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**LIMPOPO**

**PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT**  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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OFFICE OF  
**THE PREMIER**

**LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL  
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (R&D FRAMEWORK)**

**2021 - 2026**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Within the context of the research and development framework and in response to the 2002 Cabinet approved National Research and Development Strategy, this framework is a document that serves as a guide, elaborating all focus areas for research and development coordinated initiatives geared towards the implementation of the National Development Plan (NDP) and Limpopo Development Plan (LDP). The framework aims to help researchers to understand the knowledge, behaviours and attitudes expected of effective and highly skilled researchers. The framework expressed the knowledge, intellectual abilities, techniques and professional standards needed to do research, as well as the qualities, knowledge and skills to work with others and ensure the wider impact of research.

This framework is a skeletal and more succinct overview of the ways and forms of research coordination within Limpopo Province. It is a collection of solid evidence that can be used in support of decisions making for the achievement of government priorities. Given the multi-faceted challenges faced by government from economic, social, environmental, educational, employment, etc. this framework is seeking to develop a more rigorous approach that gathers, critically appraises and uses high quality research evidence to inform policy making and professional practice. The framework, as a guiding tool, ensures knowledge transfer between researchers, and policy makers within all spheres of government. It is designed for policy makers, business, academic and research institutions that provide personal, professional and career development for researchers in the province. The framework will, according to Dr. Rob Davies, enable a country to measure, monitor and evaluate its scientific and innovative capabilities. These capabilities will become increasingly important as the global community of nations confronts the reality of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the digitization of the economy.

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The framework further tries to address the frustrations encountered by researchers. According to Godfrey et al. (2010), in South Africa a gap exists between the scientific research community and the policy-making community, due to a number of underlying reasons. This gap often results in a 'push of evidence' by researchers to policy-makers, with a hope that policy-makers will take up these findings and use them in policy identification, formulation or implementation processes. The study conducted by Godfrey et al. (2010) on research dissemination and uptake in South Africa found that researchers at universities and science councils often feel frustrated when conducting research for government departments because they are not given feedback about what happens to their research outputs once these have been completed and submitted. Policy-makers and researchers need to work more closely together by means of established, regular and trusting interaction and dialogue.

The Limpopo Provincial Research and Development Framework, herein referred to as LPRDF, identified a number of challenges faced by research coordinators in the provincial government and municipalities, such as insufficient research capacity, budget constraints, misalignment of research systems and structures, inadequate coordination of research, and many more. The framework further provided ways to address these identified challenges such as the establishment of provincial research hub and skills development.

In order to prevent the duplication of research conducted and waste of resources, the framework established a Limpopo Policy and Research Repository (LPR2) which is a provincial policy and research databank. This web-based system is part of broadening access to government policy instruments and research reports or outcomes. The system supports and assists policy makers, analysts, researchers, evaluators and planners to retrieve relevant government documentation easily. The repository is also geared towards fostering a better relationship between the Provincial Government and the academic/research community, as a way of enhancing the service delivery initiatives of

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the Provincial Administration. Relevant policies, research reports and outcomes are deposited and stored in the repository. These documentations support policy making, strategic and integrated planning and monitoring and evaluation functions in the Province. The repository is linked and shall be linked to other institutional repositories across the country and internationally. This will result in information sharing and transfer and eventually this will ensure good governance and informed decision making in the Province.

The Limpopo Provincial Research and Development Framework is built upon the foundation of the legislative and legal prescripts and strategic mandates of which some of them are: The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, which is a supreme law, National Research Foundation Act 23 of 1998; Statistics Act No. 6 of 1999 and the South African Statistical Quality Assessment Framework (SASQAF); South Africa's National Research and Development Strategy, 2002; Human Sciences Research Council Act, 2008 (Act No. 17 of 2008); Technology Innovation Agency Act, 2008 (Act No. 26 of 2008); National Infrastructure Plan, 2012; The African Agenda, 2063; The National Development Plan 2030 (2012); Limpopo Development Plan (LDP); Sustainable Development Goals.

The framework asserts that research pronouncements that are legal and within the prescripts of the law and further reflect that they are informed by the research outcomes of the studies conducted and are priorities and urgent matters deemed to be of critical importance at any particular time by the Executive Council of the Limpopo Province will be integrated into the provincial research agenda. It is the responsibility of departmental research units to integrate the pronouncements into the provincial research agenda.

