organisations embark on knowledge management (KM) initiatives by procuring KM services providers and/or technology without any real strategic intent and planning. The purpose of this presentation is to articulate some issues around formulating a knowledge management strategy.

If a systematic approach is not undertaken, knowledge management can simply become another “management fad” with no discernable return on investment for any department, or indeed any business.

Public administrations are playing a central role in “knowledge-based societies. The potential applications of knowledge management and ICT into the “conventional” drivers of government’s growth and development strategies should create an organic process in which the weaving together of the social and technological components will create sustainable development.

The challenge for any KM framework is the forging of the link between knowledge management and the fundamental business strategy of any department. This involves emphasis on strong customer focus and the enablement of organisational excellence via people and process development.

This is achieved through driving the strategic imperatives of a department, i.e. what the department wants or needs to deliver – its vision and mandate – and its organisational coherence which is manifested in its efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore for knowledge management to be of value any prospective initiative must ensure that:

- There is a direct link between business and knowledge strategies;
- That it will lead to the creation of talent pools and competence and networking infrastructures;
- That it creates contexts for organisational knowledge exchange conversations;
- That accessing and using organizational expertise to mitigate risk before engaging in high-impact initiatives takes place;
- That publishing and sharing know-how from day-to-day business interactions and international best practice is done;
- That reflecting usefully on key organisational outcomes, projects and deliverables is done in such a way as to provide learnings for future iterations of the same processes;
- That communities of practice are created to address key strategic themes and validate knowledge assets;
- That knowledge enabling technologies are implemented to enable the above; and
- That there is a constant effort to change organisational behavior drivers such as performance management, HR strategy and leadership to support knowledge sharing.

The approach then would be to create a knowledge management framework. The framework would serve as a blueprint guiding the implementation of knowledge management within a department. The framework would ensure that individual business units can initiate KM projects, confident that it will integrate into a consistent overall approach.

The purpose of the KM framework is therefore to develop an organisational capability and culture that supports knowledge management and to educate and create awareness of relevant knowledge management tools and processes within the organisation.

The focus would be on creating important relationships within the organisation and to set the right conditions for collaboration between people, divisions etc. and the sharing of know-how and transferring information based on one-to-one conversations, communities of practice, electronic collaborative spaces, etc.

To this end the approach would be, post an investigative phase, to embark on a process to pilot several KM initiatives to create proof of concept and lay the foundations for what will devolve into a fully-fledged enterprise-wide knowledge management programme.
Nothing about us, without us

Dudley Moloi meets Selaelo Makgato, a blind man with a clear vision to fight for the rights of people with disabilities.

It is with slight nervousness that I waylay Selaelo Makgato for an interview amid the commotion of the conference’s morning tea break. Do I tap him, if so, how hard? Or do I shout above the buzz of the tea-drinking public servants? But then it occurs to me that Makgato is not deaf but blind. In my awkward attempt to get his attention, I feel a bit like the butt of one of the many jokes about blind people. This was after Makgato’s informative, insightful, disconcerting yet witty presentation on disability.

I gently nudge him and lead him out of the crowded hall the following day for our interview appointment. It’s a first for me. In all my years in journalism I’ve never had an interview with a blind person. My encounters with blind people are largely based on detached curiosity, perhaps laced with paternalistic concern. I recall watching an “unfolding disaster” as a visually impaired guy, guided only by a white stick, negotiated his way around the city’s treacherous streets. Precisely on cue of the robot’s green figure, he managed to cross the robots unscathed. I wonder how he made it.

Makgato currently works in the Office of the Premier (OTP) in Limpopo. In 1999 he helped set up and run the Office on the Status of Disabled Persons (OSDP) in the OTP until his appointment as senior manager for Batho Pele programmes. He is also an activist in the disability sector and President of the South African National Association of the Blind and Partially-sighted persons.

He is severely blind and is part of the minority of blind people “who can’t see even the light”. It’s a difficult condition for sighted people to fathom. Blindfolds, pitch black rooms and other simulations don’t come close. Severe cases of blindness have an element of permanence once one’s sight is affected.

