

**IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE: A CASE
IN THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS**

by

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MINI - DISSERTATION

Submitted in (partial) fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

in the

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT AND LAW

Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership

at the

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR MOKOKO SEBOLA

2017

DECLARATION

I declare that the mini-dissertation hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree of Master in Public Administration & Faculty of Management & Law has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that is my own work in design and n execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

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DATE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the Lord Almighty for his grace, mercy and favour in my life, for giving me the power and wisdom in my studies. I also wish to show appreciation to the following people for their support and contribution in the journey of my studies:

My late Mother, Rhabela Josephine Mkhabela, for the foundation of perseverance, courage and self-discipline she laid in my life.

My children, Natasha and Nyandza, for their understanding during my absence at home while I was attending classes and working.

My helper, Ms Nkhensani Maluleke, who stepped in as a mother to my children when I was at school, work, church, etc. without complaining.

My friends, Jamela, Tshamani, Pauline and Jackee for your support and encouragement.

My colleague, Mahlatse Ratau, for exercising patience during my studies.

My family, for always encouraging me to push my school work. I really appreciate your support.

My sister, Mrs Jabulani Engreth Mavunda for the assistance and encouragement in my studies.

My supervisor, Professor Mokoko Sebola, for his constructive criticism, persistence, guidance and encouragement during this difficult time.

Ms P. Moeketsi for your support and providing me with an environment conducive for me to study, and for going the extra mile by reminding us of workshops, deadlines, etc. I really appreciate your professionalism in performing your duties.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research study to my late mother, Rhabela Josephine Mkhabela, who made me the person I am today. I also dedicate the research to my father, Jacobus Mkhabela, who made sure that I continued with my tertiary education after my mother passed on. I truly appreciate your support and encouragement in everything I do. I also extend my dedication to my children, thank you for your understanding and the patience you have shown during my studies. I love you with all my heart and soul, you guys are the light of my life. I also dedicate the research to my whole family. Finally, I dedicate this research to the God Almighty who gave me the strength, wisdom, grace and favour to persist and finish this research.

ABSTRACT

South African Government departments, through the relevant executing authority, are required to develop strategic plans in terms of the *Public Service Amendment Act* (2008, Act No. 30 of 2007) and *Public Finance Management Amendment Act* (2003 Act No. 29 of 1999) through Public Service Regulations. Public service departments are also required to table a strategic plan with a five-year planning horizon, Annual Performance Plan including two-year forward projections in line with the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) and Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period, with annual and quarterly performance targets.

This study was undertaken to investigate the implementation of the strategic plan in the National Department of Human Settlements and it followed a qualitative research methodology. The study also seeks to determine the alignment of the strategic plan and the medium term strategic plan, evaluate the causes of the disconnect between the strategy and its implementation, identify systems of facilitating the implementation of the strategic plan and explore challenges in the implementation of the strategic plan in the Department. For the researcher to reach a conclusion around the implementation of the strategic plan at the National Department of Human Settlements, information was gathered through a literature review, interviews, questionnaires and document analysis. The findings reveal that there is a disjuncture in the understanding of the link between MTSF and the strategic plan between middle and senior management as there is poor understanding of the link and purpose of aligning these documents. It also reveals that there is a disconnect between the strategic plan and its implementation caused by deviation from the implementation of the strategic plan by branches and non-consideration of outstanding targets when formulating the coming year's plan. It also reveals that the systems for facilitating the implementation the strategic plan are ineffective due to the fact that there are no documented standard operating procedures that the Department follows when facilitating strategic plan implementation. Having identified the challenges in strategic plan implementation, it is vital for the National Department of Human Settlements to ensure that the systems for facilitating the implementation of the strategic plan are developed and implemented, and also that it develop a strategy for alleviating the challenges in strategic plan implementation.

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Participants' gender (Middle Managers)

Figure 2: Participants' race (Middle Managers)

Figure 3: Participants' age (Middle Managers)

Figure 4: Participants' branch (Middle Managers)

Figure 5: Participants' position (Middle Managers)

Figure 6: Participants' length of service (middle managers)

Figure 7: Understand of the link between MTSF and strategic plan

Figure 8: Understand of the purpose of aligning MTSF and strategic plan

Figure 9: Understand the role of the MTSF in Departmental strategic planning process

Figure 10: Alignment of 2009-2014 MTSF and 2013-2014 strategic plan

Figure 11: Understand of the link between the NDP, Manifesto, MTSF, SONA, STRATPLAN and Minister's Budget Speech

Figure 12: Relationship between the MTSF and strategic plan

Figure 13: Planned targets implemented as planned or not

Figure 14: Connection between strategic plan and its implementation

Figure 15: Taking into consideration the implementation phase during the formulation phase

Figure 16: Systems to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan

Figure 17: Strategic plan process comprising of both senior management's and all officials' participation

Figure 18: Departmental system of implementing the strategic plan aligned to MPAT

Figure 19: Determination of challenges in the implementation of planned targets by branches

Figure 20: Determination of challenges in the implementation of planned targets by Department

Figure 21: Participants' gender (senior managers)

Figure 22: Participants' race (senior managers)

Figure 23: Participants' age (senior managers)

Figure 24: Participants' branch (senior managers)

Figure 25: Participants' position (senior managers)

Figure 26: Participants' length of service (senior managers)

Figure 27: Understanding of the relationship between the MTSF and strategic plan

Figure 28: Understanding of the role of the MTSF in departmental planning process

Figure 29: Systems ensuring the link between planning documents (NDP, Manifesto, MTSF, SONA, strategic plan and the Minister's budget speech)

Figure 30: Availability or unavailability of systems to ensure connection between strategic planning and its implementation

Figure 31: How the Department ensures the connection between strategy and its implementation

Figure 32: Control measures ensuring planned targets are implemented as planned

Figure 33: Systems used by the Department when formulating the strategic plan

Figure 34: System to facilitate proper implementation of strategic plan

Figure 35: Alignment of departmental system with MPAT in implementing the strategic plan

Figure 36: Challenges experienced by the Department in developing and implementing the strategic plan

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	1
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT.....	3
1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	3
1.4 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES	4
1.4.1 Aim of the study	4
1.4.2 Objectives of the study	4
1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	4
1.6 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS	5
1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	5
1.7.1 Area of study.....	5
1.7.2 Target population.....	6
1.7.3 Sampling	6
1.7.4 Data collection methods	6
1.7.5 Data analysis	6
1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION.....	6
1.9 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS.....	7
1.10 CHAPTER OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION	7
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.1 INTRODUCTION	8
2.2 THE CONCEPT STRATEGIC PLANNING.....	8
2.2.1 Planning and strategy.....	9
2.2.1.1 Current planning models.....	10
a. Model one – Conventional strategic planning	11
b. Model two – Issue-based strategic planning.....	11
c. Model three - Organic strategic planning	11
d. Model four -- Real-time strategic planning	12
e. Model five -- Alignment model of strategic planning	12

f. Inspirational model of strategic planning	13
2.2.1.2 The emergence of strategic foresight.....	13
2.2.1.3 Building strategic foresight.....	14
2.2.2 Challenges of strategic planning.....	16
2.2.3 Strategy and implementation	16
2.2.4 Perspective on strategy planning in government sector.....	18
2.2.5 South African strategic planning	19
2.3 CONCLUSION	21
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	22
3.1 INTRODUCTION	22
3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN.....	22
3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	22
3.3.1 Quantitative approach.....	23
3.3.2 Qualitative approach.....	23
3.4 POPULATION	23
3.5 SAMPLING.....	24
3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS.....	24
3.6.1. Semi-structured questionnaires.....	24
3.6.2 Semi-structured interview.....	25
3.6.3 Observations	25
3.6.4 Document analysis.....	26
3.7 DATA CAPTURING AND EDITING	26
3.8 DATA ANALYSIS	26
3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION.....	27
3.9.1 Informed consent	27
3.9.2 Deception.....	27
3.9.3 Voluntary participation.....	27
3.9.4 Confidentiality/anonymity	27
3.10 CONCLUSION	28
CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS.....	29
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	29

4.2 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA	29
4.3 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF MIDDLE MANAGERS.....	29
4.4 RESPONSES BY MIDDLE MANAGERS.....	33
4.4.1 Relationship between the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) and strategic plan.....	33
4.4.2 Disconnect between strategy and implementation	38
4.4.3 Systems to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan	41
4.4.4 Challenges in strategic plan implementation	43
4.5 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FOR SENIOR MANAGERS	45
4.6 RESPONSES BY SENIOR MANAGERS.....	49
4.6.1 Relationship between the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) and strategic plan.....	49
4.6.2 Disconnect between strategy and implementation	53
4.6.3 Systems to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan	55
4.6.4 Challenges in strategic plan implementation	58
4.7 CONCLUSION	60
CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	61
5.1 INTRODUCTION	61
5.2.1 Relationship between the MTSF and strategic plan	61
5.2.2 Disconnect between strategy and implementation	62
5.2.3 Systems to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan	62
5.2.4 Challenges in strategic planning implementation.....	62
6. RECOMMENDATIONS	64
7. CONCLUSION.....	65
LIST OF SOURCES.....	66
ANNEXURE A: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH.....	71
ANNEXURE B: LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT	74
ANNEXURE C1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR MIDDLE MANAGERS	77
ANNEXURE C2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SENIOR MANAGERS	83
ANNEXURE D: CERTIFICATE FROM LANGUAGE EDITOR.....	88

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

According to Van der Walldt and Du Toit (2009:242) strategic management is already used successfully in many public institutions, provided it is adapted to the unique context of the public sector. Because of the importance of proactive management and planning to keeping pace with a changing environment, strategic management is a major alternative to traditional planning. The strategic management process would ask questions such as, what are the basic goals of the institution, what is the strategy in place for achieving the goals, what are the fundamental issues facing the institution, what is the institution's culture, is the organisation organised in a way to support the goals, issues and culture?

Van der Heijden, (1996:9) mentions that Strategic Management as a discipline originated in the 1950s and 60s, although there were numerous early contributors to the literature, the most influential pioneers being Alfred Chandler, Philip Selznick, Igor Ansoff and Peter Drucker. Chandler recognised the importance of coordinating the various aspects of management under one all-encompassing strategy. Prior to this, the various functions of management were separate with little overall coordination or strategy. Interactions between functions or between departments were typically handled by a boundary position, that is, there were one or two managers that relayed information back and forth between two departments. Chandler also stressed the importance of taking a future long term perspective. In his ground-breaking work *Strategy and Structure* (1962), Chandler showed that a long-term coordinated strategy was necessary to give a company structure, direction and focus. Selznick (1957) introduced the idea of matching the organisation's internal factors with external environmental circumstances. This core idea was developed into what we now call SWOT analysis by Learned, Andrews, and others at the Harvard Business School General Management Group. Strengths and weaknesses of the firm are assessed in light of the opportunities and threats from the business environment.

Drucker (2005), a prolific strategy theorist, author of dozens of management books, with a career spanning five decades, stresses the importance of objectives. An organisation without clear objectives is like a ship without a rudder. In 1954 he developed a theory of management based on objectives. This evolved into his theory of management by objectives (MBO). According to Drucker (2005), the procedure of setting objectives and monitoring your progress towards them should permeate the entire organisation, top to bottom. His other seminal contribution was in predicting the importance of what today we would call intellectual capital. He predicted the rise of what he called the "knowledge worker" and explained the consequences of this for management. Hunger and Wheelen (2003) describe strategy implementation as the process by which strategies and policies are put into action through the

development of programmes, budgets and procedures. It is further indicated that implementation is the key to strategic management.

In South African organisations, strategy implementation is more important than strategy formulation and the ability to implement a strategy is more important than the ability to formulate a strategy (Jooste & Fourie, 2009). A poor understanding of the strategy by the workforce, ineffective communication of the strategy to the workforce, and that strategic leadership is not perceived to be a major barrier to effective strategy implementation is the most important barriers to effective strategy implementation. The main reason for the failure of the strategic plan is a lack of appropriate models and frameworks to guide management and staff who are involved in the implementation of the strategic plan in well-known organisations (Alexander, 1991).

In 1994 the South Africa government made various attempts to apply the principles of New Public Management, developmental planning and to develop a new performance-driven system that could stimulate growth and development in all sectors (Coetzee, 2010). In 1994, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was adopted; then the Development Facilitation Act, 1995 was passed; and the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR) was developed in 1996 and eventually the National Strategic Planning Green Paper was published in September 2009. All the Acts, policies, strategies and plans were aimed at facilitating growth and development in the country.

South African Government departments, through the relevant executing authority, are required to develop strategic plans in terms of the Public Service Amendment Act (2008, Act No. 30 of 2007) and Public Finance Management Amendment Act (2003 Act No. 29 of 1999) through Public Service Regulations. Public service departments are also required to table a strategic plan with a five-year planning horizon, Annual Performance Plan including two-year forward projections in line with the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) and Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period, with annual and quarterly performance targets. Government's programmes and policies are set out at the beginning of each term of office in a medium term strategic framework (MTSF) approved by Cabinet. The MTSF is informed by the election manifesto of the ruling party. The South African government adopted an outcomes-oriented approach to planning, which is designed to ensure that government is focused on achieving the expected real improvements in the lives of South Africans (National Treasury, 2010). Treasury regulations further require government departments to identify a core set of indicators needed to monitor institutional performance, adopt a quarterly reporting system and ensure that there is alignment of reporting between the strategic plans, annual performance plans, budget documents and annual and quarterly reports (National Treasury, 2010). This study focuses on the implementation of strategic plans in the public service with specific focus on the National Department of Human Settlements. It is imperative that the study investigate the challenges to the proper implementation of the strategic plan in the National Department of Human Settlements.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

According to the Annual Report 2014/15, the National Department of Human Settlements has not been meeting its targets from 2010 to 2014 (Department of Human Settlements, 2014). It is also indicated in the Auditor-General Management Report (2014/15) that eight sub-programmes did not follow or adhere to the Simple, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART) criteria as required by the Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information in the public service.(Auditor-General, 2015) Furthermore, the Department has six units, which are referred to as programmes, and 21 sub-programmes, of which nine were identified for lack of consistency between planned indicators and targets. Furthermore, it is understood that the Medium Term Strategic Framework assists in setting up strategic objectives that can be broken into targets for five years and it is notable that the Medium Term Strategic Framework (2009-2014) was not utilised to guide the departmental branches on the outputs and outcomes of the Department during the formulation of the 2009/2014 strategic plan.

According to the Auditor-General's Report (2013), there is a problem in the implementation of the strategic plan as it was reported that there were inconsistencies between planned indicators and targets and reported indicators and targets. It was also reported that the cause of the aforementioned problem is lack of monitoring, review and oversight regarding the reporting of approved indicators and targets as outlined in the Annual Performance Plan (2012/2013). Poor implementation of strategic plans in government is not a problem that is peculiar to the National Department of Human Settlements only, but also common in other public departments (Sebola & Mahlatji, 2015) such as the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET).

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study will benefit scholars and researchers by providing information on the implementation of a strategic plan, hence benefitting the Public Administration discipline with the enhancement of relevant concepts and literature.

The outcomes and outputs of the research will aid scholars and researchers to acquire new knowledge that will be generated out of the investigation of strategic planning and implementation in the National Department of Human Settlements. The study will also assist in filling the gaps in the existing body of knowledge on strategic planning and implementation in public service and resolve the challenges that are faced by public service departments.

This study will also assist the National Department of Human Settlements to realise the need for the development of a departmental planning framework or policy to guide the departmental planning process

as well as implementation. It will also help the government to enforce sector planning and environmental scanning or analysis across all spheres of government before developing strategic plans. It will also help the government to enforce sector planning and environmental scanning or analysis across all spheres of government before developing strategic plans.

The findings will be useful in the development and implementation of the intervention mechanism to improve the planning regime of the Department. The study would further add to the body of knowledge of strategic planning and implementation in the public service.

1.4 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1.4.1 Aim of the study

The primary aim of the study is to investigate the implementation of a strategic plan in the National Department of Human Settlements. This is done in order to establish the cause of the disconnect between the strategic planning and implementation of plans.

1.4.2 Objectives of the study

- To determine the alignment of a strategic plan for the National Department of Human Settlements with the Medium Term Strategic Framework of government
- To evaluate the causes of the disconnect between the strategy and its implementation
- To identify systems facilitating the implementation of the strategic plan in the National Department of Human Settlements
- To explore challenges in the implementation of a strategic plan in the National Department of Human Settlements

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the relationship between the strategic plan of the national Department of Human Settlements and the Medium Term Strategic Framework of government?
- What are the causes of the disconnect between the strategy and its implementation?
- What systems are in place to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan in the National Department of Human Settlements?
- What are the challenges facing the National Department of Human Settlements in strategic plan implementation?

1.6 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Strategy of an organisation is the process that makes use of certain policies, procedures and resources in order to achieve the main objectives of an organisation (Van der Walt & Knipe, 1998).

Strategic management can be defined as the process whereby all the organisational functions and resources are integrated and coordinated to implement formulated strategies that are aligned with the environment, in order to achieve the long term goals of the organisation and therefore gain a competitive advantage through adding value for the stakeholders (Ehlers & Lazenby, 2010).

Strategic planning is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions shaping the nature and direction of an organisation's (entity's) activities within legal bounds (Bryson, 2012).

Strategy formulation is the analytical procedure of preparing a plan, which is a set of goals, the intended actions required to achieve the goals, and forecasts of the consequences of those actions over a long period of time (Stacey, 2003).

Strategy implementation is the procedure of designing systems to ensure that the plans are carried out in the intended manner and periodically adjusted to keep the organisation on track to achieve goals (Stacey, 2003).

Strategic control is concerned with tracking a strategy as it is being implemented, detecting problems or changes in its underlying premises, and making necessary adjustments (Pearce & Robinson, 1994).

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In this study, the researcher will be adopting a qualitative research approach to investigate the implementation of a strategic planning in the National Department of Human Settlements. Interviews and questionnaires will be used to collect data and a set of questionnaires will be used to gather information. The interview technique will be used because it has the advantage of personal contact. The collection of data will be done using the quarterly, annual and Auditor General's reports, relevant to the study, to investigate the implementation of a strategic plan in the National Department of Human Settlements.

1.7.1 Area of study

The study is about the National Department of Human Settlements. The Department is at the heart of the City of Pretoria in Gauteng under the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, where there are four National Department of Human Settlements buildings, namely 260 Justice Mahomed, 240 Govan Mbeki House, Metropark and Strucktura. The Department is currently under the leadership of the Honourable Minister Lindiwe Sisulu and the current accounting officer is Mbulelo Tshangana. The mandate of the

Department is to ensure that South Africa has sustainable human settlements and an improved quality of household life. The Department has constructed houses and created housing opportunities for 4.3 million of the poor since 1994.

1.7.2 Target population

The National Department of Human Settlements comprises of six branches with 21 chief directorates; 45 directorates and 556 officials. For the purpose of the study, the researcher will be targeting two chief directors, four officials from Monitoring and Evaluation; four officials from Human Settlements Strategy and Planning; three officials from Financial Management; and four officials from Enterprise Architecture to collect data through questionnaires and interviews to investigate the implementation of a strategic plan in the National Department of Human Settlements.

1.7.3 Sampling

De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport (2011) define a sample as a subset of measurement drawn from the population in which we are interested. Creswell (2007) says the researcher needs to select a group or individuals representative of a group of study, preferably one to which the investigator is a stranger and can gain access to information. Best and Khan (2007) view a sample as a small proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis. The researcher will be adopting a non-probability sampling design using the purposive sampling technique.

1.7.4 Data collection methods

Effective semi-structured interviews and questionnaires will be compiled in order to collect information and the subject of the study will be introduced to the participants before they participate in the whole process. The questionnaires will be distributed via email or face to face by the researcher.

1.7.5 Data analysis

The data to be collected will be analysed using qualitative methods such as coding themes. The researcher will ensure that the information is being presented in an understandable and logical manner.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

For the purpose of the study, permission to conduct the study was approved and provided by the National Department of Human Settlements. According to Kumar (2005), when a researcher collects data from respondents or involves subjects in an experiment, he/she needs to carefully examine whether their involvement is likely to harm them in any way. The researcher will provide information about the negative impact that may occur during the investigation regarding the effective implementation of

strategic planning. A consent form will be completed to avoid the disclosure of confidential information as well as to protect the identity of the participants so as to avoid victimisation.

1.9 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

The limitations of the study are those characteristics of design or methodology that will impact or influence the application or interpretation of the results. Possible limitations on methodology could be the sample size, i.e. if the sample size is small, it could be difficult to assume it is a representative distribution of the population and lack of available or reliable data could limit the scope of the analysis. The study requires the researcher to have access to documents, people, etc. and access to those people as they are senior management who travel extensively and are not always available. This means that the research could take longer than expected. The culture of lack of understanding of strategic planning and implementation processes by most officials in the Department could also affect the data collected.

1.10 CHAPTER OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

The chapters of the dissertation are summarised and outlined as follows:

Chapter 1: Provides an introduction to the study with relevant information on the background of strategic planning as a strategy to enhance organisational planning and reporting; motivation, as well as the significance; the problem statement; the research aim, objectives and questions. The key concepts will be defined; and a brief summary of the research design and methodology provided.

Chapter 2: Presents the literature review wherein different sources will be consulted with relevance to the study being conducted. Any document or information that is relevant to implementing the strategic plan will be scrutinised. The content in the literature review will be based on conceptualising strategic planning; planning and strategy; best practice of strategic planning; challenges of strategic planning; strategy and implementation; and South African strategic planning.

Chapter 3: Explains how data was collected from the National Department officials and analysed. It highlights the research design and methodology used for the purpose of the study conducted.

Chapter 4: Presents the results, citing shortcomings and discusses the detailed findings of the study.

Chapter 5: Contains a summary of findings, recommendations and a conclusion to the study. This is followed by appendices and a reference list.

In the chapter that follows, the study will focus on a literature review.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Historically, the strategic planning refers to the evolution of the strategy paradigm observing the strategic planning phase in the 1970s and the strategic management phase in the 1980s. Stacey (1993) and Heracleous (2000) both note that there is a view in the literature that in the 1990s the paradigm moved on to the strategic thinking phase, according to O'Shannasy (1999). Terminology in the field of strategy is highly contentious with different writers using the terms "strategic planning" and "strategic management" in different ways. The introduction of the term "strategic thinking" to the strategy literature has served to create further confusion with a strong debate at present on what constitutes strategic thinking. O'Shannasy (1999) further indicates that the one view in this debate that relies on the descriptive and integrative strategy literature is that in an uncertain business environment successful business strategies flow from a process that is essentially intuitive and creative. This chapter will focus on conceptualising strategic planning, the best practice of strategic planning, and challenges of strategic planning in an organisation.

2.2 THE CONCEPT STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic planning is about developing a plan to implement a chosen strategy. It is not about planning strategically. As Mintzberg suggests, "strategic planning" might well be an oxymoron (Mintzberg, 2012). The need for organisations to plan and monitor their activities in order to focus resources and efforts to ensure future survival has spawned an industry of practitioners, consultants and education programmes. Planning practitioners have their professional associations and have assumed a critical information role in organisations. Consultants sell a wide range of strategic planning approaches and tools, and strategic planning is a core component in university business courses. Strategic planning is now a routine part of business, with an accompanying set of beliefs and protocols that underpin day-to-day practice. As Mintzberg (2012) indicates, "planning lacks a clear definition of its place in organizations". While the need to plan is accepted, the resulting plans are often not successful in driving implementation of organisational strategy. Indeed, "while the need for planning has never been greater, the relevance of most of today's planning systems and tools is increasingly marginal" (Fuller, 2004). Hodgson (2004) illustrates that traditional strategic planning models are increasingly viewed as not producing a strategy that can deal with complexity, uncertainty and rapid change in the external environment. The apparent failure of corporate strategy even after extensive planning, and the inability of many organisations to read a signal of change in the external environment suggests that there is something missing from existing planning models. "It may well be that the typical strategic planning exercise now conducted on a regular

and formal basis and infused with quantitative data misses the essence of the concept of strategy and what is involved in thinking strategically” (Sidorowicz, 2009). According to Hines (2002), there is now some recognition that the missing elements in strategic planning are the capacity of an organisation to hold and maintain a shared view of the future – a foresight capacity. Scenario planning is often promoted as a way to incorporate a future view into planning and has been used by organisations and governments with varying degrees of success since the 1960s. While using a methodology such as a scenario, planning introduces organisations to the value of exploring the future; it does little to embed a more comprehensive future approach into strategy development, decision making and implementation, that is, to develop and sustain an organisational capacity for foresight. The development of strategy involves three stages: strategic thinking, decision making and planning, that is, thinking about future strategy options, deciding on options, and implementing those options. But, current definitions regard strategic planning as subsuming all three stages. Mintzberg (2013) indicates that a strategy development is a planning process, designed or supported by planners, to plan to produce plans.

