



Rolling up our sleeves to do more in 2012

February is a milestone month for government, with President Jacob Zuma's State of the Nation Address setting the tone for all public servants for the year ahead. It is both a time of stock-taking and agenda setting. *Public Sector Manager* spoke to South Africa's nine Premiers to determine their progress in 2011 and insights on 2012.

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Photos: GCIS



Premier of the Eastern Cape: Noxolo Kiviet

Although 2011 had its challenges, it was a momentous year in which we made major strides. We made a number of interventions to turn the

tide in the economy, education, health, crime and corruption and rural development, and in building a developmental state.

We concluded a number of strategic agreements that are set to create over 160 000 job opportunities to dent the province's 28% unemployment rate. These include the Umzimvubu Water Catchment Project, the expansion of the Ngqura container port to serve as a trans-shipment hub with a rail link to Gauteng to supply manganese and other major containers; the construction of major roads such as the N2 Wild Coast Toll Road and R72; as well as the roll-out of the Presidential Intervention Project in the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality.

These projects will add to strategic partnerships entered into with state-owned enterprises such as Eskom, the South African Road Agency Limited, Transnet and the South African Forestry Company to expand our infrastructure and economic development, with billions of rands committed for investment during the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). In February 2012, we will host a job summit where we will launch our job strategy to the private sector and labour.

To ensure improved quality of learning and teaching, we trained curriculum and subject advisers, early childhood de-

velopment (ECD) practitioners and teachers, and set aside R97 million to roll out the Educators' Laptop initiative.

We decentralised management and delivery of the nutrition programme and are finalising infrastructure development tenders to the value of R270 million.

We are intensifying interventions to improve delivery of healthcare, including the fight against HIV and AIDS. By the end of 2011, over 158 000 people were on anti-retroviral treatment. We have also committed nearly R2 billion over the MTEF to improve access to quality healthcare and improve nine hospitals in the Eastern Cape.

We adopted the Public Sector Transformation Framework to improve organisational culture, talent and people management, which is currently being rolled out. We have intensified efforts to improve corporate governance, with a particular focus on the fight against corruption and strengthening internal controls and administration. We have adopted a new web-based fraud and corruption case management system that assists in capturing, tracking and analysing cases to enable prompt management interventions.

We will also establish a rural development agency to spearhead the Wild Coast Development Initiative, farmer support and landcare programmes, food security initiatives and small-town revitalisation programme. There is a long way to go, however, we are certain that working together with every stakeholder, we can do more to deliver a better life for all in 2012 and beyond.

... continued on page 35



Premier of the Free State: Elias "Ace" Sekgobelo Magashule

As the Free State Provincial Government, we are responding to the President's call for a government that addresses the needs of our people. We have identified the desired outcomes we want to achieve, both in support of the 12 national outcomes as well as the eight outcomes assigned to provinces. We launched Operation Hlasela as our new service-delivery model, characterised by an integrated and coordinated approach to ensure accelerated service delivery in an economic, efficient and effective manner.

Operation Hlasela fosters collaboration, not only between

provincial government departments and public entities, but also between the national, provincial and local spheres of government. The Monitoring and Evaluation Branch in the Department of the Premier is already hard at work, ensuring that provincial government departments deliver on the outcome-based priorities and on their annual performance plans.

The Provincial Treasury is also doing well in its role of monitoring the financial management and expenditure of provincial departments.

We have given clear directives to the newly-appointed mayors and councillors to deliver. We will continue to strive to achieve our ambitious target of clean audits in provincial and local government by 2014.

Working together, we can build better communities.



Premier of Gauteng: Nomvula Mokonyane

The Gauteng Provincial Government (GPG) has eight key priority areas or outcomes as informed by the Government's outcomes approach, the Medium Term Strategic Framework and the manifesto of the ruling party.

The outcomes are: quality basic education; a long and healthy life for all South Africans; all people in South Africa are and feel safe; decent employment through inclusive economic growth; vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities contributing towards food security for all; sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life; a responsive, accountable, efficient and effective local government system; an efficient, effective and development-oriented public service; and empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

In keeping with these priorities, we will focus on:

- improving efforts around ECD, learner Literacy and Numeracy in all schooling phases, learner performance in Mathematics and Science and performance in the senior certificate examination
- decreasing infant and maternal mortality rates, dealing effectively with HIV and AIDS and TB and improving the health system's effectiveness
- reducing violent crime and crimes against women and chil-

dren, integrating the criminal justice system and reducing road fatalities

- creating decent jobs by embarking on sectoral industrial policy interventions, developing knowledge and green economies, promoting tourism, improving the strategic infrastructure and embarking on economic empowerment initiatives; to ensure rural development and food security, the GPG will embark on sustainable agrarian reform, improve access to affordable and diverse food, improve rural services and deal with the environmental imperatives of the province
- accelerating delivery of housing opportunities, ensuring more efficient land use and work on the property market
- improving financial management in municipalities and access to basic services, and refining the ward committee model
- building an efficient Public Service through improved quality and accessibility of service delivery, better human resource management and development, improved business processes and systems, tackling corruption, developing a national identity and advancing social equality and citizenship.

