



**URBAN INDICATORS PROJECT 2013 SCOPING AND
PLANNING EXERCISE**

STUDY FINDINGS

South African Cities Network

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The South African Cities Network (SACN) encourages the “exchange of information, experience and best practices on urban development and city management”. The SACN “identifies, assembles and disseminates information that enhances the ability of decision-makers to learn from the experience of others and efficiently use their resources to build sustainable cities”.

As such, one of the goals of SACN is to analyse strategic challenges facing South African cities. This project demonstrates the commitment of SACN to supporting cities and to fulfil their mandate. Geci Karuri-Sebina and Sandiswa Tshaka of the SACN played a leading role in setting up this project and in giving guidance throughout its implementation.

The project required the participation of stakeholders from a number of national departments, agencies and parastatals. They are acknowledge for the insights that they shared with the project team and for the guidance they provided on indicators, data collection approaches and methods as well as the establishing of institutional mechanisms.

In particular, gratitude is expressed to officials from the Metros that assisted the project team in coordinating meetings with key people from the different departments, as well as the various Metro officials that gave of their time and provided inputs to the set of questions posed. This project team acknowledges the immense amount of work that the Metros are doing and the enormous pressure many officials face in fulfilling many reporting obligations.

Dr Scott Drimie and Mr Craig Schwabe were the principle researchers on the project. A team of people helped facilitate meetings and organise trips to the nine Metros. A special word of thanks goes to Zenia Patrick of AfricaScope for all her hard working in corresponding with Metros, in setting up the meetings and in helping organise the study. Mikateko Makhubela and Nadia Oosthuizen ably supported her.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The South African Cities Network (SACN) recognizes the importance of monitoring the performance of cities within the fast-changing dynamics of contemporary South Africa where the majority of people now live in Metropolitan areas. This recognition led to the following study to provide a convincing and pragmatic approach to securing data that would support indicators across the Metros.

The SACN was established to promote good governance and management, analyse strategic challenges, and review the experience and promote shared experiences of South African cities with other spheres of government. The State of the City Report (SoCR) is one mechanism used to accomplish these objectives and is a barometer of the performance of cities. The aim of the study was to conduct a scoping and planning exercise with key stakeholders to develop a business plan for SACN to enable the systematic sourcing of data for agreed indicators that would underpin the SoCR and other outputs. The plan would provide a convincing and pragmatic approach for:

- Establishing institutional coordination mechanisms;
- Developing efficient and effective approaches to collecting and analyzing data;
- Proposing methods that custodians can use in regularly collecting and providing credible data; and
- Defining the costs of such an institutional mechanism.

A number of different approaches have been used to develop the SoCR in 2004, 2006 and 2011. An Indicator Reference Group (IRG) was established for the last report to develop an analytical framework to identify four main thematic quadrants for city performance indicators:

- Productive cities – economic aspects
- Inclusive cities – equitable access to social benefits
- Sustainable cities – sustainable use of natural resources
- Well-governed cities – political and institutional context

The IRG commissioned several projects with their primary focus being on reviewing the indicators. A major challenge was access to and collection of data with a key issuing being an unsuccessful attempt to source data from cities. Other challenges included the length of time to source data as there are no central data coordinators, the methods of data collection varied preventing comparisons across cities, there was no central facility to store and disseminate data and that indicator definitions varied across cities.

It was on this basis that the current study began. Many of these issues were confirmed amongst a host of new challenges that were identified. These are summarised below.

Currently Metros have a significant reporting burden. On an annual basis they use registers and other sources to report on outcome indicators required for internal purposes and by a number of national departments, agencies and regulators. These requirements are legislated and therefore required by law. Over and above the reporting burden, a lack of capacity and adequate systems makes it difficult for many Metros to provide data. In addition, further reporting requirements have been proposed by agencies such as the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation in the Presidency (DPME) and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA). As such, many entities approached during the study, including most Metros, made a request to the SACN to avoid further burdening them with the collection of new data.

Stakeholders felt that the SACN should use the output/outcome indicators and data that were already being collected to do more detailed analysis. In addition, it was suggested that the SACN should link with existing data collection mechanisms such as the National Treasury and Stats SA in order to populate indicators identified by SACN as important for comparability across Metros. Further, it was suggested that SACN should develop a suite of knowledge products such as policy briefs and a web portal to disseminate this information, which would further encourage and enhance the use of data for a range of purposes.

Stakeholders requested that the SACN engage with them to determine their specific requirements for knowledge products. As such, a User Requirement Assessment is proposed as part of the recommendations. It is also recommended that SACN engage with the National Evaluation Policy Framework to ensure that the State of the Cities Report (SoCR) is institutionalized as an implementation evaluation.

Having engaged with stakeholders on a number of issues, a business plan was developed. The detail of this report focuses on the key findings emanating from the study. A second report provides greater depth to the key issues contained in the business plan that are summarized below. The goal of the plan was to develop an institutional mechanism for the conducting of an implementation evaluation including:

- A coordination mechanism for the development and management of performance indicators;
- Utilising methods for the regular collection of credible data;
- Undertaking the efficient and effective collection and analysis of data; and
- Defining the costs of such an institutional mechanism.

The emergent findings make it clear that any future approach to securing indicators underpinned by relevant data and facilitated by appropriate institutional arrangements would pivot on four interlocked spheres of issues and activities. These are:

- 1) Coordination arrangements,
- 2) Output/outcome indicators,
- 3) Impact indicators, and
- 4) Knowledge products.

The coordination arrangements at the core would ensure that the appropriate mechanisms are in place in each Metro to ensure the definition of agreed output/outcome and impact indicators as well as the creation of knowledge products.

A quick win for SACN would be to ensure that coordinators are established at all the Metros to oversee the collection of data for submission to national departments, agencies and regulators. These coordinators will ultimately link up with the national coordinator that the National Treasury and Stats SA have proposed. They will also facilitate the identification of people responsible for data collection within Metro departments.

SACN can also play a meaningful role in identifying all the output indicators that Metros are required to provide data for and to ensure that the national departments, agencies and regulators provide detailed information on their definitions, methods of data collection and the validation methods that are used to quality control the data. Part of the coordination role is to develop service level agreements with national departments, agencies and regulators to access their data. This data can then be made available to Metros and collated on the SACN's web portal. SACN should engage with these national departments, agencies and regulators to include other critically needed questions into their censuses and surveys.

It is clear from engaging with Metros that SACN has an important role to play. Some Metros have performance management systems and knowledge portals. The smaller and more recent Metros are struggling to establish such systems and portals. The SACN can establish forums where coordinators from the different Metros could share lessons learned with each other. They could also help to establish performance management systems and knowledge portals.

Data collection mechanisms for impact indicators such as the Quality of Life and Customer Satisfaction Surveys should be standardized and the data certified through the National Statistical System. The collection of data by Call Centres and Customer Service Centres is a potential source of data to identify the impact that Metros are having in addressing citizen's needs. To ensure that the data can be used and is comparable, the SACN can facilitate the process of standardizing the methods of collecting this data.

One final contribution that SACN can make is to facilitate with Metros the conducting of an independent impact survey to collect data to focus on emerging or unique issues and to determine the impact of particular interventions or policies.

ACRONYMS

Capex	Capital expenditure
COGTA	Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
CSS	Customer Satisfaction Surveys
DPME	Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
DPSIR	Drivers-Pressure-State-Impact-Response
DRDLR	Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
FFC	Financial and Fiscal Commission
GCIF	Global City Indicators Facility
GCRO	Gauteng City-Region Observatory
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHS	General Household Survey
GIS	Geographic Information System
GVA	Gross Value Added
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IES	Income and Expenditure Survey
IRG	Indicators Reference Group
KPAs	Key Performance Areas
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LED	Local Economic Development
MAT	Municipal Analysis Tool
MDB.	Municipal Demarcation Board
MDCF	Metro Data Coordination Forum
MoU	Memorandums of Understanding
MTEF	Medium term Expenditure Framework
NDP	National Development Plan
NEPF	National Evaluation Policy Framework
NERSA	National Energy Regulator of South Africa
NSS	National Statistical System
PDG	Palmer Development Group
PSR	Pressure-State-Response
QLFS	Quarterly Labour Force Survey
QoL	Quality of Life
SACN	South African Cities Network
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SASQAF	South African Statistical Quality Assessment Framework
SDBIP	Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plans

SDF	Spatial Development Framework
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SoCR	State of the City Report
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
URA	User Requirement Assessment
WG	Working Group

1. INTRODUCTION

The South African Cities Network (SACN) was established by the Minister of Provincial and Local Government, the mayors of the major cities and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) in 2002. It was essentially established to promote good governance and management, analyse strategic challenges, review the experience and promote shared experiences of South African cities with other spheres of government. The State of the City Report (SoCR) is one of the flagship products that the SACN uses to accomplish its objectives and is used as a barometer to review the performance of cities.

To review the performance of cities a set of indicators have been selected and defined. Data was collected to populate these indicators and the SoCR was published in 2004, 2006 and 2011. Over this period the indicators, methods of collecting the data and the approach used to write up the reports have evolved. Unfortunately, the SACN has seen that the results emanating from the SoCR have varied over time. Furthermore, the SACN require more regular data to enable them to report more frequently in knowledge products other than the flagship SoCR. This situation therefore requires careful review with clear suggestions about remedying the situation, particularly as the next SoCR is due in 2016.

Reflecting on this process, the SACN recognises the importance of monitoring the performance of cities within a fast-changing South Africa where the majority of people now live in Metropolitan areas. There is therefore a need for more effective public management of Metros and opportunities for broad citizen engagement. In this regard the SoCR and other knowledge products produced by SACN have important functions for informing planning and management decisions. SACN also recognizes the need for credible data to populate performance indicators. Furthermore, there is need to identify data custodians, review methods pertaining to how data is collected, and to establish institutional, technical and resource mechanisms by which complete and credible data can be collected and provided on an on-going basis. This report engages these issues.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The overarching aim of the project was to conduct a scoping and planning exercise that would lead to the establishment of a business plan. The business plan would need to provide a convincing and pragmatic approach that covers institutional issues, indicators and the sourcing of data to populate them, and a costing of such an exercise.

The business plan would facilitate the following objectives:

- Institutional coordination mechanisms for the pragmatic development and management of performance indicators;

- Developing an efficient and effective approach to collecting and analysing data;
- Proposing methods that custodians can use in regularly collecting and providing credible data; and
- Defining the costs of such an institutional mechanism and reviewing the present cost of cities collecting or purchasing data.

The findings of the scoping and planning exercise are described in detail in this report while the details of the business plan are contained in a second report.