2.2.1 Planning and strategy

Sidorowicz (2009) states that the relationship between strategy and planning is complex and interdependent, but strategic planning explores this relationship in some depth. Most strategic planning models assume that strategy making is just one step in a well-understood planning process, which results in the production of written plans that are then implemented by staff across an organisation. The purpose and role of each stage in the strategy development process is, however, not clear. For example, a plan, process or strategy is a solution to move from where you are now (A) to where you want to be (B) or put another way, it is what you want to achieve in the end. The strategy is a class of solution that deals with uncertainty, the possibility that opposing forces may inhibit B from being reached or being reached in acceptably good form.

Bucknell (2014) also emphasises that a strategy should raise the probability that its employer will reach B in good form. It does so mostly by creating conditions that favour success. For example, a strategy can be that you will only support businesses where you can be a first or second tier player, where your objective (B) is to build a product solutions portfolio that fits that defined nature. Building a portfolio of first or second tier product solutions is the only thing you want to do. It is a solution to a problem associated with running a type of business that you determined third or less tier product solutions will not support. A strategy does not specifically say how you will arrive at this end. That is where a plan comes in.

Sidorowicz (2009) and Bucknell (2014) share the same view in that a plan is how you will move from A to B. A plan should support the strategy by providing a way to reach B that provides an acceptable balance between risk and reward. So the strategy is what you want to do, and a plan is how you will do it. For example, you may decide as a strategy that you need to acquire many patents in an area to help you maintain freedom of operation, and then your plan is how specifically you will execute, acquisition and

license. The above example, of course, is oriented on the level of the organisation you are dealing with. The company, divisional team, personal plans and strategies take place simultaneously, which creates issues of alignment that the company can cover in future. Understanding the difference between a strategy and a plan allows you to make useful strategic planning decisions that separate the two. It allows you to act in line with General George S. Patton's insightful quote, "Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity." You can include statements of intent within your planning so that when plans go wrong, which they often do, people can adjust their how-to-do-it (the plan) in a way that aligns with what you want them to achieve (the strategy).

A process, in contrast, is a defined way of doing a task. It can be linear in nature: do A, and then do B, and then do C, or it can have branches: do A, then B, and then C or D, depending. A process sets strict parameters to the "how" that can, if misapplied, allow the "how" to take priority over the "what", since a process is so anchored in the "how" it can never be a strategy. If used well, a process can be an essential part of a strategy. For a strategist, the chief purpose of any process is to drive out uncertainties that do not need to be there within a plan. For example, no matter the strategy and plan you choose regarding integrated planning (IP), you want to anchor that strategy and plan on good IP. As a part of a strategy and plan you can set processes in place for idea review, documentation and protection that assure you will have the quality of IP protection you need as circumstances arise. Then you can address all the uncertainties of what competitors, partners and customers may do to challenge or advance your IP portfolio without also having undue uncertainty about whether you can present a good IP documentation when you need it. So when you do strategic planning for IP, you and consulted team members first determine what you want to do – your strategy. Next you determine or appropriately delegate how you want to do it – your plan. You and your team then look at all the uncertainties associated with your strategy and plan with the mind set to drive out those uncertainties that do not need to be there. To drive out uncertainties, you may incorporate processes – often as simple as checklists – so that those executing your strategy can focus their talents where uncertainty remains. You do all of this in context with your opposition because you can win or lose any strategic contest on any or all of your strategies, plans or processes.

2.2.1.1 Current planning models

According to Bryan (2007), there is no one perfect strategic planning process, or model, to use the same way all the time with every organisation. Each organisation should customise the best approach to suit the culture of its members, the current situation in and around the organisation, and the purpose of its planning. Fuller (2004) states that there are several different models of strategic planning, along with basic guidelines for choosing each. There is no strong agreement among experts in strategic planning as to which approaches are indeed "models" or how each is best implemented. The purpose of presenting different perspectives and options regarding strategic planning will help planners to ensure that their plans

are the most relevant, realistic and flexible. Bryan (2007) emphasises that most planners can select the most appropriate model and then modify it to suit the nature and needs of their organisation. Mintzberg (2012) states that there are different models utilised by different organisations, which are discussed as follows:

a. Model one – Conventional strategic planning

Mintzberg (2013) states that this model is the most common model of strategic planning, although it is not suited for every organisation. It is ideal for organisations that have sufficient resources to pursue very ambitious visions and goals, have external environments that are relatively stable, and do not have a large number of current issues to address. The model usually includes overall phases such as developing or updating the mission and optionally, vision and values statements; taking a wide look outside and inside the organisation; selecting the multi-year strategies and goals to achieve the vision; developing action plans that specify who is going to do what and by when to achieve each goal; identifying associated plans, for example, staffing, facilities, marketing and financial plans and then organising items into a strategic plan and one-year operational plan.

b. Model two – Issue-based strategic planning

Mintzberg (2013) further highlights that this model works best for organisations that have very limited resources, several current and major issues to address, little success with achieving ambitious goals, and very few buy-ins to strategic planning. This model includes phases such as identifying the most important current issues facing the organisation, suggesting action plans to address each issue over the next 6-12 months, and including that information in a strategic plan.

After an issue-based plan has been implemented, and the major issues are resolved, the organisation might undertake the more ambitious conventional model. Many people might assert that issue-based planning is internal development planning, rather than strategic planning. Others would argue that the model is very strategic because it positions the organisation for much more successful outward-looking and longer term planning later on.

c. Model three - Organic strategic planning

Bryan (2007) emphasises that this conventional model is considered by certain people to be confining and linear in nature. They believe this approach to planning too often produces a long sequence of orderly activities to do as if organisations will remain static and predictable while all of those activities are underway. Other people believe that organisations are robust and dynamic systems that are always changing, so a conventional plan might quickly become obsolete.

This is true, especially if planning is meant to achieve a very long-term vision for many people, for example, for a community or even generations of people. The organic model is based on the premise that

the long-term vision is best achieved by everyone working together toward the vision, but with each person regularly doing whatever actions that he or she regularly decides to do toward that vision. The model includes the following phases:

- With as many people as can be gathered, for example, from the community or generation, articulate the long-term vision and perhaps values to work toward the vision.
- Each person leaves that session of visioning having selected at least one realistic action that he or she will take toward the vision before the group meets again, for example, in a month or two.
- People meet regularly to report the actions they took and what they learned from them. The vision might be further clarified during these meetings.
- Occasionally, the vision and the lists of accomplished and intended actions are included in a strategic plan.

d. Model four -- Real-time strategic planning

Bryan (2007) outlines that this model is similar to the organic model of planning, and is suitable for people who believe that organisations are often changing much too rapidly for long-term, detailed planning for it to remain relevant. These experts might assert that planning for an organisation should be done continuously, or in “real time”. The real-time planning model is best suited for organisations with rapidly changing environments outside the organisation by articulating the mission, vision and values; assigning planners to research the external and internal environment and suggesting a list of strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats facing the organisation; presenting the lists to the board and other members of the organisation for strategic thinking and discussions, using a SWOT analysis to analyse all four lists.

e. Model five -- Alignment model of strategic planning

According to Mintzberg (2012), the primary purpose of this model is to ensure strong alignment of the organisation’s internal operations with achieving an overall goal, for example, to increase productivity or profitability, or to successfully integrate a new cross-functional system, such as a new computer system. Overall phases in this model include establishing the overall goal for the alignment; analysing which internal operations are most directly aligned with achieving that goal or not; and establishing goals to effectively align operations to achieving the overall goal. Methods for achieving the goals might include organisational performance management models, for example, business process re-engineering or models of quality management; and including that information in the strategic plan.

Similar to issue-based planning, many people might assert that the alignment model is internal development planning, rather than strategic planning. Similarly, others would argue that the model is very strategic because it positions the organisation for much more successful outward-looking and longer term planning later on.

f. Inspirational model of strategic planning

Bryan (2007) states that this model is sometimes used when planners see themselves as having very little time available for planning, and there is a high priority on rather quickly producing a strategic plan document. He further indicates that the model follows certain steps, such as attempting to gather board members and key employees together for planning; fantasising a highly inspirational vision for the organisation or by giving extended attention to the wording of the mission statement, brainstorming exciting, far-reaching goals to serve customers and clients; and including the vision and goals of the strategic plan.

While this model can be highly energising, it might produce a plan that is far too unrealistic (especially for an organisation that already struggles to find time for planning) and, as a result, can be less likely to make a strategic impact on the organisation and those it serves. Many experts might assert that these planners are confusing the map (the strategic plan document) with the journey (the necessary strategic thinking). However, it might be the only approach that would generate some outward focused discussion and also a plan that, otherwise, would not have been written.

2.2.1.2 The emergence of strategic foresight

Strategic foresight is “the ability to create and maintain a high quality, coherent and functional forward view, and to use the insights arising in organisational useful ways”. Slaughter (2010) indicates that such a shared forward view enables an organisation to detect adverse conditions, guide policy, shape strategy and explore new markets, products and services. The traditional strategic planning model often includes words about the future in its process, but the development of strategic foresight as an integral and critical step in that process to develop a better understanding of the future has not yet been achieved. That is, the need to develop strategic foresight as a core organisational capacity and to build that capacity over time has not been recognised. One way to move strategic planning towards strategic foresight is to reconceptualise the traditional planning model as a process consisting of three stages, namely strategic thinking, strategic decision making and strategic planning.

The basic differences between strategic thinking, decision making, and planning are at the heart of the inspirational model. Mintzberg (2013) indicates that strategic planning is about taking an articulated goal and turning it into formal, documented action steps that can be implemented to achieve agreed results. This sort of activity requires thinking that is analytical, logical, pragmatic and deductive to make sure that actions are implemented, monitored and reported. By contrast, Mintzberg (2013) indicates that strategic thinking is about synthesis. Liedtka (2008) suggests that such thinking is intuitive, experimental and necessarily disruptive, and attempts to explore areas beyond logical thinking, to develop a vision of an organisation’s future. Information about potential futures is always incomplete, and the thinking required for success in this activity needs to be “synthetical” and inductive, rather than analytical and deductive:

Foresight in an organisational context is best conceived and positioned as an aspect of strategic thinking, which is meant to open up an expanded range of perceptions of the strategic options available, so that strategy making is potentially wiser. Strategic thinking is concerned with exploration, often based on limited and patchy information and options, not with the steps needed for implementation of actions, which is the realm of strategic planning (Conway & Voros, 2002).

Slaughter (2009) describes a five-stage process for the development of social foresight that includes the development of foresight as a core competence across organisations. Those five levels of development are:

- Level 1: Recognition of foresight as an innate human capacity: every individual has the capacity for foresight
- Level 2: Immersion in foresight concepts: using foresight concepts and ideas to generate a future discourse
- Level 3: Using foresight methodologies: use of key methods to make foresight “real”
- Level 4: Creating organisational niches: permanent, purpose-built areas to focus foresight
- Level 5: Foresight at the social level: where long-term thinking becomes the norm

Slaughter (2009) indicates that foresight is an innate capacity of the human brain and that everyone holds the capacity to think about the future. Once there is this recognition, individuals can immerse themselves in future concepts, methods and approaches before they begin to use futures or foresight methodologies in their work. Organisational niches need to be created to foster foresight in the organisation so that it becomes the norm internally and, finally, social foresight will be achieved when there are enough organisations in society using foresight.

2.2.1.3 Building strategic foresight

According to Slaughter (2010), Strategic foresight is the ability to create and maintain a high-quality, coherent and functional forward view, and to use the insights arising in useful organisational ways. For example to detect adverse conditions, guide policy, shape strategy, and to explore new markets, products and services. It represents a fusion of futures methods with those of strategic management. The author further outlines that building strategic foresight capacity takes time. In the lives of busy executives, a commitment needs to be made to spend the time to think systematically about the future. Simplistically, this means ensuring that meeting times are included in diaries, but it also means finding ways to capture the commitment of individuals to the process. How to craft the foresight message, so that executives accept the need to consider the future in strategy development, is not yet clear.

The practices and purposes of foresight work quite naturally depend on the organization in question. Obviously, true foresight can help in building long-term scenarios and in guiding strategic targets and road-mapping, Road-mapping has become the method of choice for planning the transition towards future

organisations. Foresight is also about tracking foreseeable changes in employee's sentiment and behaviour and it also helps in identifying new opportunities or risks even in the short term. (Kause, 2016) Slaughter (2010) further indicates that there are some other implementation issues to consider, derived from both the literature and personal practice, and are indicated below:

- Work should be with staff across the organisation, as well as executive managers. If all staff can think strategically, organisations that tap into this ability by generating a future discourse will, over time, develop a level of awareness or consciousness as an organisation about how to think about the future.
- Understanding its role in sustainability generally – that is, acknowledging a degree of responsibility for the planet and future generations. This can be a useful way of introducing the rationale for thinking about the future of the organisation.
- Building an understanding of the realm in which the organisation's strategy is to be developed – pragmatic, progressive or civilisational – is an important step. Is the organisation going to attempt to address a global issue, or will it be pragmatic and focus on an organisational or industry issue? Realistically, most planning occurs in the pragmatic arena but, over time, an organisation could set its vision on a broader, more global agenda.
- The organisation will need to focus its foresight work – is it about helping the organisation develop its preferred future and documenting that in a plan, or is it about embedding a more general foresight capacity to continually consider all potential futures, whether possible, plausible or probable?
- The use of a range of methodologies needs to encompass both qualitative and quantitative approaches. As the organisation becomes more “futures aware”, more complex and challenging methodologies can be used. Starting with scenario planning, for example, can be valuable as long as it is not the only methodology ever used. All methods have flaws, and a range of methods will help ensure outputs are well-founded. (Slaughter, 2008)

Hines (2002) points out that evidence suggests that “using futures thinking and tools improves our decision making and our lives, on a personal, organisational, community/social and global level”, but that changing an entire organisation and building the future into strategy development requires “an enlightened CEO and upper management that sees the need for this thinking. This, unfortunately, remains the small minority of situations.” Tackling the worldviews of organisational executives remains a significant challenge for planners wishing to integrate a futures approach into their planning processes.

Burt, 2007 argues that there are a number of methods within the strategic foresight repertoire that can support the discovery of interdependencies between actions, model them, and create systems that reflect future organisations or plan a transition path. As discussed earlier in this article, future organisations can be modelled and reflected by scenarios, which in turn reflect the systemic nature of the real world, where

influencing factors can be integrated by a system of interdependencies, rather than by the linear dependencies used in causal chains..

2.2.2 Challenges of strategic planning

Recklies (2008) explains that management is focused on a top-down approach wherein the organisation needs to prepare all role players such as senior managers, planners and decision makers. He further explains that the communication or conversation style in an organisation has an impact on the strategic plan and its implementation. Sebola and Mahlatji (2015) found that poor planning, lack of understanding of the strategic processes, as well as poor coordination of strategic plans is the problem encountered in the Limpopo Economic Development; Environment and Tourism (LEDET). The major problem with strategic planning is the failure to implement, and organisations do not realise that during strategy formulation but only in the implementation phase. It is important to understand what makes strategy implementation unsuccessful.

According to Musyoka (2011), strategy implementation is largely an internal administrative activity. It entails working through others, organising, motivating, culture building and creating strong links between strategy and how the organisation operates. It also entails a process of converting the formulated strategies into viable operations that will yield the organisation's targeted results. Musyoka believes that to implement successful strategies, there is a need to link strategic planning and implementation, and anticipate the challenges from sources both internal and external to the organisation. It is also important to link strategy planning and implementation, coupled with communicating the strategy and allocation of resources, to the plan.

Musyoka (2011) argues that the particular challenges that face strategy implementation depend on the type of strategy, type of organisation and prevailing circumstances. He also indicates that the challenges in strategy implementation can be avoided if strategy development is coupled with implementation. The lack of understanding of a strategy and the inability to connect strategy formulation and implementation has an impact on successful implementation. A key challenge that was outlined was that it emanated from the operating environmental changes that pose a threat to the effective implementation of the strategy. Fuller (2004) indicate the basic causes of human problems in planning systems as the disruption of social and political structures in the organisation, failure to match individual's aptitudes with assigned planning tasks, and inadequate executive support for strategic planning.

2.2.3 Strategy and implementation

Ragui and Gichuhi (2013) indicate a Human Resource Management role in implementation outlines that there are many barriers to strategic planning execution, including too many and conflicting priorities, such as the top team not functioning well; top-down management style; inter-functional conflicts; poor

vertical communication and inadequate management development. Lankeu and Maket (2012) believe that strategic human resource management will assist implementation of the strategic plans through devolved structures, reduced bureaucracy, empowerment of staff, proper human resources planning, management development, creating high performance workplaces, and lifelong learning and instilling of values and strategies for service delivery in a planned systematic way. Ragui and Gichuhi (2013) outline that change of cultural values will enhance strategic planning implementation if well guided by leadership as change agents. They further indicated that motivation of individual employees for internalisation of the desired value is also important to reduce the resistance to change.

Wandjiva (2011) concludes that those responsible for the implementation of the programmes emanating from the planning process know what a strategic plan is but do not know the content of the strategic plan. He further concludes that less effort is made by the organisation to sensitise junior staff members in the process of formulation and implementation of the strategic plan, especially employees at lower levels, and this eventually discourages them from making a positive contribution towards the attainment of departmental goals. In their study, it was also concluded that, for any organisation to succeed in the execution of its mandate, it needs to have a strategy that serves as a roadmap toward the realisation of its objectives. The strategy must also be effectively communicated and explained to all staff members in the organisation.

When encountering problems that do not have an immediate solution, the strategy that has been approved should be implemented despite its shortcomings. According to Van der Walt and Knipe (1998), a strategy of an organisation is the process that makes use of certain policies, procedures and resources to achieve the main objectives of the organisation. Strategy implementation is defined as the process that turns the selected strategy into action to ensure that the stated goals (aligned with the vision and mission) are accomplished (Ehlers & Lazenby, 2010). Jooste and Fourie (2009) claim that strategic leadership is perceived as the most important driver of strategy implementation and that it contributes positively to the effective implementation of a strategy in an organisation. They argue that strategy formulation is an effort of documentation; however, strategy implementation is the key to increasing organisational performance, and it is more important. It was further assumed that the most important barriers to strategy implementation are a poor understanding of the strategy by the workforce and ineffective communication of the strategy to the workforce; however, strategic leadership is not perceived to be a major barrier to effective strategy implementation.

Li, Guohui and Eppler (2008) argue that strategy implementation can be influenced by several factors such as the strategy formulation process, strategy executors, organisational structure, communication, the level of commitment, consensus regarding the strategy, relationships among different units and different strategy levels, the employed implementation tactics, as well as the administrative system in place. Li, Guohui and Eppler (2008) further state that poor or vague strategy can limit strategy implementation

efforts drastically. They further explain that several studies mention the fact that the kind of strategy that is developed and the actual process of strategy formulation, namely, how a strategy is developed, will influence the effect of implementation. It is suggested that there is a need to begin with a formulated strategy that involves a good idea or concept that is mentioned most often in helping promote successful implementation. Nutt (1987) suggests that managerial tactics and leadership can play a crucial role in overcoming the lower-level “obstructionism” that is prevalent in many implementation efforts.

Nutt (1987) further outlines that strategic decisions are formulated by senior management of an organisation and administratively imposed on lower-level management and non-management employees with little consideration of the resulting functional-level perceptions. Executors are comprised of top management, middle management, lower management and non-management. The strategy is implemented by every member of the organisation irrespective of which position he or she holds. Most researchers point to the importance of top management in the process of strategy implementation. Schmidt and Brauer (2006) believe the board is the key subject of strategy implementation and further discuss how to assess board effectiveness in guiding strategy execution. Heracleous (2000) finds that if middle management does not think the strategy is the right one, or does not feel that they have the required skills to implement it, they are likely to sabotage its implementation. According to Li, Guohui and Eppler (2008), middle managers expect direction and support from top management. If they receive guidance, they will provide support for the strategy in return. It was found that effective communication is the key requirement for effective strategy implementation. Organisational communication plays an important role in training, knowledge, dissemination and learning during the process of strategy implementation. Communication is pervasive in every aspect of strategy implementation, as it relates in a complex way to organising processes, organisational context and implementation objectives that, in turn, have an effect on the process of implementation (Peng & Littlejohn, 2001).

2.2.4 Perspective on strategy planning in government sector

Liedtka (2008) states that many organisation followed suit using this new strategic planning approach, and as new adaptations and the Government Performance Act came into being, states also altered and perfected strategic planning methods and techniques. Ultimately, strategic planning became prevalent, though varied, among many states. Wilson (2004), and also many local governments, essentially agree that strategic planning is a process of developing a long-term plan to guide an organisation, for example, a state agency, department or commission, towards a clearly articulated mission, goals and objectives. It is a process of assessing where an organisation is present, ascertaining the challenges and opportunities that present themselves, and determining what destination is most desirable and how to get there.

According to Young (2003), the literature also suggests that states (including local governments) do in fact benefit from the strategic planning process mainly for the reason that the development of multi-year policy plans links present situations or circumstances with a more meaningful vision of the future. In

other words, a strategic planning process enables, for instance, the governor and the legislature, to understand more clearly where their state is now and where they would like it to be in the future. A strategic plan would indicate to state leaders – more lucidly – what state government’s (or more particularly an agency’s) overall mission, goals and objectives are, its strategic or programmatic activities, and its resources (people, monies, technologies and facilities). This process would further allow state officials to have a solid grasp of the state’s on-going performance and what results are being achieved. More specifically, the benefits of a state-wide strategic planning process are as follows:

- The establishment of a long-range, unified and broad direction (a “plan”) for state government in the policy areas of education, health and human services, transportation, public safety, commerce, natural resources and criminal justice
- The facilitation by the governor and legislature in being more responsive and accountable to the current and emerging needs of their state
- The allocation of limited resources, via the state’s budgetary process, in a more rational, and “results-producing” way
- The improvement of communication among all state leaders and better coordination of the “omnibus” policy/fiscal decision-making process
- The measurement of the progress of state-wide strategic efforts, by all planning participants, and the updating or revision of these efforts as warranted

Starting the strategic planning process is arguably the most important step in organisations. As Bryson (2011) sees it, the chief aim here is getting key organisational decision makers and other appropriate stakeholders to agree that strategic planning is needed and desirable and that all participants are on board – committed and supportive of the planning process and its various sequence of steps.

2.2.5 South African strategic planning

Hughes (2003) acknowledges that there “are more problems and constraints in using strategic management in the public service compared to the private sector”. However, he is of the view that the public service could benefit from the strategic approach. Different governments introduced strategic management to improve performance, as the elements of strategic management, such as strategy formulation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and control, are systematic. Matheson, Scanlan and Tanner (1998) claim that South Africa introduced a strategic management process to improve longer-term priorities, and government coordination for overall effectiveness. Bryson, Crosby and Bryson (2009) argue that studies of strategic planning in business and government have essentially treated strategic planning as a routine that is a fixed object, not a generative system comprised of many interacting and changeable parts.

In South Africa, a National Planning Commission (NPC) was established in 2010 in the Presidency, made up of 25 part-time commissioners appointed by the President, on the basis of their skills and expertise

with a mandate for developing a long-term vision and strategic plan for South Africa. After intense country-wide consultation, a diagnostic overview that sets out the key challenges that confronted the country in 2011 was produced, followed by the National Development Plan 2030 entitled “Our future – make it work” in 2012. (Thornhill, Van Dijk & Ile, 2014). Strategic planning in South Africa has been institutionalised according to the National Treasury (1999) within the government-wide outcomes-orientated monitoring and evaluation approach. It follows the six general steps of the strategic planning process with the exception that the situational analysis in Treasury’s model comes before and informs the vision statement. Thornhill et al. (2014) outline that to provide the necessary legal basis for the implementation of the Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans, regulations issued in terms of the Public Finance Management Act, 1 of 1999 require institutions to produce a strategic plan with a five-year planning horizon, outlining the planned sequencing of projects and programme implementation and associated resource implications; produce an annual performance plan including forward projections for a further two years, consistent with the medium term expenditure framework (MTEF) period, with annual and quarterly performance targets, where appropriate, for the current financial year and MTEF; identify a core set of indicators needed to monitor institutional performance; adopt a quarterly reporting system, including submission of agreed information to executive authorities, the Presidency or Premier’s Offices, and the relevant Treasury and Parliamentary portfolio committees and ensure that there is an alignment of reporting between strategic plans, annual performance plans, and budget documents as well as quarterly and annual reports.

