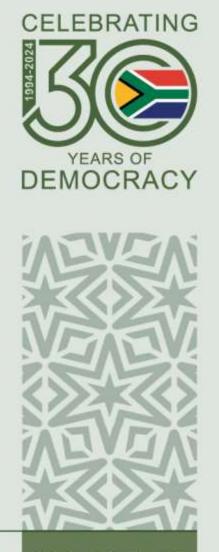Gauteng Provincial Legislature

SOM Implementation Assessment / 2024

Brown Bag Session: 08 May 2024

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- **Introduction & Contextual Background**

- **Project Determinants, Approach, Milestones, Tool**

- **Findings**

- **Recommendations**

- **Action Items**

Introduction

Focus of the presentation:

- This presentation outlines the findings from the project on the assessment of the implementation of the oversight model of the South African Legislative Sector by the Gauteng Provincial Legislature (GPL).

Main Deliverables:

- To have a research-based assessment by GPL, of GPL's own implementation of the SOM model, to be commissioned and completed during the 2023/24 Financial Year, culminating in a report with recommendations.

Introduction

What is the project about

- This study sought to examine how SOM model has been implemented by the institution in exercising its oversight mandate over the Executive, whether it has been yielding desired results in terms of tangible impact towards the citizens of the province.

- **This was NOT part of the LSS Project on the review of SOM. It was a GPL own process**

Background

Background to the project:

- Since 2012, GPL Committees have been following SOM to hold the Executives accountable.

- However, it was not clear the extent to which GPL has been implementing the model, whether it has been fully implemented, and what might be hindering the comprehensive implementation of the model, what can be done to unlock the bottlenecks, and whether the model needs to be reviewed or replaced.

- Therefore, this study sought to examine how SOM model has been implemented by the GPL in exercising its oversight mandate and whether it had been yielding desired results in terms of tangible impact towards the citizens of the province.

Background

Project Scope:

- This project was NOT a review of the SOM Model

- This project was NOT GPL's input to inform the review of the SOM Model

- This project was NOT part of the LSS SOM assessment (2024)

Main Concern:

- That the project timeline may have been too short

- That the project may not have yielded the desired results as the SOM belongs to the Sector and not the GPL

- That the respondents would not fully complete the data collection tool

Project Determinants

Project Expectations:

- Clear and timely communication

- A GPL project that has sector wide impact and implications

- A GPL project that enhances oversight in the GPL and throughout the Sector

Project Assumptions:

- Full cooperation from support units

- Relevant advice from project advisory team

- Completion by respondents of the data collection tool

- Accurate population and true representation of the data

- PESTL environment status quo and ceteris paribus

Project Determinants

Project Critical Success Factors:

- Sustained institutional appetite for the project

- Support and buy in from institutional leadership

- Approval obtained from relevant structures

- Full support provided from Project Team

- **Project Approach**: Research based study – GPL internal resources

- **Timelines**: Single year only (01 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)

Project Team

- **Project Manager**: Khaled Khota

- **Project Research lead**: Lucky Ramuhashi

- **Project Research Team**: Research Managers and thereafter the full research team

- **Project PGO advisory**: Lehlogonolo Mashifane + Avuyile

- **Project ICT support**: Surendra Chetty + Team

- **Project Comms Support**: Pelo Seabi + Comms Team

- **Project SteerCom**: PIC

- **Project Sponsor**: Mr. Peter Skosana – Secretary to the Legislature during the project implementation

Project Milestones

- Project planning, inception and conceptualization. Apr-Jun2023

- Finalization of the SharePoint Questionnaire. Apr-Jun 2023

- Development and Dry-Run of the Questions. Apr-Jun 2023

- "Go live" of the Questionnaire. July 2023

- Populating of responses. July, extended to August, Extended to Nov 2023

- Analyzing Responses. Sep 2023, pushed back to Nov 2023

- Drafting of preliminary Report. Nov 2023

- Drafting of Final Report. February 2024, completed in Nov 2023

- Project Hand-over. 31 March 2024.