3. APPROACH TO THE STUDY

3.1 Conceptualization

At the outset of the project, relevant documentation pertaining to the process was sourced from SACN. These included existing SoCR reports, Almanacs, documents describing the indicators and sources of data. A literature review was undertaken to source additional documents on the SoCR as well as international experiences in setting up institutional mechanisms, developing indicators and sourcing data. The approach guiding this review was to establish a pragmatic approach to the development of indicators and the sourcing of data to populate the indicators on a regular basis.

During the inception meetings between the research team and SACN, discussions focused on understanding the background to the project, especially in relation to the development of indicators and challenges encountered in the collection of data. These discussions also touched on challenges encountered in establishing a list of indicators and their definitions, methods and procedures that could be used to collect data, as well as possible mechanisms that could be used to coordinate the collection and access to data.

3.2 Stakeholder engagement

Drawing on the established networks of the SACN and the research team, key stakeholders from the nine Metros were identified to engage and participate in the consultative process. In Metros where there were no known stakeholders, contact was made with key departments such as the city manager's office, performance monitoring, Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and Geographic Information System (GIS) departments to help identify individuals in a coordination role. Using an approach akin to "snowballing", relevant stakeholders were identified and approached to set up key informant interviews and focus group discussions. In several of the Metros this proved to be a challenge as key people responsible for data management within Metros were not clearly identifiable. Furthermore, institutional changes within the Metros and simply a lack of capacity inhibited them being able to facilitate the process of identifying relevant stakeholders and setting up meetings.

Over a period close to three months, Metros were contacted and individuals sought that could help the research team identify relevant people to engage with so that meetings and group discussions could be organized. An E-mail and letter of introduction was distributed to each Metro to introduce the research process and the team. Although it was originally intended to send the letter to the executive of the cities (i.e. mayor, municipal manager) requesting the team have access to relevant department heads and staff to openly engage with them over a two/three day period, these letters were sent to identified individuals who played a coordination role in data collection and who could facilitate efficient access to data managers within Metro departments. In retrospect, letters should have been sent to both, as access to key personal was sometimes not forthcoming. It was felt that working through the executive of Metros would take longer to facilitate such meetings and in instances that E-mails were sent to the executives of some Metros no response was received.

A set of guidelines was prepared to provide a framework for discussions. This framework, attached as Annexure 1, aligned to the objectives of the study to ensure that all aspects of the assignment were dealt with. It is important to note that information pertaining to cost of acquiring data was not readily available for reasons discussed later in the report. Some Metros distributed the guidelines widely as a form of questionnaire, which provided further information for the research team.

Meetings were subsequently set up with identified stakeholders and trips arranged to uMshini, Tshwane, Joburg, Ekurhuleni, eThekweni, Cape Town, Buffalo City and Nelson Mandela. Telephonic interviews were set up with Mangaung. In addition, meetings with sector specialists, researchers previously involved in SoCR and national-level stakeholders such as the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), SALGA, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) National Treasury and the Presidency were set up to discuss key issues. A full list of the stakeholders that were interviewed as key informants or in focus groups is provided in Annexure 2.

Once access to a Metro or other organization had been established, the “snowballing” method was used to identify other relevant people to engage with to fully investigate the institutional coordination mechanisms, approaches to collecting and analysing data, discussing possible methods that custodians can use in regularly collecting and providing credible data; and getting an understanding of the costs to set up an institutional mechanism and reviewing the present cost of cities collecting or purchasing data.

3.3 Development of a business plan

Once the primary research process was completed in the Metros, the research team undertook a reflective process to distil the key findings that had emerged from the consultations. This was necessary, as a number of divergent issues had arisen from sector specialists, national stakeholders and the different Metros. These issues pertained to how

key stakeholders perceived their institutional “strengths” in collecting data for different indicators as well as the particular challenges that they were facing.

From this process the draft business plan was developed which allowed the research team to identify gaps in information such that follow up discussions could be facilitated with some stakeholders. The draft business plan was shared with SACN for initial comments and responses. The findings of the study and the conceptual framework for the business plan were then formally presented to external stakeholders at a one-day workshop to elicit feedback and buy-in of the proposed mechanisms and recommendations. The research team then consolidated this feedback and wrote up a final version of the project report and business plan.

In sum, the remainder of this report will describe the findings of the scoping and planning exercise while the business plan is contained in a separate report. The business plan will address the proposed mechanisms for agreeing on a set of core and supporting output and outcome indicators, for providing access to complete and credible data needed to populate these indicators, as well as knowledge products that would help consolidate SACN as a key facility for South African cities. It also presents the timelines, finances and human resources required to accomplish the development of this mechanism.

4. REVIEW OF EXISTING WORK

The drafting of three State of the Cities reports (2004, 2006 and 2011) has led to an accumulation of experience around how best to facilitate the development of the reports based on the use of comparable indicators and supporting data. The methodology has thus been an evolving one wherein the first report had a principal and contributing authors assisted by an editorial committee. The second report involved a group of researchers contributing inputs around data, which were verified by a second group and then edited into the report. The SACN adopted another approach for the development of the third report, described below.

In the lead up to the latest SoCR, the Palmer Development Group (PDG) were appointed to coordinate the “SACN Indicators Project”. A key part of this work was the establishment and management of an Indicators Reference Group (IRG) and the facilitation of four research projects that focused on an analytical framework involving quadrants based upon city performance areas, which the 2011 SoCR was based on. These quadrants involved:

- **A productive city:** can the local economy provide a majority of residents with a means to earn a reasonable living?
- **An inclusive city:** do residents have the opportunity and capacities to share equitably in the social benefits?

- **A sustainable city:** how is the city impacting on the store of natural resources that sustains that settlement and makes it liveable?
- **A well-governed city:** is the political and institutional context stable, open and dynamic enough to give a sense of security that varied interest can be accommodated?

The IRG was established and convened in June 2008 and met five times subsequently in the lead up to the SoCR between 2008 and 2010. The role of the IRG was to meet twice a year to give input and share advice, contacts and guidance around:

- Conceptualization of research that would be undertaken in the lead up to the SoCR;
- Commenting and guiding research projects;
- Reviewing research outcomes; and
- Overseeing and recording the process of SoCR 2011.

The main research projects commissioned focused on reviewing the indicator sets of the quadrants or thematic areas identified as the analytical framework of the SoCR. Projects that were commissioned during the period included:

- Review of the SoCR methodology;
- Review of productive city indicators;
- Review of inclusive city indicators;
- Review of sustainable city indicators;
- Review of good governance indicators;
- Quality of life surveys;
- Review of population data; and
- Updating the Almanac with community survey data.

Clearly the primary function of the research was to review the indicators, with the research teams also having the responsibility of collecting data for the approved indicators and, in this way, enable the assimilation of the actual SoCR based on these inputs. A major challenge experienced during this process – and which remains a challenge at present – was that of data and data collection in the cities. As such, research teams had to rely on purchasing data rather than relying on primary data from cities. Specific challenges with being able to rely on data collected by the cities included:

- Long periods of time to collect data from cities as they did not have a single central custodian or coordinator of data;
- Data calculations, which impacted on ready comparisons across cities;
- Data storage and handling, which impacted on ready comparisons across cities; and
- Definitions used by cities, which were not comparable.

Thus data collection was identified as the most significant challenge for the “Indicators Project” leading into SoCR 2011, despite this mechanism being identified as the most feasible way to develop the latest report based on two previous experiences in 2004 and 2006. Indeed, there were allegedly significant data gaps in the 2004 SoCR and the 2006 indicator set was based on data availability, resulting in an arbitrary collection of indicators that were overly reliant on a few particular sources. Attempts to collect data from the Metros in both 2004 and 2006 were unsuccessful.

As a result of the continued limitation of data collection in 2010, PDG concluded at the close of the project that the IRG was not a helpful institutional mechanism for data collection from the cities, particularly as this group involved few city officials. Based on this, PDG implied that future data collection for the SoCR needed to involve selected officials who were identified (and “appointed”) as key strategic data custodians. As such, an institutional mechanism was needed that committed such individuals from each city to engaging comparable indicators and providing data.

It is noteworthy that such observation emerged through the deliberations and consultations of this process: the need for a central coordinating person or data custodians within each member city, the agreement and acceptance of a set of (core and secondary) indicators that could be compared across cities, and the provision of comparable data across the cities to populate the indicators.

PDG recommended that a future IRG be established for the drafting of the 2016 SoCR, which included key officials from each city. This IRG would complement or replace the 2011 IRG (replace seemed most obvious as it has not been convened since 2010) and be mandated to refine indicators and provide available data from city sources. The feasibility of this is, however, questionable. Challenges around comparable data would still exist, as would commitment to divergent indicators, as some cities have long-standing indicators that they have developed and maintained over time.

With the use of key informant interviews and focus group discussions, further reflection has taken place on the recommendations emerging from the SoCR 2011. These are presented in the following section.

5. ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

The following sections provide an analysis of the key findings emerging from the study. These have been organised as follows:

- Key issues identified by national and Metro stakeholders;
- Existing coordinating mechanisms in Metros;

- Performance indicators;
- Mechanisms for collecting data;
- Costs of collecting data;
- Future mechanisms for collecting data; and
- Knowledge management.

5.1 Key issues identified by National and Metro Stakeholders

The two sections below provide tables that highlight key issues identified by stakeholders from national departments and agencies as well as the Metros. These key issues are a summary of the key issues raised by the stakeholders.

5.1.1 National stakeholders

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA)
<p>Coordination: A committee has been established between Stats SA and National Treasury to look at the burden of reporting and to streamline data collection. SACN should establish a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Stats SA to ensure regular access to data and to look at the inclusion of new questions into Stats SA data collection instruments.</p> <p>Indicators: Indicators of government departments are used to identify questions to be incorporated into surveys. Indicators are defined largely through legislation.</p> <p>Data collection: A selection of Stats SA surveys can be reported on quarterly, annually or bi-annually at a Metro level, except possibly the smaller and newer Metros. Stats SA is looking at the sample design to ensure that reporting can be done at this level. Stats SA collects local government statistics annually at a municipal level including financial, non-financial and Capex statistics. There is a need for uniform databases in the Metros so that data could be easily extracted. The National Statistical System (NSS) should play an important role in accrediting any data collected by the Metros. A partnership between Stats SA and Metros should be investigated to see how Stats SA could help Metros with their data collection. This responsibility is mandated to Stats SA through the Statistics Act. A data collection mechanism should link to existing reporting requirements of municipalities. There is a need for effective consultation on indicators and they must link to DPME indicators and outcomes.</p>
Department of Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs (COGTA)
<p>Coordination: There is no legislated requirement for local municipalities to report to SACN. Furthermore, Metros are overburdened with reporting requirements. Therefore SACN should use existing indicators, data and reports to produce SoCR.</p> <p>Indicators: COGTA have their own set of indicators, as part of their Barometer and its plan is to update the data annually at a municipal level.</p> <p>Data collection: Data used at Metros is often disputed. There is a need to implement procedures to standardize indicators and methods to collect the data as well as define who is responsible for collecting the data. Data of external providers is also often disputed. Data used must be official or accredited to prevent disputes.</p> <p>Knowledge management: The SoCR report is felt to be too academic and therefore there is a need for different knowledge products that can be presented to politicians (e.g. policy briefs)</p>
National Treasury
<p>Coordination: The National Treasury has the legislated requirement to collect financial and non-financial data. Stats SA and National Treasury are both collecting financial and non-financial data, but are in discussions to try and streamline data collection. National Treasury should be the only collector of financial data.</p>

Indicators: National Treasury has a core set of indicators and documentation that clearly defines the indicators. They are willing to collaborate in aligning indicators and the collection of data. An agreement/MoU can be established with the SACN.

