

## A vibrant collage centered around the continent of Africa. The map of Africa is rendered in a bold orange color, set against a background of dark blue and white abstract shapes. Surrounding the map are several rectangular photographs with white borders, some of which are tilted. These photos depict various African individuals: a young child in the top left, a woman looking upwards on the left, a man looking upwards in the center, an older man on the right, and a smiling child at the bottom center. Additionally, there are images of flags, including the South African flag at the bottom right and a red and green flag on the bottom left. The overall composition is dynamic and celebratory, highlighting the diversity of the African continent.

**J U L Y 2 0 1 4**



Title: Landscape review: An overview of role players facilitating evidence-informed decision-making in South Africa

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# 1. Introduction and background

Across Africa, and within the UK-based Department for International Development (DfID) priority countries of Malawi and South Africa, there is an urgent need for solutions that address poverty and a growing demand for more, and better, evidence-informed decision-making across public policy. This growing demand has led to the establishment of a programme that aims to develop the capacity of decision-makers to use research evidence. The programme to Build Capacity to Use Research Evidence (BCURE) is based at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and works within the South African and Malawian governments. As a centre of excellence in technical assistance in evidence-informed decision-making (EIDM), the UJ-BCURE team works with a number of partners to deliver a three year programme of capacity building. To inform the design and focus of this programme, we have conducted a landscape review mapping out the EIDM role players in South Africa. The aim of this landscape review is to understand who else is undertaking related activities and to explore where to focus the work of UJ-BCURE. Understanding the work of other role players will enable us to engage with other programmes and ensure complementary and supportive partnerships.

## 1.1. Overview of evidence and decision-makers

In South Africa, both non-government and government agencies have the potential to support the use of research evidence in policymaking. The majority of research is produced by universities, consultants, and independent research units. However, there are two other types of organisations that work to varying extents to increase the use of the research evidence produced by researchers: i) statutory bodies, specifically research councils, and ii) specific evidence-use programmes or projects. These are complemented by a third group which consists of a number of initiatives within government.

## 2. Methodology

Three main sources of data were used to understand the research-into-policy landscape in South Africa. These included:

- extensive internet information searches using key words around the concepts of policy capacity building in South Africa and the government departments that apply these most,
- meetings with key informants within the bodies of interest, and
- information gathered from institutions' documentation.

A snowballing technique was employed, with interviewees recommending other individuals for us to contact. The use of recommendations improved access to certain individuals and organisations, and allowed for the triangulation of information.

Three broad questions were used to analyse the findings of this landscape review. They are:

- What is the engagement of the organisation with government?
- By whom, and how, is the research agenda set?
- How do the institutions work together, and who else is within that network?

### **3. Landscape review**

The research landscape in South Africa is divided into two broad categories: i) research councils, with statutory roles such as commissioners and producers of research, in South Africa, and ii) specific initiatives which seek to increase the usefulness, and the use, of research. The latter can be independent or based at universities. There is a third group in this landscape which consists mostly of government departments and acts mainly as a research consumer. Each group is mapped out in more detail below.

#### **3.1. Organisations / Institutions working to increase demand for research evidence**

There are several research councils in South Africa. These include, amongst others, the Medical Research Council (MRC), the Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), and the National Research Foundation (NRF). The work of research councils in South Africa is largely complemented by the work of the national statistics office, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA). Although Stats SA works to present scientifically sound data for decision-making, it is increasingly being seen as a policy partner within government clustering networks. Below, we explore the relationships and policymaking environments of these abovementioned research councils in a horizontal (re)view.

##### ***The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)***

The CSIR is a statutory research council established by government, and is governed by the Scientific Research Council Act (No 46 of 1988). According to this Act, the objectives of the council are to foster industrial and scientific development in the fields that in the council's opinion should receive preference. The fostering of development is achieved through directed and particularly

multidisciplinary research and technological innovation. The CSIR achieves this aim either independently or in cooperation with principals from the private or public sectors. The CSIR is required to perform any other functions that may be assigned to it by or under this Act (DST, 2013). By striving to achieve this objective, the CSIR addresses priority issues that contribute to the national programme of development for the benefit of all South Africans. How the agenda for this list of priorities is set, however, remains to be investigated.

The CSIR derives income from baseline and ring-fenced grants from the Department of Science and Technology (DST), contract Research and Development (R&D) income from local and international public and private sectors, and income from intellectual property exploitation and technology transfer. Funding from grants is invested into research programmes and research infrastructure, as well as R&D skills development. Processes, policies, and guidelines underpin the effective utilisation of grant money (DST, 2013). The ultimate accounting office is parliament who allows a third of the budget vote for the CSIR (R750 million) to be used in innovation and R&D.

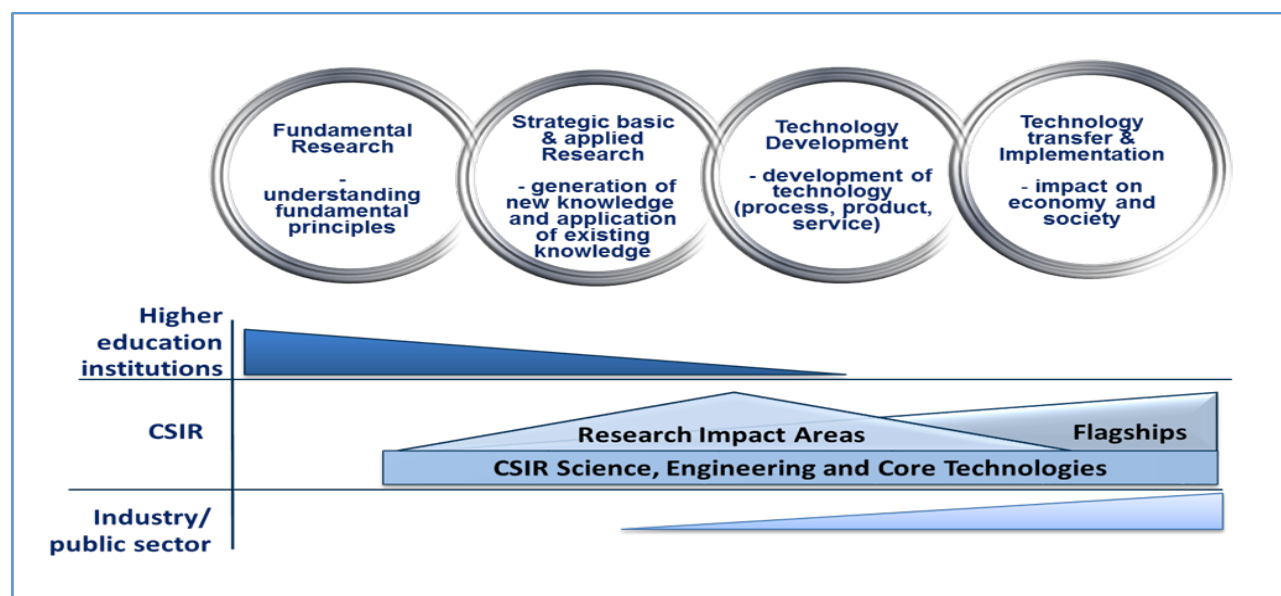
The CSIR's growth and impact strategy is structured around research impact areas (RIA) with flagship programmes and collaborators as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Stakeholders and relationships of the RIA of CSIR (adopted from the CSIR Annual report 2013/14)**

Research Impact Area		Department	Key focus areas
Health		DoH Medical Research Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Healthcare delivery system</li> <li>Burden of disease: HIV, TB and malaria</li> <li>Point-of-care diagnostics</li> </ul>
Defence and security		Military services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information security</li> <li>Interoperability and standardisation across organs of state tasked with defence and security</li> <li>Command, control, and coordination</li> </ul>
Built environment		Housing Transport Department of Water Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable human settlements</li> <li>Water infrastructure</li> <li>Transport infrastructure</li> <li>Logistics and infrastructure operations</li> <li>Planning support systems</li> </ul>
Natural environment		Department of Water Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessing and monitoring the state of the natural environment</li> <li>Support for decision-making and resource planning</li> <li>Technologies for water, pollution, and waste solutions</li> </ul>
Industry	Advanced manufacturing	Department of Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Titanium industry</li> <li>Bio-manufacturing industry</li> <li>Additive manufacturing</li> <li>Microsystems and micro-financing</li> <li>Advanced materials and composites for industry</li> </ul>
Mining		Department of Mining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health and safety</li> <li>New mining methods</li> <li>Decision support systems</li> </ul>
Energy		Department of Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renewable and alternative energy (under development)</li> </ul>

The CSIR assists in the attainment of national outcomes by supporting, and working in collaboration with, national line departments, state-owned enterprises, provincial and local government, and the private sector. This support and collaboration is done through flagship programmes that act as vehicles that draw on RIA capabilities. The flagship programmes are large, integrated, impact-driven development and innovation initiatives, with clear objectives and intended outcomes that can be achieved within a set time. They are initially funded by the Parliamentary Grant, but partnering with stakeholders to leverage resources and funding is key in pursuing the goals of the programmes (DST,

2013). Figure 1 illustrates the relationships with these stakeholders within the National System of Innovation (NSI) framework. The NSI focuses on strategic basic and directed research, technology development, technology transfer, and implementation for commercial and social benefits.



