



cogta

Department:
Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Evaluating the implementation of Back to Basics Programme

Report – November 2017



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACRONYM	DEFINITION
B2B	Back to Basics Programme
COGTA	Provincial Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
CMET	Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Tool
DCoG	National Department of Cooperative Governance
IGR	Inter-Governmental Relations
LGSA	Local Government Strategic Agenda
LGTAS	Local Government Turn-Around Strategy
NDP	National Development Plan
SONA	State of the Nation Address
SMART	Specific, Measurable , Achievable, Reliable and Time-bound

1. Introduction

The transformation of the Republic of South Africa post 1994 led to the introduction of new policies and programmes to support the vision of the country. Local government transformation has remained the focal point over the years to amongst other things provide services to communities in a manner that is sustainable. The mandate for local government to provide services to communities is enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No. 108 of 1996. The rights for the communities to be provided with the services are articulated under the Bill of Rights (Chapter 2 of the Constitution). This mandate is emphasised on the National Development Plan (NDP) which states that "...meeting our transformation agenda requires functional municipalities and a capable machinery at a local level that can create safe and healthy and economically sustainable areas where citizens and people can work and socialise."

In 2014/15 financial year, the National Department of Cooperative Governance (DCoG) and the Provincial Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) introduced the Back to Basics Programme (B2B) to improve the functioning of the municipalities to better serve communities by getting the basics right. There have been varying levels of success across the Province. It is for this reason that the Provincial Cabinet mandated COGTA as the Department that is championing Back to Basics programme to conduct an evaluation which is aimed at assessing whether the achieved progress under the B2B programme is leading to the realisation of programme objectives as stipulated in the Local Government Back to Basics Strategy document.

2. Background

A number of successive projects and programmes have been implemented by the government with an aim to improve functioning of local government sphere. In 2004 Project Consolidate was launched. The purpose of Project Consolidate was to deepen the impact of existing policies and programmes directed at local government. Through the deployment of Service Delivery Facilitators into the targeted municipalities, the aim was to enhance municipal performance and service delivery, promote a new culture of performance and accountability in the municipalities. In addition, the programme aimed at strengthening the capacity of government by gathering empirical information that can be analysed and used to refine existing strategies. This was shortly followed by the introduction of 5 Year Local Government Strategic Agenda (LGSA) programme in 2006 which was later followed by inception of the Local Government Turn-Around Strategy (LGTAS) Programme in November 2009. The main focus of the LGTAS strategy was aimed at "the development of an accountable, responsive, efficient and effective local government system in South Africa."

During his June 2014 State of the Nation Address (SONA), the President of the Republic of South Africa stated amongst others that “Government has formulated a plan of action to revitalise local government...” further affirming that “...Government would like people’s experience of local government to be a pleasant one...” In response to the clarion call by the President, the Back to Basics Programme was introduced following the Local Government Summit held in September 2014. Learning from the previously implemented programmes and an assessment done to establish the state of municipalities at the time, the main goal of the programme was “to improve the functioning of municipalities to better serve communities by getting the basics right.” This put into context; meant that all spheres of Government needed to work as a collective to actively implement objectives set towards putting people first; delivering basic services; good governance; sound financial management and building capacity. Successful implementation of these standards was meant to:

- Empower citizens to hold the government accountable;
- Basic services will be delivered;
- Oversight structures, audit committees, s79 committees and District IGR Forums will be functional;
- Ward committees will be in existence and functional, financial performance data will be monitored;
- Appointment of competent and qualified personnel in the municipalities will be ensured.

Emanating from the desktop study conducted by the National COGTA in the KwaZulu-Natal Province, twenty six (26) municipalities were identified for support under the B2B programme. Eighteen (18) of the 26 were classified as challenged (municipalities that were in a dysfunctional state where corruption is ripe, dysfunctional council, financial mismanagement, poor service delivery, etc.) and eight (8) were classified as requiring intervention, i.e. those who were mostly functional with signs of collapse. The programme has since included all municipalities.

In order to implement the B2B programme effectively and allocate resources adequately in these municipalities, the Department continuously assess Municipalities on quarterly basis, established the Nerve Centre Committee with various key stakeholders to identify and provide support, and reports on issues related to those municipalities regarded as challenged and those requiring intervention.