- Phase end reporting and updates to Project Sponsor was done throughout

Tool of delivery

Research based Questionnaire

Sent out as SharePoint Link to:

- Members (MPL) - ALL

- ALL EDs and Secretary

- ALL Programme 4: Core Business

- ALL Unit: SPME

- ALL Office of the Chairperson of Committees

Data collection ran over three months and included the online link as well as face-to-face interviews

Methodology - Approach

- Qualitative approach (with quantitative aspects built in). The aim of quantitative approach embedded within the qualitative approach was to determine the number of participants who have comprehensive understanding of the model and whether they received training on the model and how the model is being implemented to hold the executive accountable.

- Within this approach, the study was exploratory in nature because it followed a concurrent nested design so as to collect both the qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously.

- The primary method used in the study was semi-structured questions to gather data about the implementation of the SOM model in the GPL, and whether the model needs to be reviewed or replaced.

Methodology - Sampling

- Secondary information was collected by a structured questionnaire which was completed at the same time when the qualitative data was collected. The perspectives of the participants on the extent to which GPL has been implementing SOM model since its introduction as illustrated in the qualitative findings was complemented by the quantitative findings.

- Non-random, purposive sampling – it is a type of sampling technique in which units / participants are selected because they have aspects or elements that the researcher needs in his or her sample, i.e., the researcher deliberately selects the units / participants that are knowledgeable about the subject matter or the phenomenon under study.

Methodology - Sampling

- The population encompasses GPL staff and MPLs. The initial targeted sample size was 43 admin staff within Programme 4 (Core Business) and 17 MPLs.

- However, after the online questionnaires were issued out, there were only 32 admin staff and 2 MPLs who responded.

- Therefore, the sampling was changed to counter the challenge of non-responses, by involving the entire Programme 4 as it is the main implementer of the SOM model.

- The questionnaires were also sent to all 73 MPLs and 217 staff

- 44 admin staff and 4 MPLs completed the questionnaires.

Responses

- The initial plan was to employ a mixed methods approach. The quantitative component of the study aimed for a sample size of 60 admin staff giving a 90% Confidence Interval (CI) and an error rate of 10%.

- However, only 44 admin staff responded to the questionnaire despite several extensions to the deadline that were given to prospective interviewees.

- Thus, the sample size of 44 admin staff resulted in a CI of 90% and a 12% error rate based on a population of 427 GPL employees. For MPLs, based on a population of 73 MPLs, a sample size of 36 was required for a CI of 90% and 10% margin of error.

- However, with only four (4) MPLs responding, CI of 90% and an error rate of 46%. Thus, from a quantitative component perspective, the study results should be read and understood with this sampling challenge in mind.

Trustworthiness and data triangulation

- Data was saturated. This ensured Trustworthiness of findings.

- Another technique to ensure trustworthiness is triangulation. For instance, by involving the admin staff and MPLs, the aim was to address trustworthiness of the data. The same questionnaires were completed by both admin staff and MPLs and thus, data was saturated.

- This means that the findings from MPLs and admin staff were compared and contrasted or corroborated, and the excerpts were also highlighted to support the analysis of data.

Limitation with respect to the sample

Note on the sample:

- When using purposive sampling, the sample needs not be reflective, or representative of the population being observed. Despite this, the sample represented the cluster configuration of Committees and focus on those administrative structures that are directly involved with implementing and institutionalizing the SOM Model in the GPL.

Data collection tool

- The project collected data using semi-structured interviews for the following reasons:

- Quantitative structured questions were also incorporated within the semi-structured questions to gather data about the number of participants who are knowledgeable about the model and whether they were trained on the model or not.

- The online completion of semi-structured questions took approximately 1 hour long and guided by means of a predetermined data collection tool (set of questions).

Data collection

- For Members, the first priority was to secure interviews (face-to-face or virtual), with a duration of not more than 1 hour. There was also an option for Members to receive the questions via e-mail, respond and return them, in which case there would be a return time of 5 working days.

- For Staff, all the data were collected by sending the questions via e-mail only (with a return time of 5 working days)

- The e-mail questions were developed as a SharePoint survey and sent out using SharePoint.