We want to move with heightened speed and focus in implementing policies, strategies and plans to improve service delivery and deliver on the mandate from the people of Gauteng.

... continued on page 37



**Premier of KwaZulu-Natal:
Dr Zweli Lawrence Mkhize**

I want to express our gratitude to the former and current colleagues for their contribution to service delivery and the collegial spirit that has come to characterise this government's leadership. It is this spirit that

has strengthened us as a team, as we faced different situations that required us to take responsibility individually and collectively as one government.

For us, this positive spirit persisted despite the immensity of challenges that we were grappling with. One such challenge was the huge overexpenditure that required severe austerity measures to reverse; thus turning 45% – the national overex-

penditure projection – into a surplus and positive cash balance.

Oversight over municipalities has been improved to reduce the need for provincial intervention by early diagnosis of municipalities in distress.

The Premier's Coordinating Forum will have regular meetings this year to ensure an effective alignment of service-delivery plans, housing, water, energy and sanitation.

There will be a renewed focus on good governance, with closer scrutiny by provincial government on the skills profile of municipal managers and chief financial officers.

The Auditor-General (AG), Mr Terence Nombembe, has toured municipalities and reported renewed commitment to clean audit outcomes from mayors who he met. In this regard, the provincial outcomes have indicated strong leadership commitment to good governance.



**Premier of Limpopo:
Cassel Mathale**

We have registered great progress in providing essential services to our communities and we continue to make a positive impact on the lives of many people.

We have grown our economy and reduced unemployment from 25% to 16%, yet many of our people remain unemployed and trapped in poverty. We must work together to ensure that sustainable jobs and marketable skills are created in the booming mining industry.

Over the past year, more than 15 000 farmers received support from government's agricultural technicians to assist them to improve production. We have also made a commitment to build proper school infrastructure and have built nine new schools, four of which are state-of-the-art schools. We are continuing to deliver learner support material to all schools, with the aim of achieving a 70% Grade 12 pass rate.

We have increased the number of people who have access

to water, electricity and sanitation in approximately 700 000 households. More than 180 000 households have access to free basic electricity. Therefore, the provision of clean running water, sanitation facilities and electricity will remain top on our agenda until all households have access to these basic services. We have built more than 15 000 houses to reduce the housing backlog in the province.

We have increased the number of clinics by 325 and are working with national government to address the shortage of medical professionals.

Community safety forums have been established in all the districts, which has seen a reduction in crime in all the categories during the 2010/11 financial year as compared to 2009/10. We must intensify our work on crimes such as common robbery, neglect and ill-treatment of children, stock theft, driving under the influence of alcohol, and others.

We are confident that all our departments and municipalities will acquire clean audit reports by the year 2014.

The year 2012 provides yet another opportunity for us to bring services to our people and ensure a better life for all.



**Premier of Mpumalanga:
David Dabede Mabuza**

The Mpumalanga Provincial Government has set aside R1,6 billion to ensure rural development, through the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP). The CRDP focuses on enabling rural people to

take control of their destiny, with support from government.

A three-pronged strategy is used that includes land reform, which ensures that people have ownership of the land through land restitution, redistribution and tenure programmes. Agrarian transformation is then facilitated through programmes such as Masibuyele Emasimini, which seeks to increase agricultural production; the use of appropriate technologies; food security; and improving the quality of life for each rural household. Landcare programmes are also

facilitated in ensuring optimal and sustainable use of natural resources.

The Mpumalanga Regional Training Trust is also part of the CRDP and is tasked with providing necessary skills such as bricklaying, carpentry, welding, painting and plumbing through training the youth in the respective identified local municipalities.

One of the pivotal projects of the CRDP is the transformation of the Marapyane College of Education into Marapyane Agricultural College to create an institutional resource within Mpumalanga to train, develop and deploy qualified agricultural technical staff such as agronomists.

We have identified seven of the poorest areas in the province as beneficiaries of the CRDP. The impact of the CRDP in these municipalities is already being felt through poverty-alleviation programmes and job-creation opportunities.



**Premier of the North West:
Thandi Modise**

The province will be exerting extra efforts to accelerate implementation and finalisation of initiatives which address the most critical aspects of service delivery and the creation of job opportunities.