*Figure 1: The CSIR's role within the NSI. Adopted from the CSIR 2013/14 annual report*

One example of the interactions between the CSIR and one of their key stakeholders is evident in the Water Resource Governance System (WRSG). The WRSG sees the involvement of policymakers from the inception phase of research as an important step in improving the uptake of research by policymakers. An example of end user involvement is a project on the natural freshwater ecosystem. Funded by multiple donors, the project looked at freshwater ecosystem priorities including certain estuaries, wetland, and other key vulnerable areas. The result of this project was an atlas which was produced in collaboration with the people who would be using it. This end user involvement ensured that the information the atlas contained was useful, relevant, and available to end users.

### *The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)*

The HSRC was established in 1968 to undertake, promote, and coordinate research in the human and social sciences. It operates in terms of the HSRC Act (Act No. 17 of 2008). The HSRC is one of the statutory research councils operating in the NSI. As a national public entity, it reports to parliament via the Department and Minister of Science and Technology (S&T). It also has a cross-cutting responsibility of addressing priorities of several other government departments. In terms of



mandated objectives listed in the HSRC Act, it is required to undertake research, inform policy, and provide data to help monitor and evaluate the implementation of policies dealing with developmental issues. The HSRC thereby contributes to the improvement of the quality of life of vulnerable communities.

In relation to setting the agenda of the HSRC, several outputs are expected and listed in the performance agreement between the Minister of S&T and the president of South Africa. These delivery agreements are made with specific reference to the HSRC, and they include Outcome 1 (improved quality of basic education), Outcome 2 (a long and healthy life for all South Africans), and Outcome 5 (a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path) for the 2009 to 2014 period. In the delivery agreement for Outcome 1, the HSRC is listed as an agency which contributes to knowledge in the area of quality basic education, and as an institution at “the forefront of educational research in the country”. The delivery agreement also suggests that ongoing collaboration with the HSRC, and other statutory bodies, is critical in supporting basic education. The delivery agreement for Outcome 5 contains specific reference to the need to establish a credible institutional mechanism for skills planning (output 5.1). It is proposed in this delivery agreement that a memorandum of understanding between the Departments of Higher Education and Training, Science and Technology, and the HSRC be established for the provision of analyses, surveys, studies, investigations, and research into the supply and demand of skills in South Africa. The HSRC is one of many sources of health data and helps monitor the delivery agreement for Outcome 2. The delivery agreement for Outcome 2 includes outcomes related to combating HIV and AIDS and decreasing the burden of tuberculosis; infant, child, and maternal mortality; as well as chronic lifestyle diseases (HSRC, 2013).

The HSRC’s research use and impact assessment unit consolidates the dissemination and knowledge management activities of the HSRC. This single unit plays a strategic role in supporting researchers in maximising the impact of their research by engaging in activities such as knowledge exchange, synthesis, and application. The specific focus areas of this sub-programme include: bridging the gap between research, policy, and action; research use and impact assessment; knowledge management; and science communication. A key mechanism in achieving these focus areas has been the convening of policy-nexus workshops, where researchers and policymakers are brought together to engage with evidence on specific topics. Recently the final networking event of this two year programme of nexus meetings was held in Pretoria, employing a vibrant and participatory approach to policy dialogue and development. The structure and lessons learnt from this two year programme

of evidence engagement events was unpacked at an HSRC-led workshop on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2014.

### *The National Research Foundation (NRF)*

The NRF is the key funding agency for research within the science systems. It has a multifaceted research funding system that takes into account the deep race and gender imbalances that permeate the South African science system. Through this funding mechanism, the NRF addresses its key mandates of growing national research capacity, developing high-level scientific human capacity, and building knowledge domains. The NRF was established through Act No. 23 of 1998 following the system-wide review conducted by the then Department of Arts, Culture, Science, and Technology. The White Paper on S&T, 'Preparing for the 21st Century' (1996), in broad terms outlines the responsibilities and dual function of the NRF in the NSI.

The first function of the NRF is to act as a value-adding intermediary agency between top-down steering policies and strategies of government on the one hand, and research performing institutions (mainly universities) and researchers on the other hand (see Table 2). In this function, the NRF's funding and other initiatives guide the NSI system according to the relevant policies implemented within its sphere of influence (such as the higher education landscape, science councils, and industry). The second element of the NRF's dual function is to operate as a research performer. The national research facilities of the NRF conduct and facilitate research, while providing infrastructure platforms for research in areas of priority and / or geographical advantage. In addition, the NRF coordinates science engagement activities within the organisation and provides assistance across the NSI. Table 2 illustrates the different levels of interactions, as well as the role players within those levels of the NSI, which are implemented by the NRF.

*Table 2: Institutions of the National System of Innovation in South Africa. More stakeholders are indicated in the figure than those discussed in this section.*

Level 1: High-level policy								
The Presidency – National Planning Commission and Monitoring and Evaluation Advisory: HRD Council, CHE, NACI, ASSAf								
Level 2: Ministry								
DST	DHET/ DBE	The dti	DME	DoH	DWEA	DAFF	National Treasury	Other Departs
Level 3: Agency								
NRF	TIA	SANERI	IDC	MRC	WRC	DBSA		
Level 4: Research and Innovation Performers								
National Facilities of NRF	Universities	SABS	Mintek	MRC	ARC	Weather Services	Business Enterprises	Etc.
AISA			CGS			MCM		
HSRC			NECSA			SANBI		
CSIR								

There are three main collaborators through whom the NRF coordinates its activities.

(1) The first collaborator is the Presidency, which is the apex of government. The Presidency coordinates the implementation of a national strategic agenda and enhances the integrity of the state by:

- ensuring coherence in planning, coordination, policy development, and implementation;
- promoting a culture of accountability across all spheres of government through performance monitoring and evaluation;
- communicating the progress of government priorities; and
- mobilising the nation towards a common vision.

(2) The NRF is also well aligned with the Department of S&T's planned policy initiatives, which are:

- human capital development;
- global and African collaboration;
- research and development;
- innovation; and
- infrastructure development.

(3) Finally, the NRF also collaborates with the Department of Higher Education and Training. The Minister of Higher Education and Training approved the terms of reference for a ministerial review of university funding. The review team was tasked to formulate a funding framework that supports the transformation goals of the university education system as set out in the Education White Paper, 3 of 1997. Implementation of this framework should improve:

- the responsiveness of the university system to the social and economic needs of South Africa;
- student access, making it more equitable;
- the quality and excellence of teaching and research;
- student progression rates;
- equity in the allocation of government funds amongst universities; and
- the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of funds in higher education.

The NRF also has a close relationship with the Council on Higher Education and Higher Education South Africa.

### *The Medical Research Council (MRC)*

The MRC is a statutory council established in terms of Section 2 of the South African MRC Act 19 of 1969. The MRC's objective is to improve the health and quality of life of South Africa's population through research, development, and technology transfer. The MRC consists of a board which determines the policy and objectives of the MRC and exercises general control over the performance of the MRC's functions (South African Medical Research Council, 2014).