The research and development framework identified the following key determinants:

- (a) Establishment of Research and Development Directorate in provincial governments and municipalities;
- (b) Development & Implementation of the Provincial Research Agenda;

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- (c) Coordination and management of the Limpopo Research Forum (LRF);
- (d) Coordination and management of the Limpopo Provincial Research Committee (LPRC) and Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee (LPREC);
- (e) Management of Limpopo Policy & Research Repository (LPR<sup>2</sup>);
- (f) Implementation of the Provincial Research Guidelines;
- (g) Establishment of Limpopo Provincial Research and Skills Development Hub;
- (h) Implementation of the Provincial Research Collaboration Policy;
- (i) Facilitate Research Funding;
- (j) Facilitate Research Capacity Enhancement

The framework shall be reviewed after sixty (60) months (05 Years) from the date of its approval and shall be in line with the electoral cycle.

**ACRONYMS**

CoGHSTA	Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlement and Traditional Affairs
DST	Department of Science and Technology
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDP	Integrated Development Plans/Planning
IIDP	Integrated Industrial Development Programme
IKS	Indigenous Knowledge Systems
GCIS	Government Communication Information System
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
LED	Local Economic Development
LDP	Limpopo Development Plan
LIBSA	Limpopo Business Support Agency
LIIS	Limpopo Integrated Innovation Strategy
LIMDEV	Limpopo Economic Development Enterprise
LMMBI	Limpopo Mining and Minerals Beneficiation Initiatives
LRF	Limpopo Research Forum
LTA	Limpopo Tourism Agency
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MISTRA	Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection
MMBI	Mining and Minerals Beneficiation Initiatives
NDP	National Development Plan
NIS	National Innovation Systems
OTP	Office of The Premier

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LPR <sup>2</sup>	Limpopo Policy and Research Repository
RAL	Road Agency Limpopo
R & D	Research and Development
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SASQAF	South African Statistical Quality Assessment Framework
STATSSA	Statistics of South Africa
TUT	Tshwane University of Technology
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UL	University of Limpopo
UNISA	University of South Africa
UNIVEN	University of Venda

## DEFINITIONS

**Research and Development:** Systematic activities of combining both basic and applied research, and aimed at discovering solutions to problems or creating new goods and knowledge.

**Indigenous Knowledge Systems:** Human experiences organized and ordered into accumulated knowledge to serve as a basis for local-level decision making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, and natural resource management.

**Research institutions:** An establishment endowed for doing basic and applied research.

**Academic institutions:** An educational institution dedicated to education and research, which grants academic qualifications.

**Sustainable livelihoods:** A livelihood comprises people, their capabilities and their means of living, including food, income and assets.

**Research collaboration:** The working together of researchers to achieve the common goal of producing new scientific knowledge and finding solutions to the problems.

**Partnership:** Tailored business/professional relationship based on mutual trust, openness, shared risk and shared rewards that results in business performance.

**Coordination:** The synchronization and integration of activities, responsibilities, and control structures to ensure that the resources are used efficiently in pursuit of the specified objectives.

**Research Agenda:** Research areas identified in order to meet major challenges faced by the Limpopo province.

**Research funding:** Funding to help fund research efforts made by individuals, universities and departments.

**Research Capacity Enhancement:** A structured, formal or informal relationship that provides relational and instrumental support which may focus on the education, understanding, and potential collaboration around research, research process, research idea development, designs, program evaluation, and data analysis.

**Limpopo Policy and Research Repository:** A provincial government web-based facility where relevant policies and research outcomes and documents are deposited, stored and retrieved

**Monitoring and Evaluation:** the process of monitoring a program and evaluating the impact it has on the province and its citizen in order to assess the success and gaps in program implementation

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Research and Development (R&D) has been a strong driver of the new global economy, wealth creation and development. Economic growth and development literature confirm that research, development, innovation and technological progress are the basis for sustained economic growth and development. Substantially, the 2009 research report on Limpopo Integrated Innovation Strategy (LIIS) concludes that the development of LIIS is central to enhancing economic development of the Province. Thus research is an integral part of innovation.