The top priorities of the province include:

Water and sanitation

The Provincial Water Master Plan has been developed in partnership with the Department of Water Affairs. A special implementation task team is working on alternative approaches to addressing backlogs at more deserving areas in the province.

Electricity

Eskom is being engaged on a regular basis to accelerate delivery in rural areas.

Road construction and maintenance

Negotiations have been concluded with Xstrata Mines to assist with material, which will be used to repair and maintain some of the roads we could not fund due to financial limitations. The Department of Environmental Affairs has been approached for approval.

Agriculture, rural development and tourism

Agriculture and tourism have greater potential to generate sound economic activities with less effort. Rural development is critical in this regard, as it is cross-cutting and will enhance development of the two priority sectors.

The Provincial Agricultural Master Plan has been concluded and the implementation thereof will be one of our top priorities. Development of the North West Tourism products is also a top priority. We are excited that we will host of the 2012 Tourism Celebration Day.

Infrastructure development

An implementation task team has been established to accelerate implementation of quick-win initiatives.

Governance

We have adopted the Integrated Clean Audit 2014 Implementation Plan. All provincial departments and municipalities will meet quarterly to report and assess progress made in dealing with the AG's expectations. The Premier's Coordinating Council will receive updated reports at every meeting to monitor and evaluate progress.

We will also deploy unemployed accounting graduates to all municipalities. These graduates will receive special training with the assistance of the AG's office, the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants and North West University.

... continued on page 40



**Premier of the Western Cape:
Helen Zille**

The Western Cape Government expects 2012 to be a year of opportunities and challenges as we continue striving to build an open, opportunity society for all in the province. We aim to make the province a place where every individual has the chance and means to improve their own circumstances. Despite the current economic uncertainty, we are determined to forge ahead, building on the foundations that have been established and strengthened over the last three years to realise our vision of a prosperous, safe, healthy and inclusive Western Cape.

A significant development for the Western Cape in 2012 will be the establishment of the Economic Development Partnership under the auspices of the provincial Department of Economic Development and Tourism. This will be a coordination platform between various players in the Western Cape, from provincial and municipal governments to business organisations, to harmonise their plans and actions and to create a shared, coherent, regional economic strategy and an inte-

grated framework to deliver that strategy. This is an important step because it will provide a major boost to our efforts to increase the growth rate of the provincial economy so that unemployment, poverty and inequality can be better tackled.

Another key step will be the finalisation and beginning of implementation of the Healthcare 2020 strategy of the provincial Department of Health. It will build on the outcomes of its predecessor, Healthcare 2010, and is centred on improving the patient experience and the quality of care. Aligned to this progress will be the opening of the new Khayelitsha District Hospital in April 2012 and the planned completion of the Mitchell's Plain District Hospital in December this year. These two facilities will greatly assist in filling the apartheid legacy of service and infrastructure gaps in underprivileged communities.

In 2012, we will also aim to strengthen our strategic partnerships in all sectors, because we need everyone contributing – individuals, families, civil society and the private sector – to make the Western Cape an even more thriving success. It remains our key belief that no government is able to succeed without mobilising the ideas, energy and resources of all actors in society: to work better, we must work together.



**Premier of the Northern Cape:
Hazel Jenkins**

Looking back over the past year, there have been notable successes within the Northern Cape. As government, we are mindful of the progress being made to fulfil our mandate, and to this end, we have resolved to build on the solid foundation that has been laid since the inception of democracy to create a better life for all.

We have touched the lives of ordinary citizens in a positive and meaningful way through the Premier's public participation and outreach programmes. This programme has clearly affected the lives of the most vulnerable sections of society: the poor, women, the disabled, children and the rural masses.

Through these engagements, we have witnessed the handing over of school uniforms to underprivileged and deserving children, the launch of school-feeding schemes, free healthcare for children and pregnant mothers, the distribution of sanitary towels to female pupils, water provision, housing subsidies, infrastructure development and a range of services.

We have also made progress in key areas, including the hosting of the Transport Investors' Conference to source investment for the key transport infrastructure projects and to enter into public-private partnerships; the launch of the Kimberley International Diamond and Jewellery Academy to achieve economic diversification, growth, employment and skills creation, and provide entrepreneurial opportunities and contribution to gross domestic product by unlocking investment; as well as hosting the Expanded Public Works Programme Summit; staging the Maloof Money Cup – the world's greatest skateboarding championship; and the launch of the new government fleet management service to provide an effective government transport system.

We are also making progress with our health services through the construction of clinics and hospitals throughout the province. We are building cohesive and sustainable human settlements and improving the quality of household life.

The province will continue to invest in education and to ensure that our young people acquire the necessary skills that are required by the provincial economy to create work opportunities for our people.