Data collection: Although the National Treasury has detailed guidelines on the data collection mechanisms there are still credibility and reliability issues with the data collected from municipalities. Therefore, they are moving towards Standard Chartered Accounts to address this issue. They have a system for the collection of data. Even so the execution of the data collection is an issue.

South African Local Government Association (SALGA)

Coordination: The LG Forum was established with National Treasury and Stats SA to enable coordination. Need to get all national role players around the table to accept the mechanism of data collection. Coordination should possibly be that of Stats SA (mandated under the Statistics Act).

Indicators: SALGA have their own set of indicators as part of their Barometer. The focus of the Barometer is on output indicators and perceptions. It is used to provide credible baseline datasets with benchmarks and to show trends. Indicators need to be standardized through SASQAF. Developing a core set of indicators will reduce the reporting pressure on local municipalities.

Data collection: SALGA and Stats SA are to work together on building capacity to enable collection and interpretation of data at a municipality level. A guideline is therefore needed. This will enable comparability of data and more thorough reporting.

Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

Coordination: The SACN should establish a team of people that will allow them to source and analyse the data. This team should also enable them to develop knowledge management systems for the storage and dissemination of data.

Indicators: Metros should focus on outcome indicators that will allow them to do their planning.

Data collection: The SACN should initially mine the data collected by agencies like National Treasury and Stats SA and review their reports. SACN should establish agreements with these agencies to access their data.

Knowledge management: The SACN should develop their own central portal and assist Metros with the implementation of performance management systems.

5.1.2 Metro stakeholders

A more detailed expose of the key issues raised by the Metros is included in Annexure 3.

City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality

Coordination: The Metro requested that there is no duplication of reporting. A person responsible for coordinating reporting on performance at the Metro level and individuals within departments needs to be identified including the person responsible for GIS coordination in the Metro. A forum of departmental data providers within the Metros needs to be established. There is a need to incorporate GIS as part of the reporting process.

Indicators: Reporting is mainly on KPI's and indicators contained in performance contracts, which is different to strategic indicators.

Data collection: Access to data for reporting remains a problem. Proper consultation with all departments in a Metro is needed to effectively integrate all systems including the billing and property valuation systems into GIS.

Knowledge management: Metro officials saw the need for data to be centrally available.

City of Cape Town

Coordination: The SACN should link to existing reporting mechanisms as there is too much reporting already being done. There is a need for one central coordinator within Metros and key people responsible for data collection in the departments need to be identified. This includes the Corporate GIS and GIS people within different departments. Better coordination between Stats SA, National

Treasury, Metros and SACN is required.

Indicators: There is a need to develop a framework that will align indicators between cities – this is seen as a possible role of SACN– look at UN Habitat indicator framework. The difference between performance and strategic indicators was highlighted. What is also needed is the identification of targets and benchmarks, which again could be a role of the SACN. There is a critical need to clearly define and standardize a core set of indicators, as there is no uniformity in their definitions presently. Metros are moving towards the development and use of outcome indicators. SACN could develop a set of core outcome indicators for Metros including a guideline on how to measure them and provide benchmarking targets.

Data collection: Another role of the SACN could be to establish agreements with Stats SA to access data and look at mechanisms by which additional questions could be incorporated into their data collection instruments. It is difficult to compare cities because of different data collection approaches and therefore there is a need to standardize methodological approaches, especially for surveys. Need to use official and accredited statistics. SACN could engage with Stats SA to access official data. Cost of data collection and cost-benefit analysis should be facilitated by SACN. GIS is critical for reporting.

Knowledge management: The city sees the need for a set of guidelines on standardizing data collection. This is because data integrity is critical. The City is developing a Develop Resource Centre to facilitate their own knowledge management. The SACN must also do better with their data management. One action could be to develop a portal where Metros could access raw data from agencies such as the National Treasury and Stats SA. The SACN must consult on results of any reports or analyses that they do. SACN should share lessons between Metros on what is working and what is not. The SACN could lobby on behalf of Metros. Products that should be produced include summary statistics; policy briefs; monographs on lessons learnt, best practices and emerging issues. The SACN in developing their products must understand user needs within Metros. In the development of these products, including the SoCR, the SACN must produce a schedule for meetings, reporting dates and clear timelines for the SoCR. The benefits of these products include making comparison between Metros, identifying new and emerging issues, interpreting the causes of particular outcomes, developing policies and identifying appropriate interventions.

Other issues: SACN could play a role in sourcing research funding for Metros. SACN needs to get their act together to ensure quick wins and consistency – this is their “last chance”.

Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality

Coordination: Forum of departmental data collectors within Metros is needed. Have a GIS Technical Forum that has representation from all departments.

Indicators: Need to standardize indicators/questions used in different surveys and data collection methods across Metros. Differences in performances between Metros are because different indicators and data collection mechanisms are used. Indicators are used mainly for meeting performance targets (e.g. IDP & SDBIP). Need to list and define indicators. Need to move from output to outcome indicators – Metros are starting to align. SACN should do independent research on outcome indicators. Reports on indicators are required by regulators.

Data collection: Departments have their own methods of collecting data. Data must be in a useable format and be incorporated into GIS. There is a need for a single system for reporting on indicators. 40% of Metro official’s time can be allocated to reporting. There is the use of monitoring instruments to measure certain indicators. The benefits of a data collection mechanism will be to ensure uniformity in indicators, data and reporting as well as ensure accountability.

Knowledge management: SACN needs to ensure better communication. SACN should encourage the sharing of information.

Other issues: Metros are not always responsible for all functions (e.g. electricity in townships). Staff capacity and vacant posts are a major challenge.

eThekweni Municipality

Coordination: Overall negativity to reporting to SACN - already compiling numerous reports for

provincial government, national government, Treasury, etc. - already too many reports. eThekweni has reporting structures in place. SACN should first study what is already required in terms of statutory reporting and then triangular this against their needs.

Indicators: Indicators are for IDP & SDBIP requirements – provincial and national reporting requirements. Aligned to national indicators but may not necessarily align with SACN.

Data collection: SACN should collate the data already compiled in terms of legislation and construct their own reports and not ask the Metro's for more reports. SACN should define what data is essential for the Metros to collect. Reporting on an array of indicators mainly using external data sources.

Knowledge management: Develop a central data portal from which all Metros can draw information.

Msunduzi Municipality

Indicators: Mainly reporting on national indicators (e.g. Service Delivery Indicators, Key Performance indicators) to COGTA, National Treasury, national and provincial departments and StatsSA in the form of the Annual Report and the Annual Performance Report.

Data collection: Need a standard template for data collection to facilitate uniform reporting and to avoid being overburdened. Need a fully integrated performance management system - fully automated system may enable the provision of more credible data.

Knowledge management: SACN could play a role in developing a central portal for data sharing, data collection and providing benchmarking.

Other issues: Human resource shortage and shortage of the tools of trade.

Buffalo City Municipality

Coordination: Already collecting a wide range of data for both internal and external purposes. Respondents are worried about additional data collection burden. The City is expecting to collect more data, as National Treasury wants more developmental data (although not dissimilar to what is already being collected). Officials argue that many external stakeholders including StatsSA, SALGA and national departments, as well as internal departments, want information on own templates – but often want same information. This clearly needs rationalisation particularly at the national level. This challenge is dubbed "death by spread-sheet", which indicates a serious concern around duplication of effort and demands placed on officials.

Data collection: Needs an integrated reporting framework that brings in the needs of all departments. Also would allow the consolidation of information being collected, which is outside the mandate of separate departments. Officials engaged with believe that SACN could facilitate the development of such a framework by connecting Metros with similar needs with those that have developed workable frameworks. Such a forum would be widely accepted.

Knowledge management: A priority is to establish fewer systems that require attention across departments, which is partly about managers beginning to communicate effectively.

City of Johannesburg

Coordination: Broader strategic analysis of data happens at Group Strategy Level where coordination takes place. This unit focuses on impact and outcome indicators for high-level strategic use. Belief is that this works well. Need analysis to inform strategy to underpin the future development of the city. Councillors persuaded to allocate budget for R&D although this is a continuous struggle. In this regard, Joburg is in a better place than smaller Metros. Contributing to developing a culture of "using analysis" in planning but still a long way from "seamless data". City monitoring 24 indicators relating to Joburg Strategic Framework. This demonstrates the effectiveness of a central coordinator who looks at different tiers of data and undertakes analysis for different purposes.

Indicators: Sceptical about GCIF indicators as indices so different across member cities. Need to review these indicators and select a (very) short core list for the GCIF. More importantly the SACN could facilitate a process for establishing a core group of indicators, which all Metros could adopt. Populating these indicators would be a challenge unless a central service provider/ data collection

agency was brought in.

Data collection: GIS established partnerships with all departments to ensure geo-referencing of data collected. New relationship emerging with StatSA in that they are now more responsive to needs of Metros – responding to needs, which provides an opportunity for all Metros and SACN to align.

Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality

Coordination: A national performance management forum needs to be established to discuss practices, systems, and lessons learnt. SACN could coordinate the establishment of such a forum.

Indicators: Reporting on National Treasury/strategic indicators that are incorporated into SDBIP and KPI's. Acts/legislation including SBDIP's and KPA's defines importance of indicators. NMM indicators evolving and still to align with national department outcome indicators.

Data collection: Goal is to integrate all systems. Have a decentralized system that has processes in place for sign off on KPIs by different departments, where documents can be loaded and there is strict security. Management can also authorize on system.

Knowledge management: Need a guideline - how data is to be collected, what methods should be used and what framework should be used in the analysis of data. Organization issuing the guidelines must have weight.

Other issues: Challenges are – capacity and vacancies.

Mangaung Metro Municipality*

Coordination: No clear coordination structures.

Indicators: Only indicators focusing on SDBIP.

Data collection: Linking internal databases in GIS. No mechanism for collecting data – departments work in silos.

*It is important to emphasize that a proper engagement with Mangaung Metro Municipality could not be organized and therefore inputs were received from a few people telephonically.