However, there is a question as to whether the South African MRC, since 1969, has functioned optimally and whether it is meeting its mandate. The basic organisational issue for the MRC is the line responsibility it holds with the National Department of Health (NDoH). This is problematic given the latter's necessary focus on the practical challenges involved in the equitable delivery of programmes to promote and deliver preventative and therapeutic primary healthcare to 46 million people in South Africa. Despite the wider mandate of the MRC, there is evidence that the NDoH wishes to restrict the focus of the MRC to the direct 'public health / health systems' activities of the MRC. In addition, many necessary stewardship functions of the NDoH / MRC have not been optimally performed (South African Medical Research Council, 2014).

The actual scope of the national research for health agenda needed by the NDoH for delivery of its healthcare mandate extends beyond that which the MRC can possibly deliver. Due to the MRC's limited reach, organisations such as the CSIR and the HSRC are performing a great deal of this work as well. For instance, the NRF channels an estimated 15% of its extensive agency funding into health-related research, and an enormous amount of HIV and TB research extending across the basic, clinical, human / social, and innovation spectrums. This extensive funding comes as a result of foreign investment which is only loosely connected to the MRC's unit system (divided research departments). Some of the work done by the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), the Water Research Council (WRC), and other non-governmental bodies such as the Health Systems Trust (HST) are also important components of the national research for health agenda.

Of particular relevance to this landscape review is the relationship of the units within the MRC (in our case, the Cochrane Centre) and the wider MRC, and linking that relationship to policy implications within the wider NDoH. However, the link between the units within the MRC to external partners has suffered in the past and continues to do so currently (see Figure 2 for details on the relationships within the MRC). Most research policy programmes (section on the right hand side of Figure 2) report to the Environment and Development National Programme. However, the outputs of this programme are not supported by the political climate and thus policies in the core areas of the MRC research operations do not seem to be taken up.

The National Health Research Committee (NHRC) was built into the National Health Act of 2003 precisely to help the NDoH 'make sense' of all these activities. This sense-making activity is in terms of needs analysis (setting research priorities), devising strategies, suggesting policy, improving practice, and disseminating information within the national health system. These activities are especially for the benefit of the provincial health departments and delivery agents at local government level.

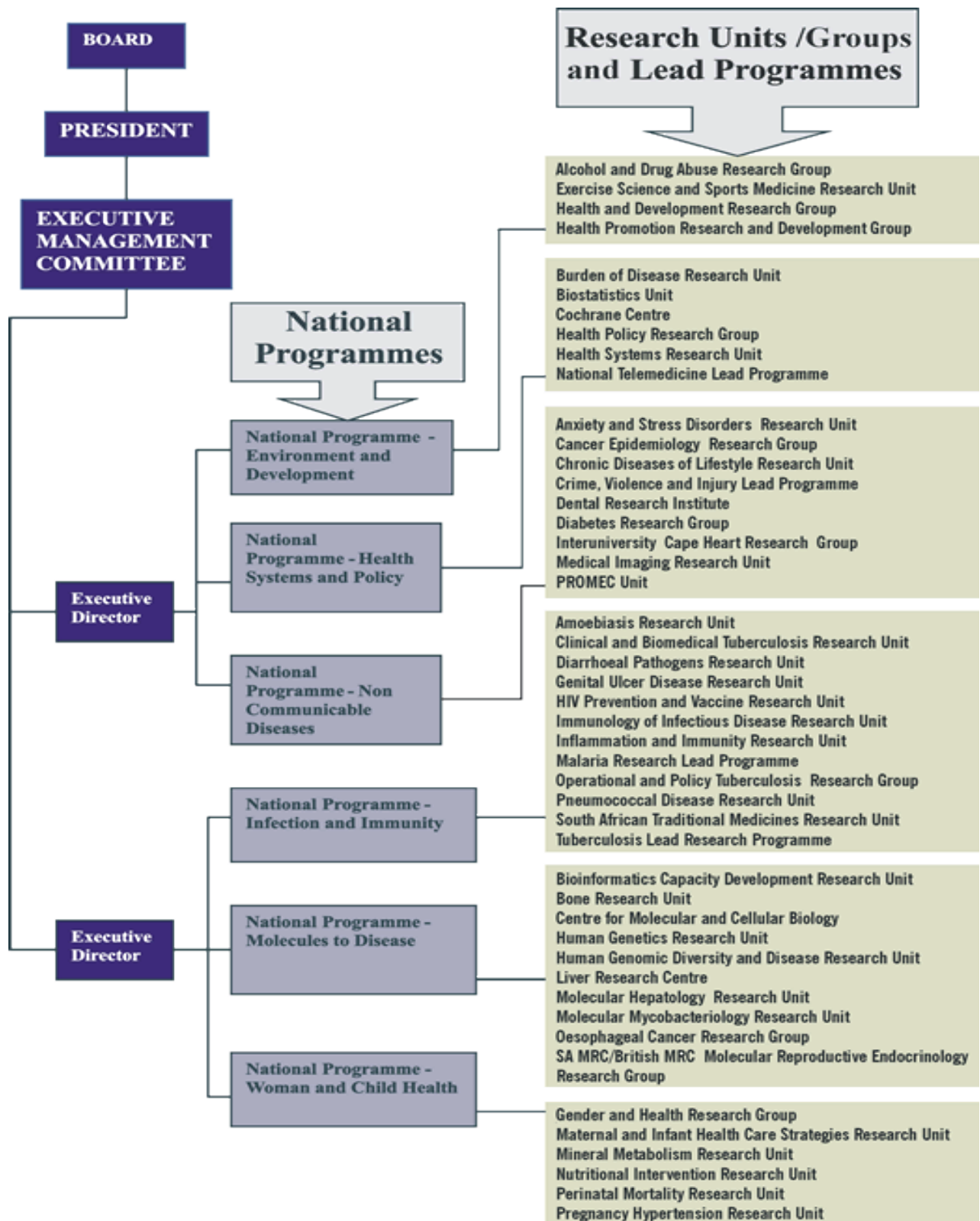


Figure 2: A schematic diagram of the structure of Research at the Medical Research Council (Adopted from the manual for the MRC, 2014)

The MRC board has recently recommended that it should move to the Department of S&T in terms of its 'solid' reporting line as has been and is still the case for both the presently flourishing HSRC and CSIR. This will enable the NDoH to draw on the entire NSI for relevant outputs of national research for health, irrespective of its origin. At the same time, the move would enable the key R&D sector of health and medical research to become fully embedded in the 'bio-economy' and 'knowledge economy' strategies and plans of the government. Both the MRC's (expanded) agency-type extramural functions and its (reorganised) intramural functions (especially the key area of innovation) would also benefit fully and equally from the major stimulus packages represented *inter alia* by the research chairs, centres of excellence, and equipment initiatives of the Department of S&T (South African Medical Research Council, 2014).

### *Agricultural Research Council (ARC)*

The Agricultural Research Council's (ARC) mandate is to conduct research, drive research and development, support technology development, and disseminate information. This mandate exists in order to promote agriculture and related industries in South Africa, contribute to a better quality of life, facilitate and ensure natural resource conservation, and alleviate poverty. Although the role of the ARC as a stakeholder is crucial to this current mapping exercise, we have been unable to establish informative and sustainable connections to enable a comprehensive placement of their role in evidence-informed decision-making for this landscape review.

### *Statistics South Africa (Stats SA)*

The mission for Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) is "to lead and partner in statistical production systems for evidence-informed decisions" (Stats SA, 2010). In the later democratic period of South Africa, policy developers and decision-makers across society have required statistical data in order to establish socio-economic and developmental priorities and benchmarks, and to monitor their successes and failures in implementing new programmes and policies. Statistical information is increasingly being used to guide planning and resource allocation, and for monitoring and evaluation of new initiatives and approaches. The 'democratisation' of statistical practice has led to increasing calls for statistics to become the basis for decision-making in South Africa. This increased call supports the constitutional imperatives contained in chapter 3 (section 41), chapter 5 (section 100), and chapter 6 (section 139) of the Statistics Act (Stats SA, 2010).