High hopes for 2012

Traditionally, February is the month in which politics and the national agenda come into its own with the State of the Nation Address and Budget Speech. While the President and Minister of Finance are working on their scripts, *Public Sector Manager* has polled various stakeholders in government and spoken to a few citizens to get their views on the year that was, and their hopes for the year ahead.



Director-General of Basic Education (DBE), Bobby Soobrayan

The department has identified strengthening literacy and numeracy of our learners as the key objective for 2012 and beyond. In 2012, the department will be introducing its new comprehensive Integrated National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy: A Whole School Approach, which will be used as a vehicle to achieve the Literacy and Numeracy goals set out in the Action Plan to 2014. The Annual National Assessments, started in 2011, will also continue in 2012 for grades three, six and nine as part of our efforts to focus on improving learner achievement in Literacy and Numeracy by measuring the quality of teaching and learning to track progress. The department will expand its workbook programme to provide Literacy (Language) and Numeracy (Mathematics) workbooks to learners in grades one to nine. In addition, workbooks for all learners

in grades one to three for First Additional Language and Life Orientation will be distributed. The workbooks are tools to ensure that there is adequate curriculum coverage in schools.

At the same time, we will continue to strengthen the management of schools. During 2012, the department will enter into performance contracts with school principals.

The DBE will also release a comprehensive Early Childhood Development (ECD) Strategy, as studies have shown that learners who have even one year of ECD education perform better than those without.

To make sure the implementation of these initiatives takes place, the department established the Delivery and Planning Oversight Unit.

Through the Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign, the department and its partners will continue to mobilise the nation to make real the President's call that "education is a societal matter" and to ensure that all education stakeholders live up to the commitments they made to the Code to Quality Education.



Minister of Health: Dr Aaron Motsoaledi

The department undertook a series of major initiatives to strengthen the health system during 2011. In my 2011 Budget Vote, I noted that health in South Africa was at a crossroads and that without a major overhaul, we were heading for a major crisis. I outlined our programme of action to overhaul the health system, including the agreement reached with the President on four major priorities, namely to increase life expectancy; to decrease maternal and child mortality; to combat HIV and AIDS and decrease the burden of disease from tuberculosis (TB); and to strengthen health system effectiveness.

In reply to this, we held a national consultative meeting on non-communicable diseases and developed a programme of action (which has been commended by the World Health Organisation); we reached consensus with major stakeholders on the need for exclusive breastfeeding of infants; we expanded access to antiretroviral therapy; we rolled out the use of new technology to more rapidly diagnose drug-resistant TB; we reached consensus with key stakeholders on maternal, neonatal, infant and child mortality rates – which coincidentally are much lower than previously reported; we gazetted the *Green Paper on National Health Insurance (NHI)* and held a national conference on NHI – which, when implemented, will dramatically change the face of healthcare delivery in our country.



Minister of Police: Nathi Mthethwa

Government believes that a rising quality of life also means improvement in the safety and security of citizens in all aspects of their lives. Partnership policing has been and still remains a priority for visible policing, not only to communities,

but to a variety of role players within government, business, municipalities and interests groups.

Improving the police's response is an objective that remains a priority for the department for this year. The equitable distribution of police stations is essential to extend safety and security services to all our people.

We shall also continue to work towards the eradication of women and child abuse. The re-introduction of the Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences (FCS) units throughout the country over the last financial year provides us with a platform to support this.

The safety and security of rural communities in South Africa is a priority. The seriousness of continued acts of violence against rural communities and high levels of stock theft require a concerted effort by farmers, rural communities, farm workers and the police. We have rolled out the rural safety plan in various provinces.

Cooperation with police services in the region and further afield will be intensified and border control will be tightened continually.

The current reduction in crime can, to a large extent, be attributed to some of our advancements, including the following:

- the successes achieved by the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigations, not only in tracking down some of the most wanted suspects, but also in ensuring successful arrests and convictions in the area of organised and commercial crime
- the successful implementation of the festive season "When Duty Calls" operations, which saw intensified SAPS efforts to curb crime
- through a concerted focus over the last year, we have gone a long way in improving the functioning of the forensic laboratories and reducing the backlogs that exist.

Training is also a crucial part of our approach to improving policing. We are now revising how and what is involved in training.

The current review of the *White Paper for Safety and Security* is an important process. Not only will it influence and impact on the review of the SAPS Act, 1995, during 2011/12, but it will also inform our approach to transforming the police, and provide the policy framework direction the SAPS will take.



Minister of Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities: Lulu Xingwana

Last year, we launched the Techno-Girl Project, to increase the representation of women in professional and scientific

professions. The project encourages girls to pursue studies in Science, Mathematics, Engineering and Technology, where women have historically been underrepresented. The department believes that promoting access to educational opportunities and skills development is key to addressing the socio-economic conditions of women in the long term.