Thornhill *et al.* (2014) indicate that there is a clear link between the national vision and annual departmental priority setting and budgeting processes, as well as an agreed set of priorities in the form of a clear, integrated statement of overall public sector policy goals. It is alleged that there is an inherent tension between strategic planning and budgeting, which often makes it difficult to achieve the desired level of integration and the challenge, therefore, lies in cascading links between strategic and operational planning and budgeting within departments to the lowest level of service. The government of South Africa, like other organisations, develops and implements strategic plans.

The Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information and Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans are issued by the National Treasury in terms of the mandates set out in section 215 and 216 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*. The planning processes outlined in the Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans are an integral part of the normal budgetary process (National Treasury, 2010).

Government's programmes and policies have been set out at the beginning of each electoral term of office in the MTSF approved by Cabinet and published by the Presidency. Government institutions are expected to align their strategic planning processes with the electoral cycle; this implies that new strategic plans should be prepared during the first budget cycle following the national general election. National

departments are expected to submit the first draft of the strategic plan to the National Treasury and Presidency for assessment at the end of August (National Treasury, 2010).

According to the National Treasury, 2010, implementation of strategic plans requires measuring of performance on a quarterly basis in South African government departments. Performance information indicates how well an institution meets its aims and objectives and which policies and processes are working. Performance information is vital to effective management, including planning, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring and reporting. To ensure that public service delivery is as efficient and economical as possible, all government institutions are required to formulate strategic plans, allocate resources to the implementation of those plans, and monitor and report results. South Africa reports on both financial and non-financial performance, which is important in measuring government institutions. In-year monitoring of non-financial performance (quarterly performance reporting) plays an important role in the entire planning and budgeting process. It allows for analysis of variances between initial plans and actual results. Quarterly performance reports serve as an “early warning system” by alerting departments to areas of weak performance, potential problems/challenges, and where remedial action is required (Preparation of Quarterly Performance Reports).

2.3 CONCLUSION

From the above literature review, it can be learnt that strategic planning is developed to assist an organisation in establishing priorities and to better serve the needs of its constituency. It is learned that a strategic plan must be flexible and practical and yet serve as a guide to implementing programmes, evaluating how these programmes are doing, and making adjustments when necessary.

One understands that a strategic plan must reflect the thoughts, feelings, ideas and wants of the developers and mould them along with the organisation’s purpose, mission and regulations into an integrated document. The development of a plan requires much probing, discussion and examination of the views of the leaders who handle the plan’s preparation. However, more often than not, the development of the plan is less complicated than is the implementation.

The implementation of strategic planning, in essence, pulls a plan apart and diffuses it throughout an organisation. Every unit within the organisation that is involved must then accept the plan, agree to its direction and implement specific actions. To effectively and efficiently implement a plan, all individuals involved in its implementation must function as a whole, or the plan is destined for failure. The next chapter outlines the methodology employed in conducting this research. It also indicates the research design; the population; sampling and data collection methods followed in conducting this research.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter (Chapter 2) presented a literature review by various scholars on the development and implementation of a strategic plan in the public sector from a global perspective, as well as within the South African context. In this chapter, the focus is on the rationale behind the choice of the research design and methodology. According to De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2005), it is important that in any research undertaken for either a masters or a doctoral degree the methodology to be used must be clearly spelled out so that the results of the research are convincing and credible. The process that was followed in collecting data, the administration of the data collection instrument, and the manner in which the data was analysed was thoroughly discussed. Ethical considerations were highlighted for the participants to ensure that trustworthiness is emphasised.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables us to answer the initial question as unambiguously as possible. The research design is not related to any particular method of collecting data or any particular type of data. Any research design can, in principle, use any type of data collection method and can use either quantitative or qualitative data (Van Wyk, 2012). According to Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006), a research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research. Research designs are plans that guide the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure.

3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the study, the researcher used/adopted the qualitative research methodology to seek and gain insight into people's attitudes, behaviours, value system, concern, motivations, aspirations and culture in the implementation of a strategic planning in the National Department of Human Settlements. A qualitative research approach involves an in-depth understanding of participants' behaviour and the reasons that govern participants' behaviour (Babooa, 2008).

Research methodology is about how data is collected and analysed. According to Mouton (2012), research methodology answers the question of how the researcher intends to go about conducting the research. According to Van Wyk (2012), research methodology focuses on the research process and the

kind of tools and procedures to be used, e.g. document analysis, survey methods, analysis of existing (secondary) data/statistics), which are driven by the specific tasks (data collection or sampling) at hand. It also focuses on the individual (not linear) steps in the research process and the most “objective” (unbiased) procedures to be employed. Generally, there are three types of research methodology, namely, qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods research approach.

3.3.1 Quantitative approach

According to De Vos *et al.* (2005), quantitative research is generally associated with the positivist/post-positivist paradigm. It usually involves collecting and converting data into numerical form so that statistical calculations can be made and conclusions drawn. In general (but not always), quantitative research methods are associated with deductive approaches (based on logic), while qualitative research methods are usually associated with inductive approaches (based on empirical evidence) (Van Wyk, 2012).

3.3.2 Qualitative approach

According to Creswell (2007), qualitative research is the approach usually associated with the social constructivist paradigm, which emphasises the socially constructed nature of reality. It is about recording, analysing and attempting to uncover the deeper meaning and significance of human behaviour and experience, including contradictory beliefs, behaviours, and emotions.

The approach to data collection and analysis is methodical but allows for greater flexibility than in quantitative research. Data is collected in textual form on the basis of observation and interaction with the participants, e.g. through observation, in-depth interviews and questionnaires. It is not converted into numerical form and is not statistically analysed. In this study, data was collected through interviews, questionnaires and by observing the behaviours of employees.

3.4 POPULATION

The population is defined as the larger pool from which sampling elements are drawn, and to which we want to generalise the findings (Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006). The population, in this study, involved officials of the National Department of Human Settlements. The population in the National Department of Human Settlement is comprised of 556 officials divided into six branches with 21 Chief Directorates and 45 Directorates. The target population will include the Chief Directors, Directors and Deputy Directors (Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006).

3.5 SAMPLING

Breakwell, Hammond, and Fife-Schaw (2001) describe a sample as a set of individuals selected from a population and intended to represent the population under study. Sampling design entails methods used in selecting the sample from the population. There are two types of sampling methods, probability and non-probability. Non-Probability sampling is that sampling procedure (design) that does not afford any basis for estimating the probability that each item in the population has of being included in the sample (Kothari, 2004). The study followed the non-probability sampling method using the purposive sampling technique. This type of sample is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the population that serve the purpose of the study best (Grinell & Unrau, 2008).

The participants were sampled based on whether they can purposefully understand and inform the study. The COO, CFO, HS Strategy, and Planning and Programme and Project Monitoring branches were the samples selected for the purpose of the study. However, the researcher further sampled the officials who are knowledgeable in strategic planning processes, performance monitoring processes, sector performance monitoring and evaluation, strategy development and budget processes. The researcher used a sample of 17 people with sub-samples of eight females and nine males who were drawn from the National Department of Human Settlement officials, thus constituting 47 percent female and 53 percent male of a total sample of 17 participants.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Both primary and secondary data sources were used. The primary method of data collection entailed personal interviews and the use of questionnaires. Questionnaires comprised of open and closed questions, scales, checklists and other statements of information to which the participants have responded. All questions were self-administered by the researcher through fieldwork. Sources of secondary data used included government documents, reports, official speeches and statistic from departmental documents. The researcher used different methods of collecting data, including the distribution of a semi-structured questionnaire, a semi-structured interview schedule, observations and documentary analysis. The methods of data collection used are discussed in detail below.

3.6.1. Semi-structured questionnaires

A questionnaire is a set of systematically structured questions used by a researcher to get needed information from respondents. Questionnaires are any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers (Brown, 2001). A semi-structured questionnaire consists of both open-

ended and closed questions and provides a greater depth than is possible with a structured questionnaire (O'Sullivan, Berner & Rassel, 2008). In this study, a semi-structured questionnaire was developed for the senior management employees in four branches in the National Department of Human Settlements. The main reason for using a semi-structured questionnaire was that senior managers in the Department are always busy in meetings hence the researcher opted for a questionnaire so that they could respond to the questionnaire at any time of their choice. The researcher agrees with Munzhedzi (2011) in that the main reason for semi-structured questions is to give respondents freedom to express their opinions and views on how they understand the situation, unlike in the structured questions (quantitative) where answers are restricted.

3.6.2 Semi-structured interview

Secondly, a semi-structured interview schedule was developed for the non-senior management employees in four branches in the National Department of Human Settlements. The kind of questionnaire used in this study contains semi-structured (open-ended and closed) questions. The reason for this type of interview is that it helps the researcher to be able to follow up particular avenues that emerged in the interview and the participant is able to provide a response reflecting a fuller picture. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews allow both the interviewer and the interviewee to express themselves openly while sharing in-depth information on the issue in question.

3.6.3 Observations

Observations referred to in this study include the observation of individual behaviour, and necessary observable characteristics of the National Department of Human Settlements employees. Observation entails the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviour, and objects in the social setting chosen for the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Even in studies using in-depth interviews, observations play a pivotal role as the researcher notes the interviewee's body language in addition to the words.

The researcher undertaking this study is a Deputy Director at the Human Settlements Strategy division of the National Department of Human Settlements. This position of the researcher makes it easier to observe the behaviour and activities of officials because the researcher has been directly involved from the time the strategic planning was developed or reviewed and implemented in the Department. Observation of behaviour has been done by considering operational issues such as the understanding of the strategic planning and the challenges confronting the strategic planning and its implementation in the National Department of Human Settlements in Gauteng. Mouton (2001) also maintains that it is desirable to use observation techniques that elicit as little reactivity as possible in order to ensure the highest level of validity. It is equally desirable to employ observation techniques that make it possible to exercise as much control on the research as possible.

3.6.4 Document analysis

According to Ritchie and Lewis (2003), documentary analysis involves the study of existing documents, either to understand their substantive content or to illuminate deeper meanings that may be revealed by their style and coverage. According to Kothari (2004), primary data is that which is collected for the first time and thus happens to be original, and secondary data is that that has already been collected by someone else and has already been passed through the statistical process. In this study, the researcher has used both primary and secondary data. The researcher has used the textual analysis technique in analysing documents. Textual analysis is usually thought of as being part of the qualitative and interpretive tradition, wherein emphasis is less on the number and frequency of occurrences and more on interpreting the meaning the document might have (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). The researcher has evaluated the authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning of the documents that were analysed.

The above data collection methods were used in order to generate valid and reliable data that contain minimal errors. The methods of data collection were used also in relation to the chosen sample and research area that will be discussed below.

3.7 DATA CAPTURING AND EDITING

The researcher has used a file to store collected data so as to capture the information on the computer, and also relevant journals, books, reports and materials to edit data context for presentation in the study.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

According to Babooa (2008), analysis of data is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modelling data with the goal of highlighting useful information, suggesting conclusions and supporting decision making. It leads to the interpretation of the data. In this context, qualitative analysis was used as the study was qualitative in nature. Data analysis usually involves two key steps, namely, (a) reducing the collected data to manageable proportions and (b) identifying patterns and themes in the data (Mouton, 2001). Babooa (2008) agrees that the first step in the analysis of data is a critical examination of the collected data.

In this study, the analysis includes data collected through semi-structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis, including of strategic plans, annual performance plans (APP), departmental annual reports, as well as the Auditor General's reports. A semi-structured interview schedule was prepared and seven (7) non-senior management officials were interviewed. Also, semi-structured questionnaires were distributed to ten (10) senior management officials at the National Department of Human Settlements. Observations were done through informal chats, observations of

moods, and discussions during interviews. Data analysis was carried out by grouping information from the primary and secondary sources into categories, i.e. senior management and non-senior management, as well as themes outlined in the interview schedule and the questionnaires.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Ethics provides researchers with a code of moral guidelines on how to conduct research in a morally accepted way (Struwig & Stead, 2010). The following are different elements of ethics that need to be considered when conducting research:

3.9.1 Informed consent

The issue of informed consent is vital when research is conducted. Researchers prefer to obtain the informed consent of research participants by getting them to sign an informed consent form. The advantage of such forms is that the researcher has a signed record of consent should any concerns be raised by participants or others (Bryman, 2012). The researcher acquired consent from the participants and signed consent forms are in place.

3.9.2 Deception

De Vos *et al.* (2011) indicate that deception refers to misleading participants, deliberately misrepresenting facts or withholding information from participants. Deception also involves withholding information or offering incorrect information in order to ensure the participation of subjects when they would otherwise possibly have refused. The researcher, before collecting data, ensured that all participants, officials of the National Department of Human Settlements, were provided with reasonable information pertaining to the purpose of the study before the interviews and questionnaires were conducted.

3.9.3 Voluntary participation

The participants were not coerced to take part in the interviews or filling in of the questionnaires. Participation should at all times be voluntary and no one should be forced to participate in a project (Rubin & Babbie, 2008).

3.9.4 Confidentiality/anonymity

According to Mouton (2001), anonymity refers to the principle that the identity of an individual is kept secret, whereas the principle of confidentiality refers to information gathered from subjects. The researcher, in this study, made a commitment to the participants that the responses in interviews and questionnaires, would be kept anonymous and confidential.

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter focuses on research design and methodology. It also outlines the research approaches and methods utilised in conducting the study. In addition, the chapter describes the data collection methods, sampling methods and design that were used. Furthermore, the chapter emphasises the importance of ethics. The next chapter focuses on analysis of data, and presentation of data obtained from participants and relevant documents.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 focused on the discussion regarding research design and methodology as well as data collection methods. Chapter 4 focuses on the presentation of data, the analysis of the research data obtained from the participants and relevant documents. The analysis is based on the data collected using various methods such as questionnaires, interviews and document analysis throughout the study.

The researcher divided the participants into two groups; the first group were non-senior managers. They were provided with a semi-structured questionnaire which had 15 questions. Section A required biographic information and Section B required diagnostic questions. In this group, participants were interviewed on a semi-structured interview schedule. The second group of participants was senior managers. This group of participants was also provided with a set of semi-structured questionnaires which had 12 questions consisting of Section A and B. In this group, participants filled in semi-structured questionnaires.

4.2 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data to be presented here was obtained from both middle managers and senior managers in the National Department of Human Settlements. The middle managers were expected to outline their understanding and observation on the relationship between MTSF and the strategic plan; disconnect between strategy and implementation; systems facilitating strategic plan implementation, and the challenges affecting strategic plan implementation. Whereas senior managers were expected to outline how senior management ensures that there is a general understanding within the Department of the relationship between MTSF and the strategic plan; how to ensure that there is no disconnect between strategy and implementation; how the Department ensures that systems of facilitating strategic plan implementation are in place; and how the Department deals with challenges affecting strategic plan implementation. The presentation of data from these two groups will be presented as follows: firstly will be data collected from middle managers and secondly, data collected from senior management.

4.3 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF MIDDLE MANAGERS

Biographical information may be brief, covering only basic information about a person's life, such as gender, race, age, branch, position and length of service in the National Department of Human Settlements. Biographical information of respondents is important in this research as it will assist in

uncovering information that would assist the researcher to understand the respondent's general background information. The biographical information in this section probes gender, race, age, branch, position and length of service of middle managers in the Department. Probing such information gives pictorial information of the respondents.

4.3.1 Gender

The purpose of looking into gender was to evaluate whether the staff complement in the Department is balanced in terms of gender. The South African government requires institutions to ensure that there is gender balance in organisational structures and that there are female officials in management positions. This information shows that the Department is non-compliant to gender equality within the working environment.

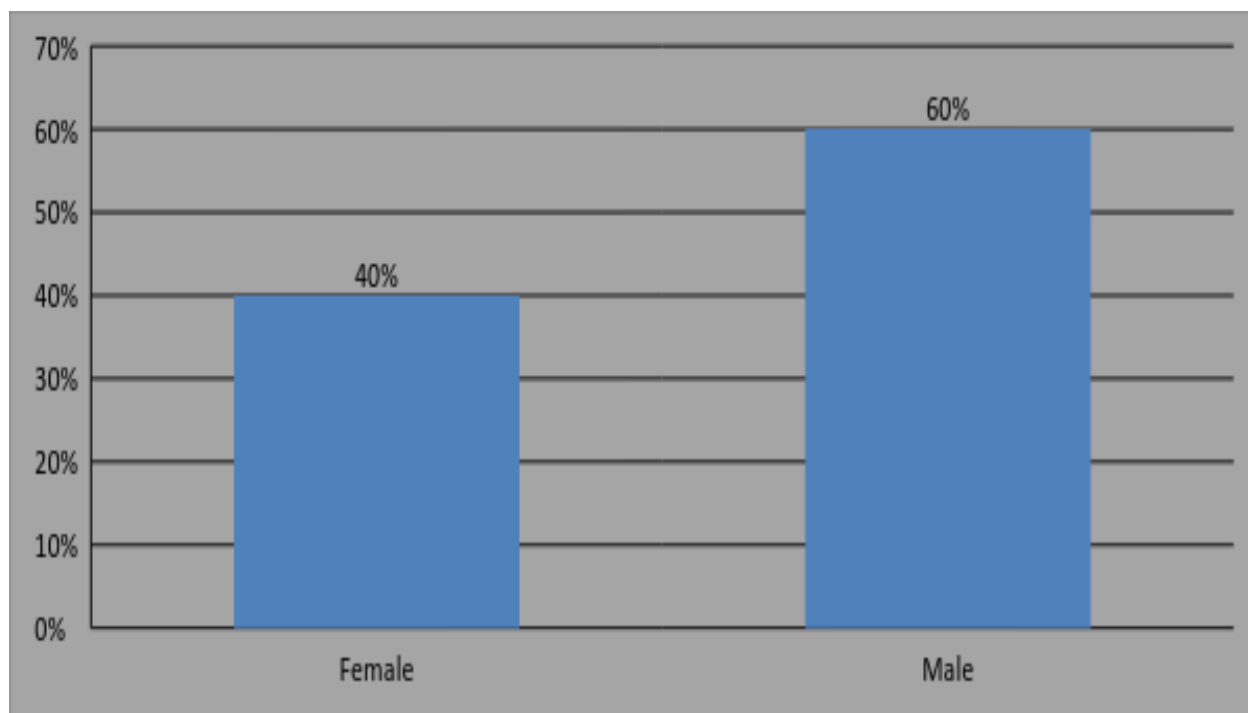


Figure 1: Participants' gender

The results revealed that 60 percent of the participants were males while 40 percent were females. This reflects that males still dominate the middle management level at the National Department of Human Settlements. This is likely to be in contradiction with what the Employment Equity Act requires in the workplace environment.

4.3.2 Race

The research revealed that 20 percent of the participants were white males and 80 percent were Africans, which reflects that whites in this level are a minority in the Department. The research also looked into the race to evaluate the racial balance of staff in the Department. The Employment Equity Act in South

Africa provides for racial balance in the working environment. South African human resources had previously been racially imbalanced at management level.

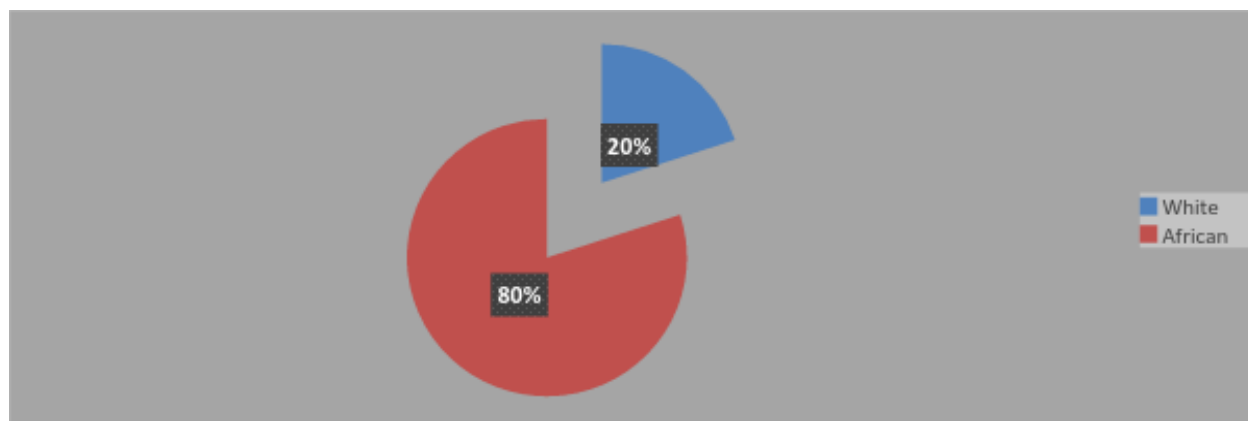


Figure 2: Participants' race

Considering that the Africans (blacks) constitute a highest percentage of the population in South Africa, the racial figure mentioned above might not be highly skewed.

4.3.3 Age

There have been arguments about generational mix within the working environment. The South African government argues that youth need to be empowered by being offered opportunities in the public service especially at management level. It is believed that youth could be innovative and fit well into transformation management. The participants who were part of the study are of different age groups, ranging from 20 years to 65 years.

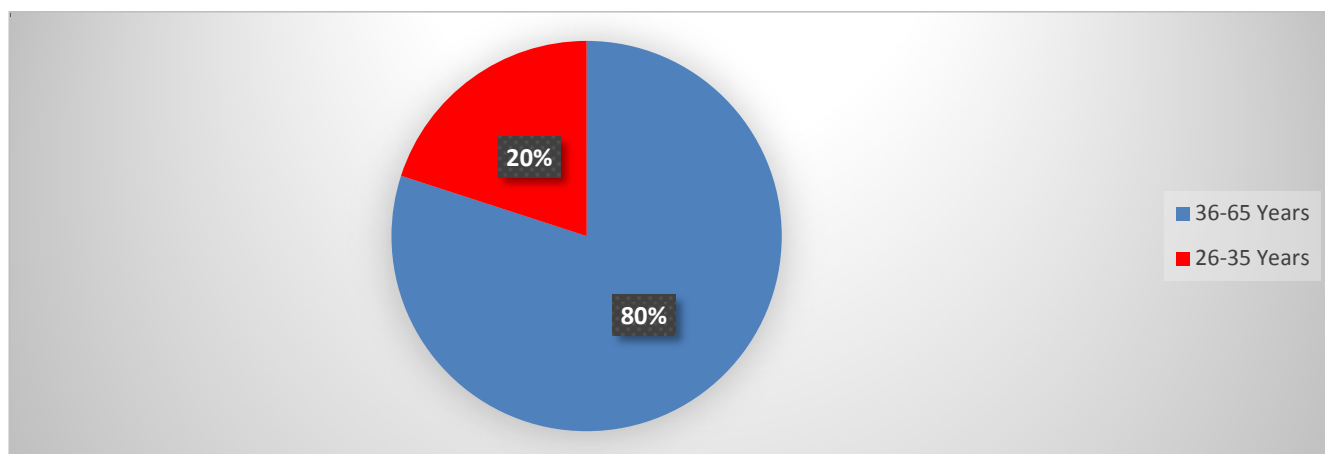


Figure 3: Participants' age

The majority of the participants (80 percent) are between the ages of 36 and 65 while 20 percent are between the ages of 26 and 35 years. The above-mentioned figures show that the majority of middle managers in the selected sample in the Department of Human Settlements are not youthful. This also implies that the majority of respondents are highly experienced individuals in the organisation. Only a

small fraction of 20 percent is youthful. Being in the minority, the innovativeness may be suppressed by the experienced individuals in the organisation.

4.3.4 Branch

Planning in the National Department of Human Settlements is done at branch level. Branches constitute the National Department of Human Settlements. The branches that were sampled were the ones dealing with planning, reporting, budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation. Branches are expected to have a thorough understanding of planning, reporting and budgeting. Branches (Programme Management Unit) and HS Strategy did not participate at the middle management level. This was probed in order to establish whether branches understand the government planning process, departmental strategy and how it should be implemented.