3. Problem Statement

The B2B programme is in its third year of implementation, reports are reflecting fluctuations on Programme achievements. It is important for the functional municipalities to remain such and for the challenged to progress to being functional. An evaluation needed to be carried out in order to assess the effectiveness of the support provided, verification of the actual against the planned outputs thus far and whether the programme is yielding the expected results.

4. Purpose of the evaluation

The evaluation aimed to assess whether the outputs of the B2B programme are working towards achieving the set objectives as per the Local Government Back to Basics Strategy.

5. Key Questions

- How were the programme outputs achieved?
- Are the B2B programme outputs working towards the achievement of set objectives as per the Local Government Back to Basic Strategy document?

6. Objectives and Key Questions

- To assess the level to which the stated Back to Basic outputs have been met
 - Were programme implementation plans relevant to the needs of Clients?
 - Were plans implemented as planned?
 - Did the achieved outputs address the challenges?
- To assess whether the objectives of the programme are being achieved
 - Are the B2B programme outputs working towards the achievement of set objectives as per the Local Government Back to Basic Strategy document?

7. Methodology

This study will collect both primary and secondary data utilising qualitative method. Desktop review and in-depth interviews were undertaken.

The first phase collected secondary data by conducting a desktop review utilising existing documents that informed the B2B programme. This attempt was made to determine outputs achieved as per the monitoring reports and also to establish whether the programme objectives are being achieved. The documents used were: B2B progress report, B2B database and Municipal Support Plans.

The second phase included the collection of primary data (qualitative) from the beneficiaries and CoGTA's Local Government Branch. Generally, qualitative approaches are most useful with experiences, feelings, attitudes and generating first-hand experience to better understand the phenomenon being explored (Ryan et al., 2007).

8. Sampling

Purposive sampling was used to select participants in this study. The population for the desktop exercise targeted all 54 municipalities in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal. Source document used for the assessment was the Back to Basics progress report for the year 2015/2016, ended March 2016. The reason for using this data was due to the incomplete database for the 2016/2017 at the time when desktop assessment was conducted.

Primary data was collected at the municipalities as well as at COGTA. Due to the limited time to conduct the study, 26 initially categories municipalities were targeted for interviews, 92% percent were reached. To get the perspective of the Department, the study targeted the Senior Managers implementing the B2B programme as well as some stakeholders from MPRU. All targeted participants (100%) were reached.

9. Limitations

Due to the urgency of the study, there was limited time to consult with all relevant stakeholders. Another challenge was encountered particularly with securing appointment dates with the municipalities and when secured, some had to be rescheduled due to unexpected other commitments. Verification of achieved outputs through the desktop exercise could not be completed due to poor quality from the database.

10. Findings

10.1. Secondary Data Findings – Desktop Review

- **B2B Database:** The main source document used was Back to Basics database for the year 2016/2017. The database was used because it was regarded as the most comprehensive since it highlights challenges from the municipalities (as per the Municipal Support Plans), gave information on how challenges were to be addressed; provided monthly or quarterly progress statements and recorded the final progress statements.
- An assessment on B2B database focused on the following areas:
 - Municipal Support Plan (What was planned?)
 - Monitoring (What was done)
 - Deliverable aligned to the proposed remedial action?
 - Time Frame / Turn-around time for completion
 - Status of Achievement

The findings from this assessment mostly confirmed that there was planning done to assist the municipalities (i.e. the challenges were defined and actions to respond to the challenges were put forward) and all role players, including the sector Department's roles were defined. However, the following gaps were identified on the B2B Database:

- Progress statements not directly responding to the challenge identified - In some instances actions conducted or the reported progress would not necessarily respond to the challenges initially identified. For example in Danhausser Municipality, under pillar 2, the issue identified was Insufficient Technical Capacity. Initial support identified was to develop skills audit template; facilitate utilisation of external sources (agencies) to provide appropriate technical resources and provide recruitment support. It was noted that the reported progress indicated that:
 - “The Municipal Infrastructure Unit relies on Capacity building Unit to conduct skills audit and there has been no progress in this regard.
 - Support provided when requested (adverts, shortlisting, interview questions and interviews).
 - CoGTA is implementing programme to assist municipal employees with professional registration.”

