



SACN Strategic Plan 2011 – 2016

SUMMARY VERSION

The South African Cities Network (SACN) was established in 2002 by the South African Minister for Provincial and Local Government in collaboration with the mayors of South Africa's nine largest cities (Buffalo City, Cape Town, Ekurhuleni, eThekweni, Johannesburg, Mangaung, Msunduzi, Nelson Mandela Bay, and Tshwane) and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA). SACN was thus registered on 9 December 2002 as an association incorporated under Section 21 of the South African *Companies Act, 1973*.

The SACN is mandated to promote good governance and management of its member cities using the knowledge of large city government experiences within the global and national economic development contexts; and to promote partnerships between or among the spheres of government in the interests of enhancing good city governance in South Africa. This Strategic Plan is developed for the period 2011/12 to 2015/16, the third 5-year cycle of the SACN.

For this period, the VISION of the SACN is envisaged to remain the same:

The South African Cities Network is an established network of South African cities and partners that encourages the exchange of information, experience and best practices on urban development and city management.

The Network's overall MISSION too remains:

- To promote good governance and management of South African cities;
- To analyse strategic challenges facing South African cities, particularly in the context of global economic integration and national development;
- To collect, collate, analyse, assess, disseminate and apply the experience of large city government in a South African context; and
- To promote a shared-learning partnership between different spheres of government to support the governance of South African cities.

Informed by the findings of its State of the Cities Report (2011) and the experiences of its stakeholders, SACN sets its overarching GOAL for the 2012-2016 strategic period as:

enabling South African cities' understanding of, preparedness for, and performance in playing their respective roles in driving local and national development.

Towards this, the SACN has established the following STRATEGIC PRIORITIES for the period:

- i) ***enable cities to act with a better understanding*** by enhancing their supporting policy, planning and data infrastructure;
- ii) ***transform the built environment function in cities***, in particular by enabling effective strategies and systems for addressing spatial planning and land use, sustainable human settlements, and public transport; and
- iii) ***deal decisively with key vulnerabilities facing cities***, in particular around the issues of natural resources, municipal finances, human capacity, and socio-political stability.

The corresponding strategic framework reflecting key outcome areas is depicted in Figure 1.

FUNCTIONALLY, the SACN will continue to use knowledge generation and knowledge dissemination to support the Network as a credible thought leader in the area of urban policy and development issues. This is enabled through various modes of engagement by SACN with stakeholders, typically including:

- ***Guidance***: By preparing and disseminating strategic inputs and positions
- ***Discovery***: By undertaking selected monitoring and evaluation, including a regular State of the Cities Report
- ***Assistance***: By preparing technical inputs on leading practice and processes

Towards this, the main ACTIVITY AREAS of the SACN will continue to be:

- Shared learning as the basis of inter-sphere partnerships
- Updating leaders on current and emerging changes and trends in urban policy nationally and internationally
- Promoting innovation and strategic thinking between cities and other spheres of government

- Fostering co-operation and exchange of best practice
- Generating options and make recommendations to network members
- Mobilising the capacity of cities to support local government and national development
- Strengthening linkages between cities, towns and rural areas

The SACN will continue to articulate its work programme thematically around its original framing comprising of five THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS for city performance:

- i) **City Development Strategies Programme:** Focus on crosscutting issues that have strategic impact on long-range aspects of city management. It culminates in the period State of South African Cities Reports which take stock of the performance, best practices and binding constraints of governance in large cities today.
- ii) **Inclusive Cities Programme:** Focus on the need to create inclusive cities which is being translated into the introduction of new housing typologies and patterns that redress old inequalities and try not to create new ones.
- iii) **Sustainable Cities Programme:** Focus on the need for capacity to plan and create cities using strategies that engage the complex combination of: finite resources, climate change, the quality of life and cost of living in urban centres; and the financial and institutional sustainability of cities.
- iv) **Well-governed Cities Programme:** Focus on developing tools and frameworks for the measurement of city performance.
- v) **Productive Cities Programme:** Focus on key factors required for increased economic growth for local development and global competitiveness.