Cabinet recently noted the proposed establishment of the National Council Against Gender-based Violence. Gender-based violence cannot be reduced or eradicated without effective leadership at national, provincial and district level. It

requires a multisectoral national response and collaboration between government, civil-society organisations, the business sector and tertiary institutions. The proposed council, expected to be established in the first quarter of 2012 will, among other things, review and monitor the implementation of the existing 365 Days National Action Plan for No Violence against Women and Children, which was adopted on 8 May 2007.

The department also aims to empower women through the Rural Women Development Programme, which is a platform for rural women to influence government's Women Empowerment Strategy and to ensure that rural women remain on government's agenda. The department is formulating a Strategy on Rural Women's Development with the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform. It intends to foster and accelerate the implementation of measures to

▶ improve the lives of rural women. We have developed a gender and disability perspective on the New Growth Path in collaboration with the Department of Economic Development, to address the needs of women and people with disabilities with regard to job creation.

The department has developed a strategic framework that guides departments and civil-society organisations on how to mainstream children's rights issues into their governance processes. The Children's Rights Mainstreaming and Advocacy Strategic Framework needs to

be shared by the whole of government and civil society for good governance. Other issues that are pertinent to children such as ukuthwala, and murder and violence directed at innocent children, need to be seriously dealt with.

This year, we will also continue with the Sanitary Dignity Campaign, aimed at improving access to sanitary towels for indigent women and girl children, as well as the Universal Accessibility Campaign for People with Disabilities and the launch of the Access to Education Campaign.

Stakeholders call for stronger partnership

Alistair Smith: Executive Director of National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac)

Economically, we can be almost certain that the new year will be as tough and unpredictable as the past year. The sovereign debt crisis in Europe is far from over and the world economy in general remains fragile.

This negative global economic outlook does not bode well for South Africa, as we continue to struggle against unemployment, poverty and inequality.

In this situation, the role of social dialogue and partnership, and therefore Nedlac becomes even more critical. More is demanded from our social partners and our institutions to kick-start growth, create millions of jobs and lift the majority of South Africans out of poverty. As the

Nedlac secretariat and constituency groups, we look forward to the New Year and working together to make South Africa a better place for all its citizens.

Bheki Zulu, CEO: Fibre Processing and Manufacturing (FP&M) Seta (Sector Education and Training Authority)

2011 saw the amalgamation

of three Setas into one new organisation – the FP&M Seta. It was

a year that required exceptional vision and a spirit of cooperation from both the FP&M Seta board and staff members.

2012 will see the culmination of 12 months of hard work to establish an organisation designed to deliver skills development to the sector responsibly and efficiently. The FP&M Seta will commence during the first part of the new year with the implementation of sector projects and initiatives to achieve its vision "to provide the FP&M sector with a quality post-schooling education and training system that will produce a highly skilled and motivated workforce, enhancing productivity and competitiveness of the sector leading to sector growth and sustainable employment opportunities for all".



What does the public expect from government this year?

Dr Thabo Sefatsa, Secunda

I believe that we can change a lot in the public healthcare sector by just changing our attitude(s). The majority of the problems within the health sector are mainly due to wrong attitudes, from security personnel through to doctors and nurses. We must remember that it is our government, our problems and our solutions.



Shalen Gajadhar, Ormonde

My hope for 2012 is that government begins to tackle the still-widening gap in wealth distribution. This needs to be done through policy approaches taken at Mangaung 2012 that allow people access to education; a government-funded tertiary education institution which offers skills on a study-now pay-later financial model; and tougher regulations in private industries to up-skill employees within certain salary grades to allow them to progress.

With inflation, rates, taxes and tolls being raised constantly without a correlation in salaries, people are becoming poorer every day. I hope that education and service delivery will be highlighted as being paramount to South Africa following a steady growth path.

We are finally starting to see serious action being taken against corrupt public service officials and politicians. I hope this continues in 2012, and that government pushes even harder to weed out maladministration.

Finally, I really hope that government tightens its lines of communication with the media and public. Our perception of government is largely determined by what we read and watch, and there are a lot of asinine comments that make it into our media. I hope more instances of intelligent and insightful utterances are published, which will go a long way in restoring faith in our leaders.



Olivia Hart-Hughes, Pretoria

The stampede for registration at the University of Johannesburg in January was shocking. My hope for 2012 is that this has been a wake-up call for government to give urgent attention to improving access to tertiary education and preventing something like this from happening again. The youth are our future leaders and nothing should stand in their way to further their education. I would also like to see more job opportunities and that people will be appointed in jobs based on competence and not on their race.