The Provincial Government acknowledges the need to conduct and use research for planning, policy-making, intervention programmes and to evaluate the impact of these on the development and progress of the Province. Additionally, the Provincial Government also understands the importance of research, development and innovation as drivers of economic growth and development and wants to use these vehicles for the development of the Province.

The Limpopo R&D Framework will make it possible for government departmental units responsible for research to conceive systems, structures, processes and approaches that link with government economic growth and development strategies. It will also outline the systems, structures and processes to deal with research needs of government and the Province.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Whilst the Provincial Government acknowledges and understands the importance of research and development, it is faced with a number of challenges such as the ones stated below:

- **Insufficient Research Capacity**

Government's own in-house research capacity is constrained in terms of lack of qualified human capital to conduct quality research. Hence in other departments, piecemeal in-house research is often supplemented by costly research conducted by service providers (often contracted from outside the Province). Consequently, the provincial government lacks mechanisms to leverage on research capacity enhancement through the existing research partnerships within institutions of higher learning and research institutions.

- **Budget Constraints**

Departments and municipalities often do not have a dedicated budget for research. It is therefore regarded as a supportive function and it always gets "left-overs" in terms of budget.

- **Research Systems and Structures**

Since the adoption of the framework in 2014, systems such as research guidelines, research repository and research collaboration policy have been development. However, these systems are not adequate to tackle the current research needs of the province. There is therefore the need for the province to enhance the current systems by exploring the prospects of establishing the research and skill development hub. The hub will assist the province in knowledge creation, generation, dissemination and research capacity building.

### **3. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.1 The purpose of the framework**

The purpose of this framework is to enhance research systems, structures, functions, services and efforts of the Province through research management instruments in order to attain objectives laid out in the existing government policies and strategies. The R&D Framework serves as an instrument to put in place systems, including their accompanying structures and processes which will assist Limpopo Government to:

- (a) Promote collaborative research efforts between government, research and academic institutions as well as other research stakeholders;
- (b) Create an environment for increased (effective) investments in research;
- (c) Effectively engage with external research and funding institutions and agencies;  
and
- (d) Advocate for the mainstreaming of research and development activities into provincial sectoral plans and activities.
- (e) Promote systems and structures for effective research management in the province.

#### **3.2 The main objectives of the framework**

- (a) Improve Provincial Government capacity to conduct research and to use it in both policy-making and planning;
- (b) Strengthen partnership between Government and the Local and international research institutions;
- (c) Ensure better coordination, alignment and dissemination of research amongst all departments and municipalities of the Provincial Administration;

- (d) Develop standards and procedures for research and development in line with both national and international practices and trends (e.g. research guidelines);  
and
- (e) Encourage community participation and involvement in research and development matters.

#### **4. SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

This framework shall be applicable to all Provincial Departments, Municipalities and the research community at large.

#### **5. LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

Research and Development is promoted by the following legislative and strategic mandates:

##### **5.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996**

Sections 125(2) (d) & (e), the Premier and members of the Executive Council are responsible for developing and implementing provincial policy, as well as ensuring the implementation of national policies and the coordination of functions between the provincial departments. These functions include inter alia research, development & innovation of service delivery. Furthermore, Chapter 3 of the Constitution on cooperative governance and play a critical role in the development and implementation of the Provincial Growth and Development Plans. By implication, this places responsibility of the Office of the Premier to oversee and coordinate the development of transversal research, development and innovation initiatives to ensure the achievement of the macro-economic policy.

## **5.2 National Research Foundation Act 23 of 1998**

This Act provides for the promotion of research, both basic and applied; and the extension and transfer of knowledge in the various fields of science and technology and the indigenous technology. Section 3 of the act seeks to support and promote research through funding, human resource development and the provision of the necessary research facilities in order to facilitate the creation of knowledge, innovation and development in all fields of science and technology, including indigenous knowledge and thereby contributing to the improvement of the quality of life of all the people of the Republic.

## **5.3 Statistics Act No. 6 of 1999 and the South African Statistical Quality Assessment Framework (SASQAF)**

The Act provides a framework and criteria for evaluating and certifying statistics produced by government departments and other organs of state and, in some circumstances, by non-governmental institutions and organization. It effectively calls on producers of statistics to be transparent in informing users of the concepts, definitions, classifications, methodologies and frames used in collecting, processing and analyzing their data, as well as informing them on the accuracy of the data, and any other features that may affect the quality of the data or their “fitness for use”.