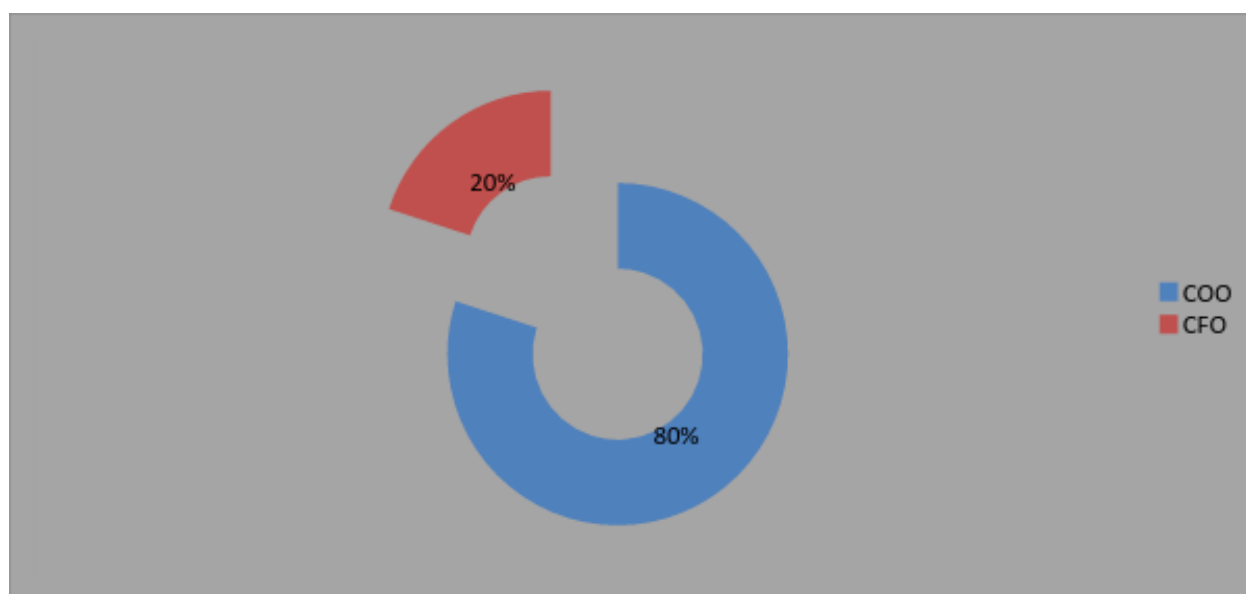


Figure 4: Participants' branch

There was 80 percent of participants from the Chief of Operations (COO) branch and 20 percent from the finance department in the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) branch. The results revealed that the majority of the COO branch officials understand the planning, reporting and budgeting processes, which is reasonable, as strategic planning and performance and the reporting function reside in that branch.

4.3.5 Position

The response provided by the participants is determined by the position they are holding. The researcher wanted to establish whether middle managers have an understanding of the planning, budgeting and reporting processes in the Department. The level of deputy directors was interviewed and not assistant directors.

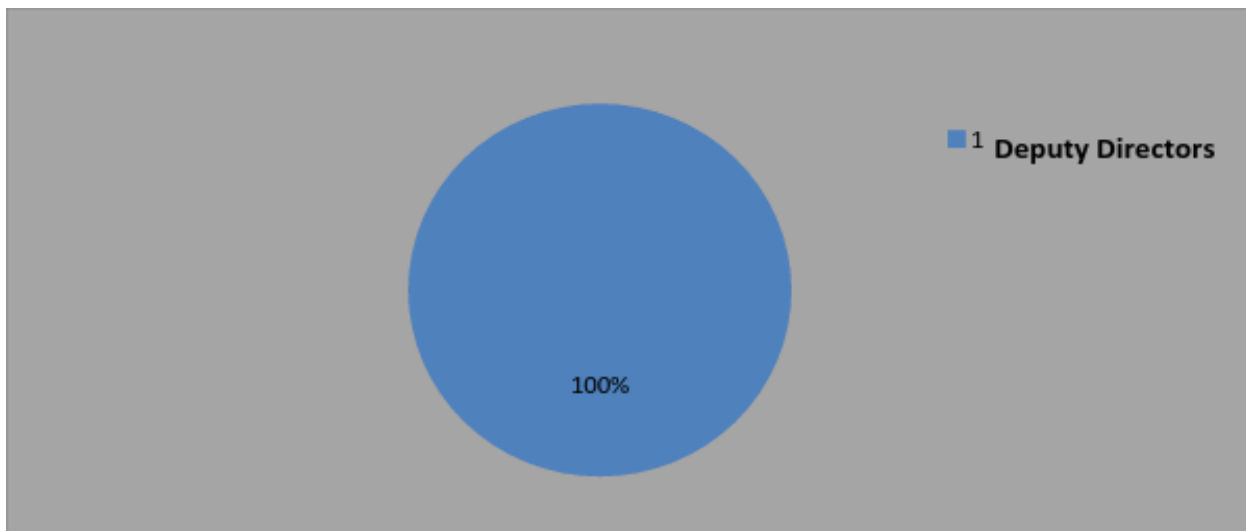


Figure 5: Participants’ position

The figure above indicates that 100 percent of the respondents participated in the interviews.

4.3.6 Length of service

The length of service of the respondents helps to determine the years of experience the respondents have in the field. The length of service of the respondents is presented as follows:

Figure: 6 Participants’ length of service

The results show that 20 percent of the participants have experience of between 18 and 22 years; 20 percent of the participants have experience of between 8 and 12 years. The majority of the respondents (60 percent) have experience of between 1 and 3 years. In general the perception drawn from this result is that the majority of participants have less experience in the middle management of the National Department of Human Settlements.

4.4 RESPONSES BY MIDDLE MANAGERS

The questions wanted to establish the understanding of the MTSF, strategic plan, the link between strategy and its implementation, systems of facilitating the implementation of the strategic plan, and challenges in strategic plan implementation by officials in the Department of Human Settlements.

4.4.1 Relationship between the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) and strategic plan

The questions wanted to establish the understanding of the MTSF and its relationship to the strategic plan. The following was the information that the respondents were expected to respond to in line with the theme on the relationship of the MTSF and the strategic plan:

B1. Branches' knowledge about the link between the MTSF and the strategic plan

It is required that employees dealing with strategic planning in the National Department of Human Settlements should know the link between the MTSF and strategic plan. The researcher requested the participants to provide information about the linkage between the MTSF and strategic plan in order to determine the general understanding of the relationship between the MTSF and strategic plan. They responded as follows:

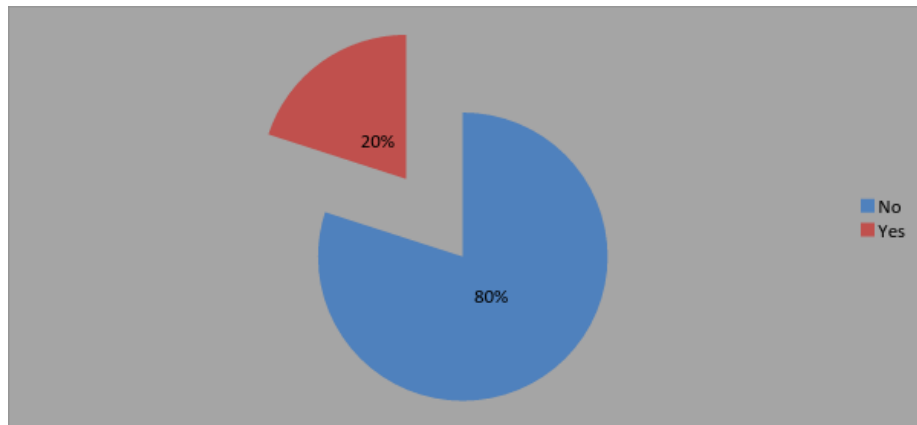


Figure 7: Understand of the link between MTSF and strategic plan

The majority of participants (80 percent) indicated that branches do not understand the link between the MTSF and the strategic plan. Some participants do have an idea about the relation but do not have an understanding of the link since some of the strategic plan targets do not correlate with the MTSF targets and they acknowledged that there is a misalignment between the MTSF and the strategic plan. Furthermore, participants also outlined that the MTSF was not thoroughly enough communicated to officials for them to grasp and fully understand how it should be linked to the strategic plan. The remaining 20 percent of the participants understand the link between MTSF and strategic plan, although they remarked that the strategic plan targets seem not to correlate with the MTSF targets. The above deduction was made due to the Auditor-General's report 2015/16 finding, indicating the misalignment between the targets in the strategic plan and the MTSF targets.

B2. The branches' knowledge about the purpose of aligning the MTSF and the strategic plan

In order to determine the understanding of the purpose of aligning the MTSF and the strategic plan, participants were asked if they understand the purpose and to outline this purpose.

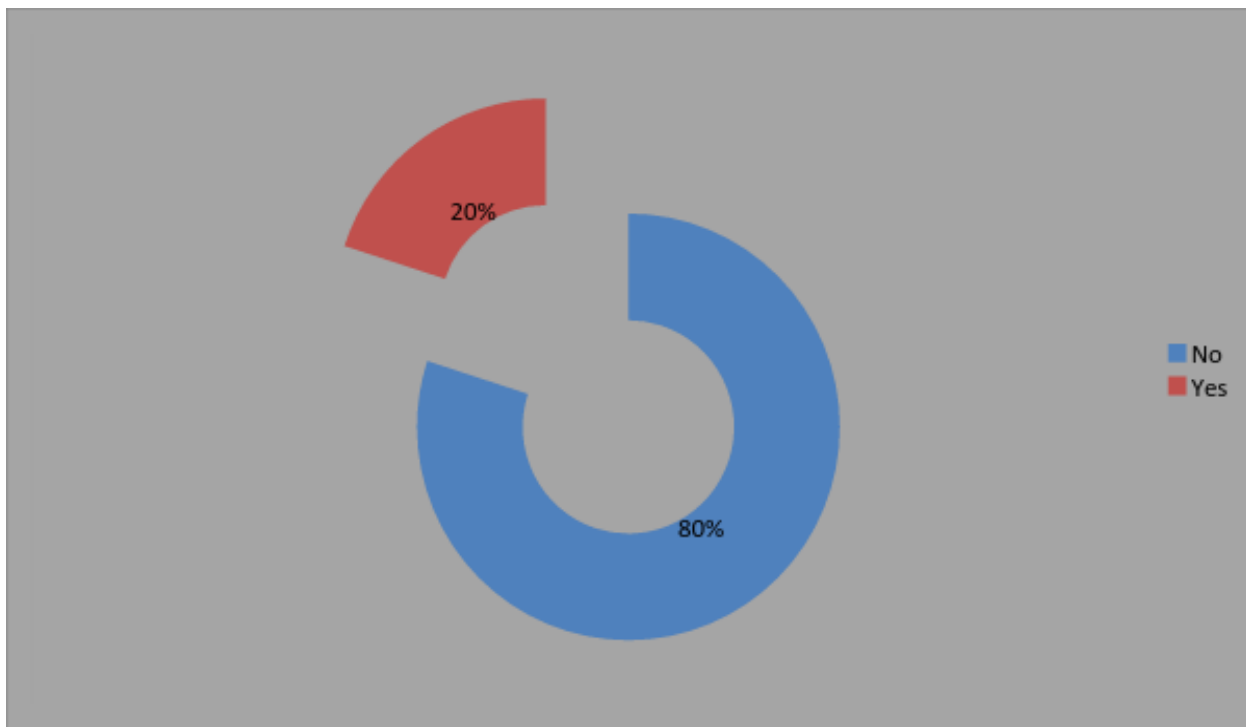


Figure 8: Understand of the purpose of aligning MTSF and strategic plan

The majority of participants representing 80 percent outlined that officials in branches do not understand the purpose of aligning the two concepts (MTSF and strategic plan). They further indicated that there are no meaningful planning sessions that would ensure that branch officials understand the purpose of aligning the MTSF and the strategic plan. One participant also suggested that intensive branch planning sessions would be useful in capacitating officials on the issues of planning. The minority of participants representing 20 percent showed that branches know the purpose of aligning the MTSF and the strategic plan but clearly have a challenge in aligning the two plans. As a result of the fact that the majority of the respondents believes that officials do not have a clear understanding of the purpose of aligning the MTSF and strategic plan, the researcher is of the opinion that the Department has a loophole in the planning processes that needs to be addressed.

B3. Branches' understanding of the role of the MTSF in the departmental strategic planning process

Participants were asked to indicate whether they understand the role of the MTSF in the departmental strategic planning process and to briefly explain its role.

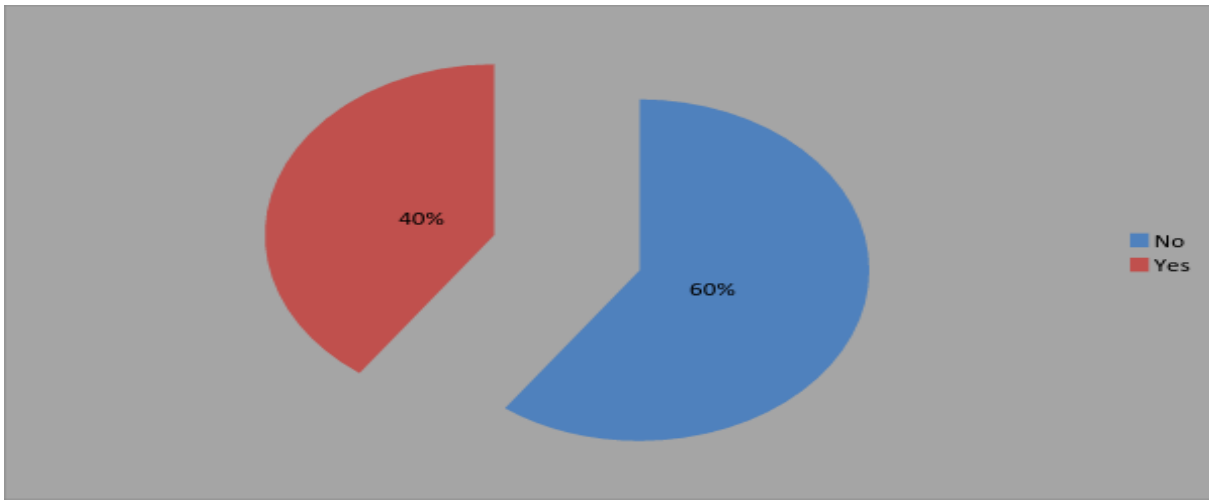


Figure 9: Understand the role of the MTSF in the departmental strategic planning process

Sixty percent of the participants indicated that branch officials do not understand the role of the MTSF in the departmental planning process. They further indicated that lack of understanding is caused by lack of proper/meaningful departmental planning sessions wherein the purpose, role and link of the MTSF in the planning process is clearly explained to officials. Forty percent of the participants indicated that branch officials understand the role of the MTSF in the planning process to a certain extent and that their understanding could improve if planners were to provide clear direction with regards to the planning process.

B4. The alignment of the previous strategic plan to the MTSF (2009-2014) and impact

The participants were asked whether there was an alignment between the strategic plan and MTSF (2009-2014) and the impact thereof.

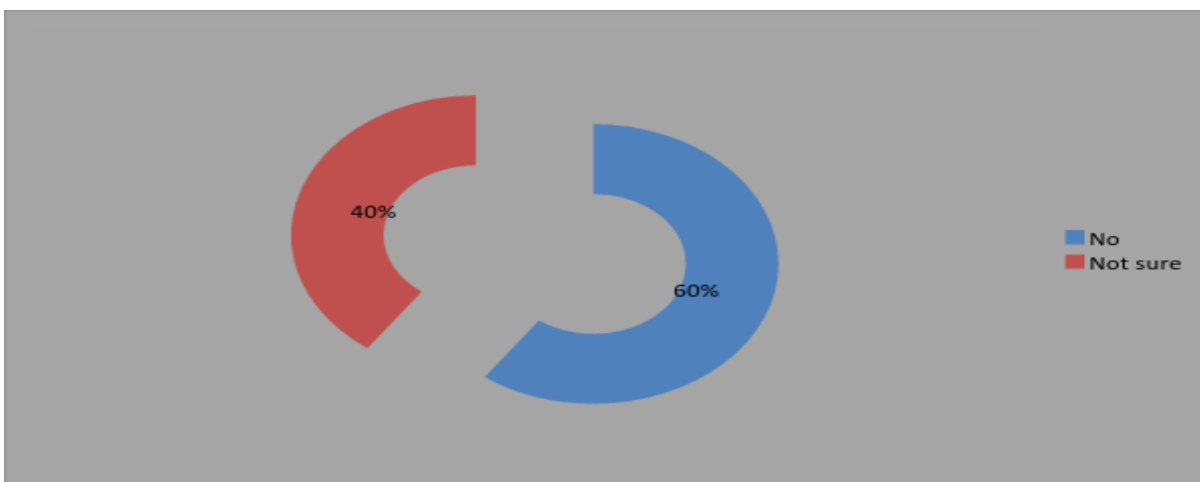


Figure 10: Alignment of 2009-2014 MTSF and 2013-2014 strategic plan

Participants, representing 40 percent, reserved their comments on this question as they were not part of the Department during that period. Whereas 60 percent of the participants outlined that there was no alignment between the MTSF and the strategic plan (2014/2015) and that the Department did not have a

documented MTSF during that period. Misalignment of strategy in the public service is common. Sebola and Mahlatji, (2015) also found that there was misalignment between plans and strategies in the Limpopo Economic Development, Environment and Tourism Department.

B5. Respondents' understanding of the link between the National Development Plan (NDP), Manifesto, MTSF and State of the Nation Address (SONA), the strategic plan (STRATPLAN) and the Minister's Budget Speech

The participants were asked whether they understand the link between the above-mentioned strategic documents and to outline the link thereof.

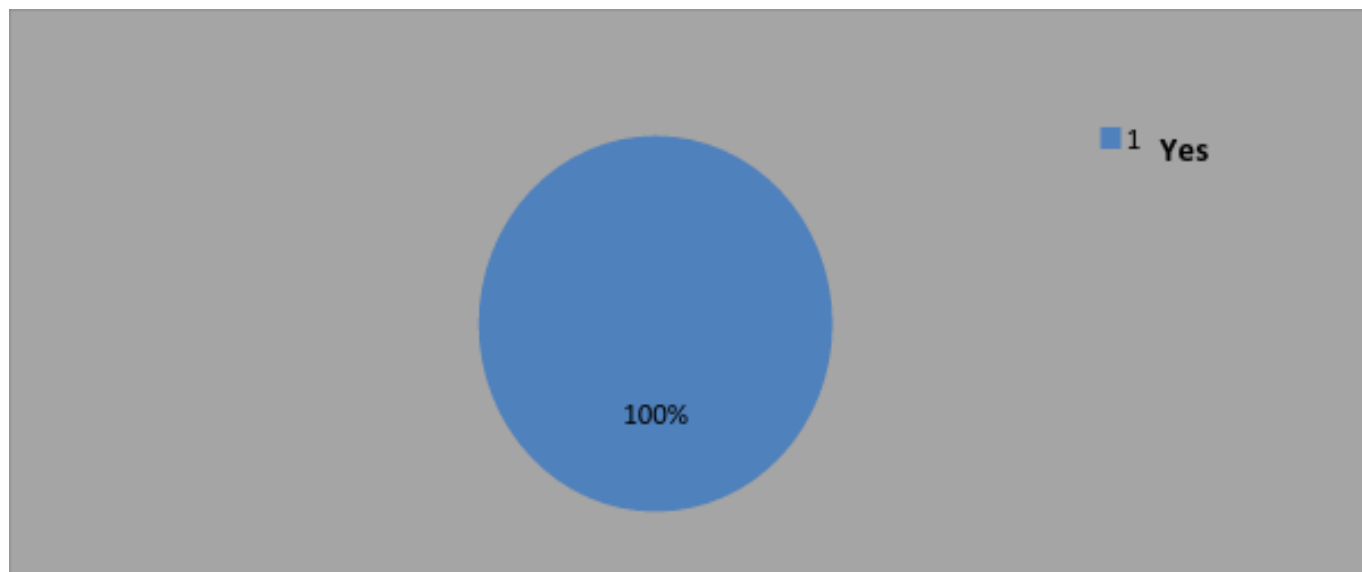


Figure 11: Understand of the link between the NDP, Manifesto, MTSF, SONA, STRATPLAN and Minister's Budget Speech

All of the participants indicated that they understand the link and further explained that the government planning processes are systematically interrelated and don't operate independently but inform each other. The participants indicated that there are different strategic documents that outline government priorities, outcomes and steps to be taken to impact or change the lives of the people.

B6. The relationship between the MTSF and the strategic plan

The participants were asked to explain the relationship between the MTSF and the strategic plan.

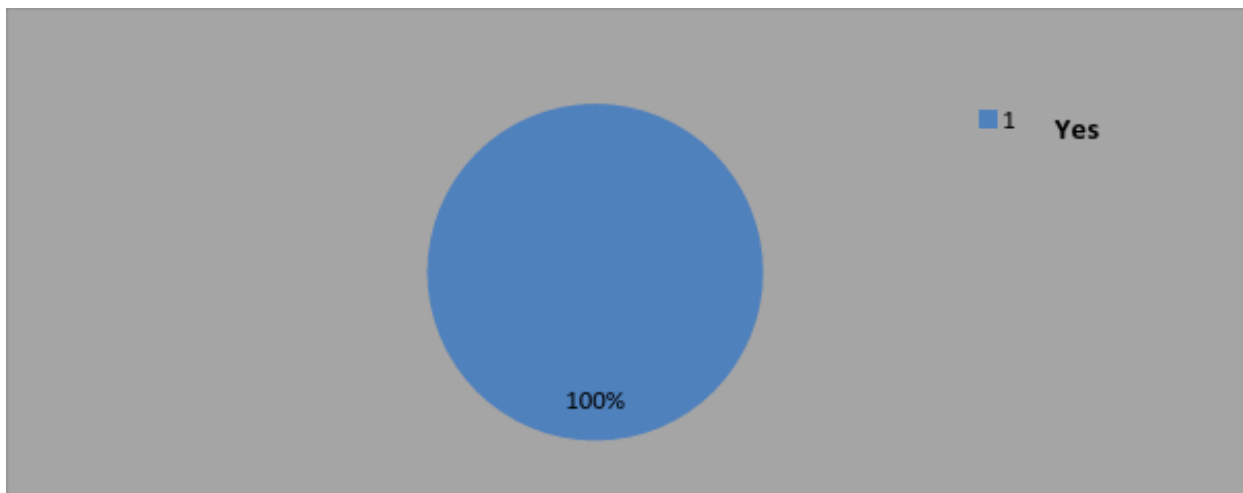


Figure 12: Relationship between the MTSF and strategic plan

All of the participants indicated that the MTSF is a high level document that should include all targets in the outcome of the Department with an indication of when the outcome should be attained, and the strategic plan unpacks the MTSF and gives direction on how the targets will be attained.

4.4.2 Disconnect between strategy and implementation

The questions wanted to establish the understanding of the connection or disconnection between strategy and its implementation. The following was the information that the respondents were expected to respond to in line with the theme on the disconnect between strategy and implementation:

B7. Planned targets outlined in the strategic plan implemented as planned

The participants were requested to outline whether planned targets in the strategic plan were implemented as planned and indicate the impact thereof.