The purpose of official statistics is to assist organs of state, businesses, other organisations, or the public in planning, decision-making, or other actions, and in monitoring or assessing policies, decision-making or other actions. This centrality of planning, monitoring, and evaluation in government has recently been formalised through the establishment of new ministries in the Presidency dedicated to these areas. This has led to increased emphasis on evidence-informed decision-making, including the need to assess development efforts through measurable results. The role of statistics is to continuously enable society to understand their environment through deepening and expanding their evidential knowledge base, as captured in Principle 1 of the United Nations Fundamental Principles and sections 2 and 3 of the Statistics Act (Act No. 6 of 1999) as it relates to the purpose of the Act and of official statistics. There is now a stronger than ever demand for statistics to provide a basis for measuring and monitoring development goals and targets, and to establish multi-data indicators that reflect progress and change.

In producing and disseminating statistical information, the focus has largely been on measuring and monitoring the outcomes of policy and programmes rather than measuring or quantifying the inputs to or outputs of those programmes. Thus, there has been less focus on developing registers or lists in the production environment.

The main areas in which Stats SA gathers data are:

- economic growth;
- price stability;
- employment and job creation;
- life circumstances, service delivery and poverty monitoring; and
- population dynamics and demographic profiles.

As such, the production of statistics suggests that the main stakeholders related to Stats SA are the economic, education, and health clusters. By focusing on these clusters, the agricultural, environmental, and other sectors – such as energy – are side-lined. Table 3 outlines some of the relationships Stats SA has with stakeholders. These relationships relate to the outputs that Stats SA generates, based on both its capacity and mandate. The government departments which do not feed directly from Stats SA rely heavily on statistics collected and generated in-house by their respective departments. These data (usually empirical in nature) inform the department not on the macro level of impact, but rather on the smaller operational level which suggests that the information does not sit well with those outside the institution.



*Table 3: Summary of the outputs related to stakeholders for Stats SA*

Output (data)	Stakeholder	Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GDP</li> <li>• Industrial</li> <li>• Financial statistics</li> <li>• National accounts</li> </ul>	Economic growth and transformation	Finance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer price index</li> <li>• Producer price index</li> <li>• Household budget survey</li> </ul>	Prices	Finance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly employment statistics</li> <li>• Quarterly Labour force survey</li> </ul>	Employment, job creation, and decent work	Labour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Household Survey (GHS)</li> <li>• Living Conditions Survey (LCS)</li> <li>• Municipal survey on non-financial statistics</li> </ul>	Life circumstances, service delivery, and poverty	Social Development, Presidency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population census 2011</li> <li>• Mid-year population estimates</li> <li>• Health and vital statistics</li> </ul>	Population dynamics	Health, Social Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statistical support: health statistics subsystem</li> </ul>	Health	Health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statistical support: education statistics subsystem</li> <li>• Map of dataflow in education statistics subsystem</li> <li>• Draft statistical work programme for education</li> </ul>	Education	Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victims of crime</li> <li>• Statistical support: safety and security statistics subsystem</li> </ul>	Safety and security	SAPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental economic accounts</li> <li>• Discussion papers on water, minerals, and energy</li> </ul>	Sustainable resource management and use	DEA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategy for independent estimates of agriculture</li> </ul>	Rural development, food security and land reform	Department of Agriculture

### *Overview of research councils' activities to increase the usefulness and use of research*

The roles outlined above were set in place to increase the production and use of research and evidence that enables the government to effectively, and efficiently, address the issues pertaining to citizens' wellbeing. However, gaps exist between evidence production and utilisation both within and between research organisations. The scope for setting policy-oriented research agendas through engagement between research councils and corresponding government departments appears to be

relatively unfulfilled. Similarly, activities to report research findings back to government are limited to pockets of innovative practice. Table 4 summarises the activities of these research institutions involved in the EIDM arena.

*Table 4: Summary of the activities of research councils involved with EIDM*

Research council	Summary of engagements (policy)	Key networks
The Medical Research Council (MRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The agenda is set by the NDoH</li> <li>• Independent funding through other networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DoH</li> <li>• Academic institutions</li> </ul>
Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda is shared between the State and CSIR in consultative manner</li> <li>• Overlap with other department like MRC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic institutions</li> <li>• DST, Transnet</li> <li>• DPME</li> <li>• Private contractors</li> </ul>
Human Science Research Council (HSRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda set through the DST</li> <li>• Work through RIA, including policy-nexus programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DST</li> <li>• MRC</li> <li>• Academic institutions</li> <li>• DoH</li> <li>• DoE</li> </ul>
The National Research Foundation (NRF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing the NSI</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DoH, DST, DPME, DTI</li> </ul>
Statistics South Africa (Stats SA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues of poverty and inequality top of agenda</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HSRC, DEA, SAPS, economics, correctional services, CSIR, justice</li> <li>• Social cluster meetings</li> <li>• Data forums</li> <li>• DPME, PSPPD</li> </ul>

### **3.2. Organisations / Institutions supporting the use of research evidence (NGOs, universities)**

#### *Centres for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEAR)*

The Centres for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEAR) initiative was established in January 2010 as multilateral partnerships between donors and the competitively selected academic institutions that host the CLEAR centres around the world. With funding from various sources, CLEAR's global initiative aims at strengthening developing countries' capacities in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and performance management with a focus on results and EIDM. The CLEAR initiatives achieve this by addressing the demand and supply-side challenges of M&E to improve the use of evidence in policy and decision-making.

On the demand side, most countries globally are currently not implementing M&E well enough to produce systematic and robust evidence, and have not advanced toward linking evidence to decisions. On the supply side, there is still a relatively limited supply of knowledgeable professionals and an appropriate range of services to build government, civil society, and philanthropic capacity to monitor and evaluate programmes. CLEAR comprises of two main components: a regional approach which constitutes 80% of their work, and a global learning approach which constitutes 10% of their work. Their regional approach is used to strengthen and provide applied, practical, and innovative M&E capacity-building services across the different regions in which they are based. Their global learning approach which is used to generate, aggregate, and disseminate global knowledge and peer-learning about what works, what doesn't, and why in order to strengthen the expertise of the CLEAR centres and communities of practice on M&E across regions. The remaining 10% of their work is used for programme governance and management, including regular monitoring and reporting and mid-term, as well as final evaluations. Although the CLEAR initiative has five regional centres around the world, of interest to this landscape review is the Anglophone African region centre. The CLEAR Anglophone Africa Centre (CLEAR-AA) is hosted by the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa, and two partners: the Ghana Institute of Management and Public and Administration and the Kenya School of Government (CLEAR initiative 2013). The CLEAR-AA centre's objectives are to sustainably engage with its partners in order to:

- enhance the enabling environment and foster demand for M&E,
- strengthen organisational capacity to produce and use evidence,
- build critical mass of professional expertise, and
- lead innovation in M&E and programme management.

In South Africa, the centre collaborates solely with the Department for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) to strengthen M&E systems in African countries. As a first step in this process, CLEAR and DPME commissioned studies of six African countries and their M&E systems (CLEAR, 2012). The results were presented at a conference hosted by the DPME with subsequent plans for improving the systems comprehensively – in terms of incentives, institutional relationships, processes, and knowledge and skills of professionals – based on peer-learning approaches.

Furthermore, between July 2012 and June 2013, activities with the DPME included the following: defining evaluation standards and competencies, supporting the development of evaluation guidance documents, developing and implementing in-service training processes, participating in evaluation steering committees, supporting liaison work with parliament and other higher education institutions, and co-writing the most viewed articles (880 views to date) in the African Evaluation Journal based on diagnostic studies of evaluation systems. This work has contributed to strengthening the overall M&E environment within South Africa by helping to set the rules and incentives for the M&E market to evolve, as well as by developing the capacity of CLEAR-AA and the DPME (CLEAR, 2012).

As outlined in Table 5, a diagnostic study was done by CLEAR in a number of African countries to outline the M&E systems in place, and how they are used to support decision making. In this regard, UJ-BCURE is pleased to be working closely with CLEAR to identify synergies in our work and explore potential partnerships in our capacity-building activities, both in South Africa and Malawi.