Even though the B2B reports indicate that this was achieved, the above progress statements do not provide a clear indication of whether the identified challenge of insufficient technical capacity has been addressed.

- The database had too many columns that could be eliminated to make it more user-friendly.
- Status of achievement – mostly for challenges that were reported as achieved supporting evidence to confirm the reported status was not documented.
- No distinction between the term closed out and achieved - The term closed-out refers to issues where no support was to be further provided by the department even when the challenges were not resolved. The term achieved referred to issues resolved and required no further support to be provided. The two terms were used interchangeable, making it difficult to distinguish between issues resolved and not resolved. Technically, these two terms are not similar yet they are interpreted as having similar meaning in the B2B Database.

Due to poor recording of B2B outputs on the B2B Database as listed above, the planned exercise of verifying the B2B outputs could not be conducted. The following recommendations are suggested to improve the B2B Database:

- The Department should focus more in ensuring that the identified challenges are followed with relevant validated progress reports;
- The Database to be cleaned to include only the relevant data per quarter, maybe to use a similar template used for Departmental performance monitoring;
- There should be consistency in reporting in terms of achievements and closed-out.
- The Database should be concise and complete to be able to provide the Department with a clear progress of how is the process of addressing the identified challenges in Municipalities.

10.2. Primary Data Findings – Municipal Perspective

Interviews were conducted with the municipalities as the direct recipients of the support provided by COGTA. The purpose was to gather their experiences and their objective assessment of the programme. The following section provides an analysis from the interviews conducted with municipalities as the beneficiaries and implementers of the programme. Findings are categorised as according to:

- **Relevance and Design** – reflections on whether the support was designed to appropriately respond to the needs of a municipality.
- **Effectiveness** - is the programme beneficial to the Municipalities?
- **Efficiency** – is the programme making good progress towards achieving its objectives within the expected quality and timeframes
- **Sustainability** – refers the long term view of programme.

10.2.1 Relevance and Design of B2B

The aim of this section was to determine whether the support provided to the municipalities was relevant to the needs of the municipalities and to assess whether the programme design was appropriate. In this regard the study found:

- **There is common understanding of the purpose of B2B programme:** The understanding of the Programme shared by the municipalities in different yet similar interpretations was that it is “meant to fast track service delivery to the communities”, B2B effects are supposed to be felt mostly by the communities, also meant to be more like the concept of Sukuma Sakhe where there is a sense of urgency in getting issues resolved and “the needs of the poorest are addressed”. Others said, it is simple to measure whether the municipalities are doing what they are supposed to be doing.
- **The B2B Programme is relevant to the needs of Municipalities:** All respondents referred to the programme as relevant as it was designed to enhance the key functional areas of a municipality, also to assist the municipalities to deliver on their mandate and encourage better functioning. The Programme was introduced with indicators to measure the achievements and status quo of Municipalities. Respondents highlighted the importance of the B2B data collection tool used as it assists them to understand where they are in terms of performance.
- **B2B data collection tools are not customised** – Even though Municipalities recognise the importance of the B2B assessment tool, they also felt that the data collection tools should be customised to respond to the type of deliverables the municipality performs, i.e. where public participation or water services are procured, the tools should reflect as such and be customised to include relevant indicators only.
- **Some of the B2B Indicators are not useful** – Participants highlighted that some indicators are confusing (i.e. not SMART) these include mostly the financial indicators. This results to submission of incomplete information by Municipalities to the Department at times. In addition, service delivery indicators such as % percentage of household with electricity; and % of houses constructed were also viewed as not useful because they only report on the status quo, whereas they could be more meaningful if they focused more on backlogs to trigger prompt support. The indicator on refuse collection was highlighted as not measuring a true reflection of what is happening particularly in rural municipalities. Participants also felt that to get an accurate picture indicators must be measured by numbers instead of percentages.