## **5.4 South Africa’s National Research and Development Strategy, 2002**

The objective of this strategy is to apply internationally well-tested principles and systems that are adjusted to local realities and requirements. The strategy identified three operational objectives:

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- (a) Achieving mastery of technological change in the economy and society (innovation)
- (b) Increasing investment in South Africa's science base (Human Capital and Transformation)
- (c) Creating an effective government science and technology system (alignment and delivery).

### **5.5 Human Sciences Research Council Act, 2008 (Act No. 17 of 2008)**

The Act was established to:

- (a) initiate, undertake and foster strategic basic research and applied research in human sciences, and to gather, analyze and publish data relevant to developmental challenges in the Republic, elsewhere in Africa and in the rest of the world, especially by means of projects linked to public sector oriented collaborative programmes;
- (b) inform the effective formulation and monitoring of policy and to evaluate the implementation of policy; to stimulate public debate through the effective dissemination of fact-based results of research;
- (c) help build research capacity and infrastructure for the human sciences in the Republic and elsewhere in Africa;
- (d) foster and support research collaboration, networks and institutional linkages within the human sciences research community;
- (e) respond to the needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups in society by researching and analyzing developmental problems, thereby contributing to the improvement of the quality of their lives; and to develop and make publicly available new data sets to underpin research, policy development and public discussion of the key issues of development,
- (f) develop new and improved methodologies for use in their development.

### **5.6 Technology Innovation Agency Act, 2008 (Act No. 26 of 2008)**

Technology Innovation Agency Act, 2008 (Act No. 26 of 2008), (Section 4), made provision for the powers and duties of Agency which are the following, namely:

- (a) to provide financial and any other assistance to any person, for the purpose of enabling that person to develop any technological innovation;
- (b) to establish a company contemplated in the Companies Act, 1973 (Act No. 61 of 1973). or in collaboration with any person, establish such a company for the purpose of developing or exploiting any technological innovation;
- (c) to acquire any interest in any person undertaking the development or exploitation of any technological innovation supported by the Agency;
- (d) to draw together and integrate the management of different technological innovations, incubation and diffusion initiatives in South Africa;
- (e) to develop the national capacity and infrastructure to protect and exploit intellectual property properly derived from research financed by the Agency; and
- (f) to acquire rights in or to any technological innovation supported by the Agency from any person, or assign any person any right in or to such technological innovation.

### **5.7 The African Agenda, 2063**

The African Agenda, 2063, is a framework formulated for the purpose of guiding Africa with regard to action plans, situational analysis and study of the global mega trends. The African Agenda, 2063, is a strategic framework for socio-economic transformation of the continent over the next fifty (50) years. Furthermore, it develops an implementation mechanism that is underpinned by a strong knowledge management system that enhances the quality of delivery through cutting edge research, innovation and codification of ground breaking experiences, promote sharing of experiences.

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Africa Agenda 2063 identifies the following seven aspirations:

- (a) A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development
- (b) An integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and vision of Africa's Renaissance
- (c) An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law
- (d) A peaceful and secure Africa
- (e) An Africa with strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics
- (f) An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children
- (g) Africa as strong, united and influential global player and partner

### **5.8 The National Development Plan 2030 (2012)**

The NDP emphasizes that South Africa needs to sharpen its innovative edge and continue contributing to global scientific and technological advancement. This requires greater investment in research and development, better use of resources, and nimbler institutions that facilitate innovation and enhanced cooperation between public service and technology institutions and private sector. Research and development should be seen as the key drivers towards the implementation of the NDP in the province.

### **5.9 Limpopo Development Plan (LDP)**

The Limpopo Development Plan (LDP, adopted 2015), a strategy for the province has been put in place in order to enable the provincial administration to tackle challenges

facing the province. This provincial plan aims at eradicating poverty and inequality and also placing the economy of the province on a new growth path that is capable of delivering decent work and sustainable livelihoods on a scale that will enable the province to achieve the target of halving unemployment by 2020. The LDP acknowledges the need to put Research, Development and Innovation at the centre, towards economic development and growth of the province.