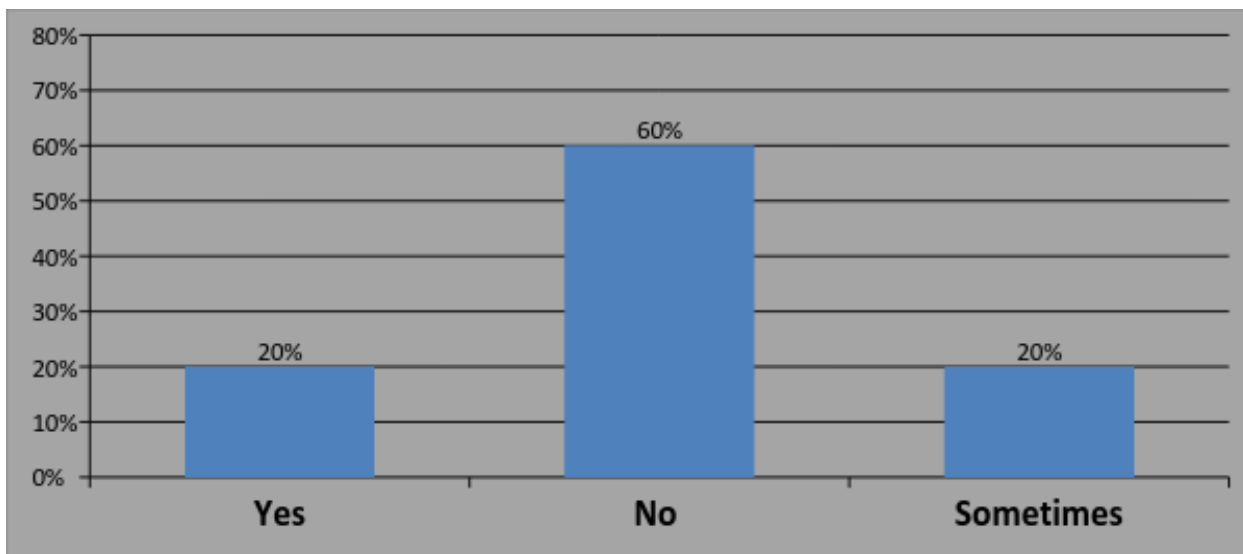


Figure 13: Planned targets implemented as planned or not

Sixty percent of the participants indicated that planned targets in the strategic plan are not implemented; branches deviate from their planned targets when implementing the strategic plan. They indicated that there is misalignment between the strategic plan and the annual performance plan of the Department. The participants also indicated that the strategic plan 2014/2015 was not formulated according to the legislation and related frameworks.

Twenty percent of the participants indicated that planned targets are implemented as planned in some instances but in some instances not, as branches focus on implementing what they think/believe should be done and not focus on what is in the plan. The remaining 20 percent of participants indicated that planned targets are implemented as planned. However, the departmental strategic plan has targets that are not SMART. It therefore becomes difficult to measure the outcomes. The majority of the respondents believe that targets that are outlined in the strategic plan are not implemented as planned by the Department, which is not in line with the Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information. The researcher is of the opinion that if plans are not implemented as planned then it becomes difficult for the performance monitoring unit to measure performance and in-year monitoring is compromised. The researcher believes that the Department should detect the early warning signs for non-performance every quarter and decide on the remedial action to be taken and implement it.

B8. The connection between the strategic plan and its implementation in the Department

The participants were asked whether there is a connection between the plan and its implementation.

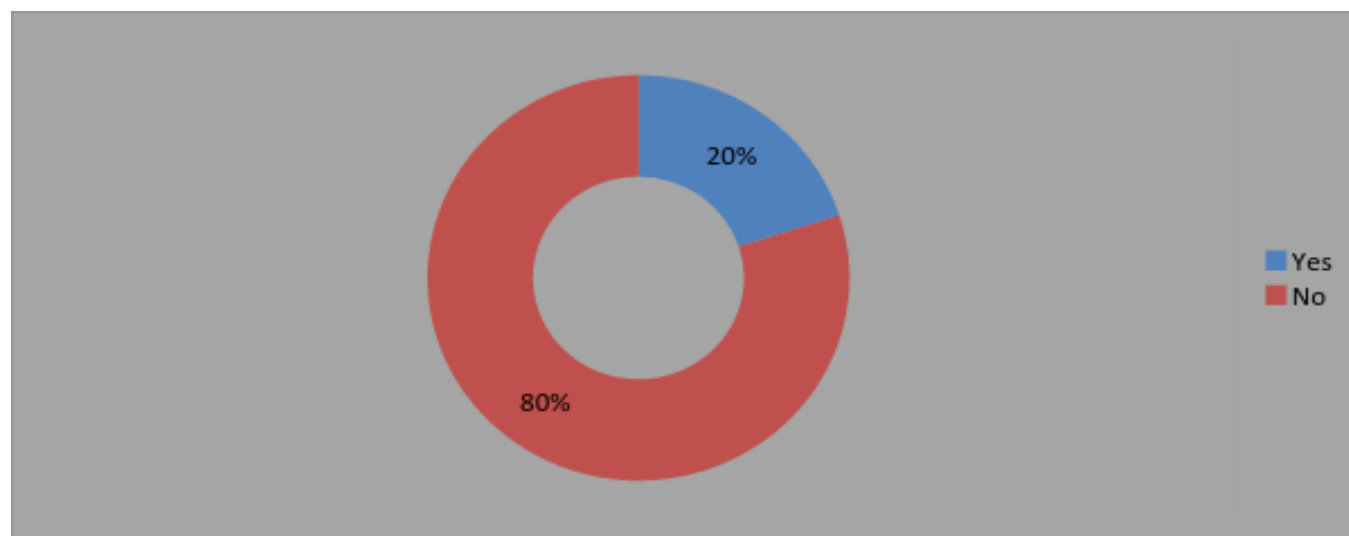


Figure 14: Connection between strategic plan and its implementation

The majority of the respondents (80 percent) indicated that there is no connection between the strategic plan and its implementation, as some targets are not implemented as planned because branches tend to evade reporting on those targets that do not align directly to the departmental targets. However, 20 percent of the participants indicated that there is a connection between the strategic plan and its implementation. The majority of respondents indicated that there is no connection between the strategic

plan and its implementation, which creates a perception that there is a serious challenge to developing plans for compliance only to implement a totally different plan that is not included in the strategic plan. The researcher believes that the Department should ensure that there is alignment in plans during the formulation phase of planning, and all branch heads should verify their branch targets and be held accountable for non-performance when planned targets are not implemented as outlined in the strategic plan.

B9. Consideration of the implementation phase during the formulation phase of the planning process

The participants were asked to talk about the Department's consideration of the implementation phase of the strategic planning process during the formulation phase to ensure that targets that were not achieved could be included in the subsequent strategic plan.

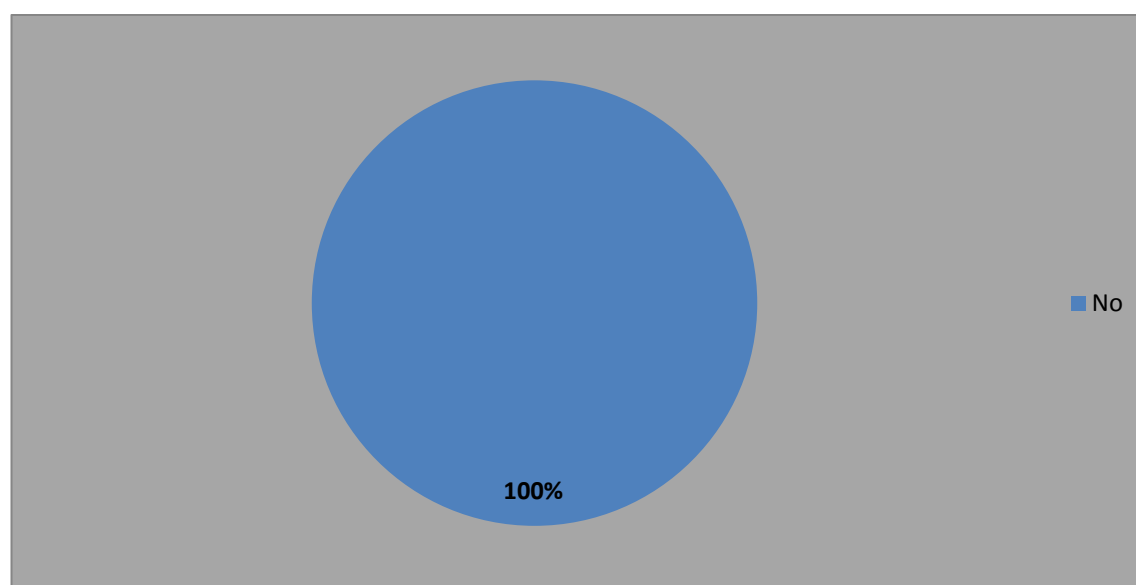


Figure 15: Taking into consideration the implementation phase during the formulation phase

All of the participants indicated that the Department does not take the implementation phase into consideration when formulating the strategic plan, resulting in repeated commission of errors. Outstanding targets from the previous year are not carried over to the new strategic plan. The respondents went on to highlight that the strategic plan is compiled/formulated after the budget process, which means that the plan does not inform the budget but the other way round. The participants also pointed out that the Department does not follow the proper planning process as per the regulations in developing the strategic plan, therefore compromising the implementation phase.

B10. The causes of the disconnect between strategy and implementation

The participants were asked to express their opinion as to what causes the disconnect between strategy and its implementation. The absence of standard operating procedures (process map) in the development of the strategic plan; limited expertise and resistance to change; poor communication between senior

management and strategy implementers; late commencement of the planning process and minimal understanding of the government planning process by the officials were highlighted as the causes of the disconnection strategy and its implementation.

4.4.3 Systems to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan

The questions in this section wanted to establish whether the Department has systems in place to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan. The following was the information that the respondents were expected to respond to in line with the theme on systems of facilitating the implementation of the strategic plan:

B11. The Department's (NDHS) systems in facilitating the implementation of the strategic plan

The participants were asked to explain whether the NDHS has systems to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan.

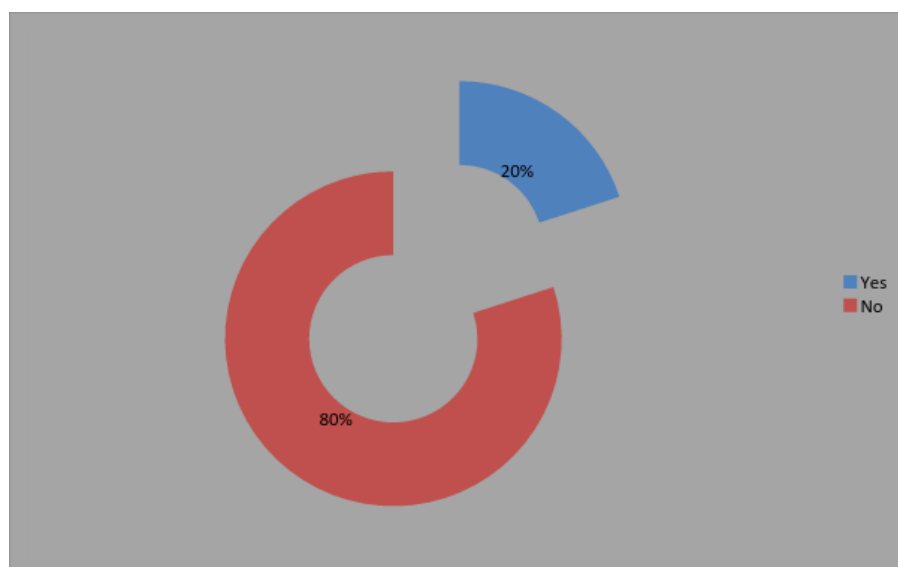


Figure 16: Systems to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan

The results show that 80 percent of the participants indicated that there are no systems to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan. However, 20 percent pointed out that there is a system in the Department that facilitates the implementation of the strategic plan. It was indicated that there is a performance monitoring system in place wherein all branches quarterly/annually report and provide evidence of performance to the Chief Directorate: Enterprise Architecture for evaluation. The researcher, after looking into the results, is of the opinion that the Department uses performance monitoring as a system of facilitating the implementation of the strategic plan. The researcher believes that the system is not effective enough to change the culture of not implementing what was planned for.

B12. Department's strategic planning process wherein both senior management and all officials participate

The participants were asked as to whether the Department has a strategic planning process that it follows and that includes senior management and all officials participating, and also to explain that process.

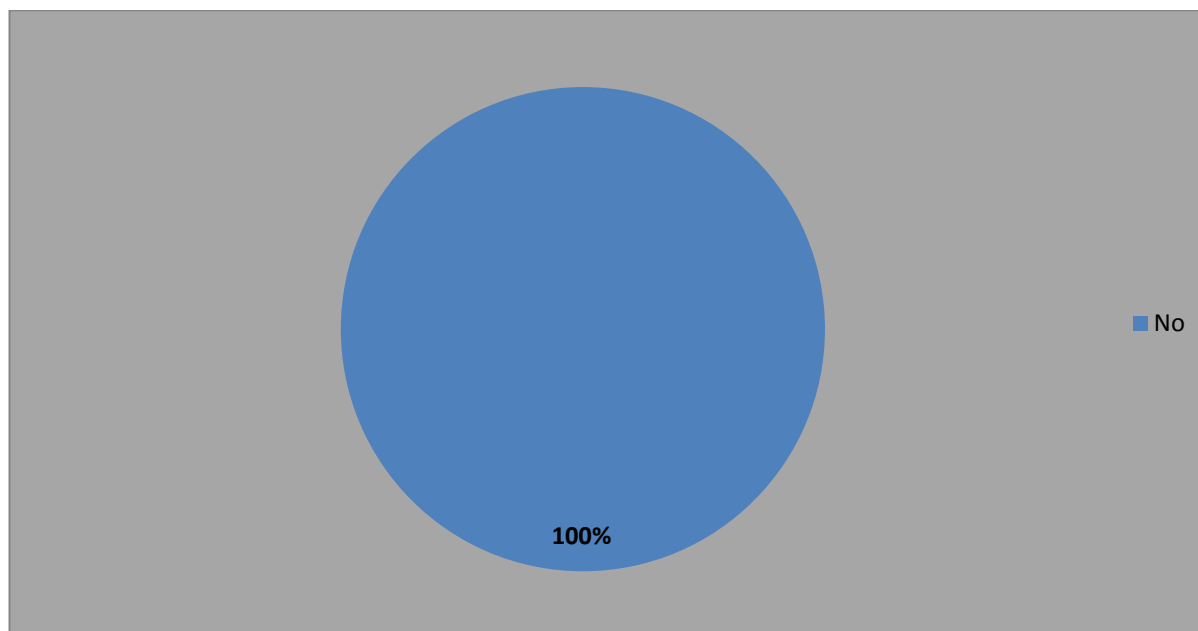


Figure 17: Strategic plan process comprising of both senior management's and all officials' participation

All participants, representing 100 percent, outlined that the Department does not have a systematic approach/process that it follows, which also includes both senior management (SMS) and all other officials in participation. They further indicated that there are no standard operating procedures that have been documented and approved for the development of the strategic plan.

However, they indicated that the system is being developed and will be in place for the formulation of the 2016/2017 strategic plan. The majority of the respondents believe that there is no system followed by the Department in which all departmental staff participate. It is vital for the Department to conduct a planning session for all staff members in order to outline the overall goal of the Department for the financial year and the importance of the contribution of all staff members. The researcher believes that the planning process that the Department follows is not effective and can be improved by developing standard operating procedures detailing every step of the departmental planning process. This will also assist in including the annual planning process in the departmental calendar for the financial year, which will make it easy for the Department to manage the planning process.

B13. Alignment of the departmental systems to the implement strategic plan with the Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) utilised in the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation to evaluate all government departments' performance

Participants were asked if the system used in the Department for the implementation of the strategic plan is aligned to MPAT.

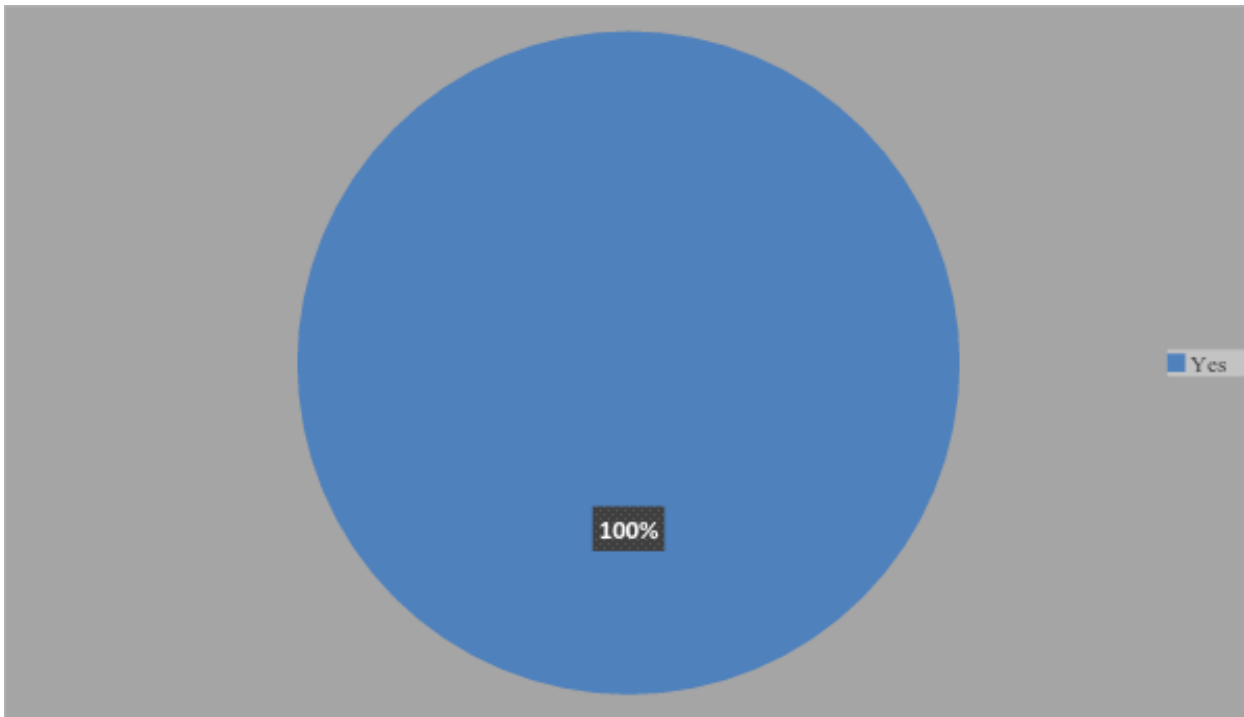


Figure 18: Departmental system of implementing the strategic plan aligned to MPAT

All participants (100 percent) pointed out that there is no system in place that is aligned to MPAT and further explained that the system that is being utilised is not adequate to assist the Department in meeting the MPAT standards. The Department is also not doing well on key performance areas (KPA) for strategic management, which includes planning, reporting and evaluation of performance. In order to address this challenge of not meeting the standards, the Department appointed KPA coordinators to ensure that follow-ups are done on areas that are not being achieved by branches. The researcher made a deduction that the Department's system of strategic plan implementation is not aligned to MPAT. However, improvement in this area still needs to be proven after the appointment of the KPA coordinators. The Department should review the process annually in order to evaluate its effectiveness.

4.4.4 Challenges in strategic plan implementation

The questions wanted to establish challenges that arise in strategic plan implementation. The following was the information that the respondents were expected to respond to in line with the theme on challenges in strategic plan implementation in the Department:

B14. Challenges that branches encounter when implementing planned targets

The participants were asked to outline the challenges faced by branches when implementing the planned targets in the strategic plan.

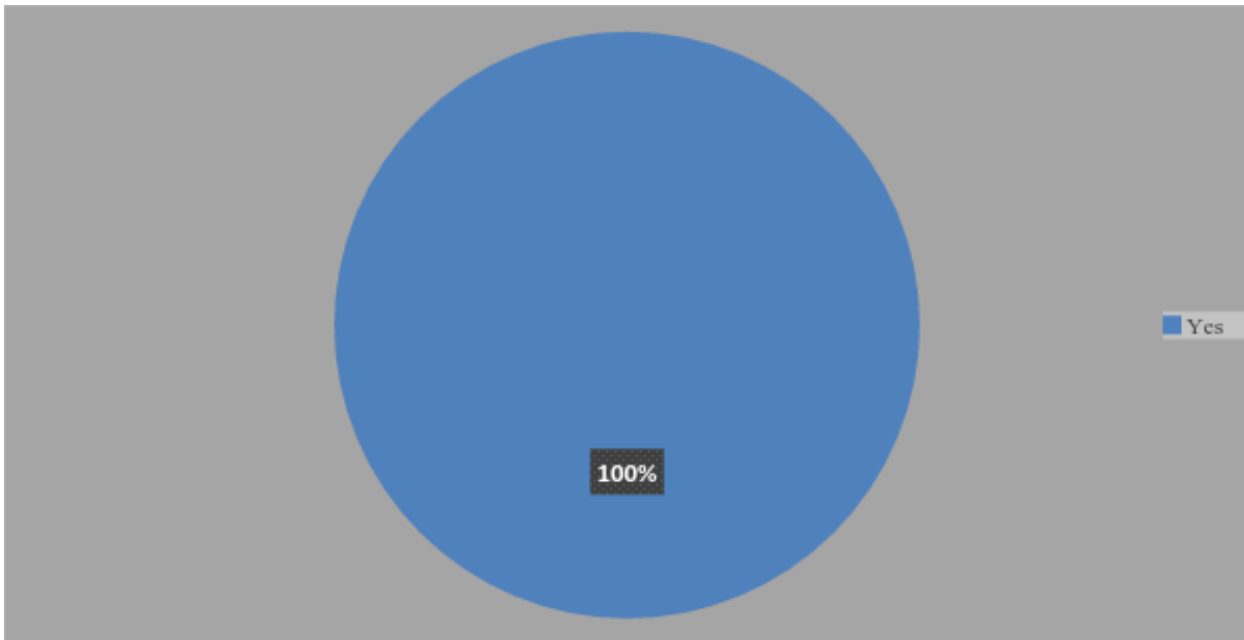


Figure 19: Determination of challenges in the implementation of planned targets by branches

All participants (100 percent) indicated that there are challenges encountered by branches when implementing planned targets outlined in the plan. The following were outlined as challenges:

Targets being disowned by branches

Some of the planned targets are disowned by branches and not aligned to the SMART principles of planning. In the strategic plan 2014/15, some targets were found in some units which did not belong to that particular unit and which the unit could not report on, which resulted in non-performance.

Targets reported on by branches

Some targets were not being reported on by branches and no branch took responsibility and accountability for the misplaced targets. Branches could not report on targets that were misplaced.

B15. Challenges facing the Department in implementing the strategic plan

Participants were asked whether the Department experiences challenges when implementing the plan and to outline those challenges.

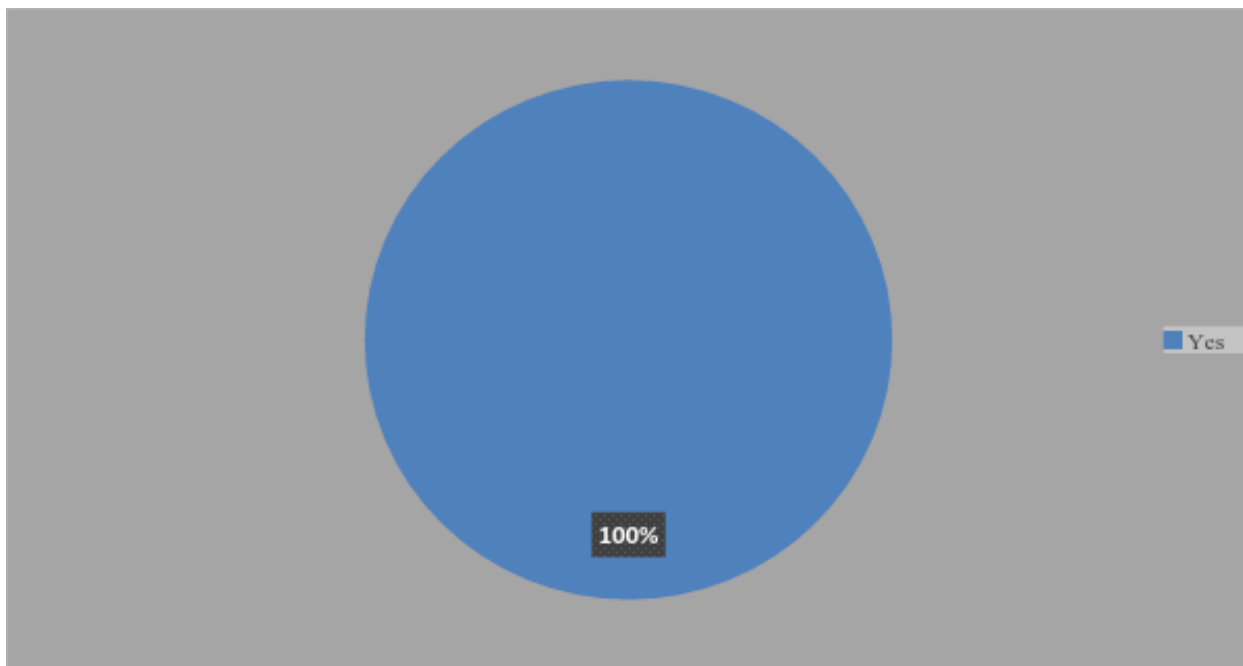


Figure 20: Determination of challenges in the implementation of planned targets by the Department

All respondents pointed out that the Department faces several challenges when implementing the plan, the following being mentioned: misalignment between planned targets and reported targets; inability to meet planned targets as well as non-carrying over of outstanding targets not achieved in the previous financial year; insufficient interrelation of planning between officials from budgeting, strategic planning and performance monitoring, and sector monitoring and evaluation. There seems to be lack of rigorous/intensive planning by the Department wherein officials regard strategic planning as the most important process in the Department. This process determines what the Department wants to achieve and how it should be achieved.