Stef Venter, Centurion

Crime and corruption is still a major problem in South Africa and my wish for 2012 is that more measures are taken to reduce it. I believe that people such as state prosecutors and the police, who are responsible for the administration of justice and combating crime, should get better salaries, as this will motivate them to carry out their duties without the need for bribery and corruption. There should be absolutely no tolerance for corruption in the police and justice services, as they are the people we are supposed to look up to for protection.



Trevor Khanyile, Pretoria

Government must skill officials at local government level. There is gross inefficiency at municipalities which hinders delivery of services, leading to people saying that government is not doing anything for them. There needs to be a close link between national and local government to avoid municipalities being placed under administration after officials have squandered the money. Mud schools should not be something that still characterises South Africa. Indeed, people in the rural areas will continue to say that government has not done anything for them if they still do not have electricity and clean water. All these are issues of capacity, nothing else. Government needs to really skill and reskill officials at local government level or nothing will ever change.



Aiming for a clean slate by 2014

Writer: Xoliswa Zulu

Photographer: Siyabulela Duda

There is no doubt that the job of the Auditor-General (A-G) is not an easy or enviable one. Aiming to keep the massive national, provincial and local government structures in the country in line and in the clear from a governance perspective, is not a task for the faint-hearted. While this may be so, A-G Terence Nombembe takes it in his stride.

Public Sector Manager sat down with the A-G to talk about the latest audit results and to find out what remedies will be put in place to ensure that clean audits are achieved by 2014.

In 2009, government announced an ambitious plan to achieve clean audits by 2014 in all 283 municipalities and all provincial departments in the nine provinces. While this year's audit results may leave some doubts in the minds of many, Nombembe is optimistic.

For Nombembe, the first key pillar of sustainability towards clean audits includes the appointment of adequately skilled administrators as Heads of departments and chief financial officers, whose task would be to produce credible reports that are validated on a monthly basis.

"The second pillar is the appointment of adequately experienced internal auditors and audit committees, whose task will be to review the credibility of informa-

tion and objectively report to the leadership. If the leadership focuses primarily on these pillars, regular monitoring by the executive leadership and legislature would be more effective and sustainable. I must say, if we don't see a breakthrough in two years, we are going struggle to achieve the 2014 target.

"I'm nevertheless confident that with the pace of monitoring that we've seen from the executive and legislators, we should be able to get the results. The engagements we've had with ministers individually as well as collectively at the level of Cabinet, has been about the approach we'll adopt to sustain the momentum towards good internal controls. In that respect, I am confident that those commitments will take us to where we should be in terms of clean audits being the norm," he explains.

The audit reports tabled by Nombembe in January 2012 took two forms: the first was a summary of the national departments and their public entities and the other was a summary of all the provincial departments and their public entities.

An assessment of the national audit outcomes of government departments and national entities reflects an overall improvement in four departments and 30 public entities, which amounts to a total of 34 improvements.

... continued on page 66

Overall regressions in audit outcomes within the national sphere of government amounted to 61 (six departments and 55 public entities).

Clean audit outcomes were received by three national departments (8%), namely public enterprises, science and technology and environmental affairs. Financially unqualified reports (with findings) were received by at least two thirds of the national departments.

“Generally, at the level of the national departments, we have results that are showing no disclaimers; with the exception of Public Works,” he says.

The main reason for these national departments and national public entities not attaining the clean audit status, explains Nombembe, is due to internal control weaknesses in financial service delivery reporting and compliance with laws and regulations.

Overall, three quarters of the national departments avoided audit qualifications in comparison with two thirds in the last two years, he adds. Public entities are leading in the clean audit space at the level of more than 40% for the last three years compared to national departments, who have been declining over the last three years (from 15% two years ago and 8% this year).

“Provincially, the picture does look promising because we have seen more provinces with more departments achieving clean audits.”

Clean audit outcomes were received by 46 provincial departments, legislatures and entities (19%). The provinces with clean audit outcomes were KwaZulu-Natal (12), Gauteng (9), Free State (7), Western Cape (6), Mpumalanga (5), Limpopo (4), Eastern Cape (3); with North West and Northern Cape not attaining any clean audits.

“Legislatures are, in essence, leading in the clean audit space registering five out of nine (56%) this year, having improved significantly from only one last year and none the year before that. What’s worth noting is that the legislators, five of the nine, have achieved clean audits.”

The areas that need to be concentrated on to get the results needed to achieve clean audits, says Nombembe, include improving internal controls on finance, internal controls on service delivery reporting and controls on compliance with laws and regulations, particularly supply chain.

“In monitoring the effectiveness of internal controls, keen emphasis needs to be placed on effective management of human resources, information technology (IT) and the administration and reliable reporting of financial management, service delivery and compliance with laws and regulation, particularly supply chain management.