### **5.10 Sustainable Development Goals**

The SDG's were developed based on the foundation as laid by the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's). The SDG's seeks to complete the unfinished business of the MDG's and to respond to new challenges. It further, highlights to address the four dimensions, namely: economic development, social inclusion, environmental sustainability and good governance. This four dimensions have been divided into the following 17 goals which must be achieved by 2030:

- a. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- b. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture
- c. Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages
- d. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- e. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- f. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- g. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- h. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all
- i. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation
- j. Reduce inequality within and among countries
- k. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- l. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

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- m. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts (taking note of agreements made by the UNFCCC forum)
- n. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- o. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss
- p. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- q. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

The SDG's acknowledges that for successful implementation there is a need for academic and research institutions, public and private sectors to produce scientific data in support of evidence based planning and policing making processes.

Moreover, data producers should produce and disseminate accurate data aligned to statistical standards set by STATSSSA.

## 6. RESEARCH PRONOUNCEMENTS

Research pronouncements that are legal and within the prescripts of the law and further reflect that they are informed by the research outcomes of the studies conducted and are priorities and urgent matters deemed to be of critical importance at any particular time by the Executive Council of the Limpopo Province. It is the responsibility of departmental research units to integrate the pronouncements into the research agenda. However, in instances wherein research agendas have been endorsed and approved, research units shall ensure that the approved research agendas are amended accordingly. The implementation of such pronouncements shall be coordinated by the unit responsible for research in the Office of the Premier and undertaken by research units in respective sector departments.

**7. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND POWERS IN RESEARCH MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION**

<b>Authority/Office</b>	<b>Research Agenda</b>	<b>Research Proposal/Projects</b>	<b>Implementing Research Findings/Recommendations</b>	<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>
<b>Executive Authority</b>	Contribute to research agenda through pronouncement that is informed by the outcomes of the study conducted and within legal prescripts.	Might influence that certain projects be conducted depending on the needs of the Province. Such projects should be accompanied by a dedicated funds	Oversee implementation of research recommendations depending on manifesto and mandate of the Government	Approves the review of the research and development framework and the amendments thereof
<b>Accounting Officer</b>	Contribute to research agenda through giving necessary resources and support.	Recommend research projects depending on the needs, priorities/directives and challenges faced by the Province	Oversee implementation of research recommendations as guided by the manifesto and mandate of Government	Approves the review of the research and development framework and the amendments thereof
<b>Executive Management/ Senior Management</b>	Inputs into the research agenda  Recommend, endorsement and approval of research agenda to Executive Authority	Recommend research projects to Executive Authority	Implement research recommendations and findings in the areas of jurisdiction	Monitor and evaluate the approved research projects
<b>Research Unit/Directorate</b>	Coordinate the development of the Provincial Research Agenda.  Coordinate and	Facilitate the approval of research proposals at the Provincial research and research ethics committees.	Support departments in implementing research recommendations and findings in their	Provide supports to research units and Executive Authority/Accounting Officer in

Authority/Office	Research Agenda	Research Proposal/Projects	Implementing Research Findings/Recommendations	Monitoring and Evaluation
	manage the implementation of the Provincial Research Agenda.  Inputs in research agenda  Ensure the implementation of the research agenda by providing support to departments	Provide research support in the approval of research projects through departmental research and research ethics committees  Coordinate research functions and efforts of the province	areas of jurisdiction	monitoring & evaluation of research projects

## 8. ALIGNING RESEARCH WITH SECTOR PLANS AND STRATEGIES, POLICY AND MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Research remains vital to planning, policy management, monitoring & evaluation and strategic planning processes in the Province. Provincial Research Agenda should align to the National Development Plan / Limpopo Development Plan or any other strategy to be developed. To realize these processes, research should be at the center of the functions of government.

- **Research, Strategic Planning and Policy Management**

Evidence-based strategic planning is critical as it shall create an enabling environment for developing policies, strategic plans and strategies that are sustainable in the Province. Integrating research into strategic planning functions will enable the Limpopo Province to build up credibility into planning and decision making processes. All policies, plans and projects should be based on empirical evidence. Researchers shall develop policy briefs to enhance policy management processes.

- **Research and Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Research and M&E functions should be integrated so they can both inform and enhance the policy-making and programme/project functions. Clear data sharing protocols should be developed to inform the discharge of the two responsibilities in the planning and programme/project implementation processes.