5.2 Existing coordinating mechanisms in Metros

A significant effort was required from the onset of the project to identify the relevant departments, managerial positions and individuals who play a leading role in the coordination of data collection within a Metro. The SACN provided names for some of the Metros but in most cases individuals within the relevant departments in a Metro had to be identified. Based on this initial information, the project team sent E-mails to identified people explaining the purpose of the project. The correspondence included a letter from the SACN that formally communicated the purpose of the project. The idea was to initially identify the key coordinators in the Metros that would then assist in identifying other departments and individuals to meet with either individually or in groups.

This proved to be an extremely time consuming exercise because in most Metros there was no department clearly responsible for coordinating data collection across the entity. Delays in setting up meetings were also caused when a few Metros insisted on following protocols in contacting relevant people within the hierarchy of the city, which created a bottleneck in some cases when the request was not prioritised. In others, a lack of capacity with few people spread thinly across many functions and responsibilities pertaining to data management caused delays when E-mails or requests to meet were not prioritized. The larger more established Metros were better able to facilitate this process. Although these observations may be deemed “normal” considering the urgency of tasks facing many officials, it does reveal how important data issues are within a “hierarchy of priorities”.

Some of the larger and more established Metros were generally better positioned than the newer, medium sized Metros to identify the departments, positions and individuals responsible for coordinating data collection. In some of the smaller and more recently established Metros, a lack of capacity resulted in much time being spent in identifying the correct departments and people to engage with. This implies that SACN would be well advised to engage with Metros in formalising a data coordination function with specific departments or positions and not individuals. Clearly staff turnover means that clarity on who is responsible for coordinating data collection in the Metros is a challenge.

This coordination function could dramatically improve data collection mechanisms and streamline reporting within the Metros, which would help decrease the reporting burden in Metros. Metros felt that the SACN could assist in facilitating the identification of “one contact person” in the Metros when it comes to data collection, which should include spatial/GIS information. What should also be facilitated is developing a list of the key people within Metro departments responsible for collecting data.

As a result of the length of time it took to set up meetings within Metros, it became necessary to focus on meeting with key coordinating individuals. It also became apparent that the GIS departments were key participants and needed to be prioritised as key informants. This is largely because of the key role that spatial information is playing within some Metros: a pivot in a mechanism for collecting and reporting data. It is also because the GIS departments have to engage with coordination mechanisms in the Metro and across different departments. They therefore know who the key people are in coordinating data collection at the Metro and departmental levels.

A guideline document was sent to all Metros to inform them of the questions that were to be asked. In some cases the Metros distributed this document to key people in the different departments who then completed it as a questionnaire. These were returned to the project team. In only one case, could meetings with individuals or groups not be arranged. As a consequence telephonic interviews were done with people in Manguang Municipality. In retrospect, the SACN and project team should have recognized the importance of sending letters to the executive of the Metros to identify the relevant coordinating departments and positions as well as to set up the necessary meetings.

What was also determined once meetings were held was that the responsibility for coordinating data collection for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Strategic Indicators (e.g. financial and non-financial data) were often managed by different departments within a Metro. The KPI's are generally output based. According to The Presidency's Policy Framework for the Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation System (The Presidency, 2007), output indicators are “the final products, goods and services produced for delivery” or more simply “what we produce or deliver”. In contrast outcomes indicators, which often

pertain to strategic indicators, are the “consequence of achieving specific outputs” and an “institution’s strategic goals and objectives set out in its plans” or “what we wish to achieve”. Thus, outcome indicators are linked to a set of targets listed by relevant government departments or Metros (European Commission, 2011).

Overall it can be argued that Metros are moving from an emphasis on monitoring output indicators to a focus on outcome-based indicators. Although this varied across Metros, a majority of respondents indicated that outcome-based indicators were the necessary goal of the future if they were to gauge their broader development mandate. However, it was recognized that the status quo favoured the collection of data pertaining to output indicators. Reasons for this included the existing monitoring framework that cascaded down the spheres of government from National Treasury and the importance of accounting for output indicators to deliverables that were aligned to budget lines. In other words, financial accounting mechanisms had a major influence on indicators and relevant data.

Further types of indicator are those pertaining to impact or impact indicators. These show the “results of achieving specific outcomes, such as reducing poverty and creating jobs” or “how we have actually influenced communities and target groups”. These indicators are more difficult to monitor but generally can be measured through the use of surveys such as Quality of Life (QoL) or Customer Satisfaction Surveys (CSS). The responsibility for coordinating the data collection for these indicators is often done by a different department to those responsible for output and outcome indicators.

The departments and individuals that assisted the project team in setting up the relevant meetings for each of the Metros are presented in Table 1. These individuals identified within their specific positions should be “appointed” as “key strategic data custodians” within the Metros. The senior managers responsible for these positions are presented in brackets and would need to ratify whether these positions are the correct entity to be “appointed” as the key strategic data custodians. This will need to be done by the SACN in consultation with the Metros coupled with a more general review of which departments the key strategic data coordinators should be located in and what specific positions should fulfil this function. The Chief Information Officer (CIO) within Metros may be a candidate for this position in Metros where such positions exist.

Table 1: Possible data coordinators within Metros

METRO	DIRECTORATE	UNIT	POSITION	PERSON
Buffalo City	Knowledge Management and Support	Knowledge and Research	Research and Policy Coordinator	Mr Jack Fine (Dr Tembisa Norushe)
Ekurhuleni	Institutional Strategy, Monitoring and	Research and Development	Director	Ms Elizabeth Ramoaka (Mr Msuli)

METRO	DIRECTORATE	UNIT	POSITION	PERSON
	Evaluation and Research			Mlandu)
eThekwini	Information and Research, Corporate Policy Unit	Corporate Policy	Senior Manager Information and Research	Mr Brian O' Leary (Ms Jacquies Subban)
Cape Town	Corporate Services	Strategic Development, Information and GIS Department	Manager Strategic Information	Ms Carol Wright (Mr Keith Smith)
Joburg	Office of the Executive Mayor	Strategy, Policy Coordination & Relations	Deputy Director Strategic Information	Mr Tinashe Mushayanyama (Mr Jan Erasmus)
Mangaung	Office of the City Manager	Organizational Planning and Performance Management	Deputy Executive Director	Mr Kadimo Masekoane (Mr Teboho Maine)
Msunduzi	Office of the City Manager		Manager	Ms Madeleine Jackson-Plaatjies (Mr Nkosi)
Nelson Mandela	Office of the Chief Operating Officer	Policy, Strategy & Research	Assistant Director: Performance Management	Mrs Amanda Dowd-Krause (Dr Lineo Nkanjeni)
Tshwane	Office of the City Manager	Organisational Performance	Director	Ms Unathi Mhlauli (Ms Anisha Dharumrajh)

The individuals in GIS in the Metros are listed in Table 2. They play a crucial role in most Metros in that they integrate information from databases such as billing and valuations with cadastral data to enable reporting on a number of indicators at various spatial levels. Essentially a GIS can integrate, store, edit, analyse, share, and display geographic information for informing decision making within a Metro. GIS applications are tools that allow users to create interactive queries (user-created searches), analyse spatial information, edit data in maps, and present the results of all these operations. It clearly represents a range of strategic options for a Metro. Not all the GIS people listed in the table were engaged with individually.

Table 2: GIS coordinators within Metros

METRO	POSITION	PERSON
Buffalo City	GIS Manager	Annemarie Fish
Ekurhuleni	Director Geoinformatics	Morena Letsosa
eThekwini	Deputy Head: GIS	Siyabonga Mngadi

METRO	POSITION	PERSON
Joburg	Director Corporate Geo- Informatics	Marcelle Hattingh
Mangaung	Director	Hennie Stander
Msunduzi	GIS Department manager	Anesh Roopan
Nelson Mandela	Assistant Director: Corporate GIS	Jaco Louw
Tshwane	Senior Spatial Information Specialist	Derick O'Brien

5.3 Performance indicators

The Metros in South Africa face a significant burden of reporting. Table 3 provides a list of the more recognized questionnaires/returns that Metros in any one-year have to submit, which are required by different legislative and policy mandates (National Treasury, 2007). The actual number when one includes reports to other departments (e.g. Dept. of Human Settlement, parastatals and national regulators) will exceed the 127 reports listed in Table 3. This includes the production of reports to national departments and agencies, Annual Reports and other reports such as the State of City Reports for individual Metros. Even in the larger more established Metros such as Cape Town, eThekweni and Joburg, it is clear that the pressures to produce data for indicators and reporting are significant.

Table 3: Number, frequency and type of returns submitted by municipalities to national agencies

Stakeholder /Role Player	Title of Questionnaire /Return	Frequency of Submission	Number of Submissions
National Treasury (National Treasury)	Capital Acquisition and Sources of Finance	Annually / Monthly	Annually (3) Monthly (12)
	Asset Management Information	Annually	1
	Grants and Subsidies Received	Annually	1
	Grants and Subsidies Given	Annually	1
	Cash Flow Statement	Annually / Monthly	Annually (1) Monthly (12)
	Statement of Financial Position	Annually	3
	Strategic Plan / IDP to Budget	Annually	1

Stakeholder /Role Player	Title of Questionnaire /Return	Frequency of Submission	Number of Submissions
	Age Analysis of Creditors	Monthly	12
	Age Analysis of Debtors	Monthly	12
	External Debt Schedule	Quarterly	4
	Budget Evaluation Checklist	Annually	1
	MFMA Implementation and Monitoring	Quarterly	4
	MFMA – Corporate Entity	Quarterly	4
	MFMA – Long Term Contracts	Quarterly	4
	MFMA – PPP	Quarterly	4
	MFMA – Financial Management Grant	Monthly	12
	MFMA – Restructuring Grant	Monthly	12
Stats SA	Financial Census of Municipalities	Annually	1
	Non-Financial Census of Municipalities	Annually	1
	Survey of Capital Expenditure	Annually	1
	Survey of Statistics of Levies	Quarterly	4
	Survey of Quarterly Financial Statistics	Quarterly	4
SALGA	Payroll Deduction Survey	Annually	1
	Basis Service Delivery Questionnaire	Annually	1
	Local Government Capital Budget Table A	Annually	1
	Local Government Operating Budget Table B	Annually	1
	the DPLG Municipal Monitoring Questionnaire	Quarterly	4
Department of Water Affairs	WSA Regulatory Performance Measure	Annually	1
	Benchmark Indicators	Annually	1
	Water Service Quality Assessment	Annually	1

Stakeholder /Role Player	Title of Questionnaire /Return	Frequency of Submission	Number of Submissions
Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB)	Capacity Assessment	Annually	1
TOTAL REPORTS			127

Presently, there are over 100 indicators that the Metros are collecting data for to enable them to fulfil their reporting mandates. It was revealing that in some instances it was necessary to allay the fears of respondents that the research exercise was not about introducing new reporting requirements and indicators but about finding practical mechanisms that built upon existing systems. Once this was explained, the discussions became more constructive in nature.