According to psychologists, people generally retain their visual experiences if they remain sighted until the age of five. Since Makgato became blind at about three or four years of age, he has no visual recollection of things prior to becoming blind but has retained his social memory, such as playing with other kids. He also vividly recalls his family’s disappointment after he became blind. The family counted on him becoming “something”, a lawyer or doctor, with the attendant prospects those professions held for turning the poor rural household’s fortunes around.

“If you tell me that I am blind, I will tell you that I can see a lot,” Makgato tells me, adding that it was only through the unwitting intervention of his grandson’s friend that attitudes began to slightly shift in the family. Though his grandson’s friend was equally illiterate and didn’t know anything about education for children with special needs, she believed that the young Makgato would grow up, go through school and get a job like any other person.

“I think she was prophesying,” he concludes.

While Makgato’s parents were contacted by a local blind man called Rankgata after hearing rumours that there was a blind child in the village, they were more receptive to the idea of sending their son to a special school. Rankgata had the good fortune of having gone through education for the blind, availed himself to assist the family with getting their son into a school for the blind.

“School gave me a new experience. There was no over-protection. We were moving independently [even though] our school yard was so big. We were also going out of the school yard, going to church and other places,” Makgato recalls.

Illiterate, indigent and isolated in rural Botlokwa, in what was formerly the self-governing state of Lebowa, the Makgato family were at a loss as to how to bring up their disabled son. As disability of any kind was unusual (or sometimes hidden) and often carried a heavy burden of social stigma, the family’s approach to their son’s disability was to hide the little boy from the stares and whispers of the community, and to severely scold him: “Who do you want to show that [you’re] blind?”

“It seems [my blindness was] something that needed to be hidden,” Makgato tells me, adding that it was only through the unwitting intervention of his grandson’s friend that attitudes began to slightly shift in the family. Though his grandson’s friend was equally illiterate and didn’t know anything about education for children with special needs, she believed that the young Makgato would grow up, go through school and get a job like any other person.

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However, the world beyond the boundaries of school remained a stark contrast to Makgato’s new-found world of independence and acceptance. Though his parents had acceded to him going to school, they struggled with the social stigma associated with the disability and continued isolating Makgato from the rest of the community each time he came home on school holidays, until the situation reached breaking point.

“I felt that I could not take this any longer. I took a very big stick and challenged any person who did not want me to play with other kids. I think that was a turning point in my life and in the family,” he says as we both laugh at the quixotic image of the little, skinny, blind Makgato, wielding a big stick and daring anyone who stood in his way.

While Makgato might have found it difficult to hit his targets, the incident marked a resolve to resist the enforced dependency and passivity often associated with people with disability. It marked the beginning of a lifelong struggle to be accepted as a human being and a tentatively step towards advocating what he referred to as “rights culture”, which would become the pillar of his activism in the disability sector.

Attending a school exclusively for blind learners had many advantages. It provided solidarity among fellow learners and had a more sensitive and appropriate educational support infrastructure. Apart from his criticism of the curriculum, which was effectively designed to train blind learners for menial jobs, Makgato is also critical of the school’s inability to integrate or prepare blind learners for the world out there.

“When a disabled person continuously lives among other disabled people, he develops a perception that the world is only for disabled people. And when you start moving out of that circle of disabled people to a circle of non-disabled people, you start feeling
insecure, feeling that non-disabled people are not accepting you.”

Well developed social skills are critical to integration into the world dominated by sighted people. Much like politics or any other aspect of life, being blind requires the nurturing of a network of people who may be in a position to help when the need arises, picking you up for university lectures or assisting with note-taking. In some cases, the relationships with sighted people, for example at university, were based on mutual benefit, with assistance for fellow sighted students who were struggling academically in return for their help.

“There are some people who have a negative attitude towards disabled people. Some would refuse to sit next to me at the university and there would be some who were receptive. You get a sense of who has accepted you or not, then you begin to classify people and relate more with those who are receptive. You don’t find this this type of environment in the disability circle because you are all disabled and accept yourselves as you are. When you go to the other environment you realise that the world is cruel. It is not everybody who is for you.”