- The data were collected by the GPL research team senior researchers, 2 additional researchers per cluster as well as the GPL research interns. This was also supplemented by members of the project team itself.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

Findings: Institutionalization of SOM

- The SOM model allows legislatures to monitor the performance of provincial departments by utilizing a set of imperatives.

- SOM is perceived as a good model to hold the Executives accountable.

- Not seen as a one-size fit all - as there are some prescripts of the model that are not automatically customized to particular Committees.

- E.g., Standing Committees that are not aligned with provincial service delivery departments, thus are not processing departmental quarterly, annual, and budget reports.

Findings: Institutionalization of SOM

- The GPL Standing Rules extensively make provision for conducting legislative business in line with SOM.

- This is done by giving members the right to question government officials, and the reporting of oversight findings to the public, through the tabling of the oversight reports in the House.

- Speaker is seen as the political champion of SOM

- Secretary is seen as the administrative champion of the model

- In some instances, participants do not know who the political and administration champions of the SOM model are – Participants mentioned other Members of the Provincial Legislature (MPLs) and senior officials as well as committee support staff as the champions of the model.

Findings: Institutionalization of SOM

- Practically however, the political champion of SOM model is the CoC

- SOM oversight and oversight on the Model is given effect through the Office of the CoC

- Programme 4 was seen as the Programme most involved in implementing the SOM

- There is insufficient induction on the political and administrative organograms of the GPL as well as the delegated mandate championing of the respective Presiding Officers

Findings: SOM Imperatives

- A significant number of participants have limited understanding of the SOM Budget Cycle Model (BCM) and the SOM Budget Information Matrix (BIMS) with some indicating they have no understanding of it at all

- Those that do understand are mostly the experts and day-to-day SOM practitioners

- **This suggests that the training on SOM is necessary to acquaint the staff and MPLs about all its imperatives in order to enhance oversight and scrutiny over the Executive.**

Findings: SOM Imperatives

- Contracting is not formally affected as the GPL is not involved when departments set their plans and targets.

- A considerable number of the participants have no understanding of what micro-prioritisation is all about.

- Many submitted that the GPL has not been firmly implementing micro-prioritisation in line with the SOM model. The implementation has been irregular with a lack of consequence management and adequate resolution tracking system.

Findings: SOM Imperatives

- Departmental APPs: GPL only gets to cross-examine the Departmental plans during the budget process after the APPs are set in stone already

- Departmental Quarterly Reports – There is a belief that the implementation of these reports is for compliance only as there is no value. It was submitted that the consideration of quarterly reports needs to be more exploratory with oversight related questions. Further that these should be more than information seeking. **This suggests that there is a need for improvement for the oversight to be more robust and have impact towards the people on the ground rather than just been done for conformity.**

- Focused Intervention Study (FIS) – is a critical tool that is utilised by the GPL to hold the Executive accountable in relation to the implementation of programmes. But at times, it is difficult to conduct detailed work, due to limited time allocated to Committees to carry out their business. **The time prescription of SOM on Nr of FIS per year is also counter-productive due to the nature of some FISs.**

Findings: SOM Imperatives

- Annual Reports (AR) – the consideration of the annual reports is sufficiently done. However, time allocated to committee business is still a challenge. Therefore, there is a need for improvement.

- Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) (outer) years – although the SOM model requires the GPL to review the MTEF years to make sure that Gauteng Provincial Government (GPG) departments are on the right path in terms of realizing their targets. The GPL has not yet done a thorough review of the outer years. The participants argue that the GPL only examines the outer years during the budget process and no more

- SOM Analytical tools – majority of the participants have no understanding of the analytical tools (apart from the experts and day-to-day practitioners).

Findings: SOM Enablement

- The GPL term programme does not fully enable the implementation of SOM.

- For instance, during the budget process and the annual report process the programme becomes congested with activities.

- Some activities like FISs are not being done robustly due to time constraints, and it becomes a matter of compliance because the BCM requires the committee oversight reports to be tabled in the house on a particular period.