From the City of Cape Town's perspective, this burden is likely to increase with the release of a new set of indicators by the National Treasury for inclusion in the Annual Reports of Metros. There is also indication from national departments and agencies that further reporting requirements may be placed on the Metros including the requirements of the Municipal Analysis Tool (MAT) emerging from The Presidency and the Barometers of COGTA and SALGA. It should be emphasized that respondents from the medium and smaller Metros made it clear that they are only able to cope with their existing demands. Further requirements would require a careful re-evaluation and re-configuration of their systems. A range of respondents including from within eThekweni Metro and national stakeholders strongly suggested that the SACN should source data from agencies (i.e. National Treasury and Stats SA) that have already been compiled in terms of legislation for their purposes.

In 2008, COGTA and the National Treasury focused on reducing the reporting burden on municipalities and on rationalizing data collection at local government level. The Local Government Data Forum was established and coordinated by the National Treasury to address this issue. The analysis emerging from this process emphasised that:

- There is a need for Information officers at municipal level (including Metros) to be appointed;
- There is great need for an adoption of a National Coordinating Body;
- There are many cases of ambiguous questions currently posed to municipalities;
- There needs to be an attempt to introduce the South African Statistical Quality Assessment Framework (SASQAF) to local government data collection;
- There is a need to link data collection practices to national indicators;
- There is a need for a complete assessment of data reporting at local government level.

To drive these recommendations posited in 2008, the Forum asked the Financial and Fiscal Commission (FFC) to highlight the scale of the problem regarding local government data collection as well as to promote the awareness of the forum across government. This reflects a need to provide a stronger legal mandate to the Local Government Data Forum and the prioritization of strengthening capacity at local level including the appointment of Municipal Information Officers, providing access to relevant aggregated data and agreeing on a set of standard definitions for indicators.

Respondents across many Metros believe that the National Treasury should be the only collector of financial statistics. Similarly it can be argued that Stats SA should be the only collector of non-financial statistics. Both departments have a legislated requirement and this necessitates a forum not only consisting of the National Treasury and Stats SA but all other departments and regulators that require municipalities to collect data of some kind to populate selected indicators.

When enquiring about the indicators of the Metro and their alignment to SACN indicators, most stakeholders were not aware of the latter even in the simplest terms. According to COGTA, the SACN has no legal mandate to collect data from Metros to enable them to populate their indicators including those of the SoCR. For various reasons, including limited capacity and a prioritization of responding mainly to legislated reporting requirements, respondents within Metros are not generally supportive of providing further data to the SACN. Stakeholders felt that the SACN should not add to the burden on Metros and should use existing indicators, data and reports produced by mandated national departments and agencies of state.

As an example, Metros have to report on a quarterly and annual basis to agencies such as Stats SA and the National Treasury. Furthermore, many departments within Metros have to report to national departments and regulators on key output indicators. The data required for reporting to Stats SA and the National Treasury comes through the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plans (SDBIP) that are integrally linked to the Key Performance Areas (KPAs), Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Annual Reports of Metros.

The SACN may argue that as a network established by South African cities, the Minister for COGTA and SALGA that they have a mandate from their members to collect data to populate indicators for reporting on in the SoCR. However, it is recommended that SACN play a role that demonstrates the utility of a network that is able to facilitate effective use and ultimately collection of data that strengthens this area of work within Metros. For example, the role that the SACN could play is to summarize the data coming from agencies across the Metros and distil what interventions and policies are required to have the greatest impact on improving the situation within Metros. The products of this research must enable the SACN to influence policy and therefore consideration must be given to the creation of different

types of knowledge products such as policy briefs and comparisons across Metros. Useful examples of such knowledge products can be found at the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO).

The ability of Metros to report on these indicators is strongly linked to a spatial dimension with many of the Metros having a comprehensive cadastral system – an electronic map of surveyed land parcels - and GIS. Many of the Metros have integrated their departmental databases such as the billing system, valuation roll, and service access into their GIS to assist them with their operations. For example, Tshwane Metro commented that GIS is critical in maintaining an asset register and that it is an audit requirement for the systems within a Metro to be integrated and linked to a GIS. It is only in a few instances that the GIS is effectively being used by the Metros for reporting purposes and especially at a sub-Metro level. This is potentially a key area of intervention by the SACN to ensure that Metros have an integrated GIS that enables their operation and reporting in the future.

5.4 Mechanisms for collecting data

In most countries data required for populating indicators can be obtained from a number of sources including registers, censuses and representative surveys. Key criteria for using a particular source include the level at which it is reported, the frequency of collection and the level of accuracy. Another key factor is whether it is defined as a national or official statistic. Having this status prevents politicians, government officials and other stakeholders from questioning the data.

According to the South African Statistical Quality Assessment Framework (SASQAF) of the National Statistical System (NSS), statistics become official when they are certified after going through the standard assessment procedure. To be certified, the data collected must meet user needs of a broad audience and form part of a longitudinal and sustainable process. Consequently, the data collected by many national agencies such as Stats SA and the National Treasury can be considered to be official statistics. This includes their censuses and household surveys.

Sources of data that are not collected by “official” government agencies should follow the process of accreditation by going through the standard assessment procedure of SASQAF. Datasets that are not official statistics should not be used to report on any indicators whether they are part of the SACN set or not.

5.4.1 Registers

A register is often used, especially in developed countries, as the primary mechanism for providing statistics because it is updated continuously and provides accurate data for a geographic area of interest. These include population, birth and death, marriage, property as

well as citizenship registers. Within Metros, a number of registers exist including cadastral systems, property valuation rolls, billing systems and indigent registers. Wherever possible, information from these registers should be used with the assurance that they provide a valid reflection of the reality on the ground. It is from these registers that much of the official information provided for reporting to national departments and regulators is provided.

Several of the Metros also indicated that they were using software that allowed them to report their performance on SDBIP indicators.

5.4.2 Censuses

5.4.2.1 Stats SA

South Africa conducts a decennial census with the last one undertaken in 2011. Between the censuses, Stats SA normally conducts a community survey such as the one conducted in 2007. The community survey provides extensive information on the population, households and the services they access. Both censuses and community surveys suffer from the same problem that as soon as the data is released that it is often out of date. As a consequence, national departments required to provide services to households such as the Department of Water Affairs or Eskom resort to conducting dwelling counts as a mechanism to supplement information from the censuses. Other censuses that are conducted include those done by Stats SA and National Treasury in all the municipalities in the country.

The focus of Stats SA at a local government level is to undertake a census of all municipalities on financial, non-financial and capital expenditure (Capex) data so as to provide official statistics for the government. Financial statistics are collected on a quarterly and annual basis while the non-financial and Capex statistics are collected on an annual basis. The financial census provides a balance sheet for the municipality as well as all income and expenditure. This includes investments, debt recovery, expenditure on services and rates and taxes. The non-financial census covers information on municipal employees, demographics, service provision, indigent support, broader strategy and policy development, and community facilities. The Capex survey provides present expenditure and future budgets for capital works in a municipality.

A review of the questionnaires for these censuses shows that they are conducted to monitor and evaluate the performance of municipalities and provide a wealth of information that can be used to populate many of the SACN's indicators. To lessen the reporting burden it is proposed that indicators used by the SACN link to those being reported on in these censuses and surveys. Stats SA indicated that stakeholders are invited on an annual basis to give inputs on the questions incorporated into their censuses. Furthermore, Stats SA has indicated that the SACN could request them to add questions to their census questionnaires.

A Service Level Agreement (SLA) can be established between the SACN and Stats SA to provide them with all the data from these censuses and in a predefined format.

5.4.2.2 National Treasury

In a similar fashion, the National Treasury collects financial and non-financial statistics from municipalities. On a monthly basis statistics on income and expenditure are collected and compared to a municipality's budget while on an annual basis municipalities report on their SDBIP outcome indicators that describe their service delivery targets and performance. This is supplemented by the Annual Reports that have to be produced by the municipalities. These requirements are stipulated in Sections 71 and 72 of the Municipal Finance Management Act (No 56 of 2003).

The National Treasury has been able to institutionalize the collection and reporting of financial and non-financial statistics over many years. They have also developed a guideline to capacitate municipalities in the collection and reporting of these statistics. Although Stats SA and the National Treasury both collect financial and non-financial statistics there are recognized differences. According to the National Treasury, statistics collected by Stats SA are more of a historical nature while those of the National Treasury are actual figures. The National Treasury, through Section 216 of The Constitution, are required to "prescribe measures to ensure both transparency and expenditure control in each sphere of government", through recognized accounting practices, uniform expenditure classifications and uniform treasury norms and standards.

The National Treasury may enforce the collection and reporting of statistics by stopping the transfer of funds if municipalities persistently refuse or are unable to provide such information. According to Stats SA this mechanism of enforcement results in the information provided to the National Treasury differing to that received by Stats SA. The National Treasury recognizes that even with the stringent measures that they provide, there is still an issue with the credibility and reliability of the statistics they receive. They will therefore be implementing Standard Chartered Accounts to address this issue.

The National Treasury believes that the SACN indicators should align to those that they collect data for. They also argue that they should be the only collectors of financial statistics. Whatever the situation, they are willing to collaborate with agencies like Stats SA, SALGA and SACN. Similarly to Stats SA, they are open to working with the SACN in looking at adding additional questions in their mechanisms for collecting financial data. They are also willing to provide whatever data they have available that might be required by the SACN.

5.4.3 Household surveys

5.4.3.1 Stats SA

On a quarterly and annual basis, Stats SA conducts nationally representative household surveys. These surveys are accredited through SASQAF and therefore provide official data for South Africa. The main surveys conducted by Stats SA are the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS), the General Household Survey (GHS) and the Income and Expenditure Survey (IES). The QLFS is conducted quarterly while the GHS is done annually. The IES is done every five years.

The QLFS was designed to enable the statistics to be reported on quarterly at a Metro level. This refers mainly to the larger Metros but even in the smaller Metros the sample design of the QLFS allows the statistics to be reported on annually rather than on a quarterly basis. Stats SA is also looking at changing the sample design of their surveys to allow more frequent reporting at a municipal level. The questions incorporated into the QLFS link to particular indicators that have been identified in consultation with government departments.