- **Assessment method not a true reflection of performance of municipalities** – the current assessment method of using CMET tool and support plans to measure the functionality of Municipalities was viewed as not credible and not the only reflection of performance of the municipalities. To prove this it was highlighted that, some municipalities are rated as functional using the B2B assessment whilst in reality they may be collapsing. As a result Municipalities would rather put more effort towards achieving the clean audit status rather than on B2B assessment.
- **Time wasted due to Duplication of Reporting** – Currently the Municipalities are reporting to National DCoG monthly and to the Province on quarterly basis. Respondents felt that it is not necessary for them to report to the Province as well to National DCoG as this is as a duplication of efforts and a waste of limited resources. The question asked by most was whether it is necessary for them to report to the National as they report to the Province?
- **Internal Municipalities challenges to collate data for reporting** – The municipalities commonly shared that they are experiencing challenges on co-ordinating the data collection and collation before submission to the Department. They felt that this is largely due to the lack of co-operation from within; they mentioned that they have to consistently remind the Co-ordinators to submit. The experiences led to a conclusion that the B2B is not taken seriously by some and it could be better placed within an office of higher authority than is currently.

10.2.2 Effectiveness of B2B

This section provides a critical analysis of municipalities' reflections on the effects of the programme as implemented, it has been found that:

- **The Programme has created awareness:** Since the implementation of the programme, it is worth highlighting that the programme has assisted municipalities to become “more aware of what is happening in their space through reporting” and to some extent “political leadership is involved in municipal operations”. Some even mentioned that, the indicators have been incorporated into the SDBIPs.
- **The Programme has no impact community level:** Despite the good elements mentioned above, the programme according to the municipalities has missed many opportunities to “make an impact at the community level”. This is due to the fact that the focus of the programme is more on monitoring than service delivery.

- **Monitoring information not used for action:** It is acknowledged that the Department has a mandate to monitor municipalities, however according to the municipalities the monitoring exercise is more beneficial if the information received is interpreted and used to provide support. Currently that is not happening.
- **B2B - a compliance tool:** According to the municipalities, monitoring is done consistently with no support. Neither the Department nor the other stakeholders (e.g. Sector Departments) assist Municipalities to address the challenges raised on the CMET tool and the support plans. Mostly the issues raised end up being addressed by the municipalities on their own. The monitoring exercise has become tedious and is not of much benefit for the Municipalities because of limited resources. The municipalities highlighted that “the B2B has become more of a compliance tool” where they feel compelled to report because if they do not comply they will be rated as challenged or requiring intervention.
- **Programme shifted from addressing the Basics to a monitoring tool:** Most participants felt there has been a shift on the B2B programme to be more focused on monitoring than addressing challenges. The current perspective of B2B by the Municipalities is that it is a reporting tool used by the Department to monitor Municipalities. According to the municipalities, it seems that the B2B programme has derailed and got complicated along the way, whereas it “was meant to be a simple programme to address service delivery challenges” and “its existence needed to be felt at the community level”.
- **There is no validation of data:** Municipalities mentioned that currently they are reporting but the evidence to confirm the validity of what is done as part of reporting is not submitted to the Department, with an exception of Municipal Finance and Public Participation Units. They even highlighted that, one could submit incorrect information and no-one would notice.
- **There is loss of interest in the B2B Programme:** Municipalities shared that, unlike before where there was much interest in the B2B processes, the programme is now viewed as a burden and a tool for compliance. The experience has somehow caused the municipalities to lose interest in the programme.
- **Programme not achieving its objectives:** Most Municipalities highlighted that the current approach is mostly bias towards monitoring, calling for a need to focus on other B2B pillars. Otherwise, they do not believe the programme would achieve its objectives by merely reporting.

10.2.3 Efficiency of B2B

This area intended to answer questions in relation to whether the programme is making good progress towards achieving its objectives within the expected quality and set timeframes. The primary evidence received from Municipalities indicates that:

- **Support Plans challenges:** Municipalities expected to receive support from the Department through the developed support plans. For the benefit of identifying what ought to be achieved and focus, the process of developing the support plans was welcomed. The process of identifying support to be provided was however found to be diverse, whereby some municipalities expressed their dissatisfaction with the way challenges were identified. They mentioned that the support plans were drafted with no mutual agreement between all stakeholders at times. As a consequence, municipalities had to constantly defend what was put on the plan which some of the challenges were not relevant to them.
- **Less implementation of Support Plans:** The municipalities further mentioned that they managed to achieve most without the support from the Department or the supporting Sector Departments. They felt that the involvement of Sector Department would make them to progress and be able to achieve timeously as most of the targets not achieved mainly because of the lack of support. The Department according to the municipalities, no longer ensures the participation of other Departments in assisting them. The municipalities recommended that more support including the involvement of Sector Departments, as well as providing technical skills and where possible infuse financial support, will be beneficial.