The implementation of CLEAR's strategy follows a theory of change which includes training sessions, workshops, meeting events, knowledge exchange (sharing) seminars, technical assistance programmes, and knowledge-generating programmes (for example, mapping the supply of and demand for evaluation within the region).

*Table 5: The diagnostic study of African M&E systems undertaken by the CLEAR initiative.*

A diagnostic study on the M&E systems of several African countries (including Benin, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa, and Uganda) was completed in collaboration with the South African Presidency, and with additional funding from Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit. Its findings were formally published and disseminated as “African M&E Systems – Exploratory Case Studies.” With the success of this work, the CLEAR centre was able to win a contract to study the supply of, and demand for, evaluation in five African countries (Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Rwanda, and Zambia), focusing on the effects of the political economy on these issues. The study is being funded by the UK Department for International Development (DfID) and supported through CLEAR. This work is enabling a deep assessment of the issues in evaluation capacity building as well as enabling the development of evaluative research skills and experience among local researchers. The fieldwork is complete. The mapping will also be used to refine the centre’s strategic approach and to develop new lines of work (for example, in Zambia).

### *Development Research Uptake in Sub-Saharan Africa (DRUSSA)*

Development Research Uptake in Sub-Saharan Africa (DRUSSA) is a five year programme funded by DfID supporting 24 African universities as they strengthen processes and systems to manage research uptake. The DRUSSA programme is led by the Association of Commonwealth Universities based in the UK and is delivered in partnership with the Centre for Research on Evaluation, Science, and Technology at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa as well as Organisation Systems Design, also based in South Africa.

DRUSSA provides direct support to universities at individual, institutional, and systems levels to improve participation in, and impact on, policy and practice. The programme has been designed to consolidate and strengthen existing capacity that can be sustained in the long term by the universities themselves.

### *The Evidence Informed Policy Network (EVIPNet)*

The Evidence Informed Policy Network (EVIPNet) Africa is a regional network of evidence-to-policy partnerships in 11 sub-Saharan African countries. It has a steering group and country teams, and is sponsored by the World Health Organisation (WHO). EVIPNet is a demonstration programme launched by the WHO and the ministries of health in several African and Asian countries. Its aim is to promote the use of scientific evidence in health-policy formulation, with the ultimate goal of strengthening health systems and improving service coverage. At the country level, EVIPNet takes

the form of partnerships between policymakers, researchers, and civil society that focus on facilitating use of high quality research evidence. Launched in 2005 in the Asian region, and supported by a group of international experts, EVIPNet now supports activities in Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America. To date the focus of activities has been on sensitising and training policymakers, and supporting the development of country-specific implementation plans (EVIPNet Africa, 2014).

The African branch of EVIPNet was launched on March 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> 2006 at a workshop held at WHO AFRO headquarters in Brazzaville, Congo. EVIPNet Africa can trace its origins to the preparatory work that led to the establishment of the Regional East African Community Health Policy initiative (REACH-Policy). The African steering group was formed in November 14<sup>th</sup> 2007 in Cape Town, South Africa in an EVIPNet Africa planning meeting held during the SUPPORT Collaboration course on policy relevant reviews, at the South African MRC / Cochrane Centre. The African steering group for EVIPNet was formed by the leaders of the current EVIPNet-Africa country teams (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Zambia- Forum for Health Research (ZAMPHOR)) and representatives of REACH-Policy and the WHO Regional Office for Africa (AFRO) (EVIPNet Africa 2014).

### *Centre for Evidence-Based Health Care (CEBH)*

In collaboration with national and international partners, the Centre for Evidence-Based Health Care (CEBH), funded by UK DfID along other agencies, aims to increase evidence-informed decisions to improve health and healthcare for the poor in low- and middle-income countries via the Effective Health Care Research Consortium ([www.evidence4health.org](http://www.evidence4health.org)). The foundation of the consortium is collaborative work between five international partners based in Africa, East-Asia, China, Norway, and the UK. Together partners work towards preparing and updating Cochrane reviews about the effects of healthcare relevant to low- and middle-income countries. Partners also work on identifying approaches to ensure the dissemination and use of the results of systematic reviews in decision-making. The CEBH leads this work in the African region and works with, and provides project management support to, partners in Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, the Gambia, and Uganda (South African Cochrane Centre, 2013).

Within South Africa, the CEBH works closely with the South African Cochrane Centre (SACC) at the South African MRC. Born out of the CEBH is the Policy Building Demand for evidence in Decision-making through Interaction and Enhancing Skills (Policy BUDDIES) project funded by the WHO. The

Policy BUDDIES project involves collaboration with the Health Systems and Services Research centre at Stellenbosch University, the South African Cochrane Centre (SACC), the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, and the Centre for the Development of Best Practices in Health based in Cameroon. The Policy BUDDIES project is tasked with understanding the policymaking process and policymakers' capacity to use policy, as well as enablers and constraints to demanding evidence during policy formulation and implementation. To achieve this the project, which is still in its early stages, is working with and targeting Western Cape (WC) and Kwazulu Natal (KZN) based provincial managers of health programmes related to the delivery of the Millennium Development Goals 4, 5, and 6 (Young, 2013).

The model used by Policy BUDDIES works on three levels:

- a situational analysis in both the WC and KZN to understand what the key informers understand about the policymaking process in regards to EIDM;
- a three day workshop to inform capacity development that address how to formulate questions and how to do systematic reviews and interpret results; and finally,
- the “grade” approach to summarise findings.

The Policy BUDDIES project was launched in 2013 and the situational analysis of policymakers in both the WC and KZN, which has recently been completed, isolated four main areas of concern:

1. the need for manpower to follow up in capacity-building initiatives which are usually lacking due to the slow processes within government that sometimes lead to participants forgetting details of activities,
2. the length of time it takes to clear initiatives, for example, within the provincial health departments,
3. the mixed bag of managers and directors who are responsible for the evidence-making process and chain, and
4. the allocation of time for the workshop which in itself is challenging given that many participants went in and out of sessions for short periods of time to attend to urgent duties at their offices.

### *The Southern African Social Policy Research Institute (SASPRI, formerly CASASP)*

The Southern African Social Policy Research Institute (SASPRI), which also stands for Southern African Social Policy Research Insights, is a non-governmental organisation with strong academic and government partnerships in South Africa. Committed to promoting social policy as an area of study, this small organisation undertakes policy-oriented work and facilitates the use of research evidence

through a combination of partnerships and capacity-building activities. SASPRI organises and runs training events and conferences, as well as undertakes research to develop the social policy evidence-base. Their work, some of which was conducted under the previously linked structure CASASP, includes several examples of good practice. This work has been possible due to existing relationships with academics at a number of international universities, as well as strong links with South African government departments. An example of such relationships is the Strengthening Analytical Capacity for Evidence-Based Decision-Making (SACED) programme delivered with the South African Department of Social Development (DSD) and funded by DfID southern Africa.

SASPRI worked to develop a tax-benefit micro-simulation model for South Africa (SAMOD), which was developed and refined by a group of researchers for use within the South African government. Training sessions were then delivered for members of DSD and the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA). The South African government has subsequently commissioned several projects that use SAMOD for policy development. SASPRI's approach of developing evidence-tools and datasets, and then providing training support in their use, is further reflected in their work to develop a set of small-area-level indices of deprivation using census data. These indices provide a profile of relative deprivation which enables researchers and policymakers to identify the most deprived areas across South Africa. These indices also enable policymakers to profile deprivation within a subset of the country; to monitor change over time; to identify deprived areas for special initiatives; and (in some instances) to provide a rationale for spatially-variant decisions about resource allocation. Last but not least, SASPRI provides training to high level decision-makers in evidence informed decision-making.

### *Build Capacity to Use Research Evidence (BCURE) programmes in South Africa*

The UK DfID has funded two BCURE programmes operating in South Africa, one of which is led by UJ. This landscape review is one of the initial steps of UJ-BCURE in identifying where to focus capacity building activities in order to increase the demand for, and the use of, research evidence in decision-making in government. Over the course of the three year UJ-BCURE programme, the team will:

- Combine landscape reviews of the research-push and research-into-policy environment with a detailed situation analysis of government needs and priorities in order to produce a tailored implementation plan for supporting the use of evidence in the South African government.