- Time allocation on the term programme does not enable the implementation of SOM as it is not sufficient to engage all the activities of the Committees.

- Time allocation in the House – time allocation in the House is not adequate, the congested speaking list limits members to debate meaningfully. Members are unable to go through all their Committee oversight reports due to time limitations.

Findings: SOM Enablement

- <u>Considering draft APPs</u> – Participants feel that Departmental APPs should be sent back for revision if Committees are not satisfied with the plans and the proposed budgets. The GPL Standing Rules need to make explicit guidelines on how the APPs are to be considered for scrutiny by Committees, the same way they do the Budget Votes.

- <u>Money Bills</u> – a handful of participants cited the Money Bills Amendment Procedure and Related Matters Amendment Bill. However, most participants acknowledge that they do not know / understand the Money Bill.

- <u>Parliamentary Budget Office</u> – the institution needs a dedicated Parliamentary Budget Office as it will fully support the implementation of the Money Bills Act and strengthen the work currently undertaken by the Finance Portfolio Committee and even perhaps consider the establishment of an Appropriations Committee.

Findings: SOM Implementation Challenges

- Lack of comprehensive understanding of the SOM model.

- Time allocation to the Term Programme and Time allocation in the House are not adequate to enable the implementation of SOM.

- Insufficient meetings outside GPL in communities.

- Insufficient field visits by researchers and for verification of reported performance / responses to resolutions.

- Long members' recess.

- Resolutions Tracking: Process / practice not standardized and consistent with all Committees

- Poor appetite / capacity / knowledge to initiate Bills.

Findings: SOM Implementation Challenges

- Lack of political will, not because it is intentional, but it is primarily due to lack of understanding of the model, its implementation and overall importance.

- Lack of attendance by Members during oversight visits and PPP engagements.

- Lack of consequence management for non-compliance on both the departments and GPL.

- Contracting – contracting is not properly affected as the GPL is not involved during the planning sessions of the GPG departments.

- Time based FIS not conducive to robust oversight

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Quarter Reports:

• Move away from Q1,Q2,Q3,Q4 and Annual Reports

• Reformat reporting to a first mid-year report in Q2, a second mid-year report in Q4 and an Annual Report to look at the whole year

FIS:

• Move away from 2 x FIS per Committee, per year, 1 Quarter apart

• Reformat FIS to minimum 1 FIS concluded per year, per Committee

• In no specific Quarter

Automation

• Automaton of manual processes, (e.g. Resolutions management process, end to end). Reduction of reporting burden

RECOMMENDATIONS

PCO linkages

- Establish regional coordinators for PCOs to adequately address issues of stakeholder and public mobilization.

- Promotion of PCOs as extensions of the Legislature (and associated reporting)

Benchmarking / collaboration

- Establishment of Parliamentary Budget Office (e.g. ECPL)

  o Money Bills

  o Draft APPs

- Management of Research function (e.g. Parliament)

- Resolutions tracking (e.g. KZNPL)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Integrate with Value Creation Project

- Capacity vs Skills vs Warm Bodies for specific functions in specific units

Continuous training

- On the objectives and benefits of SOM

- Customization of SOM in the GPL

- Imperatives and tools of SOM

Review of SOM

- Make recommendations to LSS on the review of SOM

- GPL being a contribute to the sector in this regard

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthen Rules

• Consequence management for non-complying Departments

• Poor Resolution Responses

• Member attendance (with sanction for non-attendance)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- The Secretary to the Legislature for support and encouragement

- Respective EDs for constant support; and all relevant and respective governance / advisory structures / PGO / Support Units.

- Programme 1 and 4, especially Committee Support for constant reminders into the Core Business Programme to participate in the study.

- The GPL entire research team for professionalism, availability and dedication throughout the research component of the project.

- All participants (Members and Staff).

- LSS for kindly acceding to GPL request not to be part of the LSS study, but to conduct GPL own study and share findings.

NEXT STEPS

NEXT STEPS

- Brown Bag Session [Scheduled for 08 May 2024]

- Implement Recommendations (GPL)

- Share with LSS (Sector Recommendations)

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