4.5 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FOR SENIOR MANAGERS

Biographical information of respondents is important in this research as it will assist in uncovering information that would help the researcher to understand the respondent's general background information. The biographical information in this section probed gender, race, age, branch, position and length of service of senior managers in the Department. Probing such information gives pictorial information of the respondents.

4.5.1 Gender

The purpose of looking into gender was to evaluate whether the staff complement in the Department is balanced in terms of gender. The research revealed that 40 percent of the participants were males and 60 percent were females, which reflect that there is representation of females at senior management level.

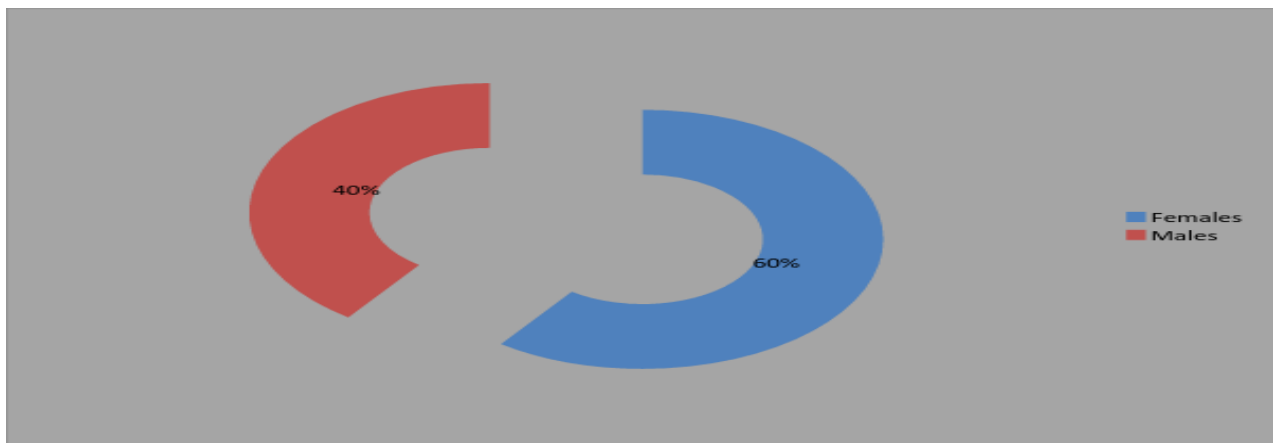


Figure 21: Participants' gender

This reflects that females are well represented in senior management in the Department of Human Settlements. This is in line with what the Employment Equity Act requires in the workplace environment. It is clear that the Department is compliant in gender equality within the working environment.

4.5.2 Race

There was 11 percent representation of whites among the participants and 89 percent of Africans, which reflects that whites in this level are a minority in the Department. The research also probed into the race to evaluate the racial balance of staff in the departmental senior management level. Blacks constitute the highest percentage in South Africa, therefore the racial figure mentioned above might not be skewed and it is not surprising that even in the Department whites are in the minority.

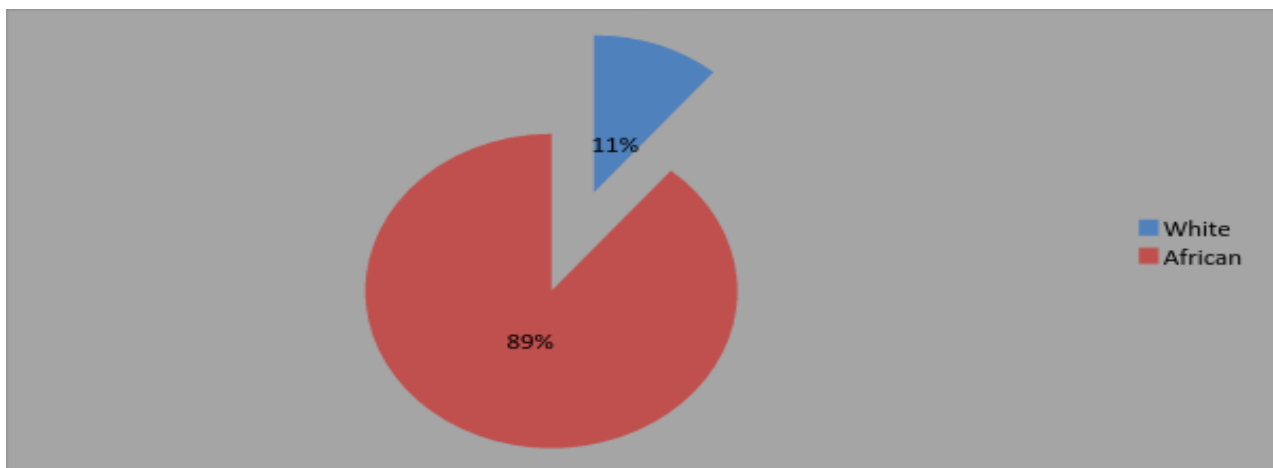


Figure 22: Participants' race

4.5.3 Age

The researcher also probed the age factor to evaluate the generational mix in the senior management level of the Department. The participants included different age groups, of which 10 percent were between ages 56 and 65; 50 percent were between ages 46 and 55; 30 percent were between ages 36 and 45 and 10 percent were between ages 26 and 35 years.

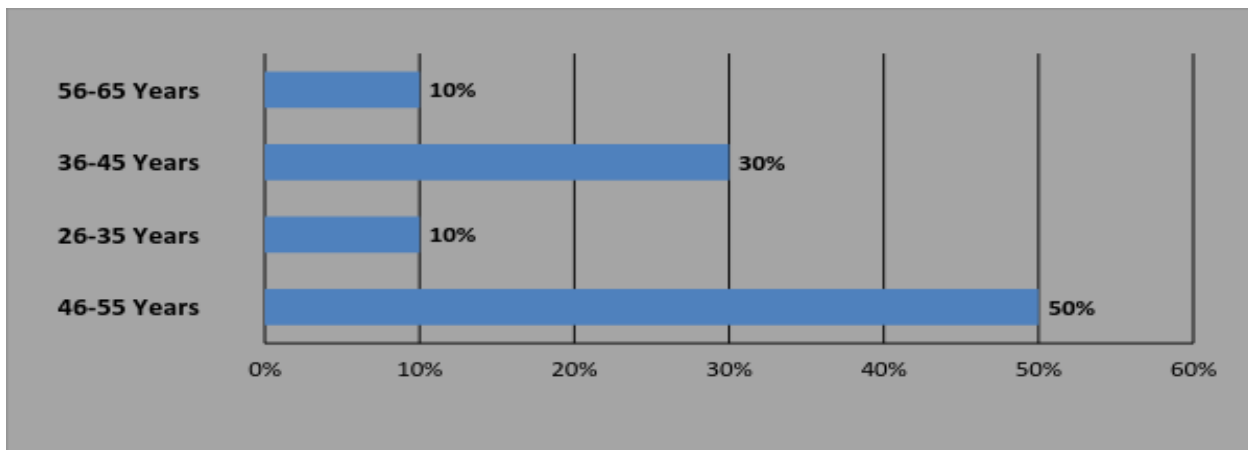


Figure 23: Participants' age

The result shows that there is a high percentage of the older generation officials in senior management in the Department. This might mean that the Department could be conducting planning and its implementation in the traditional manner and might be resistant to change with the evolving government planning processes.

4.5.4 Branch

The researcher wanted to probe the branches' understanding of planning and its implementation. Three officials from the PMU branch, three from the Chief of Operations branch; two from Finance (Chief Financial Officer) and two from Human Settlements Strategy and Planning were questioned.

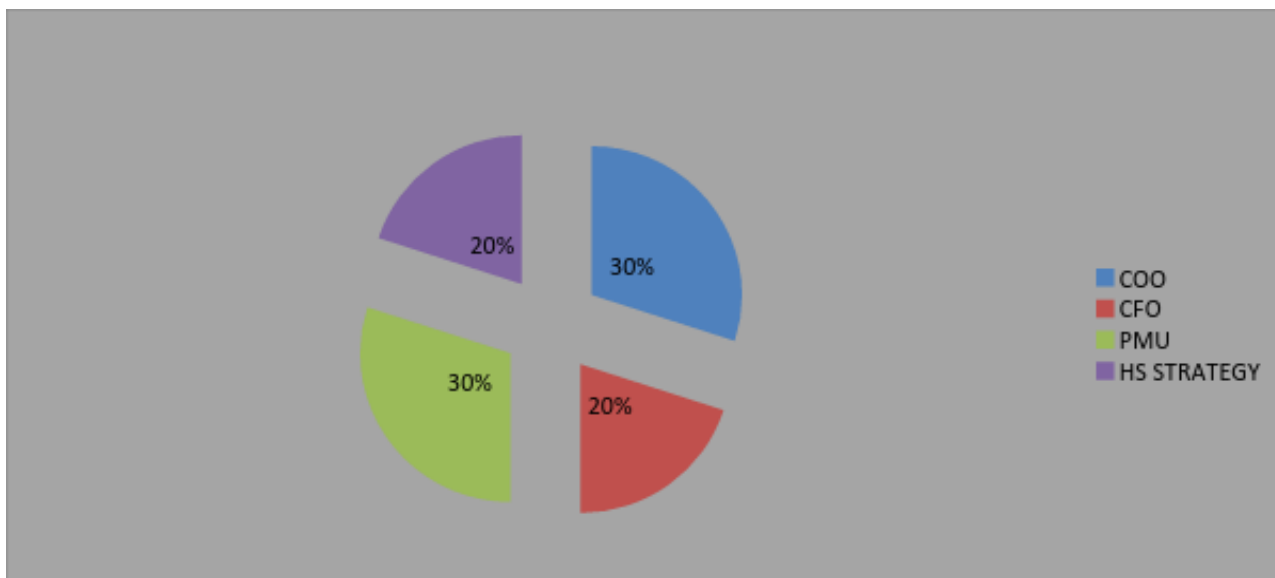


Figure 24: Participants' branch

The results show the percentages of officials who were interviewed in the following branches: COO (30 percent), PMU (30 percent), CFO (20 percent) and HS Strategy and planning (20 percent). This might reflect that there is a low rate in the understanding of strategic planning; reporting and budgeting processes and implementation by different branches mentioned above.

4.5.5 Positions

There was a representation of chief directors consisting of 40 percent and 60 percent of directors for the study. The researcher probed the position to establish the understanding of planning; reporting and budgeting processes by senior managers in the Department.

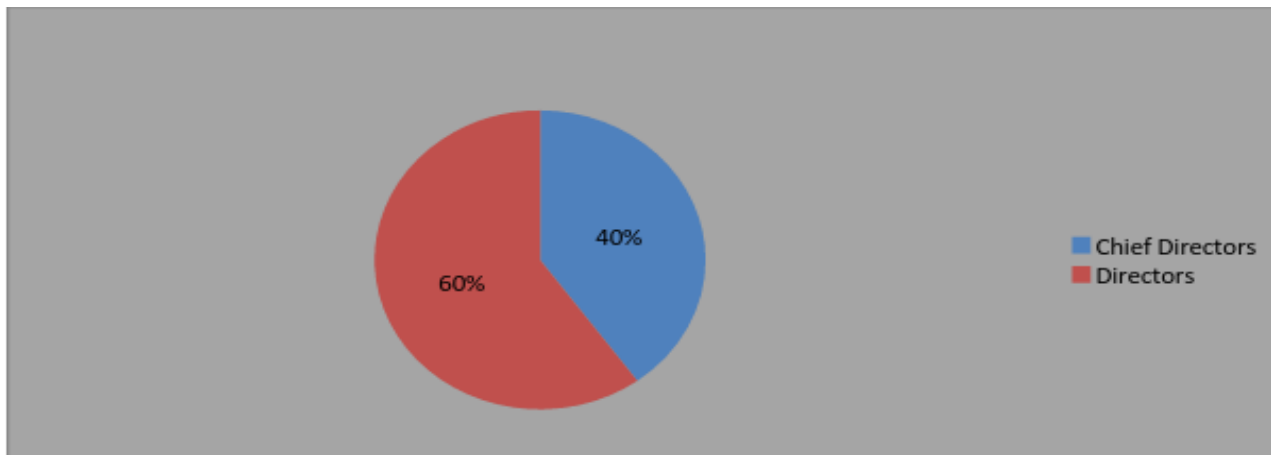


Figure 25: Participants' position

The result revealed that 40 percent of the chief directors and 60 percent of the directors have an understanding of planning, reporting and budgeting processes. This might reflect that directors have a better understanding of the processes as they work more closely with the implementers of the strategy.

4.5.6 Length of service

This section shows the length of service of officials in the Department. The length of service was probed to make an analysis on the experience of officials in the senior management team. The results show that there is a representation of 20 percent participants between 1 and 3 years; 10 percent between 4 and 7 years; 50 percent between 8 and 12 years and 20 percent between 13 and 17 years.

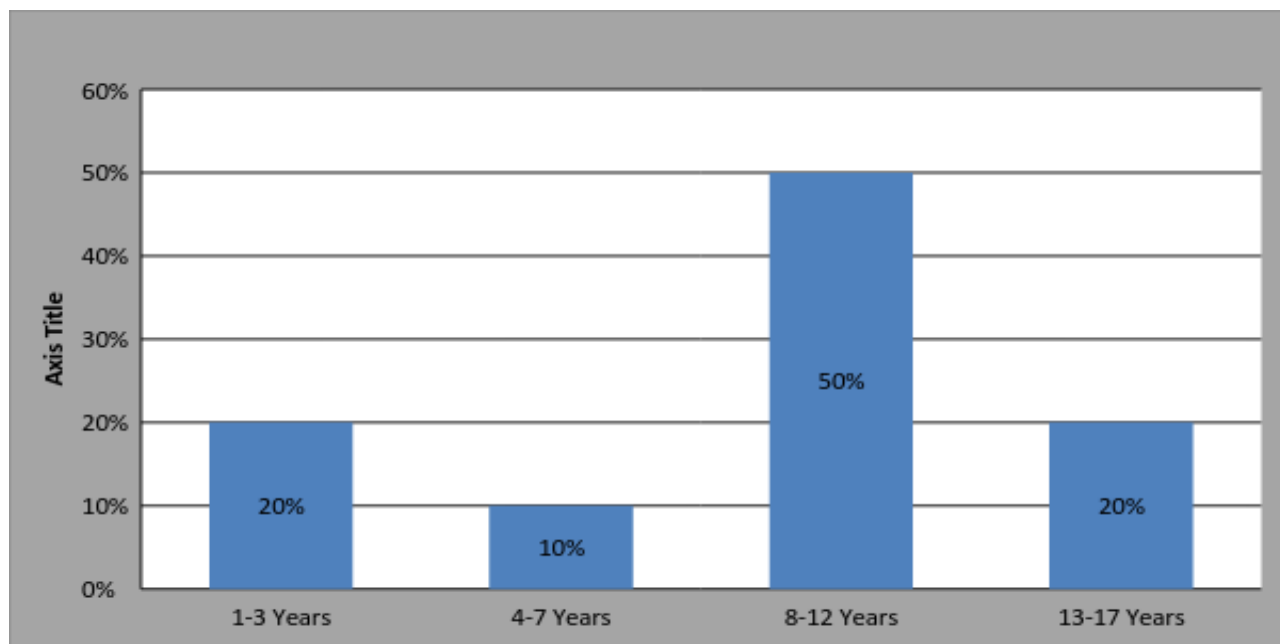


Figure 26: Participants' length of service

The figure might reflect that the majority of officials have enough experience in the Human Settlements sector. It also tallies with the finding that there is a high percentage of older generation officials in senior management in the Department. This may be bad for the Department as some officials can be resistant to change or it can be good as the longer serving officials can provide direction and share institutional memory with new officials.

4.6 RESPONSES BY SENIOR MANAGERS

This section will present the responses by the participants of the second group, which are senior managers in the Department. Four chief directors and six directors were sampled for the study. Two chief directors and three directors were interviewed and two chief directors and three directors responded to questionnaires.

The questions sought to establish the accountability and responsibility of senior managers in the Department in terms of ensuring the understanding of the MTSF; strategic plan; link between strategy and implementation; systems of facilitating proper implementation of the strategic plan; and challenges in strategic plan implementation by junior officials in the Department of Human Settlements.

4.6.1 Relationship between the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) and strategic plan

The questions sought to establish the extent to which senior management ensure there is a common understanding of the relationship between the MTSF and the strategic plan and the role of the MTSF in the planning process by branches or Department.

B1. Senior management ensuring the understanding of the relationship between the MTSF and strategic plan in branches

The participants were asked to outline how the Department ensures that branches have an understanding of the relationship between the MTSF and the strategic plan.

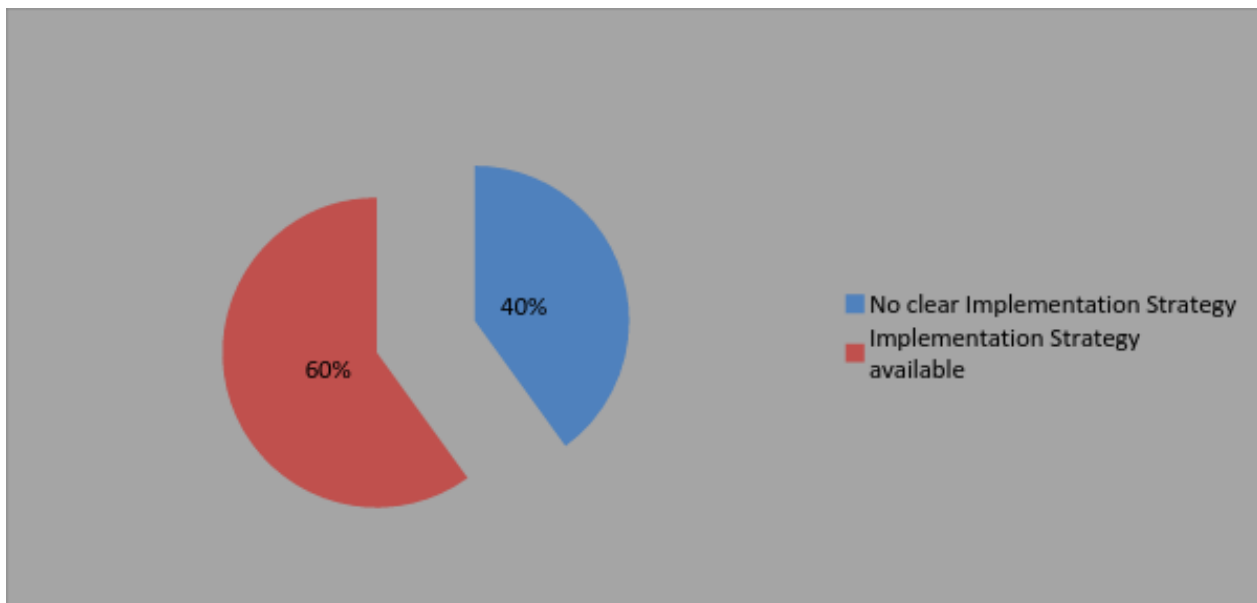


Figure 27: Understanding of the relationship between the MTSF and strategic plan

The results show that the participants representing 40 percent of the sample indicated that there is no clear implementation strategy to ensure that officials understand the relationship between the MTSF and the strategic plan and that no effort was made by the senior management team to ensure that officials are made to understand the relationship between the MTSF and strategic plan. The participants also indicated that the responsibility of ensuring that the relationship between the two (MTSF and strategic plan) is left to an individual senior manager to explain; there is no collective approach such as a process that one needs to follow in ensuring that the relationship is well understood by branch officials. If a senior manager does not ensure that his/her subordinates understand the relationship, there is no action taken against a particular senior manager.

However, 60 percent of the participants indicated that the understanding of the relationship between MTSF and the strategic plan is achieved through branch and departmental planning sessions wherein officials are reminded to ensure that the plans developed should be responsive to the MTSF. Furthermore, the senior management performance agreements are always verified by both Human Resources Management and the planning units to ensure that the documents (Performance Agreements) are aligned and relevant to departmental plans, i.e. MTSF, strategic plan, annual performance plan and operational plans.

B2. Action taken by senior management to ensure the understanding of the role of MTSF in the departmental planning process in branches

The participants were asked to indicate the level of intervention senior management has exercised to ensure the understanding of the role of MTSF in the departmental planning process by branches. Participants were asked to outline action taken by senior management to ensure the understanding of MTSF by branches.

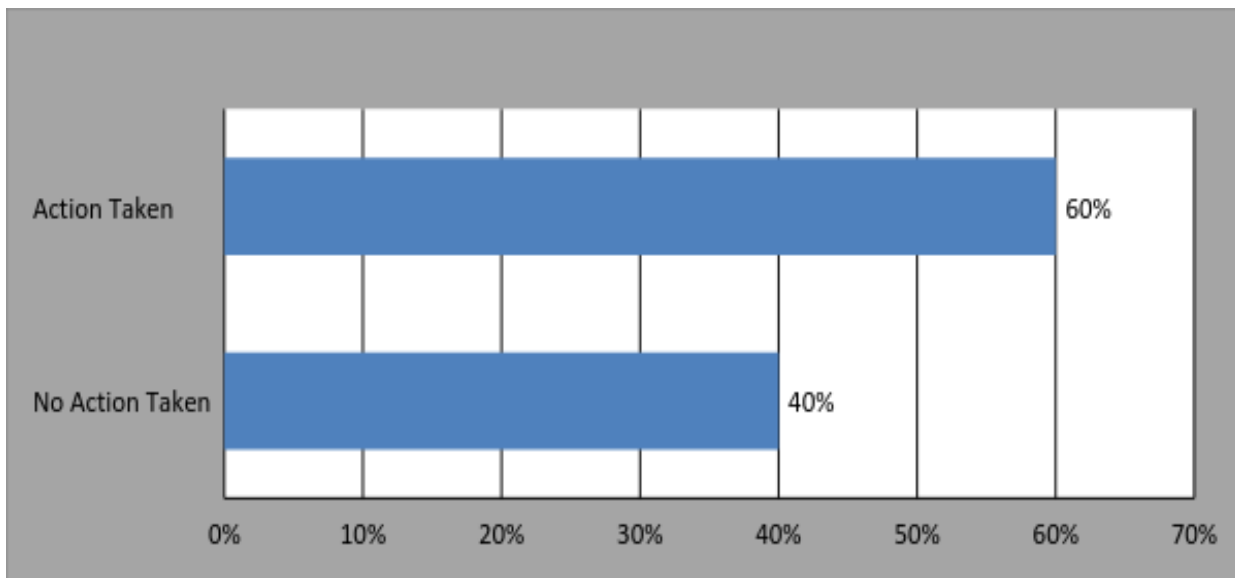


Figure 28: Understanding of the role of the MTSF in departmental planning process

The results show that 40 percent of the participants believe that no or minimal action is taken to ensure that branches understand the role of MTSF in the departmental planning process. The participants argue that if rigorous planning was done in the Department, branches would not struggle to develop plans that are aligned to the MTSF. Sixty percent of the participants are of the view that branches are always cautioned that the Department, as part of the sector and tasked with an oversight role in the implementation, should consult with stakeholders in the sector to ensure that their plans are aligned to the MTSF.