The GHS was designed for reporting at a Metro level, especially the larger Metros. For the smaller Metros the GHS data could be reported on every two years; although Stats SA is revisiting their sample design with the view of being able to report at a municipal level. This request was received from COGTA that the sample sizes be increased to enable more effective reporting at a municipal level. Stats SA engages with government on a regular basis to ensure that the questions incorporated in the GHS align with their indicators. All the members of Stats SA interviewed in this exercise suggested that the SACN write to the Statistician General requesting:

- The regular access to data collected from the censuses and surveys conducted by Stats SA; and
- The inclusion of new questions to populate the indicators that were not already in any of the censuses or surveys

While meeting with the national departments, it became clear that there are many existing and proposed requests on Metros to provide data that need to be streamlined including MAT, COGTA Barometer, SALGA Barometer, financial and non-financial statistics for National Treasury and Stats SA. It is proposed that the SACN engage with Stats SA and request them to facilitate, possibly through the NSS, the alignment of these initiatives so that the burden of reporting on Metros is made more efficient. In some instances, it may be argued that data collection exercises such as the financial and non-financial censuses is a duplication that results in disparate information being provided for decision-making in South Africa. Through the Statistics Act No. 6 of 1999, the co-ordination of statistical data collection among organs of state, which includes national government departments and local

government authorities, has to receive approval by the Minister. The National Treasury is supportive of Stats SA becoming the National Coordinator and being responsible for coordinating the various data collection mechanisms (National Treasury, 2007).

The SACN should also engage with Stats SA to see how it would be able to assist Metros in the collection of data so as to ensure quality, standardized and comparable statistics and develop procedures that will minimize the collection and reporting of statistics. What should also be determined is how the data collected by the Metros through their registers or Quality of Life and Customer Satisfaction Surveys can be designated as official statistics. Stats SA also has a role to play in reviewing and commenting on any statistics that are collected analysed and reported on by Metros or SACN. These functions are defined within the Statistics Act.

5.4.3.2 Quality of Life (QoL) and Customer Satisfaction Surveys (CSS)

The QoL and CSS are clearly instruments that can be used to collect data especially to populate impact-based indicators. These surveys are one of the few mechanisms that can be used to measure the impact of interventions being implemented by Metros. The SACN commissioned PDG to undertake a review of QoL and CSS surveys, which was largely done by facilitating a workshop of stakeholders from the different Metros.

The focus of the PDG-led process was to look at the commonalities and differences between the QoL and CSS and work towards the adoption of a common approach and set of core indicators. All nine Metros have conducted either QoL or CSS in the past. The approaches used varied quite markedly in terms of the sampling methodology, type of interview, frequency of studies, use of service providers, form of questionnaire administration and scaling used with questionnaires. Some progress seemed to have been made on aspects such as identifying a core set of indicators although much progress is still to be made for adequate comparison.

Metros like Ekurhuleni are supportive of an initiative to standardize the indicators/questions and methods used in conducting QoL/CSS. If the QoL and CSS are to be standardized in the Metros, more work needs to be done. Bossel (1999) outlines the following requirements for developing such a set of indicators:

- A framework needs to be developed that will enable the processes and criteria for selecting a core set of indicators;
- This must be participatory to ensure stakeholder buy-in by the people who are responsible for the QoL/CSS in Metros
- The indicators should represent the important issues that Metros are facing and to enable them to measure their progress towards their objectives

- Indicators should be responsive to situations and changes in situation, whether political or environmental
- To populate the indicators requires rigorous and effective data collection and analysis
- The collecting of data through the QoL/CSS must also be consistent, regular and capable of interpretation.

Stats SA potentially has an important role to play in standardizing the approaches through the implementation of SASQAF. Stats SA has also indicated that they would be willing to assist the Metros in the implementation of the surveys using their comprehensive field survey infrastructure. This would ensure that data collected through these surveys would be collected on a regular basis and be recognized as an official statistic. SACN's role would be to further facilitate discussions with the Metros and Stats SA in the standardizing of these surveys.

It is recommended that a forum of individuals responsible for conducting QoL and CSS be established under the auspices of the SACN. It is also recommended that in the standardization of the survey approach, consideration be given to the use of a Citizen Report Card (CRC) approach. The DPME in their report entitled "Citizen-based service delivery monitoring: research into current practices" is supportive of the CRC rather than the QoL/CSS approaches.

This approach uses similar methods and questions to that of the QoL and CSS but differs in two critically important ways. The first is that there must be systematic communication with citizens about the implementation of the CSS and the findings of the study. The second is that a Social Compact is entered into with citizens at appropriate administrative levels to ensure that service delivery needs of communities are targeted.

The CRC is explicit in terms of the use of an area based sampling methodology, face-to-face interviews, the conducting of the CRC over a three year period in line with the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), use of independent service providers such as Stats SA, and scaling used with questionnaires.

5.4.3.3 Independent Metro Survey

The data collection mechanisms described above generally has fairly standardized output and outcome indicators for which data is collected. This is required to provide a longitudinal perspective on issues being measured within the Metros. A further requirement, especially to test theories and practices on the implementation of interventions and policy, would be to conduct an independent survey that allows reporting with precision at a Metro level. The SACN, in consultation with the Metros, should define all aspects of such surveys. The

questions would be specific to the circumstances that Metros are facing at any particular time.

The questions incorporated into these surveys would be mainly orientated to populating impact type indicators. These independent surveys could also be used to monitor “unusual” indicators. In other words, not the normal indicators monitored in registers, censuses or QoL and CSS surveys but impact indicators that focus on unique issues in a Metro. The identification of these indicators would need to be done by the SACN in consultation with the Metros.

5.4.4 External data sources

The populating of indicators for the SoCR has in the past relied very heavily on external data providers. The Metros have also relied on external data providers and consultants for data to populate certain indicators such as population or gross value add (GVA). The main problem with the use of external data sources is that the information they provide is often politically contentious or cannot be validated for it to be used as credible data. It is also the case that the information cannot be provided on a regular basis for reporting purposes.

The bottom line on this issue is that Metros cannot provide all the data needed to populate particular indicators. Therefore, there will be a continued dependence on external data sources. However, the external providers should be encouraged to have their data certified through the SASQAF of the NSS. In the event that the data cannot be certified it is then recommended that the use of these particular indicators is discontinued. A good example of this is the GVA.

Through an engagement with the National Accounts department of Stats SA it became apparent how difficult it is to calculate the gross domestic product (GDP) or GVA for a country or province. The wealth of information required to calculate the GDP or GVA, as well as the costs of collecting such data inhibits this at a local municipality level. As a consequence, macro-economic and statistical methods are used with proxy indicators to estimate the figures at a local municipality level. The methods used to generate these estimates inhibit the validation of the data through the NSS, as the statistics would then be considered official.

Stats SA therefore argue that other indicators such as rates and taxes, or government expenditure, could be used to understand what is happening within the economy of a Metro. Stats SA collects all of this data, as part of their financial census and surveys for Metros on an annual basis.

5.4.5 Geospatial information

In Section 5.2, the importance of spatial information was described, especially the cadastre linked to internal databases of a Metro as a mechanism for reporting data. The value is that the internal databases can be easily analysed to provide a wealth of information for spatial units of administration such as a suburb, ward, or sub-Metro regions within a Metro. Over and above this, geospatial information can provide a wealth of information on the location of projects; income and expenditure; government, municipal and community services; population, education, labour and employment statistics; infrastructure such as roads, electricity, water, and sanitation, telecommunications; voter registration; crime statistics; human settlements and land use/cover. The importance of geospatial information is further emphasized by the requirement of Metros to develop Spatial Development Framework (SDF) that form part of their Integrated Development Plans (IDP).

5.4.6 Customer Care Centres

Many of the Metros indicated that through their Customer Care Call Centres, data pertaining to a range of issues was collected. This data relates to requests for information or complaints. Some of the Metros indicated that they monitored the call centre data and use it as a mechanism to see how they are doing in addressing issues raised by customers. As an example, Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality introduced the concept of a Customer Care Centre, as a one-stop service delivery point for integrated access to services and information including that pertaining to:

- Payment and account-related services;
- Logging and following up of all complaints;
- Provision of information related to all services in the Metro;
- Liaison with and referral to line departments where necessary;
- Provision of a multi-purpose community care front desk;
- Provision of a “one-stop Metro-wide” customer care service to all the customers of Ekurhuleni; and
- Switchboard and call centre related services.

5.4.7 Monitoring stations

Within the Metros, departments have to use monitoring stations to enable them to collect data on particular indicators. Data generated from these monitoring stations are required to populate particular indicators and the information sent to national departments and regulators. For example, Metros use monitoring stations to collect data on indicators such as air quality, water quality, and electricity loads. The departments within Metros that use monitoring stations indicate that the indicators they use were generally similar to those of the

SACN. Once again, the request was made that the SACN obtain data from the departments that Metros were already feeding information to, to populate indicators.

5.5 Costs of collecting data

Stakeholders at both a national and Metro level were asked if they had any understanding of the costs for collecting data. They were also asked if any studies had been undertaken to look at the costs of collecting data in a Metro. Nearly all stakeholders could not provide any insight or documentation on costs in the collecting or reporting of data. One Metro said that 40% of their time was used towards reporting and therefore, this could be used as a proxy for data collection and reporting costs. The National Treasury and Nelson Mandela Metro indicated that they had undertaken studies. The National Treasury document is to be published in 2014 and a copy of the study done by Nelson Mandela Metro was requested. None of the other stakeholders could provide any information or studies done on costs.

A review of the literature did not provide any documentation on cost analyses or cost-benefit studies done in South Africa generally, the cities or internationally and more specifically on data collection mechanisms. There is a need for such a study to be undertaken in Metros in South Africa. This is a project that the SACN could facilitate. The study should look at what the overall costs are for Metros to collect the data requested of them for operational and reporting purposes. The study should go further to determine the cost-benefit of collecting all this information.

From a stakeholder perspective, the cost of data collection was not felt to be a major issue. This is largely because they see it as part of their daily activities and because they do not see the need for additional mechanisms to be established to collect data. This reiterates the point that the SACN should link to existing mechanisms for the collection of data. Stakeholders indicated that costs were incurred for data collection as part of the overall work of any department within the Metro. This would include human resources, data collection, software, programming, analysis and reporting. The business plan will provide an indication of what the possible budget should be for the SACN to implement mechanisms for them to collect data and to fulfil their mandate of identifying, assembling and disseminating information to enhance decision-making within the cities.

The censuses (excluding population census) and surveys conducted by Stats SA on a quarterly and annual basis cost in excess of R100 million. Stats SA has a full field force and personnel that capture, process and validate data collected from censuses and surveys. There is no other government agency that has such capacity and infrastructure to support Metros in the collection of their data. Furthermore, through the Statistics Act, they are given the responsibility to collect official statistics for the country. All stakeholders engaged with at Stats SA indicated a willingness to assist Metros wherever they could. SACN should facilitate discussions with Metros in looking at how Stats SA could help them in their data

collection efforts, especially if it would lessen the burden of data collection and reporting on the Metros.