## **8. KEY DETERMINANTS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE R&D FRAMEWORK**

The key determinants for the successful take off of the framework and the sustainability of research services and efforts of the Limpopo Province are discussed below:

### **9.1 Support for Research and Development Unit**

The Office of the Premier (OTP) shall have the responsibility to coordinate Provincial Research initiatives, functions and services. Such initiatives and functions of the unit shall be to:

- a. Coordinate and manage the implementation of the R&D Framework across the Province;
- b. Facilitate and coordinate the development of the provincial research agenda;
- c. Support the implementation and compliance of International, National, Provincial and Local Governments regulations, policies and procedures dealing with R&D matters;
- d. Facilitate and manage the Limpopo Policy and Research Repository (LPR<sup>2</sup>);
- e. Facilitate research collaborations between Provincial Government and Academic / research institutions; and

- f. Dissemination of research reports / outcomes and findings through LPR<sup>2</sup>.

## **9.2 Development and Implementation of the Provincial Research Agenda**

The Office of the Premier shall identify research themes/niche areas that should guide departments in developing departmental research agenda. Departments shall conduct or commission research projects to credible research and academic institutions. The Provincial Research Agenda shall be shared with all research partners and institutions of higher learning (See Annexure A)

## **9.3 Coordination and Management of the Limpopo Research Forum (LRF)**

Through Research and Development Directorate, the Office of the Premier shall establish the Limpopo Research Forum (LRF) which shall serve as a multi-stakeholder forum that aims at catalyzing networks among government departments, municipalities, academic and research institutions; and other stakeholders. The LRF's focus shall be on providing a conducive environment for research activities and collaborations to occur by advising and assisting government to develop relevant policies, systems, structures and processes for research and development. The LRF shall meet once per financial year and can be preceded by Research Colloquiums / conferences, seminars. The overarching objective (goal) of the Limpopo Research Forum (LRF) is to serve as an institutional coordination forum for partnerships and support for the use and production of high quality research in the province. Furthermore, the LRF shall operate as a mechanism for coordination and a platform for partnership related to the use and production of sound research outputs. It also serves as a forum for sharing best practices, lessons and experiences amongst various stakeholders in support of research in the province for the co-ordination of the LRF (refer to Annexure B).

#### **9.4 Coordination and Management of the Limpopo Provincial Research Committee (LPRC) and Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee (LPREC)**

The Limpopo Provincial Government through the Office of the Premier (Research and Development Unit) shall establish the LPRC and LPREC. The two committees are established with an aim of regulating research and ethical practice in the province. The main function of the LPRC is to review the methodological soundness of all transversal wide research proposals/protocols or sector specific research proposal/protocols as and when requested by sector departments. Whereas, the main function of the LPREC is to review the ethical soundness of all transversal wide research proposals/protocols or sector specific research proposal/protocols as and when requested by sector departments. Refer to annexure B for the LPREC Standard Operating Procedures.

#### **9.5 Management of Limpopo Policy and Research Repository**

The Limpopo Provincial Government shall establish the Limpopo Policy and Research Repository (LPR<sup>2</sup>) which is a provincial policy and research databank. This web-based system is part of broadening access to government policy instruments and research reports or outcomes. The system will support and assist policy makers, analysts, researchers, evaluators and planners to retrieve relevant government documentation easily. The repository is also geared towards fostering a better relationship between the Provincial Government and the academic/research community, as a way of enhancing the service delivery initiatives of the Provincial Administration.

The LPR<sup>2</sup> shall deposit and store all the relevant policies and research reports and outcomes. The research and policy documents will basically be managed through the repository and the users will get advantage and privilege of retrieving all the relevant policies/policy instruments and research reports/outcomes. These documentations will support policy making, strategic and integrated planning and monitoring and evaluation functions in the Province. The repository will be linked to other institutional repositories

across the country and internationally. This will result in information sharing and transfer and eventually this will ensure good governance and informed decision making in the Province.

