

POLICY : RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

ITEM DP 8-2003
MC 08.05.2003

PROPOSED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK

RESOLVED:

1. **That** the proposed Research and Development Framework by the Director: Research and Development, **BE APPROVED**.
2. **That** the framework **BECOMES** an official document guiding the research process in the Metro.
3. **That** departments **ADHERE** to the policy framework, where research is involved.
4. **That** all departments **PARTICIPATE** through the IDP Steering Committee and in all research activities.



Ekurhuleni
METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

**POLICY
RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT
FRAMEWORK**

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK

1. INTRODUCTION

Research and Development a new function in the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (EMM). Previously research was carried out uncoordinated in different departments even in the former disestablished towns which now form the Metro. It is in this context that a research framework is proposed. A framework should serve as a guide to conducting research, however should be emphasised from the start that a research framework should be aligned to the aims and objectives of the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality as articulated in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP).

The implementation of the IDP approach in the municipality areas has thus far played a significant role in laying a foundation for coordinated research. Although research was not a factor in the IDP process research could play a meaningful role in the implementation process.

The framework will ensure that research carried out is developmental. Research should be seen as a support system for both the administration and the political wing. The Research and Development Framework will identify immediate and urgent priority developmental areas and also develop a long-term strategy that will prepare the metro for future developmental challenges. It will link with and build upon existing government strategies in order to engender an effective and concerted government response to development.

2. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

This framework is intended to guide the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality in defining what the role of Research and Development should be, and it also demarcates the parameters of what this municipality has to do to become a smart, creative and developmental city. The research framework will therefore give flesh to the policy expectations set out in the White Paper on Local Government. The framework will be the reference document that must be used to determine the research function content, direction and processes in Ekurhuleni. The framework should guide the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality to become a developmental local government.

3. RATIONAL FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Research is conducted on various sectors for different purposes but the aim is to achieve informed results that would provide guidance in pursuit of development. The current situation in the Metro is that research is focused on departmental interest and operations. The need for integrated research is indispensable for sustainable development and it is critical that such an approach is adopted as a support tool for planning.

In general terms the process of conducting research is driven by socio-economic growth and development. Developmental research should constitute a goal-directed research agenda that lends itself to support the interaction between policy formulation, planning, implementation and the management of the development process. Policy formulation is normally informed by research findings while developmental research attempts to maintain balance between policy, planning implementation and the management processes. A continuous research of these aspects and a meaningful relationship between them is the only solution to such an effective service delivery and development.

4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The notion of developmental local government is formerly enshrined in the South African Constitution. The South African Constitution provides that a local government must, in addition to its more traditional functions of providing democratic and accountable government and ensuring the provision of services to communities also:-

- Promote social and economic development
- Promote a safe and healthy environment and community organisations in the matters of local government

The White Paper on Local Government has helped to clarify what this development vision for local government in practice in entail. In essence, the White paper expressed a view of developmental local as involving:-

- A new approach to governing locally; and
- A new set of tools which local government could use to build this approach

Developmental local government entails a new culture or orientation for local government. The white paper emphasis the fact that Municipalities must begin to focus their energies on a clear set of developmental outcomes, which are:

- The provision of household infrastructure and services
- The creation of liveable, integrated cities, towns and areas
- Local economic development; and
- Community empowerment and redistribution

The research directorate within Ekurhuleni must therefore focus on issues of governance and development in these spheres and how the relationship between the government spheres can be strengthened to improve governance and delivery.

5. ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

The government has developed an integrated Research and Development strategy which is consistent with performance measurement in order to meet the requirements relating to the optimisation of government in research and development.

The national R&D strategy is aimed at better alignment and delivery which is essential to create an enabling framework at national level which will allow integrative research and development planning that:-

- Reflects the cross-cutting issues facing government as a whole
- Address the specific, sector-oriented R&D planning of national departments
- Leverages provincial initiatives and capacities
- Generates enhanced innovative and human resource development.

In particular, the strategy combines the three pillars of Enhanced Innovation, Transformed Human Resources and Government Leadership to yield a strong foundation for future growth aid development.

The strategy addresses issues of research and development in Councils by advocating for increases in the core financing to assist with transformation, renewal of their research infrastructure and related issues.

6. ROLE OF THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE

The role of Research and Development directorate, in essence, is about the strengthening of governance and service delivery within the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. The research directorate within Ekurhuleni must therefore focus on issues of governance and development in the Metro and how delivery Can be improved.

All the other departments in Ekurhuleni are focusing. on development and execution of specific programmes such as health, finance, etc and these departments therefore have a micro focus in dealing with specific programmes only. The Research and Development directorate, on the contrary, must also have a macro or holistic focus in that it focuses on issues from governance perspective across these departments. The role of the Research and Development can therefore not be restricted to render research support to other directorates alone, but it must also contribute to more effective governance in the Metro.

There are two processes that the Research and Development directorate must ideally be involved in namely demand driven research (research demands originating from Ekurhuleni management and politicians), and supply driven research (research needs identified by the Research Directorate itself). Demand driven research reacts on requests from management while supply driven research is more of a proactive nature in that certain strategic issues are identified together with management on which research is required.

An example of the value that supply driven or proactive research can add is that findings and implications of major reports and studies can be brought to the attention of Ekurhuleni management.

The ideal will be that the Research and Development directorate achieve a balance between both the demand driven and supply driven aspects of research. This means that the necessary resources and staff compliment be made available to perform both functions.