Makgato demonstrated his capabilities by completing his university degree, including doing practical training at a school of sighted pupils. However, his qualifications didn’t so help much in placating prejudice against securing a job as a teacher. The schools for the sighted felt that he was “not able enough to teach sighted learners” while those for blind learners, which were often run by sighted people, didn’t have any confidence in a professional blind teacher.

“I applied for jobs at schools for blind learners, but because schools for blind learners are also managed by sighted principals, sighted management, they also felt that despite the fact that I was educated to teach, they felt that I was not able enough to teach blind learners. So I just found myself with no one requiring my services.”

Having failed to get a job, he then returned to university for postgraduate studies in education. But even after that, he had to appeal for the intervention of higher education department authorities of the then Lebowa government before finally securing a teaching position in his former school for the blind, which Makgato had previously approached for a job but was told to try applying for a job as court interpreter, even though he was an educator.

The world of work came with its own challenges, such as blatant paternalism. Makgato says blind teachers were routinely summoned to the principal’s office and reprimanded for alleged demeanours, which sighted teachers were often exempted from. There were also differences between the school’s blind teachers and the school management, with the latter accusing blind teachers of “bringing a foreign culture” to the school.

Like in the rest of the country at the time, there was growing discontent with the apartheid status quo in township schools in the 1980s which coincided with the emergence of a “spirit of rights culture” and increasing mobilisation in the disability communities. In 1985, during his early university days, Makgato and fellow activists launched the Northern Province Association of the Blind, which later became the South African National Association of the Blind and Partially sighted persons (SANABP), with national coverage. It currently has about 10,000 members.

The objective of the organisation, whose slogan is “Nothing about us without us”, is primarily to advocate for interests of visually impaired people by advocating for policies which consider the expressed needs and participation of blind people, in all aspects of life. Makgato, who is the current president of the association, says his organisation has had an influence on the transformation of the curriculum in schools for the blind to be more career-oriented in the context of the post-1994 transformation of South Africa’s education system.

“So far we can proudly say schools for blind learners and learners are able to do commerce or science. But what we have seen is that in schools for black learners there is no capacity of teachers to teach blind learners maths and science, but in white, Indian and coloured schools the capacity is there. So we are still continuing the battle that capacity should be developed to teach blind learners in maths and science and not leave them to follow the general stream and the commerce stream,” he says.

He says their efforts have seen the establishment of a disability centre at his alma mater, the University of the Limpopo, Turffontein campus, which now boasts a “big two-storey centre with many talking computers, Braille transcription devices”. Similar initiatives have been undertaken in other universities.

SANABP has taken on workplace-related issue by pointing out some of the discrepancies in the implementation of redress legislation such as the Employment Equity Act. Employers would, for instance, prefer to hire people with other disabilities at the expense of blind people because of expenses associated with employing blind people.

“They say it is very expensive to hire a blind person. We have to acquire a talking computer which is expensive and you must get a personal assistant to this person. They were counting all these expenses and as an organisation we tell them that when the Employment Equity Act was developed it was developed for all of us,” says Makgato.

In 2002 SANABP staged marches to the labour department in five provinces in protest against the hiring of blind people only in menial positions and lack of promotions. Makgato, who was at the time working in the Office of the Premier in Limpopo, says the protest action was a turning point. A year after the march there was a wave of promotions of people with disabilities.

“The march was a turning point because blind people were just hired as switchboard operators and were never promoted. The following year I got promoted, and many other people were also promoted. We [began] seeing improvements. I am currently employed as a director, which is something I did not expect because of the level of discrimination,” says a triumphant Makgato.

He tells me that the Limpopo Office of the Premier currently employs more than 16 disabled people and he is the second senior manager who is blind. The Office for the Status of Disabled People, which was set up in 1999, has over the past 11 years gained a lot of experience in terms of the workplace needs of blind people.