B3. Systems/processes senior management utilises to ensure the understanding of the link between the National Development Plan, Manifesto, Medium Term Strategic Framework, SONA, strategic plan and the Minister’s Budget Speech by branches

The participants were asked to outline the level of awareness of systems used by senior management to ensure understanding of the linkages between the planning documents as outlined above.

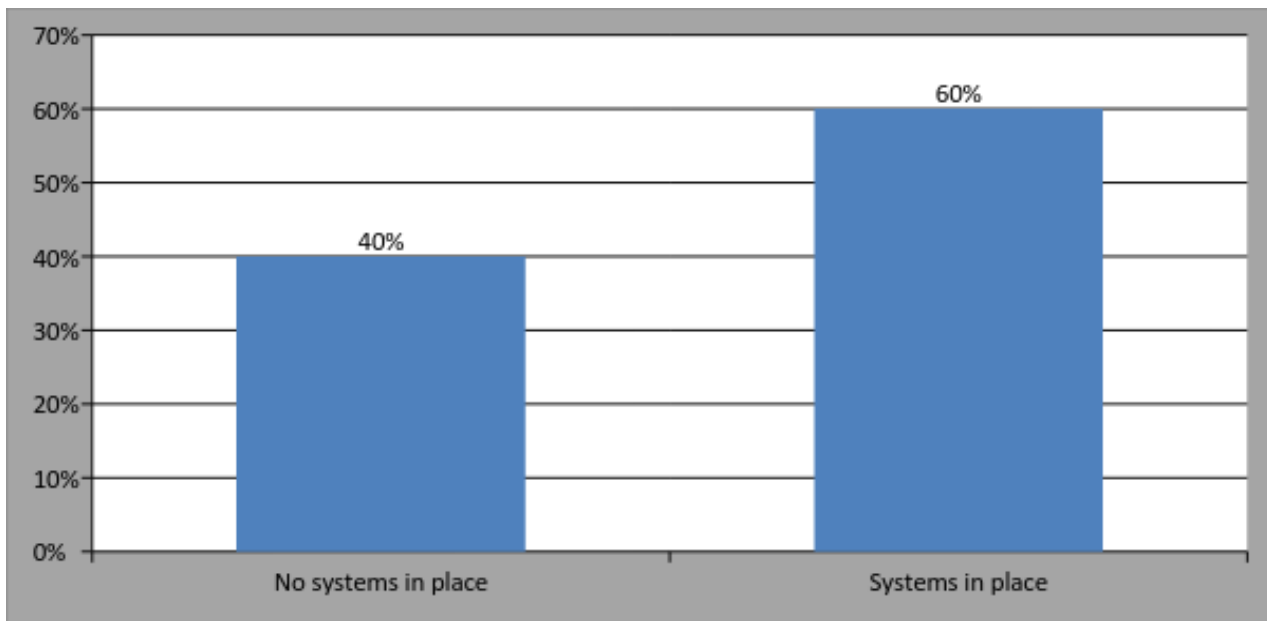


Figure 29: Systems ensuring the link between planning documents (NDP, Manifesto, MTSF, SONA, strategic plan and the Minister’s Budget Speech)

The results show that 40 percent of the sample indicated that there are no systems to ensure the understanding of these linkages. They outlined that the NDP forms the 20-30 year objectives of government; the Manifesto is derived from the priorities of the ruling party over a five-year period and is informed by the NDP. The participants pointed out that the MTSF is a collective statement of the short term (5 years) NDP goals, including the numerical targets in the manifesto. All the above-mentioned strategic documents must find expression in the five-year departmental strategic plan. The SONA and ministerial Budget Speech give an account of progress in the previous year and set priorities for the following financial year, and must also find expression in the departmental annual performance plan.

The other 60 percent of the participants indicated that it is part of the planning process that the cascading plan from the NDP to operational plans are aligned and should draw from the higher plan. The ruling party manifesto is the base of all documents, followed by more concrete targets captured in the NDP. Departmental management is always reminded that the MTSF is a sector plan and the Department plays a leading role (oversight role) in ensuring that the MTSF targets are achieved by all role players. The strategic plan is a five-year departmental plan and it helps to ensure that the sector targets (MTSF targets) are realised. The annual performance plan is used to annualise the departmental contribution towards the attainment of sector wide targets. It is common knowledge that the Budget Speech is a confirmation by the Minister regarding the budget of the Department and sector in attainment of the annualised targets (especially major projects). All things mentioned above are discussed and explained in branch and departmental planning sessions.

4.6.2 Disconnect between strategy and implementation

The question sought to establish the extent to which senior management enforce systems of strategy implementation, how they ensure that there is a connection between strategy and its implementation, and enforce control measures to ensure that planned targets are implemented as outlined in the strategic plan.

B4. The system the Department follows in ensuring the connection between the strategic plan and its implementation

The participants were asked to outline the system the Department follows in ensuring a connection between strategy and its implementation.

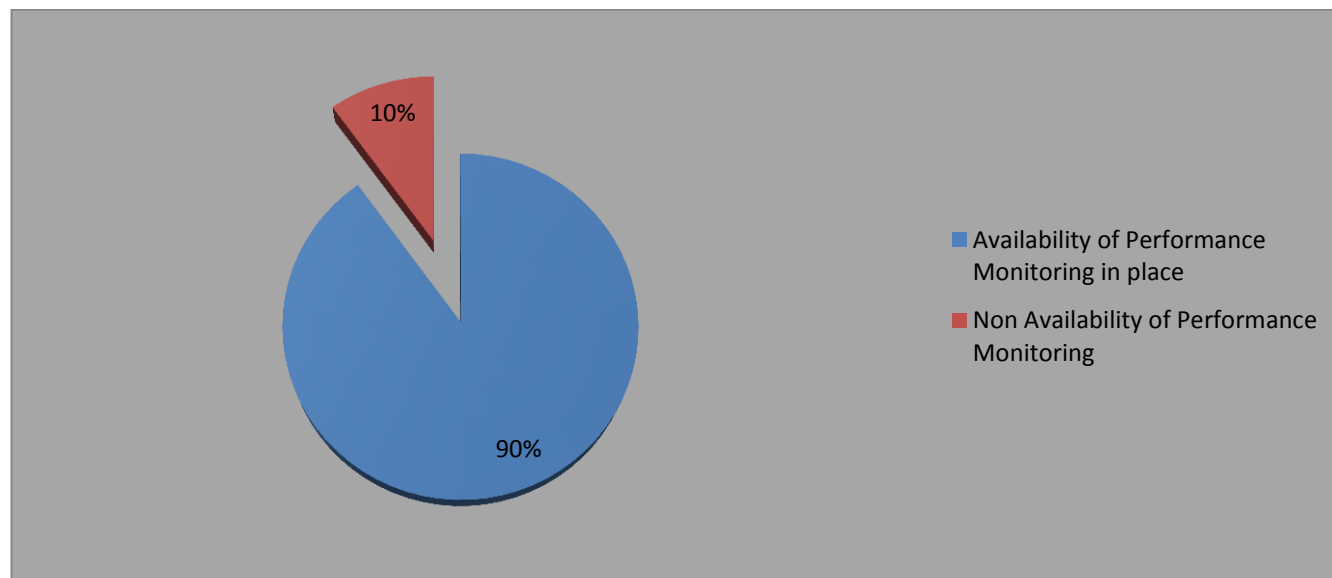


Figure 30: Availability or unavailability of systems to ensure connection between strategic planning and its implementation

The results show that participants representing 90 percent indicated that the Department has a dedicated unit that monitors the implementation of the approved strategic and annual performance plans. The Department uses the performance monitoring system to ensure that there is a connection between the strategic plan and its implementation. The participants also indicated that the Department has a Performance Monitoring Framework that is used as a tool to monitor departmental performance; however, the system is ineffective and inefficient. It was outlined that the current system is based on quarterly performance reporting, which is inadequate as the focus should be entirely on performance planning, risk mitigation, internal control and performance reporting. Therefore, without prioritising planning, mitigation and control, performance reporting becomes a formality for compliance purposes.

The participants also outlined that the Department and the sector as a whole seem to be doing well on paper; however, the synergy between what is planned and what is implemented is always lost in translation. South Africa is known to have one of the best legislative frameworks in the world; however, implementation seems to be encountering a plethora of challenges. The Department conducts quarterly

performance reviews to ensure that the gap between what is captured in the plans does not fall far behind what is implemented and vice versa. It was indicated that it is still a challenge to ensure that what is delivered is proportionally aligned to what is planned. Ten percent of the participants indicated that they do not have any knowledge of a system to ensure the connection between the strategic plan and its implementation.

B5. The way the Department ensures the connection between strategy and its implementation

The participants were asked to outline whether there are systems in place and how senior management in the Department ensures that there is a connection between strategy and its implementation.

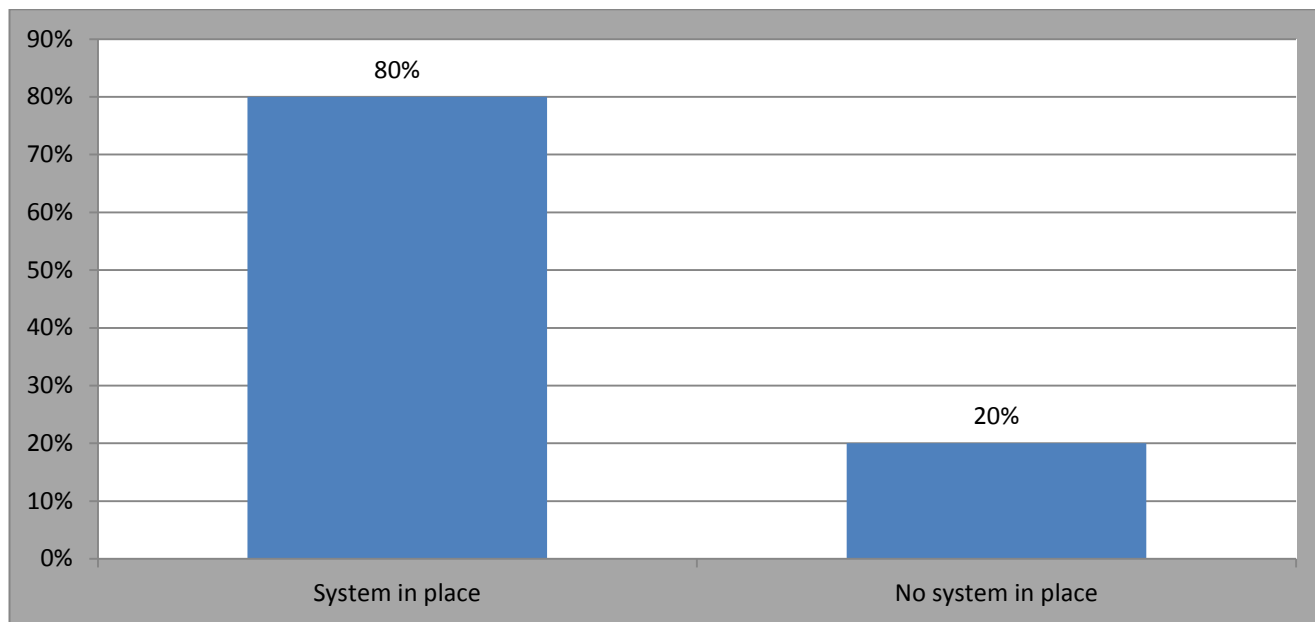


Figure 31: How the Department ensures the connection between strategy and its implementation

The results show that the participants representing 80 percent of the sample indicated that the Department ensures that there is a connection between strategy and its implementation by conducting internal and sector-wide quarterly performance reviews with all the stakeholders. The Department also holds individual sessions with role players who are experiencing challenges during the implementation phase, e.g. one of the senior officials was seconded to deal with challenges in areas such as Lwadle and Limpopo.

However, 20 percent of the participants outlined that the Department does not have a system of ensuring the connection between the strategy and its implementation. The participants believe that there should be a direct link between the long, medium and short term plans with the performance agreements of the officials.

B6. Control measures that senior management put in place to ensure that planned targets are outlined in the strategic plan are implemented as planned

The participants were asked to indicate the control measures in place to ensure that planned targets in the strategic plan are implemented as planned.

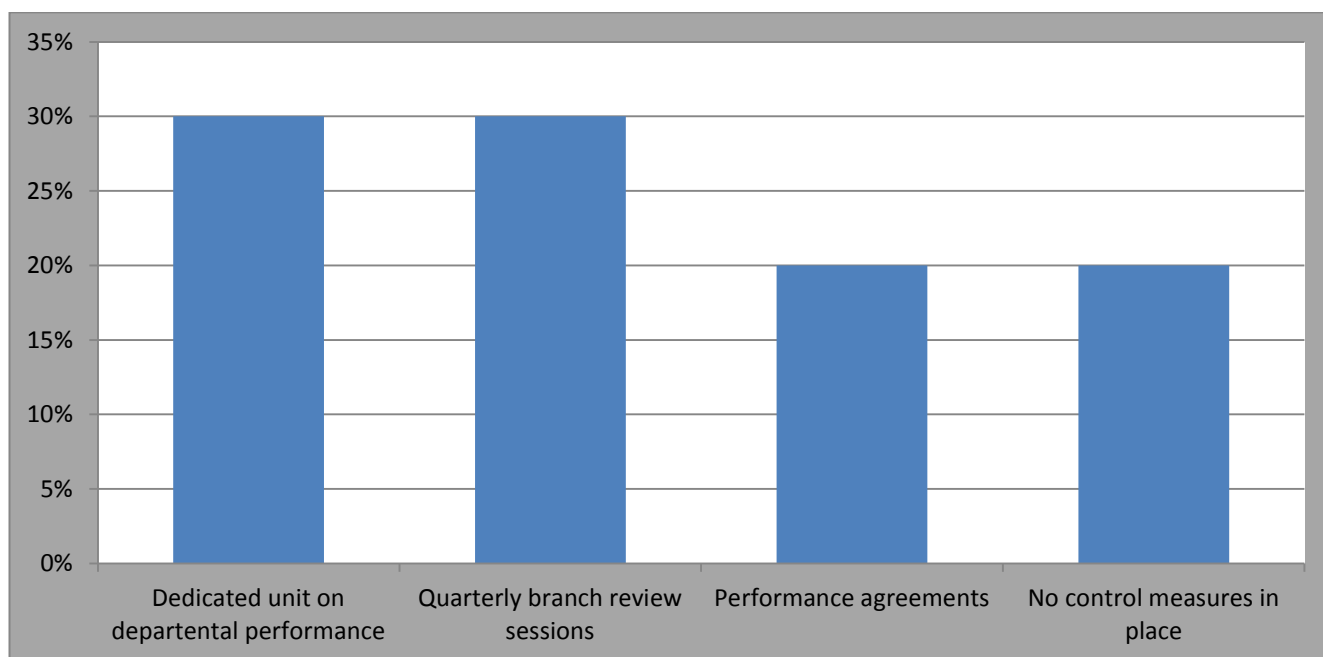


Figure 32: Control measures ensuring planned targets are implemented as planned

The results show that 30 percent of participants indicated that the Department has a dedicated unit that deals with control measures, particularly on departmental performance, 30 percent of participants indicated that management of performance is done through a performance monitoring system wherein branch sessions are held quarterly to ensure that branches are implementing the plans in line with the strategic plan.

Twenty percent of the participants outlined that performance agreements (especially for senior managers) are used to ensure that officials are concerned about the performance of the Department as that directly affects their performance and bonuses and 20 percent of the participants indicated that there are no control measures and outcomes sometimes have no linkages to the initial plans.

The performance monitoring unit analyses the reports and develops a report on behalf of the Director General for submission to the National Treasury as well as the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation. The unit also develops letters to programme managers (DDGs) indicating areas that need to be improved or rectified. Furthermore, internal and external auditors raised these matters as concerns annually.

4.6.3 Systems to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan

The questions wanted to establish the National Department of Human Settlements' planning process; how senior management enforces systems to facilitating proper implementation of the strategic plan and the Department's performance monitoring system's alignment with MPAT.

B7. The planning system/process the National Department of Human Settlements follows when formulating the strategic plan

The participants were requested to indicate the planning system the National Department of Human Settlements follows when formulating the strategic plan.

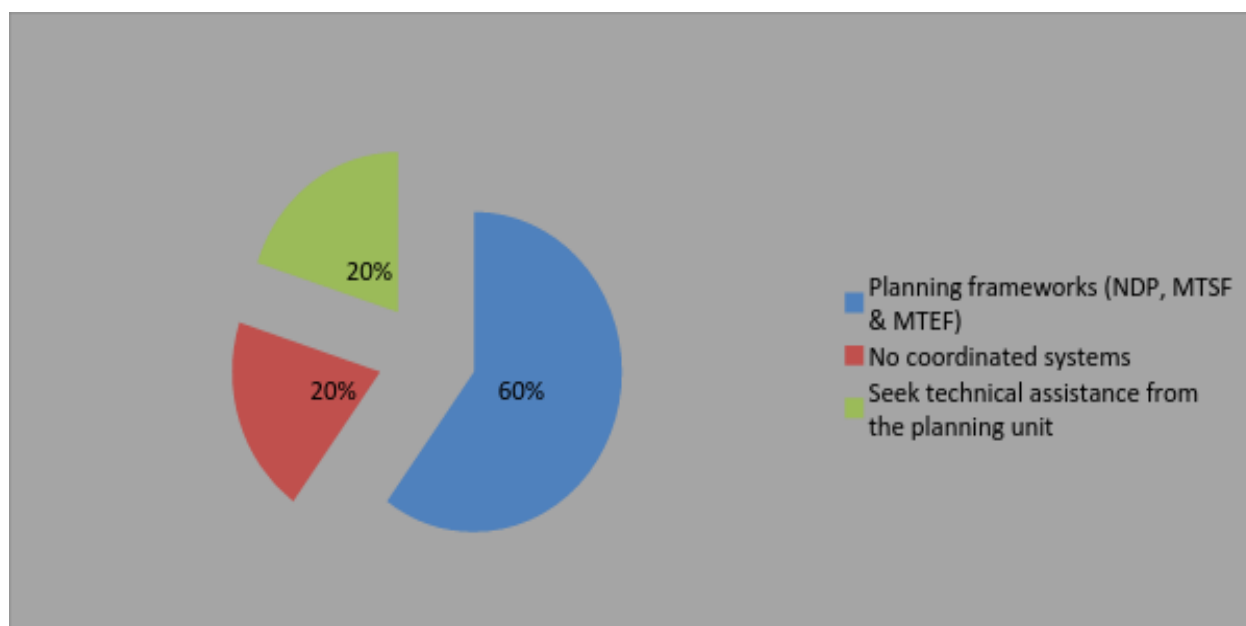


Figure 33: Systems used by the Department when formulating the strategic plan

The results show 60 percent of participants outlined that the Department uses the National Treasury Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans, as regulated. The planning unit develops the planning template to be populated by various branches and which is then sent back to the planning unit for consolidation and analysis. The participants indicated that a consultative system is used to ensure that there is buy-in from all contributors in the sector and to ensure that all role players in the sector understand their contribution towards the bigger goal as envisaged in the NDP via the MTSF; strategic plan; APP and operational plans. Both internal and external role players are consulted in the development of the MTSF, strategic plan and annual performance plan.

Twenty percent of participants pointed out that there are no coordinated systems used in formulating the strategic plan and resolving challenges, hence the audit findings are always about targets that are not SMART.

Twenty percent of participants also indicated that each unit (Chief Directorate) is given an instruction to make an input on the plan and seek technical assistance from the planning unit.

B8. System of facilitating proper implementation of strategic plan in the Department

The participants were requested to outline systems used by the Department in facilitating proper implementation of the strategic plan.

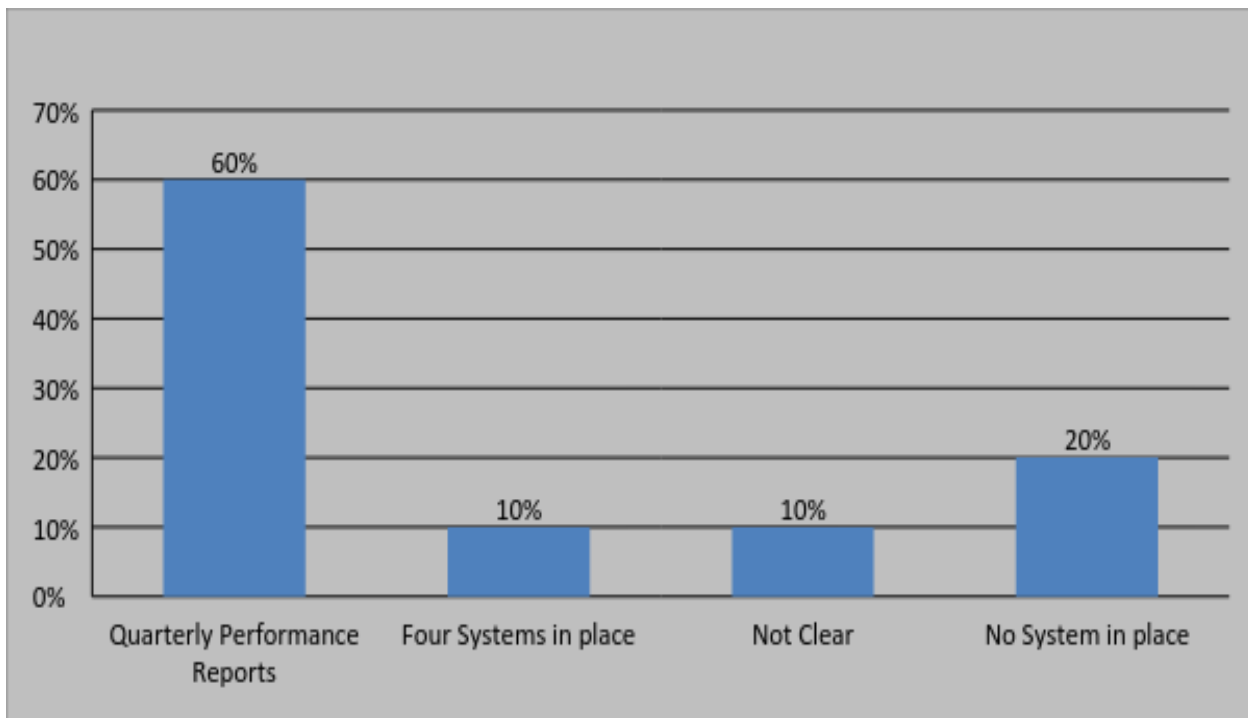


Figure 34: System to facilitate proper implementation of strategic plan

The results show that 60 percent of the participants of the sample indicated that the Department uses the quarterly performance reports to verify whether strategic plan targets are properly implemented and aligned to the plan. Ten percent of the participants outlined that the Department uses at least four systems to ensure proper facilitation of strategic plan implementation, i.e. departmental performance review sessions; quarterly performance feedback sessions (DG talking to all staff members); sector-wide quarterly performance review sessions and individual mid-term performance assessments. Ten percent of the participants are not clear about the system that the Department has in place to facilitate proper implementation of the strategic plan, and 20 percent of the participants pointed out that they regard quarterly performance reporting adequate in facilitating proper implementation of the strategic plan.

B9. The Department’s way of ensuring alignment of departmental systems with Monitoring Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) used by the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation to evaluate government department’s performance in implementing the strategic plan

The participants were asked to indicate how the Department ensures alignment of its monitoring system in implementing the strategic plan with MPAT.