Practical examples of the two types of research are as follows :-

Demand driven

- Research support on strategic objectives
- Management of research identified by both management and politicians

Supply Driven

- Identifying and analysing local and international trends in governance that has a bearing on local government in South Africa
- Bringing implications of findings of important reports and studies to the attention of Ekurhuleni management.

Another important role that the Research and Development could play is to management information database. In order for the directorate to operate effectively, there should be information available which will inform the basis of any decision making. Basically, the information database will assist in the following. areas:-

- It will help the Metro to manage its operations through sound knowledge of information
- Help report through coordinated information to Council
- Help report to both provincial and national

7. PRINCIPLES

As a unit within government, the Research and Development has to adhere to certain principles in relation to its research function. Three broad principles apply and these can be detailed as follows:-

Firstly, the research should support the role of government. This means that research is not of a purely academic nature, but aims to inform policy and evaluate the impact of policies on society. The research in which the directorate is involved is, therefore, not aimed at furthering knowledge in and of itself, but to develop knowledge with a specific aim in mind, for example, to improve policy or to inform a strategy or plan.

Secondly, the role of the Research is not to engage directly in research activity of all departments itself. This would not be a realistic goal given the resource constraints within the directorate. Rather, the directorate should carry out its research function by facilitating, coordinating and, managing research activity where necessary carry out proactive research. The research staff should engage in on an ongoing analysis of data and dissemination of data and research findings.

Thirdly, there is a specific scope to the research function of directorate and that is to focus on research relevant to effective governances. The scope of research is critical as it demarcates the work of the directorate from research carried out in other departments.

8. POLICY GUIDELINE

In the context of the above, the following are the main policy guidelines for the research function of the directorate:

1. Practical and realistic policy research — the research is intended to be practical in application and realistic in scope. In undertaking research activity, it is- important to maximise existing research and to avoid duplication.
2. Understanding the impact of Metro policies - our research is focused on uncovering the impact the policies developed in the new Metro do have in the development of the Metro.
3. Anticipating issues that may impact on development our research function will monitor developments and enable us to alert key players to issues that may affect policy and/or implementation strategies.

4. Delivering quality, timely research products - within existing resource constraints, we will strive to ensure quality research outputs within reasonable time schedules.

The Research and Development is still a new unit within the Metro. The particular research area with which we are concerned is also relatively new in South Africa and remains undeveloped. To carry out our research function effectively within this environment poses challenges - challenges to our ability to facilitate and coordinate research effectively, to identify appropriate areas and questions for research and to build the networks required to carry through and deliver on a relevant research agenda.

9. CHALLENGES FACING THE RESEARCH INITIATIVES IN THE METRO

The following challenges are or the success of coordinated research in the Metro:

1. Defining the research agenda for the Metro
2. Defining the role of research in monitoring and evaluating, and improving service delivery and development in the Metro.
3. Setting institutional arrangements necessary for proper research management.
4. Access and openness of research conducted in the Metro.
5. Coordination of research activities through a research committee.

10. RESEARCH AGENDA

The relationship between research and the macro policy of the Metro should strengthen the capabilities of the Metro to deliver on its mandate. A research agenda guided by the delivery plan should be coordinated to better fulfil the Metro's priorities through the strategic plans of the departments. It is through this approach that a comprehensive research database can be formulated and coordinated purposefully. Issues of policy improvement will be incorporated into the approach.

A coordinated research agenda should be determined by the Research Coordinating Committee and guided by a delivery plan. It is through such a plan and its impact to improve service delivery that the departments' choice of topics will be influenced. The implementation of such a plan and agenda should not nullify or undermine initiatives by departments which might have their own agenda but should actually strengthen the relationship between them and the Research and Development directorate.

11. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The directorate Research and Development was conceived with the main of undertaking research in order to evaluate, monitor and inform policy within the Metro. However, due to capacity and other constraints, the directorate cannot fulfil this task alone. All the departments in the Metro conduct their own research, this situation is likely to create an unnecessary duplication of research efforts within the Metro.

It is against this background that the Research Coordinating Committee (RCC) within the Metro should be established. The establishment of the RCC will ensure that research conducted internally within, and that commissioned externally by the Metro is of high quality, timely and relevant to the objectives of the Metro.

Other important roles of the RCC includes :-

1. **Ensure the** coordination of all research activities within the Metro, i.e. the RCC would be the forum that monitors all research activities in the Metro advises on possible gaps and how these gaps can be addressed.
2. **Prevent duplication of research** activities in the Metro through regular information sharing and discussion of the research programme for individual departments and how they fit into the Metro's overall integrated research agenda.
3. **Ensure quality control of research projects**, i.e. the RCC would serve as a forum where research outputs can be widely disseminated and assessments made on the usefulness of the outputs. It is also through the RCC that different departments can be share information on consultants that do give the Metro value for money.
4. Develop a plan for building and continuously **improving research quality** within the Metro

The RCC is envisaged to be coordinated through the IDP forum and convened and chaired by the Director Research and Development. It will include all the representatives from the departments.

12. THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE SHOULD BE AS FOLLOWS :-

1. Develop a well articulated research agenda for the metro in line with organizational objectives.
2. Determine the role of research in the monitoring, evaluation and' improving service delivery and development in the metro
3. All research proposals should be approved by the RCC
4. All such research shall be approved by the head of the department before seeking approval from the RCC
5. Research should support the Key Performance Areas of the department
6. All research findings should be submitted to the Committee
7. A database of all research project be should be created

13. FUNCTIONING OF RCC

1. The RCC should meet once a month
2. The RCC should report regularly to the appropriate individuals

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3. The RCC should be available to assist all departments to identify their research needs, formulate research programmes, and implementation plans in line with departmental objectives.