- Employ innovative ways to build capacity. This will include tools, systems, and processes for capacity building (see Table 6). Specific focus areas will be established following in-depth consultative workshops and meetings with our primary partners (DST, DBE, DPME and the Department of Human Settlements), and gaps and priorities further defined in a dedicated period of needs assessment and consultation.
- Develop the Africa Evidence Network (AEN), which will include the establishment of country-specific branches and the hosting of two continent-wide colloquiums to provide capacity-building and capacity-sharing opportunities for AEN members. This will include partners in South Africa and Malawi: research councils (such as the HSRC and the CSIR), as well as academic institutions (for instance, WITS and the University of Malawi). The AEN will be supported by a web-based platform for visibility, debates, and resources.

*Table 6: Approaches to capacity building from the UJ-BCURE led team*

<p>To raise awareness and demand for research evidence in government, the UJ-BCURE will be utilising three approaches:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training and seminar programs, from introductory awareness-raising sessions for senior civil servants to advanced skills training in accessing, appraising, and synthesising evidence for technical staff within government.</li> <li>2. A mentorship programme on adaptation and implementation of learning within their (government) work environment(s).</li> <li>3. Secondment(s) for government policymakers to enable one- to-one individual capacity-different to their work environments but that operates in a similar context.</li> </ol>
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The UJ-BCURE team has also been tasked to deliver a similar programme in Malawi. The local Malawian capacity-building strategy will mirror that of South Africa in terms of the scope of work and deliverables.

The second BCURE programme operating in South Africa is led from the UK by International Network for the Availability of Scientific publications (INASP) and is known as the Vaka Yiko consortium. The consortium is working in South Africa through the HSRC in collaboration with the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in the UK. The consortium also works with other partners in Ghana and Zimbabwe. The HSRC-led arm of the programme focuses on building the demand for research evidence by policymakers and will adapt a UK-based toolkit for use with key stakeholders in the South African context. The informing principle for the consortium's project is that there are three

essential components for good evidence-informed policymaking to be embedded within government departments: a cadre of individual policymakers who have the skills and capacity to use evidence, a suite of organisational tools and processes that enable teams and organisations to process evidence effectively and efficiently, and an environment that encourages the use of evidence.

### *Overview of initiatives in South Africa working to increase the usefulness and use of evidence by decision-makers*

We acknowledge that we have not covered all the initiatives working to increase the usefulness and use of evidence by decision-makers in South Africa, although we have been able to identify a broad range of related activities (see Table 7 for an overview). It is nonetheless clear from those programmes we have reviewed that there are gaps in the formal evidence-production / evidence-use systems, which are to an extent being filled by these dedicated programmes. Many of these mentioned initiatives are funded externally, suggesting a donor-driven agenda to improve governance in the country through the increased use of evidence. Whilst these projects have the advantage of being attached to institutions of higher learning (mainly universities), they are all still reliant on relatively short-term external funding and have limited linkages within more formal research-policy structures. Their effectiveness is likely to rely on the relationships they build with these more formal structures, and the extent to which they are able to support sustainable change beyond the lifetime of their funding.

*Table 7: Summary of the activities of key projects involved with EIDM*

Name of key project	Summary of engagements (policy)	Key network (name, other)
Centres for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEAR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The system is set to support M&amp;E</li> <li>• Independent funding through other networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DPME</li> <li>• Academic institutions</li> </ul>
Development Research Uptake in Sub-Saharan Africa (DRUSSA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda set through funders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic institutions</li> </ul>
The Evidence Informed Policy Network (EVIPNet)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda is set by WHO to support regions with evidence for decisions</li> <li>• Overlap with many other organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic institutions</li> <li>• NDoH</li> </ul>
Centre for Evidence-based Health Care (CEBH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda is set through funders</li> <li>• Policy BUDDIES programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provincial government only (WC &amp; KZN)</li> </ul>
Southern African Social Policy Research Institute (SASPRI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports capacity building for good practice and partnerships</li> <li>• Developed a tax-benefit micro-simulation model for South Africa (SAMOD)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DSD</li> </ul>
The BCURE Programmes	DfID-funded to support policymaking within government and partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DPME, PSPPD</li> <li>• research councils</li> <li>• government departments</li> </ul>

### **3.3. Organisations / Institutions working on the intermediate side**

#### *The Department for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME)*

The main role player within the South African government's arm of decision-making, working to increase the demand for research, is the Evaluation and Research Unit within the DPME at the South Africa Presidency. Since 2009, the Evaluation and Research Unit has been able to implement numerous evidence-informed checks related to monitoring the government's activities. The DPME is responsible for South Africa's government-wide M&E system. In general, effort has gone into developing monitoring systems but much less into evaluations. Evaluation is not systemised in government, and efforts are currently underway to continuously enhance the national evaluation strategy with the development of the 2014 / 2015 National Evaluation Plan.

The DPME, under section 85 of the Constitution, requires the president and other cabinet members to develop and implement national policy and coordinate the functions of state departments and administrations. The Presidency thus plays a crucial role in the coordination, monitoring, evaluation, and communication of government policies and programmes. The DPME is the custodian of government-wide M&E, which establishes the framework for M&E, supports the development of appropriate capacity, and integrates data for reporting purposes (the Presidency, 2014). The government-wide M&E strategy is summarised in Table 8.

Alongside the DPME there are a number of other supporting transversal institutions that are involved in the implementation of the overall M&E system in South Africa. These include the National Treasury, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), the Auditor-General, the Department of Cooperative Governance (DCoG), and Stats SA. In addition, there is the functional role played by line departments, provinces, and municipalities (Latib and Goldman, 2012).

*Table 8: Government-wide M&E partners, mandate, and core roles and functions within the EIDM environment*

GWM&E partner	Constitutional mandate	Role and function
National Treasury	Sections 215 and 216 of the Constitution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure that programme performance information on inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes underpins institutional arrangements for planning, budgeting, implementation management, and accountability reporting.</li> <li>- The National Treasury is the central custodian of quarterly reports of budgets (which include performance information) and for the monitoring of expenditure.</li> </ul>
The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA)	Public Service Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Responsible for public service transformation to increase public service effectiveness and improve governance.</li> <li>- Acts as the custodian of public management frameworks, performance and knowledge management, and service delivery improvement.</li> <li>- Co-chairs the cross-departmental Governance and Administration Cluster Group.</li> <li>- As the custodian of the public service human resource function, the DPSA is particularly active in monitoring individual and management performance.</li> <li>- The DPSA has established the Public Management Watch System that is key to the overall system for assessing management performance in the public service.</li> </ul>
The Auditor-General	Section 20(1c) of the Public Audit Act (25 of 2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The reports of the Auditor-General feed into the overall monitoring process and serve as a key indicator of government institutional performance.</li> <li>- The Auditor-General also undertakes discretionary performance audits which are very close to evaluations.</li> </ul>
Department of Cooperative Governance (DCoG)	Chapters 3 and 7 of the Constitution; the Municipal Structures Act of 1998; and the Municipal Systems Act of 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Its core function is to develop national policies and legislation with regards to local government, to monitor the implementation and to support local government in fulfilling its constitutional and legal mandate.</li> <li>- Works with counterpart provincial departments in monitoring performance in accordance with established local integrated development plans.</li> </ul>
Statistics SA	Statistics Act (No. 6 of 1999); 2002 January Cabinet Legkotla; the State of the Nation Addresses of 2004 and 2005; Section 14.6 (a), (b) and (c) of the Statistics Act; Section 14.7 (a) and (b); Section 14.8 clauses (a) and (b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To comment on the quality of national statistics produced by any organ of state and to publish such other departments' statistics.</li> <li>- Responsible for conducting the national census and thus its role is particularly evident in the evaluation process.</li> <li>- Continues to be a key player in establishing standards and quality of data, and accrediting official statistics.</li> </ul>
The Public Service Commission (PSC)	Sections 195 and 196 of the Constitution; (is independent from the executive and reports directly to Parliament)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tasked with investigating, monitoring, and evaluating the organisation and administration of the public service.</li> <li>- Obligated to promote effective and efficient performance within the public service, and to promote the values and principles of public administration as set out in the Constitution.</li> </ul>

Meeting of Ministers and Provincial Members of the Executive (MinMECs)	None	Since 1996, forums known as MinMECs have been established along sectorial lines, consisting of national ministers and their provincial MEC counterparts.
The President's Coordinating Council	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consultative body that deals with cross-sectorial issues</li> <li>- Presents an opportunity for provinces to influence national policy, and to ensure the coordinated and integrated implementation of national policies and programmes at provincial level.</li> </ul>

In order to ensure coordination at the apex of the government system, there are six cabinet level clusters of government. There are also inter-governmental structures to ensure coordination between national government, provinces, and in some cases municipalities.

