

Saica calls on urgent intervention by oversight bodies to achieve the NDP goals

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The auditor-general of South Africa (AGSA) released the 2021-22 National and Provincial Audit Outcomes General Report on Thursday, 23 November, which reflected a gradual improvement in audit outcomes. However, there continues to be poor audit outcomes in key service delivery portfolios and state-owned enterprises. Furthermore, lack of accountability has led to service delivery failures.



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The National Development Plan (NDP) was launched by government in 2012 and aims to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality by 2030. However, the AGSA has identified key weaknesses in the processes implemented by government to achieve the NDP goals which includes: incomplete planning, budgeting and reporting; ineffective reporting and accountability processes; and an underachievement on service delivery improvements. These fundamental weaknesses in controls may hamper the achievement of the NDP by 2030, resulting in the spending of the budget without improving the well-being of the country and its citizens.

The AGSA identified the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) as an example of a service delivery department that has incomplete planning, budgeting and reporting as it did not include the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) deliverable on “eradicating the bucket sanitation system” in its annual performance plan. As a result, the government may not be able to deliver on its promises to eradicate the bucket sanitation system and improve the lives of its citizens. This also impacts on the transparency and accountability of service delivery by the government as the MTSF is incomplete and not reliable.

The auditor-general, Tsakani Maluleke, also highlighted that even though there are well-designed processes with defined responsibilities for planning, achieving and reporting on auditees’ delivery on their mandates and on the MTSF, “these processes are poorly implemented, and the public continues to experience a lack of delivery, particularly in the key service delivery portfolios”.

Furthermore, despite the government continuing to spend all or most of its budget, annual targets are still not achieved by many service delivery departments and public entities. This is evidenced by the DWS’s water services management programme where 82% of the budget has been spent whereas the department has only achieved 71% of its target, which will result in overspending to achieve the target. Moreover, the Department planned to rehabilitate nine dams by 31 March 2024 in terms of its MTSF, but has only rehabilitated one dam as of 31 March 2022. The government must be cautioned that the department’s failure to properly implement its mandate and enforce accountability may result in dire consequences for the country in terms of water management, which may be a repeat of the rolling blackouts that are being experienced by the country.

With eight years remaining for government to achieve its goals as set out in the NDP, it is time for government to take stock, revisit its strategy and enforce accountability to avoid further failures within the state.

Saica urges oversight bodies to collaboratively review and monitor the implementation of the NDP which will require a consolidation of multiple service delivery departments and public entities plans aligned to the NDP. Furthermore, accountability and consequence management need to be enforced to ensure that the well-being of the country and its people is improved.

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