5.6 Future mechanisms for collecting data

An interview was facilitated early on in the study process with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), which anticipated and summarized what many of the stakeholders - especially at the Metro level - felt about future mechanisms for collecting data. In essence, this was that the SACN should use the indicators and data already collected from Metros by national departments and agencies. By doing this, the SACN would avoid further burdening of the Metros. COGTA concurred with this and recommended that the SACN analyse the data already being collected to summarize what was happening in the Metros.

COGTA felt that the SACN should distil from this data the key interventions and policy requirements to make cities more sustainable. They also felt that the SACN should produce policy briefs on particular subjects for individual Metros or by doing comparisons of Metros. COGTA, as well as a number of the Metros, felt that the SoCR was “too academic” and “too long” to have any real utility for them. This should not be taken to reflect the final word of the Metros on the SoCR but is a good indication of what many Metro officials exposed to data and data use felt. Short and concise policy briefs could be used by SACN to leverage government in making a greater impact within Metros through the identification of key investments and policy changes. Metros also believed that such knowledge products would help them with their planning and budgeting.

COGTA and several of the Metros cautioned against the blanket use of similar data across the Metros because the mechanisms for collecting data differed across entities. This necessitates a guideline being developed that will provide a consolidated description of the standard approaches that Metros should follow in the provision of data to all the different departments and agencies that they are mandated to provide data for. The guideline must clearly define all indicators so that there is a common understanding of the indicators and data collection methods that specific departments within a Metro are required to use. Methods of how the data is to be validated by national departments and agencies should also be described. SACN should engage with the NSS at Stats SA to establish mechanisms by which data collected by Metros that are not part of national accounts such as QoL and CSS, can be certified as official statistics.

The CSIR also stated that for the SACN to undertake the analyses and provide support to Metros, a team of at least three dedicated people was required. A GIS and database person would be needed to process the data received from national departments, agencies and the Metros. A programmer would be required to assist the SACN and Metros in the development of web based knowledge portals where the data and other knowledge products could be

stored and accessed by stakeholders. A researcher specializing in urban development would be required to undertake the analysis of the data received from the various sources and produce the policy briefs and other knowledge products. This team would need to be managed by a person at the SACN. It has not been ascertained as to whether this capacity already exists at the SACN.

The key focus of the SACN would also be to establish SLAs or Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) on behalf of themselves and the Metros to access data from the national departments and agencies. The issue was raised and discussed in detail in Section 5.1, and relates to the need for coordination structures to be established in the Metros. This is a role that the SACN could play.

Stakeholders at the Metro level suggested that the SACN could play a role in facilitating a number of forums at the national and Metro levels. This would include a national forum of the data coordinators from the nine Metros so that they could learn from the experience of each other, especially in looking at methods and the efficient use of resources in the collection of data. Another national forum would be of the heads of GIS in the Metros so that they could learn from each other about the implementation and use of GIS at a corporate level as well as within departments of the Metro. It is important that the SACN facilitate the process of ensuring that GIS is more integrally incorporated into the operational and reporting side of Metros.

SACN has in the past coordinated an engagement of people responsible for QoL and CSS in the Metros. This role needs to be continued and further discussions on the standardization of indicators, sampling methods, questionnaire administration, and frequency of surveys and scoring of questions. The SACN should include Stats SA in this forum to examine ways in which the data from the QoL and CSS can be certified as an official statistic. The opportunity for the QoL and CSS to be 'bolted-on' to Stats SA surveys on a quarterly and annual basis should be investigated.

At a Metro level, the identified Metro data coordinators should facilitate forums of people responsible for the provision of data from the different departments. Metros felt that departments should be properly consulted in terms of their indicators and the data collection systems. A key focus of the data forums would be to ensure that all their existing systems were fully integrated and linked to their GIS. The heads of corporate GIS at a Metro level should form part of these forums to ensure that GIS contributes to performance monitoring and reporting at a strategic level. The SACN could play a role in ensuring that these forums are established and that they are held on a regular basis.

5.7 Knowledge management

Having accessed the required data, it will need to be analysed and turned into forms that are accessible and useful to a range of different users. International best practice demonstrates that indicator development and analysis should be done within an appropriate framework. It is here worth reflecting on an earlier analysis that the SACN commissioned as part of the lead up to the last SoCR (reference). Indicator frameworks are used to identify a logical set of core indicators and facilitate their interpretation (Sengestam, 2002). Two of the more commonly used indicator frameworks are the Drivers-Pressure-State-Impact-Response (DPSIR) or Pressure-State-Response (PSR) and Thematic Frameworks.

The DPSIR framework provides a structure to try and get a more holistic understand of the causal linkages between particular indicators and the social, economic and environmental situations in an area. This is demonstrated in Figure 1. Drivers describe the driving forces that can cause a particular state reflected as an output or outcome indicator. Pressure indicators describe the human activities that exert pressures on the environment while state indicators describe the “present state” or status quo of factors being reviewed. A response indicator describes the policies and interventions used to address a particular situation.

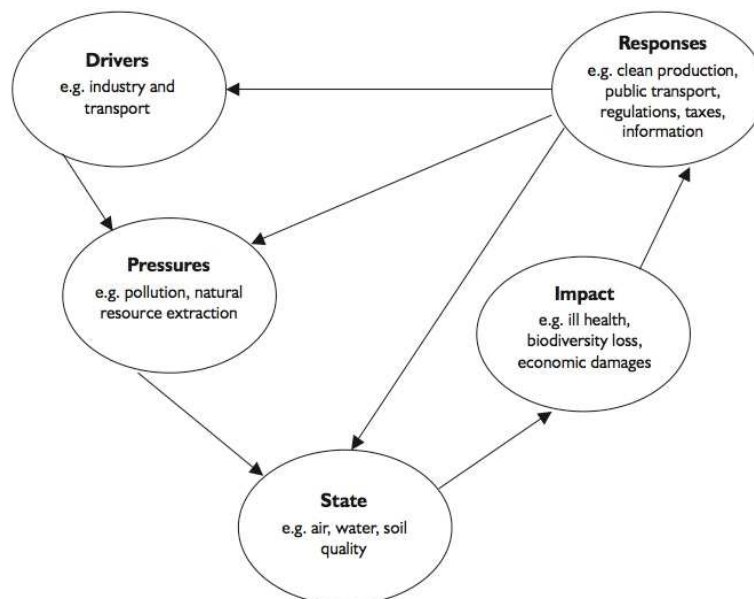


Figure 1: DPSIR framework with example indicators

The thematic or issue-based framework groups indicators according to particular themes. This framework is better suited than the DPSIR framework when having a national focus, assessing development progress and linking indicators to policy processes and targets reflected as outcomes. The advantage of the thematic framework is that it receives greater supported by government departments as they are more easily understood and communicated (Lewis, 2009). Such frameworks should be considered by SACN to enable the interpretation of the data accessed through the various mechanisms described in previous sections.

The City of Cape Town is in the process of developing such a framework that will ensure that their indicators and interpretation links to their international and national reporting requirements. They have decided to use a thematic framework in the development of their indicators and the reporting of the analysis. The value of these frameworks is it enables the core indicators to be identified and defined to ensure that their interpretation is used to focus on the strategic issues and monitor the implementation of Metro strategies. The City of Cape Town sees this framework as a mechanism of doing more reporting using outcome-based indicators.

Metros feel that the SACN could play a role in guiding Metros towards the development of appropriate frameworks that will include the evolution towards the greater use of outcome and impact indicators. Part of this role would be to assist the Metros in developing their targets and benchmarking their outcome indicators.

Several of the Metros indicated that a key activity they were busy with or were planning, was the development of knowledge portals. All the Metros recognized the value of such a portal in that information from departments could be stored on it and accessed by a broad set of stakeholders from within and outside of the organization. Some of the less capacitated Metros would need help from the SACN to implement such a knowledge portal. The City of Cape Town felt that the SACN could play a meaningful role in assisting Metros with knowledge management.

They also felt that the SACN could further develop their own knowledge portal so that data sourced from agencies such as Stats SA, National Treasury, other departments and the Metros in easy to use formats could access regulators. To facilitate this, the SACN should engage with these agencies and establish agreements in accessing their information. Ideally the portal should enable Metros and external stakeholders to analyse the data themselves so that they could produce their own reports. This could be done through the use of technologies such as SuperCross (used by Stats SA), ESPRI and other open source products. They also requested that this portal be linked to those of the Metros so as to encourage sharing of information between Metros.

They could also engage with Stats SA to get their assistance in helping the Metros with data collection, sampling and data dissemination. A key aspect of knowledge management would be to establish an archive of all this information. The National Treasury is also recommending that a portal be established to allow all municipalities to automate and standardize their reporting.

The Metros and national stakeholders were of the belief that the SACN should do a review of the SoCR. As was stated earlier stakeholders felt that the SoCR was too academic and Metros did not see the utility of the report to them. What was recommended is that the

SACN do a review of user needs. Some of the products Metros indicated they would like to see emanating from the SACN are summary statistics; policy briefs on lessons learnt, best practices and emerging issues; development of joint products and the holding of workshops with relevant people in Metros to discuss these products and hold conversations on what was working and what was not.

This is not to say that there is not a role for the SoCR. What Metros did say is that the SACN should use existing reporting mechanisms to develop the SoCR as much as possible. Other mechanisms for collecting data that were described in Section 4.3 could be used to source additional information. The key factor for them was to minimize the reporting burden on Metros. Metros said that they would be willing to contribute to the SoCR but that a proper plan with timelines needed to be provided to them well in advance. They also asked that the SACN provide a schedule of meetings well in advance so that Metros could plan appropriately.

5.8 Challenges and opportunities to developing data collection mechanisms

The key challenge facing Metros is the extent of reporting that they already face. This is further exacerbated by a lack of capacity. In many of the Metros it was reported that there were many posts that had not been filled. For example, in Nelson Mandela Metro at the time of reporting literally all the executive posts from the mayor to the executive managers were vacant. As a consequence, many Metros have to outsource the collection of data and reporting to consultants.

Metros also reported a lack of technology to enable them to collect, store and disseminate data. While some Metros use fully functional enterprise software to manage business processes and customer relations, such as SAP and enterprise databases such as Oracle, the smaller Metros report the use of Microsoft Excel for these purposes. Many of the larger Metros have international or locally produced software for monitoring performance while others lack such technology. In many of the Metros there is a corporate GIS with enterprise GIS software while in others there is just one person using a desktop GIS packages.