### *The Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD)*

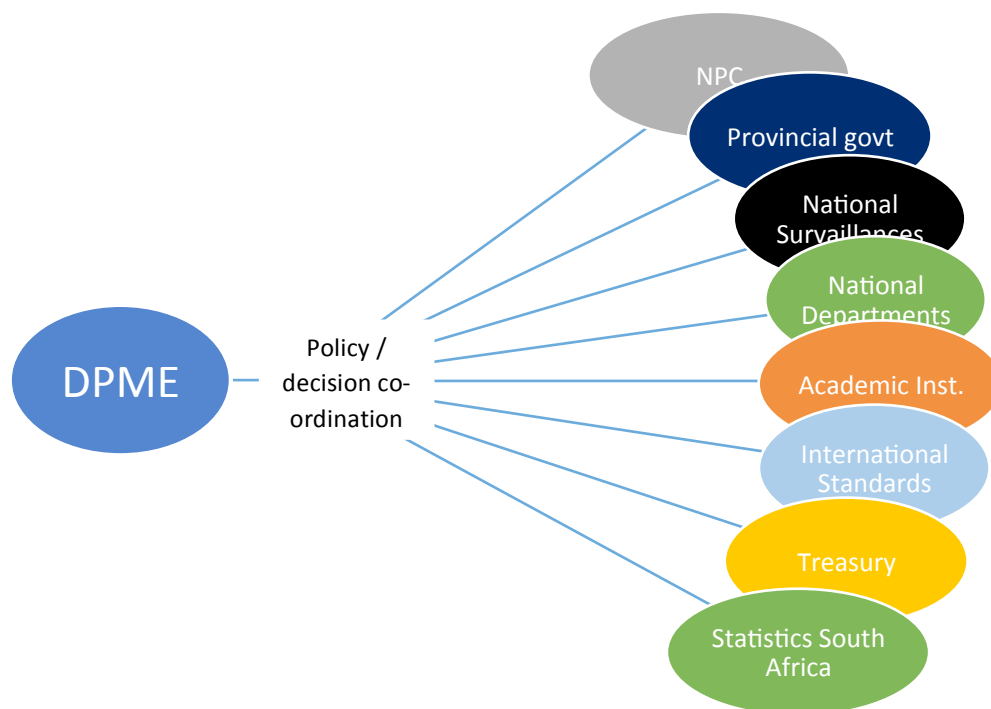
The role of the DPME is strengthened by the Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD), which is within the Presidency's National Planning Commission. The PSPPD is also in partnership with the European Union and aims to improve the understanding of decision-making at that affect household levels in South Africa so as far as to better inform policymaking to address poverty. The PSPPD programme was designed by the Presidency's Programme Steering Committee (PSC) and is currently located in the National Policy Commission with strategic management provided by the National Income Dynamics Survey (NIDS). The Southern African Labour Research Unit (SALDRU) at the University of Cape Town (UCT) is another close collaborator of the PSPPD programme. The PSPPD also works in partnership with the HSRC, particularly with the Research Use and Impact Assessment Unit and the Policy Action Network. Day to day management of the unit is through four people including a programme manager, finance and research managers, and a programme administrator with a research facility of €850,000 implemented through calls of proposals, a short-term technical assistance budget, and incidental expenditure (Clearly and du Pisani, 2012).

The first phase of the PSPPD ran from 2007 to 2012 and focused primarily on supporting the social sector. It used the evidence-informed policymaking approach to generate new knowledge, through its grant-making process, by funding thirteen research projects. In addition to this, the programme undertook a number of capacity building activities. Among these were training, study tours, and

exchange programmes. These activities included both policymakers and academics, and the aim was to develop their existing skills, to attain new skills and exposure to good practice in other countries, and to learn from challenges within the policymaking arena (<http://www.psppd.org.za/>).

The second phase of the PSPPD (2012 to 2017) is leveraging the knowledge and experience gained in phase one to further strengthen the use of research and other evidence in policymaking and implementation. This second phase is being implemented in the social and economic sectors of government and is to support the National Development Policy Support Programme (NDPSP), the overarching programme between the South African government and the European Union (<http://www.psppd.org.za/>).

The relationships and partners linked to the PSPPD are illustrated in Figure 3 and range across the spectrum as mentioned above.



*Figure 3: Summary of the partners who are linked to the DPME through policy coordinated clusters to support EIDM*

### *The Department of Science and Technology (DST)*

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) derives its mandate from the 1996 White Paper on science and technology. The DST, as the custodial coordinator for the development of the National

System of Innovation (NSI)<sup>1</sup>, influences this system through key strategies such as the National Research and Development Strategy (NRDS) and the ten year innovation plan. The latter, particularly, seeks to contribute to the transformation of the South African economy into a knowledge-based economy. In such an economy, the production and dissemination of knowledge will lead to economic benefits and enrich all fields of human endeavour. In this regard, the measure of success will be the level to which S&T play a driving role in enhancing productivity, economic growth, and socio-economic development.

Following from the 1996 White paper, the DST was separated from the Ministry of Arts, Culture, Science, and Technology and independently established in 2002. Subsequently, Cabinet approved a new Science and Technology Management Framework on October 24<sup>th</sup> 2004. This high-level functional model for the management of the South African S&T system is based on a classification of activities into three broad areas: cross-sectorial generic technology and associated human resources; focused, sectorial, and relatively mature technology domains; and critical technology-intensive services.

As the custodial coordinator of the NSI, the DST plays a central role in supporting the research institutions under the NSI umbrella and is the custodian of the policies that are derived from them. However, the NSI's leadership role, under the new global directions of science and in meeting the requirements of the republic, is in need of redirection to give it the impetus to remain relevant in light of delivering its mandate. According to the NSI ministerial committee of July 2010, the NSI should be led by a National Council in Research and Innovation, with the Deputy President as the head and lead in prioritisation and agenda-setting for the NSI. The first task of the committee would be to map out the demands on the research and innovation system for the next decade, and then to advise on the broad measures needed to galvanise system actors to these ends. The council would further make recommendations on future grand challenges, major allocations, major equipment needs, and new sources of funds for the challenges (DST, NSI Ministerial Report, 2012).

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<sup>1</sup> The NSI remains an ideal for which the South African government continues to strive. It is an enabling framework for S&T. It can be understood as a set of functioning institutions, organisations, and policies that interact constructively in the pursuit of a common set of social and economic goals and objectives, seeking to promote change through the introduction of innovations. In this regard, the NSI framework defines innovation as the introduction into a market (economic or social) of new or improved products and services. Innovation is vital for wealth creation, economic growth, and social development. S&T and R&D are the key drivers of innovation.