## **9.6 Implementation of the Provincial Research Guidelines**

The Limpopo Provincial Government shall develop the Limpopo Provincial Research Guidelines to serve as navigation tools to assist, direct and guide Provincial Departments, National Departments in the Province, Parastatals and other stakeholders to conduct research that is credible, useful, responsive, valid and reliable. The research guidelines shall serve as a system put in place by the Limpopo Provincial Government to ensure common research approaches in the province. Substantially, the implementation of the system is dependent on the establishment of Provincial Research and Research Ethics Committees as well as Departmental Research and Research Ethics Committees. The development and establishment of these research committees will be guided by the purpose and objectives as outlined in Annexure C: (Limpopo Provincial Research Guidelines). The research guidelines shall also put emphasis on the significance of research as a tool used to respond to the needs of the Limpopo community at large. It is through research ethics committees at both a provincial and departmental level that the communities are to be recognized as focal points of research. This will ensure that research is responsive to their needs and challenges (refer to Annexure C).

## **9.7 Establishment of Research Units in Provincial Departments and Municipalities**

All provincial departments need to establish Research and Development units. The respective departments' research units will be responsible for implementing research activities and projects at a departmental level. These departmental research units shall provide research and developments functions for their respective departments and also

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ensure that departmental research services and efforts are well coordinated and managed. The units will also develop departmental research agenda and allocate dedicated financial (budgets) and human resources for the progress of the units. The budgets would specify the funds allocated to self-directed strategic research within the broad mandate of the departments and the proportion allocated to service work for the relevant department. In this regard, each department will have an R&D plan that forms part of the Provincial R&D Strategy/Plan.

The department responsible for coordination of municipalities shall manage and facilitate the process of establishing research and development components and units in municipalities with the assistance of the research and development unit in the Office of the Premier.

### **9.8 Establishment of Limpopo Provincial Research Development Hub**

A research hub is essentially a dedicated center that conducts research on behalf of government. The center will utilize existing university expertise and resources or source in expertise which is not available to conduct research specified by government. The research outcomes shall then be packaged for government in a palatable manner. Importantly, the hub together with relevant departments shall ensure that there will be research uptake for research outcomes, the uptake can be in a form of writing and presenting of policy briefs or hosting research dissemination events. The hub shall also promote skills development and provide research capacity to government officials.

In 2010/11 benchmarking exercises were undertaken at the Gauteng City Region Observatory and Cape Urban Observatory and a similar observatory model is proposed for the Limpopo Province involving government and the Universities of Limpopo (UL), Venda, (UNIVEN), Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) and University of South Africa (UNISA). This proposal sets out the substantiation, purpose, structure and function of such an observatory.

Government needs up-to-date, reliable, relevant and appropriate data, information and facts to formulate meaningful policies and devise appropriate interventions (plans, strategies, resource allocations, technologies to invest, in or to develop, and other programmes). Moreover, Government requires regular, systematic feedback about the impact of its policies and interventions; such feedback through empirical evidence can provide guidance on how government projects and programmes can be improved for the benefit of the beneficiaries. Through empirical evidence, government can be able to identify weaknesses in its interventions and as well as strengths on which it can build. As a result, such a facility needs to be established.

### **9.9 Implementation of the Provincial Research Collaboration Policy**

Close collaboration is required with government's key R&D driver, higher education institutions, funding agencies, foundations, Science Councils, private industry and other organizations. Such cooperation needs to be facilitated and effected across the publicly funded R&D system regarding agenda-setting (prioritization), co-programming, co-funding and, most crucially, alignment of R&D policies and programmes for systems efficiency and efficacy. This process will improve innovation, service development and facilitate access to publicly funded research facilities that will result from the established collaborative partnerships.

The unit responsible for research function within the Office of the Premier shall develop research collaboration policy. The policy will promote research partnerships and collaborations between the provincial administration and other provinces, research institutions, institutions of higher learning at both an international, national and local level. (Refer to Annexure D). Already the R&D directorate has entered into a collaborative MoUs with **Univen, Unisa, UL**, and will enter into MoUs with other relevant institutions in future.

### **9.10 Facilitate Research Funding**

According to 'R&D Survey 2014/2015', the South African government seeks to increase the country's investment in research and development (R&D) by 100% from the R29-billion of 2014/2015 to about R60-billion a year by 2020. In terms of percentage of gross domestic product (GDP), this would involve an increase from 0.77% to 1.5%. The survey further revealed that R&D investment in the country is on an upward path. It came to R29.3-billion in 2014/2015, which was an 8.1% increase over the preceding year. This was despite the fact that the country's GDP growth rate was decelerating, from 2.2% in 2013 to 1.5% in 2014.