ORGANISATIONALLY, the SACN Secretariat structure will continue to be lean and focused as befits a network-based knowledge-sharing organisation. The general structural organisation is reflected in Figure 2.

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Figure 2: SACN Organisational Framework

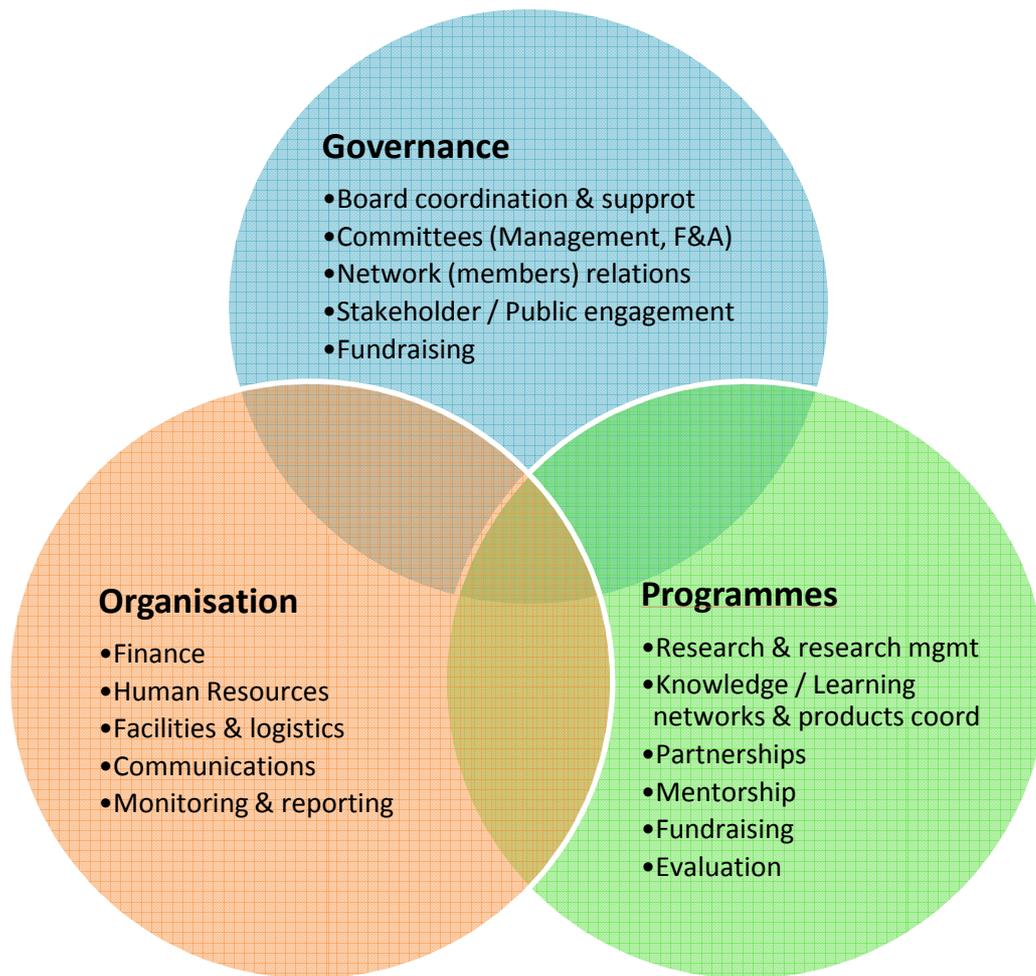


Figure 1: SACN Strategic Framework 2012-2016

GOAL: The 2016 State of the Cities Report reports on South African cities as effective drivers of local and national development.

OUTCOME INDICATORS:

- Cities understand their respective developmental roles and strategies
- Cities are prepared, recognised and enabled to play their developmental roles
- Cities are improving and monitoring their performance in executing their development strategies and plans

Through: Shared- learning platforms and partnerships between SACN, cities, and strategic partners which support the effective development and delivery of clear and effective City Development Strategies, enabling frameworks, and monitoring systems.