10.2.4 Sustainability

The intention of this section was to test the the long term view of programme. This was triggered by the regressions of some municipalities from being functional to challenged or requiring intervention. In order to mitigate this, the municipalities were asked on what can be done to ensure that programme achievements are sustained, meaning what can be done to ensure that those municipalities that are categorised as functional remain in that category. The study found that according to the perspective of Municipalities the regressions are mainly centred on:

- Challenges related to reporting and non-implementation of existing policies and council resolutions. The lack of follow up both from the Department and municipalities on the implementation of adopted resolutions.
- Focusing on marking target achieved without properly checking whether indeed the challenge is addressed. For example there are some challenges that are marked as achieved but not making a difference in the municipality, e.g. “now that we have the indigent register marked as achieved on the support plan, then what...”
- In order to maintain the positive status, municipalities mentioned that there is a need to focus on the negatives and put mitigating strategies to ensure improvements, reporting accurately and institutionalising the programme.

10.2.5 Summary of Municipal Perspective on B2B Programme

In summary, Municipalities view the B2B programme as a programme which had good intentions of addressing bottle necks in Municipalities that negatively affect service delivery in a speedily manner, by ensuring that Municipalities are functional to meet their legal mandate. However, the programme experienced challenges from its early stages due to poor process of development of support plans which resulted to little ownership and implementation by relevant stakeholders. This was then followed by a gradual shift of programme focus from being service delivery to a complicated municipal monitoring programme which is not followed by the required support. Even though the monitoring process is playing a role but there are challenges around the tool itself, lack of data validation, duplication of reporting and less support guided by the collected data were mentioned as negatively affecting the programme success.

The municipalities strongly felt that currently if nothing is improved, the programme will not reap its benefits. Arguing that, programme effects should be felt at the ground by the citizens and should be operationally driven to deliver services not only to monitor.

10.2.6 Recommendations from the municipalities

The municipalities recommended the following:

- Information submitted by the municipalities should be used for decision making by the Department.
- Minimise reporting by addressing National vs COGTA B2B reports and coordinate reporting so that Municipalities do not have to report to different Principals.
- To avoid the risk of data manipulation and compromised quality - Other Departmental Units to replicate what Municipal Finance and Public Participation are doing to gather the portfolio of evidence on data reported.
- Categorisation of municipalities' methodology should be re-looked at, as the current one of using the CMET tool and support plan does not indicate a true reflection of what is happening at the municipalities.
- The support plan was mentioned to be lacking implementation, included irrelevant issues and no follow-up
 - Support plan should be more focused and address specific issues
 - Follow-up on implementation of existing and established ways to better resolve issues should be implemented
 - COGTA must monitor the departments that are supposed to be supporting the municipalities.
- “No need to divert from winning strategies”, most municipalities felt that the effects of the programme were mostly felt during the period of campaigns. They recommended that the programme goes back to basics by dedicating months to fixing roads, potholes, etc. This was viewed as the key to improve on service delivery and align collective efforts to the specific theme and the budget was available.

10.3. Primary Data Findings - Departmental Perspective

This section narrates findings from the interviews conducted with Chief Directors from the Local Government Branch of COGTA. These interviews were conducted using the same interview tools meaning the same questions that were asked in Municipalities were also used when interviewing the Chief Directors therefore the findings will be recorded in a similar fashion as following:

10.3.1. Relevance and Design

In this area the study found that:

- **There is a common understanding of the purpose of the B2B Programme:** Similar to the municipalities, the Department appreciates the development of indicators generally, further highlighting that the indicators allowed them to get to know what is being done by the municipalities and to get an overview on what has been achieved. They further acknowledged that the programme is evolving; therefore commonly, felt there is a need for an improvement particularly on the indicators that are currently used.
- **There is a need to revise indicators:** The need to improve emanated from the gaps as observed, where it was mentioned that “some useful indicators were removed that assisted to measure service delivery related activities, such as backlogs” in the municipalities. The current indicators were to a greater extent viewed as “...too high level”, others highlighted that “the plot has been lost by trying to measure the wrong things.”
- **There is a need to establish what need be measured:** Commonly, there is a notion for the indicators to be reviewed. However, some felt even though the idea is not disputed, they felt the Department needs to guard against consistent changes in the reporting to avoid confusing the municipalities. As a result the Department recommends a need to come to a point where there is satisfaction and stability on what needs to be reported.

