



Theme: The use of evaluation in decision-making for public policies and programmes

The use question in South Africa: Examples and lessons from the Public Service Commission (PSC) of South Africa

by

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OUTLINE

1. Country context
2. M&E within the oversight architecture
3. Constitutionally driven M&E
4. Differentiated M&E approach of the PSC
5. Towards results based decision-making
6. Conclusions

1. COUNTRY CONTEXT

- Constitutional democracy, middle-income country, population: 49 million, diverse language and culture.
- Economic giant of Africa, exerts much influence on international governance discourse.
- Developmental State model to address inequalities and transformation – centrality of government recognised.
- Recently host of the successful 2010 World Cup.



2. M&E WITHIN THE OVERSIGHT ARCHITECTURE

- Global thrust for greater accountability has resulted in the growth of monitoring and evaluation (M&E), as a profession and function.
- Whilst M&E produces transparency and learning, the **most notable evidence** that it adds value may be seen in its ability to ensure accountability and demonstrate utility by influencing policy, programmes and performance.
- This paper shows how the PSC has helped attain multiple M&E outcomes, towards the pursuit of development and good governance.

.....production and users oversight data

Production of oversight data

- Public Service Commission
- Public Protector
- Auditor-General
- National Treasury
- Department of Public Service and Administration
- Statistics South Africa

Users of oversight data

- Management of departments
- Parliament
- Citizens
- Media

3. CONSTITUTIONALLY DRIVEN M&E

Good governance
Transparency, accountability, learning,
democratic enrichment

M&E interventions via a
differentiated M&E
programme

Chapter 10 SA Constitution
The role of the PSC in M&E across the
9 principles and values for public
administration

4. DIFFERENTIATED M&E PROGRAMME

- Towards attaining policy and programme utility, the PSC model caters for different users.
- It has charted the decision-making modalities for different performance dimensions & tracks recommendations to assess its impact.
- **Evaluative products** and **services** seek to address multiple needs: information, accountability, policy and programme review, management etc.

4.1 CITIZENS

A key system to capture citizen concerns has been the National Anti-Corruption Hotline (which operates 24/7/365, 11 languages)

- *Demonstrated utility: Recovered ZAR100 million, keeps public servants accountable*
- *The use of inspections of service delivery sites (announced and unannounced) also produces actionable reports, to ensure that services mirror service charters*

4.2 PARLIAMENT

Regular reports produced and tabled at all levels, with actionable recommendations. Provides evaluations of the state of performance of different policies and programmes

- *Widespread acknowledgement of work, and regular requests for briefings*
- *Assists with evidence based engagement between parliament and departments*

4.3 DEPARTMENTS

Multiple forms of periodic engagement by PSC with all departments which produce criterion-referenced and diagnostic assessments of key performance areas.

- *Produced over 150 assessments of departments, and sectors, allowing for comparative assessments.*
- *Key instrument in making departmental performance transparent and accountable*

...areas of focus

Quality of professional ethics, financial management, performance management, human resource management, etc.

Interim reports are tabled for comments, recommendations made, tracked and action thereof, reported upon.

Full application of M&E principles takes place, directed towards improving performance

4.4 BROADER SOCIETY

- Strategic partnerships with academia and professional bodies to advance M&E – co-hosting with the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) Conferences.

Use of various tools
to achieve impact

- Hearings
- Inspections
- Round-tables
- Talk shows
- TV interviews

6. EVIDENCE OF USE – TOWARDS RESULT BASED DECISION-MAKING

- There have been several changes or refinement of policy (Policy on Ill Health), that can be traced to PSC intervention.
- Examples relating to human resource management (Guidelines on Recruitment and Selection), labour relations (Amendments of Public Service Act – grievances of HoDs, transfers between departments whilst disciplinary cases are underway), policies and programmes

7. CONCLUSION

- To achieve use, need to carefully examine how decisions are made, and strategically target key persons and institutions
- Implement a system to systematically track recommendations – or management action reports. This will demonstrate impact and show whether indeed, utility follows M&E



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