“In this respect, there’s a task force underway between ourselves as the audit office, The Presidency, National

Treasury and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) to clarify respected norms and standards with regard to managing and reporting on service delivery. The task force should report sometime this year about a clearer guide when it comes to auditing service delivery.”

One area that needs attention is IT controls, which according to Nombembe, vary in terms of exposing government to the loss of assets.

“This is one area that needs to be given primary attention. We’re working very closely with the DPSA to collaborate the priorities with the government information systems experts in such a way that the controls around IT governance are first and foremost standardised for all government departments, right from national through to local government,” he says.



So where to from here? According to the A-G, the level of monitoring by the ministers themselves, nationally and provincially at the level of the MECs, needs to be beefed up.

“For me the biggest disappointment was the fact that what we had agreed would be done last year was not done diligently in terms of the monitoring by the ministers. Had that happened, we would’ve seen a different result, which is what we’ve seen for those ministers and MECs who have heeded that call.

“We need to engage the portfolio committees, so that they too have a clearer understanding of the controls that are in place to ensure that budget execution is done within acceptable norms.

“We are in a learning and development phase of governance in South Africa and that’s why we are as an audit office, systematic and patient about identifying all the remaining obstacles so that we keep chipping away, one by one, at the weaknesses that exist.”

The 2010-11 audit outcomes of national and provincial departments and public entities showed a combination of improvement, stagnation and regression, says Auditor-General Terrence Nombembe.

Only one national department received a disclaimer of opinion this year – the Department of Public Works. Seven national public entities received such audit opinions; these included the National Arts Council of South Africa, Property Trading Entity, Road Traffic Infringement Agency, Road Traffic Management Cooperation, Water Trading Account, Public Service Sector Education Seta and Technology Innovation Agency.

Financially unqualified reports were received by 58 % of auditees within the provincial sphere. The main reasons for these provincial auditees not attaining the clean audit status mirrors that of the national sphere, namely internal control weaknesses in financial reporting, service delivery reporting and compliance with laws and regulations. Of the 12 disclaimers in the provinces, the four big departments that remain with audit disclaimers are Health (in Limpopo and the Northern Cape), Education (in the Eastern Cape) and Public Works and Roads and Transport (North West).

The A-G also works collaboratively with departments in identifying the areas that need to be improved.

“All we need is for the departments to commit to improve those areas and the commitments we’ve received from the ministers, MECs and premiers have been satisfactory in responding to those areas”.

For the period 2010-11, the A-G obtained an unqualified audit opinion from its external auditors, Kwinana and Associates.

“We wanted to lead by example. We can’t afford to comment on others negatively when we are not

demonstrating and living up to the same norms. We have an obligation to be audited independently and we have an obligation to rise to that audit result in a manner that would be exemplary to the norms of clean governance and for us everything that we are suggesting to the ministries is what we’re doing internally.”

As the supreme audit institution, the A-G of South Africa (AGSA), which turned 100 years on 12 May 2011, is responsible for the auditing of national and provincial state departments and administrations, all municipalities and any other institution or accounting entity required by national and provincial legislation to be audited by the AGSA.

The AGSA is answerable only to Parliament. It is held accountable by a number of parliamentary mechanisms, including the Standing Committee on the Auditor-General, which maintains oversight of the AGSA, and an audit committee, which ensures that the AGSA maintains sound financial and risk management and internal control systems. External auditors, Kwinana and Associates, are currently responsible for auditing the AGSA’s financial statements and performance information.

As required by the Public Audit Act, 2004 (Act 25 of 2004), the AGSA has to submit to Parliament an annual report which includes audited financial statements. The report also incorporates performance information, measured against predetermined objectives, on how the AGSA performed in key areas, such as public sector auditing, employment equity and Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment.





A century of readiness to govern

Writer: Chris Bathembu

Photos: GCS

A young government; a veteran political movement.

This is the mix as the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC), marks 100 years of existence in 2012, with this milestone causing the leadership to alternate vibrant celebrations with deep soul-searching.

The reflection on challenges such as an unemployment rate of 25% and rural poverty and underdevelopment are preoccupations for a 100-year-old party that has to remain in step with the demands of life and politics in the 21st century.

Public Sector Manager spoke to ANC National Chairperson Baleka Mbete to find out how the ruling party plans to preserve its status as a liberation movement, while adapting to the ever-changing socio-political landscape in the country.

Mbete admits that the ANC, which prides itself as Africa's oldest liberation movement, needs some retrospection if it is to continue governing Africa's largest economy.

"As the ANC leadership and membership, we continue to be worried about how slowly the wheels of change are turning, because clearly that is the reality," says Mbete, who is a player of note in the party's think-tank.

She describes the centenary as a milestone that will be used to celebrate the party's proud traditions, values and principles, and highlight the challenges that face the country.