10.3.2. Effectiveness

In testing the Department’s view on effectiveness of B2B, the study found that:

- **Good progress has been made to inculcate a culture of reporting in Municipalities:** participants felt that there has been good progress made around reporting from the municipalities. They further agreed that the programme has created a sense of responsibility for municipalities to account.

- **The programme has been twisted from its objectives:** there is an acknowledgement from the respondents that B2B has somehow changed its focus from its objectives, which is to “get the municipalities back to basics”. Getting the municipalities back to basics was elaborated as “to provide support to the municipalities to function optimally” by adhering to the implementation of the prescribed five (5) pillars, “to address important and urgent challenges that can be resolved within a financial year”, “to allow the municipalities to comply with service delivery needs” and “to operate within the prescribed municipal framework”. However, the change in programme focus led to the programme to be viewed as “complicated, too scientific and fixated on reporting”.
- **The programme created an impression in Municipalities:** respondents highlighted that the Department went to the municipalities to lend a helping hand but had no resources. The support plans ended up capturing what can be defined as “the IDP wish list”, whereby challenges bigger than the programme were listed. The exercise of drafting the support plans according to the Department raised expectations in Municipalities as a result Municipalities hoped that the programme will address all their challenges and this is not possible. For example during the categorisation of challenges participants felt that the Department continues to get the wish lists from the municipalities, without ascertaining what is practically achievable and determine its strengths and weaknesses.
- **Re-active than pro-active support approach is used through B2B programme:** Currently the Department referred to the support provided in relation to B2B as a “short gun approach”, “reactive than being pro-active”, “soft to medium support”, and “mainly just touching the surface”. In essence, besides the standard support provided to the municipalities, not much was done to ensure that the B2B targets are met, especially around the pillar of service delivery.
- **The Programme was not well institutionalised by the Department:** Internally, some respondents raised that the roles and responsibilities were not clearly defined. This demanded that Departmental officials to operate out of the ordinary stream in order to fulfil the functions of B2B as a result they had to make tougher choices to choose between the core function or B2B activities and this led to the programme participation being compromised. However, some respondents felt that there was no real need for the roles and responsibilities to be spelt out, since the pillars are all linked to a particular function within the Department. These respondents further stated that the Department and the Municipalities ought to have institutionalised the programme from the inception and not to viewed it as an extra function.

- **There is poor programme coordination:** respondents mostly felt that the office which the programme currently occupies does not hold enough authority to decide on strategic issues that can assist the programme to bounce from its current position. To this finding, a proposal was made for the programme to be moved from Municipal Performance Directorate to the Municipal Government Specialist Unit under Local Government Specialists. In, addition participants also felt that there is not much guidance received from the National.
- **Programme is not prioritised by the municipalities** – Some municipalities do not give much attention to the implementation of the programme because the programme is not audited. This requires the Municipal Managers and the political leadership to take ownership for the Programme to be effective.
- **The programme missed the opportunity to serve its purpose:** most respondents felt that the current method of support does not assist either parties much as it is not effective. Drawing from experience, participants agreed that the B2B campaigns made some difference and almost got the municipalities back to basics, to an extent that “there was action” and “people were aware”. Ceasing the campaigns was regarded as one of those missed opportunities when the Department “was so close to nailing it”. On the other hand some respondents argued that even though the campaigns were a good initiative. The issue of sustainability was always going to be a problem because of inadequate resources.

10.3.3. Efficiency

The Department was given an opportunity to reflect on whether the programme is achieving its outputs to meet its objectives within the expected time frames. The Department strongly highlighted that the support provided was limited due to:

- The reliance on municipalities to work with what they have to provide services since the programme was implemented with no additional resources.
- Some of the challenges identified with Municipalities required strong financial injection which is not available.