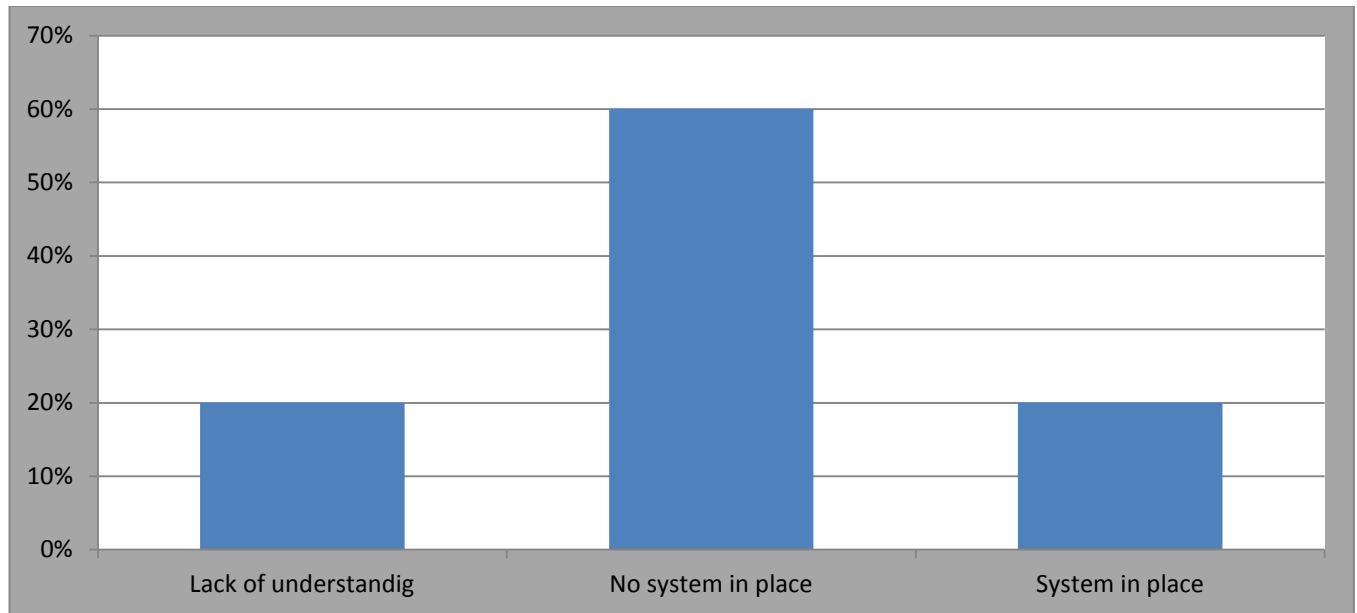


Figure 35: Alignment of departmental system with MPAT in implementing the strategic plan

The results show 20 percent of participants indicated that there seems to be a lack of understanding of the purpose of MPAT as it is viewed as a separate compliance exercise by departmental officials; 60 percent of participants believe that there is nothing in place to ensure alignment of the departmental system to implement the strategic plan and MPAT and 20 percent of participants outlined that the Department is doing badly in terms of MPAT assessment; however, the Department is now taking into consideration MPAT requirements during the planning process.

4.6.4 Challenges in strategic plan implementation

The questions wanted to establish the challenges that the Department encounters when implementing the strategic plan and how senior management ensures the reduction of the challenges.

B10. Challenges that branches encounter when implementing the planned targets

Participants were asked to outline their opinion on challenges encountered by branches when implementing the planned targets. The participants highlighted that some of the targets are not implementable (not SMART); there is no basis of what informed the targets; there are gaps between plans and implementation and no clear understanding of the direction to take to achieve the targets and

objectives; neither is there a clear indication of roles and responsibilities; there is insufficient understanding of the mandate, vision and mission of the Department, as well as insufficient commitment, laziness and no vision by staff, which in turn affects implementation of the strategic plan. Insufficient cooperation by relevant stakeholders and failure to adhere to performance reporting requirements were all challenges encountered by branches when implementing planned targets

B11. Challenges experienced by the Department on systems used to develop and implement the strategic plan

The participants were asked to indicate challenges experienced by the Department in developing and implementing the strategic plan.



Figure 36: Challenges experienced by the Department in developing and implementing the strategic plan

The results show that 20 percent of the participants indicated that there is a lack of understanding of planning; poor planning and integration by units; misalignment of funds; duplication of work between units and poor monitoring and oversight, 20 percent of the participants outlined that one of the greatest challenges in the Department is non-compliance by branches of the requirements of the systems used to develop and monitor the strategic plan; 10 percent of the participants indicated that there are no challenges in systems used in developing and implementing the strategic plan; 10 percent of participants indicated that organisational structure is also a challenge as the Department has not finalised the structure that should be aligned to the current MTSF (2015/2020); 30 percent indicated that targets are developed

for units and officials in those units are expected to give input on the plan; and 10 percent of the participants outlined that a major challenge encountered is lack of ownership and non-embracing of the MTSF by some officials.

B12. Challenges facing the Department during the strategic plan implementation and the way these challenges may be reduced

The participants were asked to indicate the challenges facing the Department during strategic plan implementation and ways of reducing these challenges. The results show that 100 percent of the participants cited that lack of alignment of plans and priorities; absence of clear guidelines on roles and responsibilities and lack of willingness to take accountability for targets and objectives in terms of areas of responsibility by some officials; the absence of clear roles and responsibilities during the planning process; formulation of unfocused and inconcise plans; lack of technical capacity by staff in the Department (this can be reduced by shifting staff around after a proper skills audit has been performed in order to place staff in their area of strength); leadership not holding officials accountable for non-performance; non-compliance and non-achievement of targets; lack of firmness/assertiveness by leadership in enforcing rules, regulations and laws.

4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided the data analysis of the study. Data was collected from the National Department of Human Settlements with the targeted population being the officials in different branches in the Department. Data was analysed and interpreted. The findings show that implementation of the strategic plan in the Department is still a challenge as there is still a disconnect between the strategic plan and its implementation. This means that the Department needs to develop procedures on the development of the strategic plan and guidelines on its implementation. The next chapter provides the summary of findings, recommendations and conclusion. The conclusion and recommendation will be informed by the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 discussed the presentation and analysis of data obtained through various methods including interviews, semi-structured questionnaires and departmental documents. This chapter provides findings from the research and concludes by outlining recommendations on the management of strategic planning in the National Department of Human Settlements.

The respondents were divided into two groups, middle managers and senior managers. Middle managers were interviewed administering 15 questions and senior managers were asked to fill in a questionnaire, consisting of 12 questions, due to their busy schedule. Below are the findings based on the themes and responses to the questions.

5.2 MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings regarding the implementation of strategic plan in the department were divided into middle management and senior management's understanding of the strategic planning implementation process. The findings are summarised below:

5.2.1 Relationship between the MTSF and strategic plan

The following are the findings made by the researcher about the middle managers responsible for the analysis of branch reports:

- Branches in the Department do not understand the link between the Medium Term Strategic Framework and the strategic plan.
- That there is no correlation between the strategic plan and the MTSF targets.
- That there is lack of understanding of the purpose of aligning the MTSF and strategic plan and its role in the strategic planning process.
- There was no alignment between the departmental strategic plan and the 2009-2014 MTSF.

The researcher also found that senior managers believe that there is a strategy to ensure that branches understand the relationship between the MTSF and the strategic plan as well as the MTSF's role in the planning process. Senior managers also believe that there are systems/processes in the Department to ensure branches understand the link between the NDP, Manifesto, MTSF, SONA, strategic plan and the Minister's Budget Speech.

5.2.2 Disconnect between strategy and implementation

Middle management respondents outlined that targets are not implemented as planned because branches deviate from what was planned. The research reveals there is lack of connection between the strategic plan and its implementation; the Department does not consider the outcomes of the implementation of the plan when formulating the coming year's plan, resulting in outstanding targets not being incorporated into the new Annual Performance Plan.

5.2.3 Systems to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan

The researcher found that middle management believes that there are no systems to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan and that the performance monitoring system is not effective as no action is taken against branches who do not achieve their targets on a quarterly basis. The research shows that the Department does not have a systematic process and procedure to adhere to in the planning process. Only deputy directors and above are invited to the strategic planning processes of the Department.

Senior managers hold the view that the performance monitoring system is not utilised in formulating the strategic plan and in resolving challenges during the implementation of the strategic plan. It was clear that quarterly performance reports are utilised as a system of facilitating the implementation of the strategic plan. The researcher found that there is a system in place to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan, but the system is not well coordinated, especially during the formulation phase of the strategic planning process. The researcher also found that the system is effective and efficient in facilitating the implementation of the strategic plan.

It was also found that there are no documented standard operating procedures on the process that the Department follows when facilitating proper implementation of the strategic plan.

The researcher found that there are different opinions in terms of strategic planning systems/processes. Middle managers believe that the Department does not have a systematic approach/process that is followed in planning wherein all officials are involved and given an opportunity to participate in the process. According to senior managers, there is a lack of understanding of the MPAT process by officials and the Department is not doing well in terms of KPA 2: strategic management, which includes strategic planning, reporting, monitoring, and evaluation.

5.2.4 Challenges in strategic planning implementation

The researcher found that the following are the challenges facing the Department in the implementation of the strategic plan:

- a. Insufficient understanding of the Medium Term Strategic Framework and its role in the strategic planning process

The Department's planning process is not an intensive or rigorous process wherein the objectives, indicators and targets are discussed in detail by senior managers. There is also no interrelated planning between officials from budgeting, strategic planning, performance monitoring, sector planning and monitoring and evaluation. The lack of interaction between various units that are directly involved in planning may cause them not to understand the MTSF and its role in the planning process as there is no sharing of information among the units.

b. Ineffective monitoring of proper facilitation of the strategic plan implementation

The disconnect between the strategic plan and its implementation may be caused by ineffective monitoring of proper facilitation of the strategic plan implementation. The disconnect happens when the Department reports on targets that are not included in the strategic plan and actions are not taken to remedy the situation.

c. Malicious compliance in the development of the strategic plan and reporting

Malicious compliance also creates misalignment between planned targets and reported targets. Branches develop and submit plans that are not thoroughly assessed in order to comply with the deadlines; they are not able to carry over the outstanding targets that have not been achieved in the previous financial year and that may cause inability to meet the planned targets by the Department.

d. Organisational structure alignment with the Medium Term Strategic Framework

The Department's organisational structure needs to be such that it is able to implement the Medium Term Strategic Framework, as the principle is that structure must follow strategy. The Department should develop the organisational structure that is relevant to the strategy.

e. Low staff morale

The low morale of the staff can be caused by non-filing of strategic vacant positions. The Department has more officials acting in critical positions and it takes a long time (2-3yrs) for the positions to be filled, which poses a challenge as the official becomes more comfortable in the position and is not appointed when the position is eventually advertised. This may cause ineffective performance by the acting official as he/she may not be fully committed.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher makes the following recommendations based on the findings of the study:

a. The Department should conduct workshops on the Medium Term Strategic Framework and the strategic plan at the beginning of the planning process every financial year.

During the workshops, the relationship or the link between the Medium Term Strategic Framework and the strategic plan; the correlation between the targets in the MTSF and the strategic plan; the purpose of aligning the MTSF and strategic plan and its role in the strategic planning process should be clearly articulated to ensure that all officials understand.

b. The Department should ensure that there is a connection between the strategic plan and its implementation

The Department needs to develop standard operating procedures or guidelines on the process facilitating proper development and implementation of the strategic plan. It is vital for the Department to evaluate the outcomes of the previous strategic plan so as to include the targets that were not achieved when formulating the coming year's strategic plan.

c. The Department should ensure that there are systems to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan

The Department needs to establish a Planning and Reporting Committee to be chaired by the COO and consisting of all heads of branches, CD: financial management, CD: Internal Audit and CD: Planning. The purpose of the committee will be to verify quality assurance and approve the strategic plan, the annual performance plan as well as well as operational plans. The Department needs to put in place stringent measures to ensure that departmental branches report on what was planned and do not deviate from reporting on what is in the strategic plan or annual performance plan and take action against those who fail to implement what is outlined in the approved strategic and annual performance plan. Branch heads (managers) have to report on their respective Key Performance Areas to the Planning and Reporting Committee and branch reports should be approved by the committee before submission to the Director General for approval and submission to the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation as well as the National Treasury.

d. The Department should ensure that it comes up with the strategy to alleviate the challenges outlined above.

The Department needs to ensure that there are skilled branch champions responsible for planning and reporting within branches to deal with issues of monitoring and oversight and non-compliance to eliminate challenges pertaining to planning, reporting and compliance and to avoid malicious compliance. The Department should realign the organisational structure to align with the strategy (Medium Term Strategic Framework) every five years to ensure that the relevant structure implements the Human Settlements Strategy.

7. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study was conducted with the purpose of investigating the implementation of the strategic plan in the National Department of Human Settlements to establish the cause of the disconnect between the strategic plan and its implementation. The Department has been audited by the Auditor-General over the years and has consistently obtained an unqualified report. The researcher collected evidence with the aim of responding to the purpose outlined in Chapter 1.

The researcher, after consideration of the evidence gathered, drew a conclusion that there was no clear MTSF document for 2009-2014; however, the 2016-2017 departmental strategic plans were aligned to the 2014-2019 MTSF. There was definitely a disconnect between the strategic plan and its implementation in the Department, assumed to be caused by the fact that the Department seems to have a system of facilitating the implementation of the strategic plan through performance monitoring by analysing quarterly reports. However, there is no action taken against branches that have not achieved their targets, which means that reporting is done for compliance and not to improve the performance. Therefore, the system monitoring performance in the Department is insufficient and ineffective in creating proper implementation of the strategic plan. It is vital for the National Department of Human Settlements to ensure that systems to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan are developed and implemented, and also a strategy to alleviate the challenges in strategic plan implementation.

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human settlements

Department
Human Settlements
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

TEL: 012- 444 5046	FILE NR:8/7/9-MPA
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TO:	DIRECTOR GENERAL – MR T ZULU
FROM:	DEPUTY DIRECTOR STRATEGIC ANALYSIS – MS B.A MKHABELA
SUBJECT:	REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS FOR MASTERS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN THE SUBJECT-STRATEGIC PLANNING.

1. PURPOSE

To obtain permission from the Director General to conduct a research Study in the Department of Human Settlements for Masters Degree.

2. BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

I am a Deputy Director attached to the Chief Directorate: Human Settlements Strategy. I am currently studying towards Masters in Public Administration in the subject-Strategic Planning with the University of Limpopo (Turfloup Graduate School of Leadership).

As part of the requirement to obtain the MPA qualification, the university requires that students should conduct research and develop a research report. Attached is the Masters Research Proposal as well as the approval of the proposal by the university.

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS FOR MASTERS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN THE SUBJECT-STRATEGIC PLANNING.

The topic of my study is **“Implementation of Strategic Plan in the National Department of Human Settlements”**. The phrasing of the topic may change as the research work progresses based on the information received, however the objective of the study will remain unchanged.

The main objective is to analyse the findings and conduct a research on the root cause of the problems and come up with measures that can assist department to improve on challenges encountered whilst implementing strategic plan. The research will be conducted by means of questionnaires from the officials in the national office only and the data will be analysed to determine the findings.

The research is for academic purposes and all the information obtained will be for academic purposes, and the entire confidentiality requirement will be observed. Should the Director General grant me approval to conduct my research in the department, I undertake to provide him with a research report with all findings and recommendation.

I am willing to meet with the Director General to explain further what the research will entail, should the Director General so require.

3. RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore recommended that the Director General approves that Ms B.A. Mkhabela conduct a research study in the Department of Human Settlements for the postgraduate degree: Masters in Public Administration in the subject –Strategic Planning.

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS FOR MASTERS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN THE SUBJECT- STRATEGIC PLANNING.

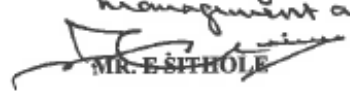

MS. BONDY MKHABELA

DEPUTY DIRECTOR: HUMAN SETTLEMENTS STRATEGY

CD: HUMAN SETTLEMENTS STRATEGY

DATE: 10/07/2014

~~Supported/Not Supported~~ however records of the department should be managed in terms of the Departmental policy on records management and the ~~Not~~ National Archives Act (NARS).


MR. E SIPHOLE

CD: CORPORATE SUPPORT

DATE: 2014.07.11.

~~Supported/Not Supported~~


MR. M XABA

CD: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SERVICES

DATE: 11/07/2014

~~Approved/ Not Approved~~


MR T ZULU

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

DATE: 2014/08/12

Comments _____

ANNEXURE B: LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

Participant's Name: _____

Researcher's Name: _____

1. **Title of the research:** Implementation of Strategic Plan in the National Department of Human Settlements.
2. **Purpose of the research:** The purpose of the study is to investigate the implementation of a strategic plan in the National Department of Human Settlements. This is done in order to establish the cause of the disconnection between the strategic planning and implementation of plans.
3. **Procedure:** The researcher will call the respondents to be part of the research and once there's an agreement, the researcher will email the questionnaire and a letter of consent and inform the participants about the turnaround time to respond to the questionnaires. To clear uncertainties before the respondents can respond to the questionnaire, the researcher will be available to respond to any questions telephonically.
4. **Language usage:** English will be the language used for the purpose of the research.
5. **Turn around time:** The data collection from the respondents will be done in week, a proper schedule will be compiled in order to collect and capture correct information and in case the respondents do not respond, the researcher will contact the respondents.
6. **Risks and discomforts:** There are no known or suspected risks associated with this research; however, the challenge that might hinder the research is the unavailability of the respondents. However, this has been eliminated by acquiring full contacts of the respondents, i.e. office numbers, cellular numbers and email addresses.
7. **Benefits:** There are no material benefits in this research; however, the results may be used by the National Department of Human Settlements to address the challenges facing the implementation of the strategic plan in the Department or maybe in government.

8. **Participant's right:** Any respondent has a right to withdraw from participating in the research at any time.
9. **Financial compensation:** There are no financial compensations to be provided to the respondents.
10. **Confidentiality:** The results of the research will be studied by the supervisor and members of the research team at the University of Limpopo; however, the final results will be released to the National Department of Human Settlements.

As a respondent, if I have questions; clarity or concerns, I can contact Ms Bondy Mkhabela (92163489) at 012 444 5046 or 082 923 0130 or Bondy.Mkhabela@dhs.gov.za during and after hours. I fully understand my rights as a research participants and I voluntarily consent to take part in this research. I also fully understand what the research is about, and why and how it is being conducted.

RESPONDENT'S SIGNATURE

RESEARCHER'S SIGNATURE

DATE:

DATE:

Possible questions for interviews of the research on the implementation of strategic plan in the National Department of Human Settlements

Notice: Questions will be emailed to the respondents by the researcher and the responses will be captured for analysis and recommendations. Interviews will be conducted with respondents where necessary.

- All respondents will be requested to complete the consent form before completing the questionnaires.
- Answer all questions with objectivity and honesty.
- Answer both section A and B of the questionnaires.
- Take note that the information will be kept confidential and anonymous.
- The questionnaires will be administered by the researcher, the supervisor and or/any member of the research committee at the University of Limpopo.

Researcher: Ms BA Mkhabela

Supervisor: Professor M. Sebola

Date:

Date:

ANNEXURE C1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR MIDDLE MANAGERS

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION			Mark with an 'X'
A.1	Gender	Female	
		Male	
A.2	Race	African	
		Coloured	
		Indian	
		White	
A.3	Age	18 to 25	
		26 to 35	
		36 to 45	
		46 to 55	
		56 to 65	
		66 above	
A.4	Branch	Corporate Services	
		HS Delivery Frameworks	
		HS Strategy and Planning	
		Programme Monitoring and Delivery Support	
		Office of the Chief Financial Officer	
		Office of the Chief of Operations	
A.5	Position	Deputy-Director General	

		Chief Director	
		Director	
		Deputy-Director	
		Assistant Director	
		Administrative/Security/Cleaner/Driver	
A.6	Length of service in the National Department of Human Settlements (+-)	1 to 3 years	
		4 to 7 years	
		8 to 12 years	
		13 to 17 Years	
		18 to 22 Years	

SECTION B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR OTHER OFFICIALS

Theme 1: Relationship between the MTSF and strategic plan

1. Do branches know the link between the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) and the strategic plan?

Yes	No
-----	----

Briefly explain.

2. Do branches know the purpose of aligning the MTSF and the strategic plan?

Yes	No
-----	----

Briefly explain.

3. Do branches understand the role of the MTSF in Departmental Strategic planning process?

Yes	No
-----	----

Briefly explain.

4. Do you think the previous strategic plan was aligned to the MTSF (2009-2014)? If no, what do you think was the impact?

Yes	No
-----	----

Briefly explain.

5. Do you understand the link between then National Development Plan, Manifesto, Medium Term Strategic Framework, State of the Nation Address, strategic plan and the Minister’s Budget Speech?

Yes	No
-----	----

Briefly explain.

6. What is the relationship between strategic plan and the MTSF?

Theme 2: Strategic plan process

7. Does the Department follow the strategic planning process/system during the formulation of the strategic plan?

Yes	No
-----	----

Briefly explain the process/system used in the Department.

8. Does the Department have a strategic planning system/process that comprise of senior management participation?

Yes	No
-----	----

Briefly explain.

9. What do you think will be the impact of having a strategic plan that is developed with or without the participation of senior management?

Theme 3: Strategic plan implementation

10. Are planned targets outlined in the strategic plan implemented as planned?

Yes	No
-----	----

Briefly explain.

11. Does the Department have systems in place to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan?

Yes	No
-----	----

Briefly explain.

12. Are the departmental systems to implement strategic plan aligned to the Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) used in the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation to evaluate all government departments' performance?

Yes	No
-----	----

Briefly explain.

13. Is there a connection between strategic plan and its implementation in the Department?

Yes	No
-----	----

Briefly explain.

14. What do you think are the causes of the disconnection between the strategy and implementation?

Theme 4: Challenges in strategic plan implementation

15. Are there challenges that branches encounter when implementing planned targets?

Yes	No
-----	----

Briefly explain.

16. Does the Department experience challenges in implementing the strategic plan?

Yes	No
-----	----

If yes, what are the challenges facing the Department in strategic plan implementation?

Thank you for your participation

ANNEXURE C2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SENIOR MANAGERS

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION			Mark with an 'X'
A.1	Gender	Female	
		Male	
A.2	Race	African	
		Coloured	
		Indian	
		White	
A.3	Age	18 to 25	
		26 to 35	
		36 to 45	
		46 to 55	
		56 to 65	
		66 above	
A.4	Branch	HS Strategy and Planning	
		HS Delivery Frameworks	
		Programme Monitoring and Delivery Support	
		Office of the Chief Financial Officer	
		Office of the Chief of Operations	
A.5	Position	Deputy-Director General	
		Chief Director	

		Director	
		Deputy-Director	
		Assistant Director	
		Administrative/Security/Cleaner/Driver	
A.6	Length of service in the National Department of Human Settlements (+-)	1 to 3 years	
		4 to 7 years	
		8 to 12 years	
		13 to 17 Years	
		18 to 22 Years	

SECTION B: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SENIOR MANAGERS

Theme 1: Relationship between the MTSF and strategic plan

17. How does senior management (SMS) ensure that branches understand the relationship of the MTSF and strategic plan?

18. What does senior management do to ensure that branches understand the role of the MTSF in Departmental strategic planning process?

19. What system/process does senior management use to ensure branches understand the link between the National Development Plan, Manifesto, Medium Term Strategic Framework, State of the Nation Address, strategic plan and the Minister's Budget Speech?

Theme 2: Strategic plan process/system

20. Which planning system/process does the National Department of Human Settlements follow during the formulation of the strategic plan?

21. Does the Department have a strategic planning system/process that comprises of senior management participation? If yes, which senior managers are involved and why?

22. How does senior management ensure that the Department involve staff during the formulation of the strategic plan?

Theme 3: Strategic plan implementation

23. What control measures do senior management put in place to ensure planned targets are outlined in the strategic plan implemented as planned?

24. What systems do the Department have in place to facilitate proper implementation of the strategic plan?

25. In your view what kind of challenges do branches encounter when implementing planned targets?

26. How does the Department (SMS) ensure that the departmental systems to implement the strategic plan are aligned to the Monitoring Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) used by the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation to evaluate government departments' performance?

27. Which process does the Department follow to ensure that there is a connection between strategic plan and its implementation in the Department?

Theme 3: Challenges in strategic plan implementation

28. In your view what kind of challenges do branches encounter when implementing the planned targets?

29. What challenges does the Department experience in terms of the systems used to develop and implement the strategic plan?

What are the challenges facing the Department during the strategic plan implementation and how could the challenges be reduced?

Thank you for your participation

ANNEXURE D: CERTIFICATE FROM LANGUAGE EDITOR

CERTIFICATE FROM LANGUAGE EDITOR

259 Muckleneuk Street
New Muckleneuk
Pretoria
0181
14 July 2017

I hereby declare that I have edited the language of the thesis for **BONDY ANGELIQUE MKHABELA (9216348)** entitled **“Implementation of strategic plan in the public service: a case in the National department of human Settlements”**.

I checked the Contents page, List of Figures and References against the contents of the document and all language.

I returned the thesis to the student showing the track changes and queries and comments, checked the changes and then returned it to her.



LYNNE SOUTHEY

082 2022 090