One of the real opportunities is to identify a single person in the Metro that is responsible for coordinating the collection of data and reporting on key indicators. People within Metro departments that are responsible for data collection should also be identified. There is also opportunity for Metros to fully integrate their information systems into GIS to enable them to improve their operational efficiencies and reporting. In the integration of these systems there must be proper consultation. With the intent of the National Treasury to establish a national reporting portal, the SACN could play a role in facilitating these discussions with Metros. The SACN could also facilitate the development of a national forums of Metro data coordinators, GIS managers from Metros and data collection people within Metro departments.

A key opportunity for the SACN is to develop a guideline for the Metros. The guideline would largely be a synthesis of the documents already produced by national agencies requiring reporting from Metros. The guideline would identify and clearly define the indicators that Metros have to report on. As part of the guideline they could provide guidance on the evolution from reporting on output to outcome indicators. This would include aspects such as setting targets. The guideline could follow the example of the work done by the National Treasury on their Performance Information Handbook (National Treasury, 2011).

The guideline would also describe the methods that have to be used in the collecting of this information. Metros report that the collection methods that each of them use differ and therefore, there is value in trying to standardize the methods so that the data collected on Metros is comparable. The methods used by the various agencies to validate the information collected would also be described. The SACN could also facilitate the development of a framework that Metros could use in the analysis of their data. The establishing of a National Coordinator as proposed by the National Treasury with data reporting happening through this position and a central portal would also be an opportunity.

The SACN could also develop a knowledge portal to facilitate the dissemination of information on Metros sourced from national agencies so that benchmarking could be done. They could also produce a suite of information products that meet the needs of Metro users. Metros felt that from these analyses the SACN could be of great benefit in helping them lobby provincial and national government in terms of their policy and intervention needs. Part of the role that the SACN could play in enabling the Metros to fulfil their reporting requirements would be to source research funding so that the Metros could do some of the critical R&D that they require to remain sustainable cities.

6. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION ON URBAN INDICATOR PROJECT FINDINGS

A workshop with key stakeholders from selected national departments and agencies and Metros was hosted by the SACN. The SACN informed stakeholders that in compiling the previous SoCR, challenges were identified, specifically with accessing accurate and credible data to populate the indicators identified in their four thematic groups of productive, inclusive, sustainable and well-governed cities. The SACN said that the intention of the study and workshop was to hold a discussion with stakeholders in developing a more robust and efficient mechanism of collecting data.

A presentation was given by the project team that highlighted the findings of the study. Presentations were also given by the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) on their Municipal Assessment Tool (MAT), National Treasury on the Cities Support Programme (CSP), South African Local Government Association (SALGA) on their

Municipal Barometer and Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) on the South African Quality Assessment Framework (SASQAF).

The stakeholders responded by indicating that the challenges identified by the SACN in the study were similar to the challenges they faced. A discussion on indicators and data collection was needed at the highest level, possibly in the form of a data summit, so as to ensure the buy-in of people at the highest level within Metros as well as other government departments. Stakeholders at the workshop confirmed what other Metro officials had stated during the study that there was a need for a guideline document. The guideline would collate all indicators Metros were collecting data for and provide descriptions of the standardized methods that should be used in the collecting of data for them.

Stakeholders were of the belief that there were regulatory requirements for Metros to have input, output, outcome and impact indicators. The issue was raised that definitions for the indicators were required and that there should be a focus on the outcome indicators. The issue of using official data and accrediting other sources of data was highlighted. Buffalo City Municipality indicated that they were in the process of working with Stats SA in making their datasets official through their accreditation within SASQAF. In this regard, there were several stakeholders that indicated that Stats SA had a central role to play in providing data and in accrediting other data collection processes (eg Quality of Life and Customer Satisfaction Surveys).

According to Stats SA, they are mandated through the Statistics Act to develop criteria for evaluating the quality of data, for coordinating data collection so as to avoid duplication and in making data official. Stats SA indicated that they had worked with several departments in accrediting their data (eg education, health, crime, etc). These datasets are all potential sources of data for the SoCR.

Stakeholders were also of the belief that the SACN needed to conduct a User Requirement Assessment (URA) with stakeholders at the Metros. The purpose of the URA would be to clearly define the needs of Metros, especially in terms of the products that the SACN needed to produce. One of the ways that this could be accomplished was to make the SoCR part of an implementation evaluation within the National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF). The SoCR and other products needed to reflect on whether cities over the last ten years had in fact become more productive, inclusive, sustainable or better governed. It was also proposed that the SACN collaborate with other departments and agencies that had already developed portals for the dissemination of data (eg Stats SA, SALGA's Municipal Barometer).

Several of the delegates concurred that there was a need to do a cost analysis or cost-benefit analysis of the data collection processes in Metros. The DPME confirmed the need for better coordination within municipalities and thus, they supported the findings of the

SACN study. The National Treasury provided insight into a study they were busy with looking at the performance of cities through indicators and how they would be measured. They indicated that they have consulted with Metros in this regard and were aligning their indicators to sector/departmental indicators.

SALGA was very supportive of the SACN study. They indicated that they faced similar challenges to the SACN with their Municipal Barometer. They felt that there was a need for an indicator reference group that would develop a standard set of indicators and benchmarks/targets. There should also be agreement on what data would be used and the types of outputs that would be produced (eg policy briefs). The development of the indicators should be done within an appropriate framework and should align with the data collection mechanisms already in place.

In the instance that these data collection mechanisms did not provide all the data required to populate the core set of indicators then they should be engaged with to see how this data could be collected. It was also proposed by stakeholders that the indicators link to City Development Strategies (CDS), national legislation and the National Development Plan (NDP), which the DPME was busy developing indicators for. It was agreed that the SACN needed to publish a list of their indicators and definitions. Stakeholders indicated that a differentiated approach would be required in the developing the indicators to take into consideration the unique characteristics and sizes of the Metros.

The presentations made confirmed what Metro stakeholders felt, that there is a lot of duplication in data collection. Clearly there is a need for a central coordinator such as Stats SA to minimize this duplication. Through such a central coordinator more uniform data would be made available that would improve the comparability of indicators between the Metros. It was also proposed that external data providers form part of the coordination structures. Stakeholders confirmed that at the Metros there was a need for coordination at the highest level with the City Managers driving the process. Departments within the Metros should also form part of the coordination structures within a Metro.

It was also indicated that there is a need for building capacity in the collection and use of data. SALGA and Stats SA were already collaborating in building the capacity of local government officials. Stats SA could also help Metros in the standardizing of their research approaches. According to the National Treasury cities' capacity in developing their own vision was also needed.

The overall consensus was that the findings of the study were a good reflection of the issues that were being faced by the Metros. Stakeholders were also of the opinion that SACN should support the recommendations made in the report.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Metros in South Africa have a significant reporting burden. On an annual basis they use registers and other sources in the Metro to report on outcome indicators that a number of national departments, agencies and regulators are mandated to collect by law. The above sections have shown that this equates to well over 100 reports per year. Over and above the reporting burden, a limited and lack of capacity as well as a lack of systems make it difficult for Metros to provide data.

Many of the Metros, as well as national stakeholders, made a sincere plea to the SACN to avoid contributing further to the burden by asking them to provide additional data. Also apparent is that the reporting burden is likely to increase with other reporting requirements being proposed by agencies such as DPME and SALGA.

Metros indicated that they are progressing towards the development of outcome indicators. Outcome indicators are output indicators that are linked to a specified target. Impact indicators are not a significant focus of Metros even though they undertake QoL and CSS that are possible sources of data for these indicators. The conclusion in this regard is that the SACN should link with existing data collection mechanisms such as the National Treasury and Stats SA from where most of the data required in order to populate the SACN indicators.

Stakeholders felt that the SACN should use the output/outcome indicators and data that were already being collected to do more detailed analysis. From this analysis they should develop a suite of knowledge products such as policy briefs and a web portal to disseminate this information. Stakeholders requested the SACN to engage with them to determine what their specific requirements are for knowledge products. It is for this reason that a User Requirement Assessment (URA) was proposed as part of the business plan.

The project team has also recommended that the SACN engage with the NEFP to get the SoCR institutionalized as an implementation evaluation. By following this approach a number of knowledge products will be produced including the SoCR. The knowledge products produced by the SACN will then receive the legitimacy that they deserve.

Having engaged with stakeholders on a number of issues the project team was able to put forward a business plan. Many of the activities included in the plan are recommendations emanating from the stakeholders. A conceptual model was constructed that indicates that there are four inter-linking spheres that the SACN will need to focus on. The spheres focus on facilitating the development of coordination structures in Metros, the use mechanisms to source data for output indicators and the development of outcome/impact indicators and the development of knowledge products.

A quick win for the SACN will be to establish coordinators at the Metro level that will oversee the Metros collection of data for submission to national departments, agencies and regulators. These coordinators will ultimately link up with the national coordinator that the National Treasury and Stats SA are proposing. They will also facilitate the identification of people responsible for data collection within Metro departments.

The SACN can also play a meaningful role in identifying all the output indicators that Metros have to provide data for and to ensure that the national departments, agencies and regulators provide detailed information on their definitions, methods of data collection and the validation methods that are used to quality control the data. To facilitate the use of this information it is recommended that the SACN develop a guideline document that will describe in more detail all indicators, their definitions and targets as well as methods, data sources and data collection approaches.

Part of the coordination role that the SACN can play is to develop SLAs with national departments, agencies and regulators to access their data. This data can then be made available to Metros and collated on the SACN's web portal. The SACN can also engage with these national departments, agencies and regulators to include other critically needed questions into their censuses and surveys.

It is clear from engaging with Metros that the SACN has an important role to play. Some Metros have performance management systems and knowledge portals. The smaller and more recent Metros are struggling to establish such systems and portals. The SACN can establish forums where MDCF, GIS and QoL/CSS coordinators from the different Metros could share lessons learned with each other. They could also help to establish performance management systems and knowledge portals.

Data collection mechanisms for impact indicators such as the QoL/CSS need to be standardized and the data certified through the NSS. The collection of data by Call Centres and Customer Service Centres is also a potential source of data to see what impact the Metro are having on addressing citizen's needs. To ensure that the data can be used and is comparable, the SACN can facilitate the process of standardizing the methods of collecting this data. One final contribution that the SACN can make is to facilitate with Metros the conducting of an independent impact survey to collect data to focus on emerging or unique issues and to determine the impact of particular interventions or policies.

It is the belief of the project team that the above addresses the needs of the SACN in institutionalizing coordination mechanisms for managing indicators, providing efficient and effective approaches for collecting and analysing data and proposing pragmatic methods for the regular collecting of credible data. The cost of this data collection is largely internalized in the Metros, departments, agencies and regulators. Through the proposed business plan it

has also become possible to set out a financial budget for the SACN to accomplish its objectives and to ultimately publish the SoCR in 2016.

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ANNEXURES

Annexure 1
Discussion Guideline

Annexure 2
List of stakeholders interviewed

Annexure 3
Key issues raised by Metro stakeholders