“They have developed talking computers for us [and] I have a talking laptop, a scanner, Braille printer, despite the fact that they [employer] are currently still experiencing hiccups here and there. They provide me with a personal assistant wherever I go. I think they are trying their level best to make the environment conducive for me,” he concludes.
Reversing the poverty mentality

Chris Kanyane discusses his book *Create Better Life Now*, which focuses on psychological reversal and alignment

Around 2006, while working as Chief Researcher at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), I published a book called *Create Better Life Now*. At that time I was part of a team selected to form an exciting national priority initiative called Employment, Development and Growth Initiative (EGDI)

Our work included the following areas:
- Evidence-based scenarios for employment absorbing growth - This is a vision of the economic structure of South Africa, should unemployment and poverty be halved on a sustainable basis. This was supportive of the “growth accounting” exercise being undertaken by National Treasury; the HSRC initiative puts employment at the centre of its analytical work.
- Monitoring and evaluation - These are innovative methodologies to enable the tracking of underlying phenomena to tell us where we are against a particular employment scenario.
- Employment policy e-communities - This draws together the best information and analysis on employment policy for experts and stakeholders, in SA and globally.
- Stakeholder dialogue - Drawing together key experts and stakeholders to dialogue was a critical part of this initiative.

A critical central part of EGDI though, involved developing “implementation networks”. The essence of implementation networks is that dialogue is an inherent part of generating and disseminating ideas amongst experts, policy makers and other stakeholders.

All these elements support government’s objective of halving unemployment and poverty, as part of a growth strategy, by 2014.

My responsibilities were knowledge management for the initiative. The essence of my responsibilities was to build a body of knowledge and understanding geared towards developing scenarios and economic growth paths that ultimately bring a better life to the masses of people who experience acute poverty and massive unemployment.

In carrying out my responsibilities the persistent questions I asked myself were:
- How do people cope and what are their aspirations in the midst of misery and poverty?
- How can people become skilled?
- What international situations resemble South Africa?

I was excited about our work but also sometimes concerned by the pragmatic nature of what we do.

In addition to our pragmatic approach, is there no other simple way where the majority of people could get out of poverty and live a better life? What is the problem that causes the problem of poverty? Is there a way people can live better lives now, not 20 years from now?

The book I published focuses on psychological reversal and psychological alignment.

Dr Callahan describes psychological reversal this way: “Any form of psychological reversal appears to be rooted in a deep rejection of self on the part of the individual. Reversed people do not believe they deserve to succeed. They consider themselves unworthy of good things and deserving of failure and unhappiness. Dr Albert Ellis dubbed this syndrome the ‘worthless piece of shit’ approach to life. A person suffering from this condition considers himself so valueless that he deserves no happiness or success in life.

“A psychological reversal exists when a person claims he desires to achieve a specific goal, but his actions and major motivation, and especially his results, are contrary to his stated goal. Superficially or outwardly he appears to be striving to achieve (in the area of his behavior where he is reversed), but he will inevitably, grossly or subtly, sabotage his own every effort.”

The things that many poor people talk about reflect a poverty mentality directly in line with their poverty situations. They would probably never refuse money. But until they build a new belief system, they will remain poor no matter how many development projects are undertaken to assist them with the problem of poverty.

This is significant because it is unrealistic to suggest that you can think and not be a part of the process of your thinking. Your thoughts are not detached from you. You cannot think independently of something that affects you.

Ultimately whatever you think about comes back to you because it is you thinking it. You certainly cannot think about people you don't know. You can only think about people you know. There is no thinking or thought of you or from you that does not include you. Nobody thinks thoughts that are independent of themselves.

The thing that affects you most is the thing you think about most. People who live in poverty and squalor are affected by poverty and squalor every day, and because these things affect them daily their mind begins to reason that things are not going to change. And this process of thinking overwhelms them. It possesses them and they react, respond and operate within the feeling of these thoughts. It is unrealistic to think that you can think thoughts and not become part of or be affected by those thoughts, whether good or bad.

The underlying message of the book is: If you think and focus on what you want instead of what you don't want, you will know when you will get the things that you focus on. You will know when you are going to succeed. You will know when you will not fail. You will know when you are going to be happy and you will be happy.

If you would like to obtain a copy of this book, please contact HSRC’s Hanlie Rossinger at hrossinger@hsrc.ac.za or 012 302 2066
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