10.3.4. Recommendations from the Department

Similar to the municipalities, the internal stakeholders shared a reflective view of B2B as a good programme that need some improvement. The improvement were noted around the following areas

- B2B indicators to be revised. This includes B2B indicators on Financial Management and Service Delivery.
- Improve programme coordination both within the Department as well as with National DCOG. This includes locating the programme where it can enjoy more authority to foster cooperation and ownership.
- The support plan development process needs to be strengthened to be crisp to avoid ambiguity when it comes to reporting.
- A more focus on the service delivery is required to revive the programme and to once again reach out to the needs of the citizens by re-introducing service-delivery campaigns.

11. Evaluator's Observation

This evaluation exercise which comprised of the qualitative information gathered through interviews with the Municipalities as the beneficiaries of the programme and the Departmental Officials tasked to roll out this programme as part of the Departmental mandate, offered the evaluators an opportunity to get views from both angles. It is from this opportunity that observations about the B2B programme can be summarised as follows:

- The programme received a warm welcome by both stakeholders, Municipalities and the Department when it was introduced as it was seen as a simple programme with a quick turn-around time to address the identified challenges to improve municipal performance and speed up service delivery.
- As a result the service delivery campaigns are still a remarkable achievement of the B2B programme as these campaigns were directly responding to the programme purpose of getting the basics right for example Public participation campaigns, Pothole campaigns, etc. which managed to ensure that potholes were attended to within a short period of time. Even though there is a question of sustainability it remains a better option to getting back to basics.
- It is noteworthy that both groups of respondents recognised the salient shift of focus from the service delivery to a Municipal monitoring tool which even requires some improvement as well.

- Even though the Department did not sharply raised the need to improve on the development and implementation of support plans like Municipalities, the need to strengthen coordination of support guided by precise identified Municipal challenges will was recommended by both categories of respondents. This will ensure that all parties are clear of what is going to be delivered by when.

Without repeating the findings recorded from both Municipalities and Department, the Evaluator's deductions of the B2B programme in a nutshell is: the programme need to be refocused back to its originality before more interest is lost by all parties.

12. Overall Conclusion

In concluding, taking into consideration the perspective of Municipalities as well as from the Department a conclusion can be reached that:

- B2B is a programme which was welcomed by all critical stakeholders, i.e. Municipalities, Provincial CoGTA and National DCoG. The B2B was welcomed as it was viewed as a programme to bring change in the municipalities in a simpler, faster and better approach which will eventually lead to improved service delivery felt by the communities.
- Along the way, the programme transformed to be more of a monitoring and reporting tool with some unclear indicators whose data is regularly collected by different state institutions on different times to assess performance of the municipalities. Even though the assessment was conducted from the developed support plans, very little was support to ensure achievements.
- Whilst monitoring is appreciated as it provides a sense of awareness, this approach will not assist to take the programme to meet its intended objectives. Therefore programme overhaul is recommended to redirect the programme to its origin and attend to systematic issues. Part of that process should include a development of a clear a Provincial and Municipal level.
- Programme overhaul will include amongst others, assessing whether is it better placed internally and in Municipalities; and introducing a business unusual approach in a simpler, faster and better coordinated manner.

Emanating from the findings of the study, the Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit expect the Local Government Branch to consider these findings with an aim to improve the programme. In so doing the discussion around the findings should lead to the development of clear and precise recommendations which can be implemented to assist the programme to meet its intended objectives.

Failure to do this, the B2B programme will remain seen as monitoring tool which is not followed by support to improve the functionality of Municipalities therefore has no impact in Communities.

13. ANNEXURES

13.1 Data collection tool for the Municipalities

Evaluating the effectiveness of Back to Basics Programme in KwaZulu–Natal Municipalities

DERMOGRAPHICS	
Please Note, confidentiality is crucial in the study therefore demographics information requested will only be used by the Programme Evaluator. No third party will acquire the names of participants and participation is voluntary.	
Name of the Municipality:	
Name of Person Interviewed:	
Designation:	
Main area of responsibility:	
Name of Interviewer:	
Date :	
Time :	

CATEGORY	QUESTIONS
Design	1. How appropriate / useful are the indicators used to assess the programme’s performance? OR Are the programme indicators appropriate to measure the performance of a municipality?
	2. In your own view, do you think it is necessary for the programme processes to be modified going forward?
	3. Were the roles and the responsibilities clearly outlined per each role player?
Relevance	4. In your understanding what is the purpose of B2B Programme?
	5. In your understanding do you think it was necessary for your