The Limpopo Provincial Government departments and municipalities, through Provincial Treasury, will determine a reasonable percentage that should be dedicated to research without compromising the value attached to it. The office of the Premier shall create a conducive environment to attract research investments in the province. This shall be done by linking departments and municipalities with prospective investors. Similarly, departments and municipalities will strive to facilitate other access to funding sources, facilities, and other resources. This will be done through partnerships/collaboration with research institutions and donor/development agencies. Funding will encourage and promote cross-fertilization and rotation of expertise and talent between provincial government and other entities in research sector.

### **9.11 Facilitate Research Capacity Enhancement**

The research capacity enhancement can be approached in numerous angles such as: research mentoring and presentations from academic and research institutions. These methods are regarded as developmental processes that aim at enhancing the research capacities, capabilities and skills of officials, departments and institutions in the Province. This research capacity enhancement process implies that research and academic institutions will be providing government officials and departments with advice on how to

approach research activities and enhance their research capacities. The process shall occur as part of day-to-day consultations and interactions between officials and academics, and researchers in and outside the Province. This process shall even promote collaborations on research proposals, projects and publications between departments/government officials and academics. Additionally, the process can take place through formal meetings and informal settings. The existing capacities in the universities in the province i.e. UNIVEN, UL, TUT, and UNISA can be utilized. Moreover, research institutions such as HSRC and MISTRA can also be utilized to mentor and provide guidance to officials and research units in the Province with the aim of enhancing research capacity. The Office of the Premier in consultation with the department responsible for coordinating municipalities shall facilitate linkage and networks with relevant institutions that are willing to offer pro-bono services. STATSSA as the custodian of research will also play a vital role in this respect.

## **10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE FRAMEWORK**

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is a critical element to ensure the achievement of the objectives of the Provincial R&D Framework in Limpopo Province. The Green Paper on Performance Monitoring (2009) states that Government must be more effective in its actions and improve the quality of its services. Within the framework, monitoring and evaluation should not be an end in itself. Information from the monitoring and evaluation processes should be used to understand why policies and implementation approaches work and how those not functioning properly can be improved. Data and findings obtained from the monitoring and evaluation processes must be used to inform the planning and policy development processes.

Besides focusing on the monitoring of the M&E, the National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF) of the Department of Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation (DPME) also emphasizes the significance of evaluation. Therefore, the NEPF provides for a common understanding of evaluation, an institutional framework for executing evaluations, and

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mechanisms to promote the utilization of evaluations. Its main purpose is to promote quality evaluations which can be used for learning to improve the effectiveness and impact in government, by reflecting on what is working and what is not working, and then revising and improving interventions accordingly. It seeks to ensure that credible and objective evidence from evaluation is used in policy-making, planning, budgeting, organizational improvement, policy review, as well as ongoing programme and project management, to improve performance. As a result, the evaluation of the implementation of the R&D framework, together with the research agenda and programmes, is paramount for the achievement of the objectives of the framework.

It is the responsibility of the directorate responsible for the research function in consultation with the M&E Unit in the Office of the Premier, together with the LRF to oversee and ensure the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the R&D framework and research agenda & programmes, and also to provide expertise and support. As a result, M&E implementation plans for the R&D framework and research agenda should be developed to enable monitoring evaluations activities to be successfully undertaken.

## **11. REVIEW OF THE FRAMEWORK**

The framework shall be reviewed after sixty (60) months (05 Years) from the date of its approval by the Executive Authority or sooner as per decision or directive of the Executive Authority. The unit responsible for the research function shall review the document and effect changes after consultations with stakeholders in the Province.

## **12. CONCLUSION**

The Provincial R&D Framework is necessitated by the potential growth and development challenges as outlined in the LDP, and local realities of the Province. It is apparent that current R&D functions and efforts are not adequately coordinated for maximum impact.

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This Framework provides broad guidelines of the necessary institutional arrangements, support and processes for effective and efficient coordination of R&D functions and efforts in the Province. A unit responsible for research coordination in OTP in collaboration with provincial and departmental research and research ethics committees, and the LRF will ensure that both public and private participants align their R&D activities with the framework. The already mentioned stakeholders will also engage with external funders for possible investments. It needs to be emphasized that investment in human resources, improved funding for research, innovation and development, intellectual property management and funding are crucial for growth and development of the Province.

**APPROVED BY EXCO**

**DECISION NO: 26 of 2021/22**