## 4. Overview and reflections

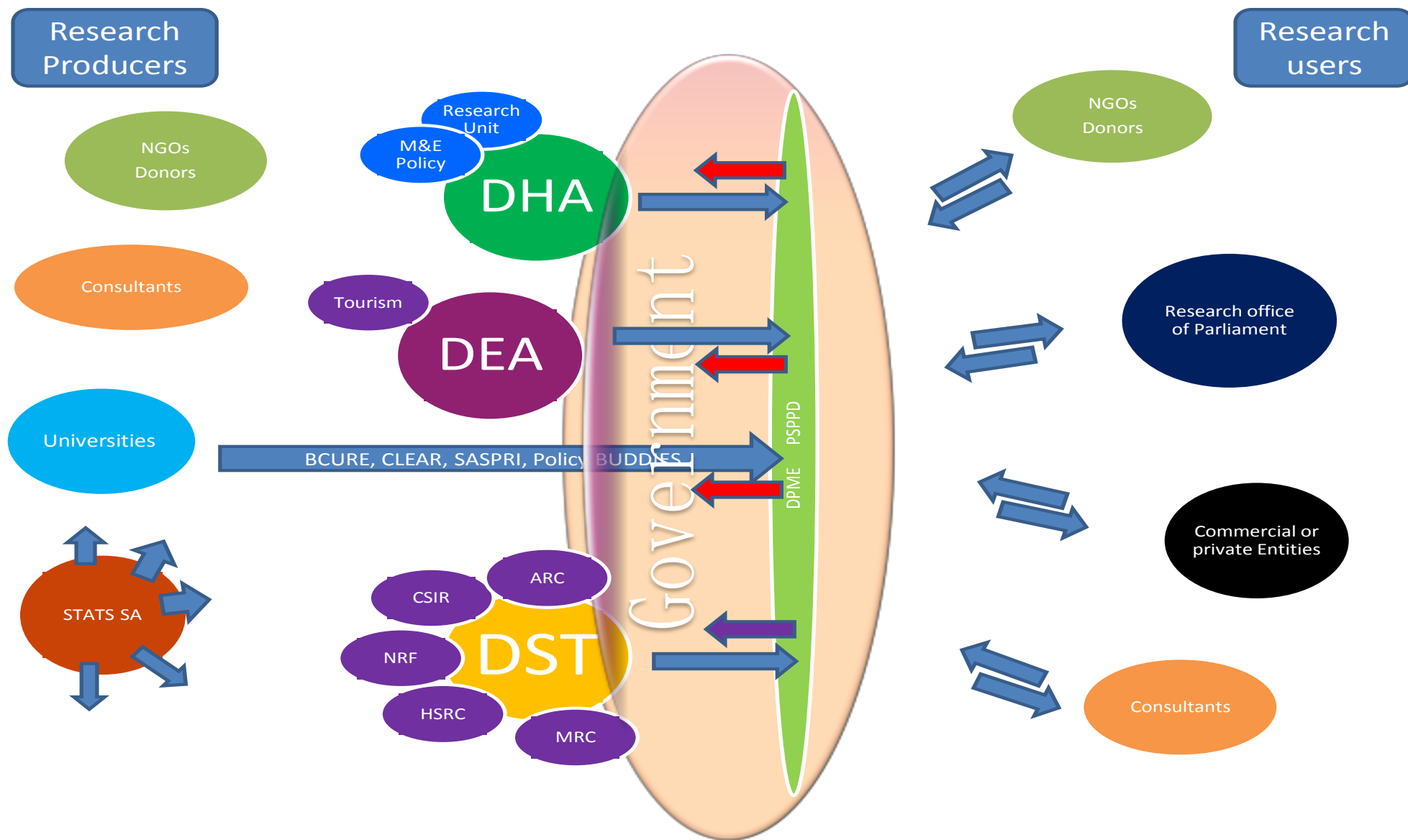
### 4.1. Main conclusions from the findings

The main aim of this landscape review was to elaborate on the relationships between the main players in EIDM and the platforms on which evidence is made available to decision-makers in South Africa. This complex field is divided into two complementary, but largely distinct, 'systems' for supporting evidence-informed decision-making (see Figure 9).

Whilst we acknowledge the system is both complex and cyclical, we have presented it as a simplified landscape with research producers (universities and research centres) on one side of the diagram, and research users (for the purpose of this exercise, government) on the other side. A number of organisations and processes sit between the two, to differing extents bridging the gap between evidence and decision-making.

Within more formal structures, represented by the bottom section of Figure 9, research councils and other statutory bodies (potentially) link closely with government, in research agenda setting, commissioning, and conducting research. They provide a link between the research production system and government, and include scope to feedback the research evidence to decision-makers. In addition to the commissioning of research via the research councils and the generation of evidence through bodies such as Stats SA, government also commissions research directly from producers, either through universities and research centres or consultants. We have deliberately positioned these organisations closer to government as they have the potential to work closely together, even if this is not always the reality.

In addition to this more formal system there are a number of externally-funded initiatives, programmes, and networks (many of which are linked to universities) that are presented in the top section of Figure 9. We have identified a range of activities within this less formal space that focus on the 'demand' side of building capacity in evidence-informed decision-making: the two BCURE programmes (UJ-BCURE and Vaka-Yiko), CLEAR, CEBH's Policy BUDDIES programme, and the work of SASPRI. DRUSSA is notable for its work with universities in the region to support the 'push' for useful evidence for decision-making. Furthermore, within this spectrum are research consultants who support both the 'push' for research and who work closely with decision-makers.



**Figure 4: Map of formal relationships between the main role players in the South African EIDM environment**

A number of issues have arisen from this mapping of the landscape, many of which are unanswered questions at this stage:

- Whilst we have identified and represented 'systems' within this report, it is not clear the extent to which the different agencies really engage with one another in an effective way and it may be premature to call these systems apart from the overarching umbrella of the NSI.
- The role of government in setting the research agenda is unclear. Although there is evidence to suggest that the government on the extreme right has a coordinating role in this aspect, it is not clear to what extent long-term planning takes place or whether the agenda is driven by public pressure, which is again influenced by short-term-stop-gap measures. It is envisioned that this role is played by the government policy clusters, but this remains unclear.
- There are challenges in bringing together such diverse organisations within one 'evidence production – evidence use' system. It is easy to assume that research questions are understood by both sides in the same way, that these questions are driven by real priority problems which are well articulated, and that the results will provide the information that decision-makers want and need.
- In addition, and not yet sufficiently explored in this work, we know that most government bodies have their own internal data collection mechanisms which are used to support internal decisions, mainly based on operational reasoning. Because this information is internally collected, it operates outside of the wider research environment.
- We are aware of systems within government to increase the use of evidence, not the least being the National Evaluation Plans and the work of the DPME. However, these do not appear to be integrated within the main systems in the country for research-production.

There are a number of initiatives operating to bridge the gap between research production and research use. These are, however, not well integrated into a larger system and appear instead to be filling a gap left by inadequacies in that more formal 'system'. The sustainability of these efforts will depend on the extent to which they can embed within larger structures, and indeed support the development of the overall system.

## **5. The way forward**

This landscape review has focused on some of the relationships of the main players in EIDM in South Africa. This work was followed by a review workshop on March 25<sup>th</sup> 2014 which provided an opportunity to reflect on what we have learnt thus far, and to begin to explore how government departments engage with evidence. Subsequently, the DST (working on the e-education policy implementation with the DBE) and the Department of Human Settlements were areas identified as needing support in capacity building at a workshop on May 13<sup>th</sup> 2014 (subsequent meetings, which targeted areas of support and the build up to the decisions, are further explained in the Needs Assessment report). A needs assessment and formulation of how best to introduce and implement workshops, mentorships, and secondments with these partners will be done in the latter part of 2014. This landscape review thus remains the first part of deliverables in terms of capacity building for the South African government policymakers.

## Appendix 1: List of meetings conducted for this landscape review

Meetings conducted in person or by telephone		
Organisation / network	Person contacted	Type of partner / organisation base
CLEAR	Tim Clynick	NGO, P&DM Wits University
EVIPNet	Pierre Ongolo-Zongo	Network
SA Cochrane Centre, MRC	Tamara Kredo	NGO, Research Council, Cape Town
CEBH	Celeste Naude, Taryn Young	NGO, University of Stellenbosch
SASPRI (formerly CASASP)	Gemma Wright, Michael Noble	NGO, Cape Town (formerly University of Oxford)
DRUSSA	Karrine Sanders	Network
CSIR	Berenice Lue Marais and Zaid Kimmie (Nikki Funke (CSIR water))	Research Council, Pretoria
MRC	Niresh Bagwandin	Research Council, Cape Town
Stats SA	Isabel Schmidt	National statistics office
Research Office of Parliament	Carmaine Rustine	RSA, Cape Town
ARC	Sylvester Mpandeli	Research Council, Pretoria
NRF	Andrew Kaniki	Research Council, Pretoria
HSRC	Temba Masilela	Research Council, Pretoria

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