	<p>municipality to be categorized as requiring intervention / challenged? Please elaborate.</p>
	<p>6. What are the key specific areas that the programme meant to address in this municipality?</p>
	<p>7. Were the programme interventions appropriate to respond to your needs as the municipality?</p>
Efficiency	<p>8. Were the programme interventions delivered within the agreed time frames? Please elaborate.</p>
	<p>9. Were the programme interventions implemented within the expected standards? Please elaborate.</p>
	<p>10. Is the programme making sufficient progress towards its planned objectives?</p>
	<p>11. Are the programme objectives likely to be achieved? Please provide reasons to support your answer.</p>
	<p>12. Were the programme resources (human, finance) used efficiently to address challenges identified?</p>
Effectiveness	<p>13. What benefits did the municipality derive from the developed municipal support plans / identified interventions?</p>
	<p>14. What observable changes have you seen/ identified since the implementation of B2B?</p>
	<p>15. What challenges did you experience from the implementation of support plan interventions?</p>
	<p>16. What strengths have you identified that you think should to be continued?</p>
	<p>17. What weaknesses have you identified that you think should be corrected?</p>
	<p>18. Is there anything the Department should do differently in supporting similar programmes in future?</p>
	<p>19. Is the intervention working?</p>
Sustainability	<p>20. What processes have been put in place to ensure that there are no regressions in what has been achieved?</p>
Recommendations	<p>21. Please suggest any recommendation that can assist the Department to better implement B2B.</p>

13.2 Data collection tool for Internal Stakeholders

Evaluating the effectiveness of Back to Basics Programme in KwaZulu–Natal –Internal Stakeholders

DERMOGRAPHICS	
Please Note, confidentiality is crucial in the study therefore the raw data identifying participants will only be used by the Programme Evaluator. No third party will acquire the names of participants and participation is voluntary.	
Business Unit:	
Name of Person Interviewed:	
Designation:	
Main area of responsibility:	
Name of Interviewer:	
Date :	
Time :	

CATEGORY	QUESTIONS
Design	1. How appropriate / useful are the indicators used to assess the programme's performance?
	2. In your own view, do you think it is necessary for the programme indicators to be modified going forward?
	3. Were the roles and the responsibilities clearly outlined per each role player?
Relevance	4. In your understanding what is the purpose of B2B Programme?
	5. What acts or documents were used to guide the implementation of B2B?
	6. What needs was the programme meant to address?
Effectiveness	7. What kind of support did the municipalities get from the Department?
	8. Was the support appropriate to respond to the needs of the

	municipalities?
	9. What benefits did the municipality derive from the support provided?
	10. What observable changes have you seen/ identified since the implementation of B2B?
	11. What challenges did you experience from the implementation of B2B Programme?
	12. Is the intervention working?
	13. What strengths have you identified that you think should to be continued?
	14. Are there success stories that can be used as examples of best practise?
	15. What are the key challenges that the B2B Programme is facing in the Department / Municipalities? If any, how do you resolve those challenges?
	16. What actions can be put in place to address the challenges?
	17. Is there anything the Department should do differently in supporting similar programmes in future?
Efficiency	18. Were the programme objectives achieved on time? Please elaborate.
	19. Were programme resources used as planned?
	20. Is the programme making sufficient progress towards its planned objectives?
	21. Are the programme objectives likely to be achieved? Please provide reasons to support your answer?
	22. Were the programme resources (human, finance) used efficiently to address challenges identified?
Sustainability	23. What elements of the B2B could be replicated?
Recommendations	24. Please suggest any recommendation that can assist the Department to better implement B2B.

14. Signatures

Submitted by :

Mr Manelisi Sogwagwa _____
Director: Evaluation

Date

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Signature.....

Supported by :

Ms Aah Sekhesa _____
Chief Director: Strategic Support,
Monitoring and Evaluation

Date

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Signature.....

Supported by :

Mr Andre Delport _____
Acting Director: Municipal Performance,
Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

Date

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Signature.....

Approved by :

Mr L. Pienaar _____
Acting Deputy Director General: Local
Government

Date

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Signature.....

Noted by :

Mr T. Tubane _____
Head of Department: CoGTA

Date

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Signature.....