"What went wrong more than three and a half centuries ago is not

something that we can ever hope to change and turn around in two decades. We continue with hope and determination to address and improve how we deal with the implementation of the policies that are going to change the situation around.

"The next 100 years is the time that we must actually intensify, and we are glad that the National Planning Commission has given us an opportunity to keep looking at this question as to how do we effectively change the situation," she says.

While its critics have been vocal in pointing out the ANC's failures since 1994, Mbete says the party could not be happier with the progress it has made since taking the reins of power in South Africa after more than 80 years of mass mobilisation against white rule. She also denies consistent claims by the opposition that the ANC of Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela has lost touch with the black majority in South Africa.

"I do not agree with statements that the ANC has lost its relationship with the people; I think it is a convenient line. Of course we have to compete for the confidence of our people, we have to compete for the support of our

... continued on page 74

people within the political sphere; and so without denying that there are mistakes that we have committed at various levels, it is not true that the ANC overwhelmingly and in general is no longer the ANC of Oliver Tambo. I do not believe that."

She does, however, point out that while the party can pride itself on liberating the people of South Africa and putting a sound government in place, leadership should not be oblivious to the fact that inequalities do exist in the country; and as celebrations take place around the country throughout the year, the ANC leadership should be reminded of the struggles of the people on the ground.

"You find that in five out of nine provinces in the country, you have areas where you have the most rural population, who are poor in terms of sanitation and infrastructure development. It is worrying."

This worrying factor was also highlighted by President Jacob Zuma, when he told thousands of party supporters in Bloemfontein two months ago that while the ANC had laid a sound foundation for socio-economic development, challenges remained.

Mbete suggests that some changes probably need to start with the Public Service.

"We think that there is always room for improvement. We have in this country a culture of a Public Service that is not really sensitive to a humane way of interacting with our people."

Political analysts have cautioned that with the ever-changing political dynamics

in Africa and the world, the ANC needs to review its political strategy if it is to survive in a multiparty democracy like that of South Africa.

University of Johannesburg Professor Stephen Friedman, director of the Centre for the Study of Democracy in the Faculty of Humanities, suggests the organisation might even have to abandon its image as a liberation movement and start thinking in a "modern" way.

"No one can take that away from them; the party should take pride in the fact that it liberated South Africa, and that the centenary is a very important event. But the question we should all be asking ourselves is whether the ANC can adapt to the changes that are taking place in South Africa. Liberation movements tend to regard themselves as the voice of the entire population and that is not a helpful attitude in a multi-party democracy," says Friedman.

He adds that the challenges which led to the demise of some liberation movements in Africa were partly a consequence of leaders "tending to forget that they existed in the presence of other political parties".

"The ANC should no longer see itself as a liberation movement – it faces huge challenges. We have an economy that is still in the hands of a minority. I believe the ANC has been caught unaware by the changes in society, and often strained relations with the people on the ground. The

reality is that people are starting to realise that, while we may have had a new government in place, not enough has changed in this country".

Professor Shadrack Gutto from the University of South Africa's Centre for African Renaissance also agrees that it is probably time for the ANC to use the next year or so to re-strategise.

"They need to think what those 100 years of existence meant and what the next 100 years should mean," says Gutto. "The ANC had gone through phases of transformation, from peaceful resistance to the formation of the Youth League (ANCYL), which brought new life to the organisation back in the days."

It is the ANCYL, under the leadership of Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and others, which had brought about the idea of the armed struggle that many today believe played a role in defeating apartheid.

"As you go through the history of the ANC, you can see that it is a party that has gone through a series of phases. One hundred years later, one would think a critical reflection is needed and I am not sure this is happening. What we should be seeing is a party in government that is controlling the state and governing; and no longer a liberation movement that is concerned with the cadre," says Gutto.

But after all is said and done, Mbete believes the ANC's "relevance" would

probably be what determines its continued presence in local politics.

"I believe what will determine the survival of the ANC is its relevance in the lives of our people – the extent to which it continues in its policy formulation and its interpretation and analysis of what role to play within the politics of South Africa; remaining informed by the people on the ground and by those issues that face our people on a daily basis.

"So its relevance should be informed by it continuing to be an organisation of the people, the ordinary people. I always want to explain the fact that the ANC conference, unlike any other political party conference, is one of the best reflections of how it is actually a people's organisation. "It remains a parliament of the people, because a parliament is where you have people who are the voice of ordinary people, who might not be at that particular forum. Like many political formations we have our challenges, even some of our people, we admit, have committed mistakes, but we think we still have this."®



ANC 100th Centenary Celebration. Several heads of State and Government were invited by President Zuma to attend the centenary. Free State Premier, Elias Magashule, addressing the gala dinner.