

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROCEEDINGS REPORT

MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK FOR THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF INNOVATION



SHERATON HOTEL, PRETORIA
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PROGRAMME DIRECTOR:
DR MLUNGISI CELE, NACI ACTING CEO



science & innovation

Department:
Science and Innovation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INNOVATION



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1. BACKGROUND

Dr Mlungisi Cele welcomed attendees to the meeting and tendered apologies of the Acting Chair of the National Advisory Council on Innovation (NACI), Dr Shadrack Moephuli. The programme consisted of a presentation of the draft monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework commissioned by NACI for the science, technology and innovation (STI) system. This will be followed by a panel discussion on the draft framework, then discussions and proposals for areas of focus in the 2020 and 2021 STI Indicators reports.

NACI was established in terms of the NACI Act (Act no 55 of 1997), as an advisory council to the Minister of Science and Technology and, through the Minister, Cabinet; to advise on the role and contribution of STI and indigenous knowledge systems in promoting and achieving national objectives. NACI commissioned the Centre of Excellence in Scientometrics and Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (SciSTIP) to create an M&E framework for STI. Domestic and global factors contributed to the commissioning of the framework. Erratic development and increasing demands for an improved quality of life influenced the policy terms. It was necessary to consider the implication of broad societal challenges such as poverty, unemployment, social inequality, slow economic growth and climate change, for the innovation policy. The M&E framework was developed to respond to these challenges. A systemic M&E framework would assist NACI to move forward taking the challenges into consideration. The framework was based on current practice and SciSTIP and NACI's stakeholders were consulted.

The framework also needed to reflect proposals contained in the White Paper on STI, published after SciSTIP had begun work on the framework. The framework would take the policy intent of the White Paper forward and would be an umbrella framework to guide and provide direction for the many reviews on the state of innovation and science in South Africa.

2. PRESENTATION: DRAFT M&E FRAMEWORK

Prof Johann Mouton gave a presentation on the draft M&E framework for the South African STI system, explaining that SciSTIP is a Department of Science and Innovation (DSI)/ National Research Foundation (NRF) Centre of Excellence in Scientometrics and Science, Technology and Innovation Policy established in 2014.

2.1. Terms of reference

- ▶ SciSTIP was tasked with developing an M&E framework that addressed the performance and impact of the South African STI system at different levels of analysis.
- ▶ SciSTIP was further required to develop a conceptual framework that provided clarity on key concepts of the object to be analysed and the relationships among these concepts.
- ▶ In addition to finalising the conceptual framework for the study, SciSTIP would, in agreement with the DSI, develop a measurement framework (i.e. a performance M&E framework) to assess the performance of the National System of Innovation (NSI).

Work carried out to date included a literature review and a workshop to discuss the preparatory document, and the appointment of an assistant to work through the 500+ indicators. A special database and indicator bank had been developed and would be made available to NACI.

2.2. Terminology

Prof Mouton clarified terminology used in developing the framework:

- ▶ Logic of evaluation: the logic of evaluation was based on Michael Scriven's work, including criteria of merit, standards of merit and the determination of the performance of the 'evaluand' as the object of evaluation to compare against standards. No distinction was made between monitoring and evaluation, and evaluation was theory-based. Clarity was needed on the object of evaluation when developing a framework. Once evaluation criteria were agreed, standards would be set.
- ▶ Theory-based evaluation: the M&E framework was premised on the theory of change found in the institution's high-level policy statements.

In this diagram, acronym SETI needs to be spelt out and spaces after slashes need to be closed up. The first letter after the colons should be lower case for consistency

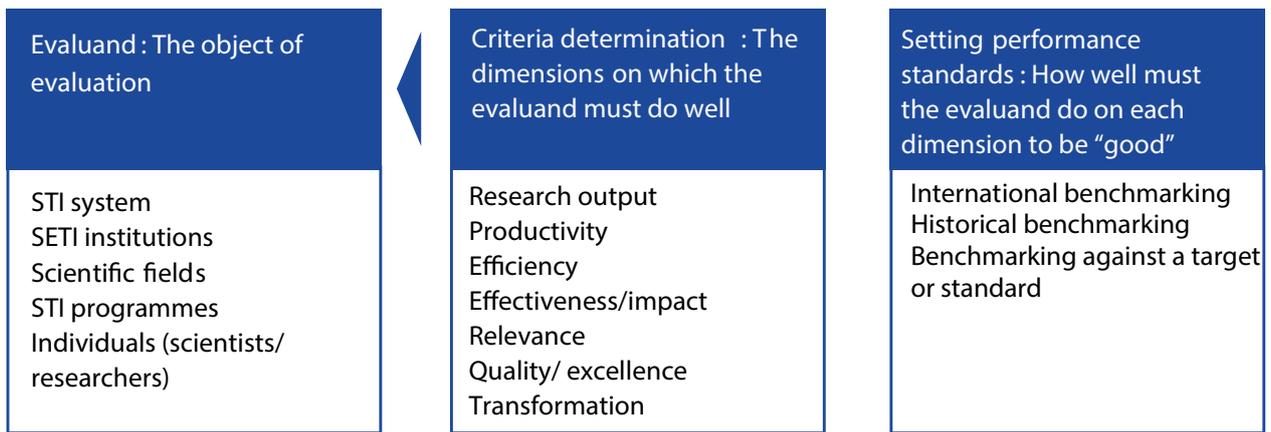


Figure 1: The logic of evaluation

The following five steps were noted:

- ▶ Formulate a plausible theory of change.
- ▶ Formulate and prioritise evaluation questions.
- ▶ Use programme theory to guide evaluation design.
- ▶ Collect and analyse data focusing on programme theory and evaluation questions;
- ▶ Test the underlying theory of change.

- ▶ Theory of change/logic model: Prof Mouton presented an example of a theories-of-change flow chart, adapted from Jonkers et al, and the results-based management model of National Treasury to illustrate his discussion. The models had been selected because they could be adapted and easily mapped to STI evaluation.
- ▶ STI system: SciSTIP chose to follow a framework developed by Kuhlmann and Arnold, the NIS model and mapped the framework to the current White Paper.
- ▶ Outline of proposed M&E framework for the South African STI system: Figure 2 presents the broad contours of the proposed framework and its socio-historical context. The core components of the framework distinguish between the evaluation and monitoring components. The former further distinguishes between system-wide and domain-specific evaluations; the latter between international and

national benchmarking. Under the latter, the construction of a South African STI scoreboard and a South African STI index would be addressed. The construction of a detailed implementation plan for the framework was outside of SciSTIP's remit. However, references to the key issues needed for the implementation had been included.

2.3. Context of the framework

SciSTIP sought out past reviews and evaluations of STI and the system and created a repository of the reports. Nearly 100 past STI reviews conducted over the previous 20 years were identified, classified at national, sector-specific, scientific field, and science and funding programme review level. Very few science and technology innovation programme reviews were found. A systematic review of the reports above could be conducted in future. A predominance of institutional and scientific field reviews existed. Concern was expressed about the time lag and the failure of uptake and use of reports.

Capitals in bracketed words under 'Framework Implementation' need lower casing

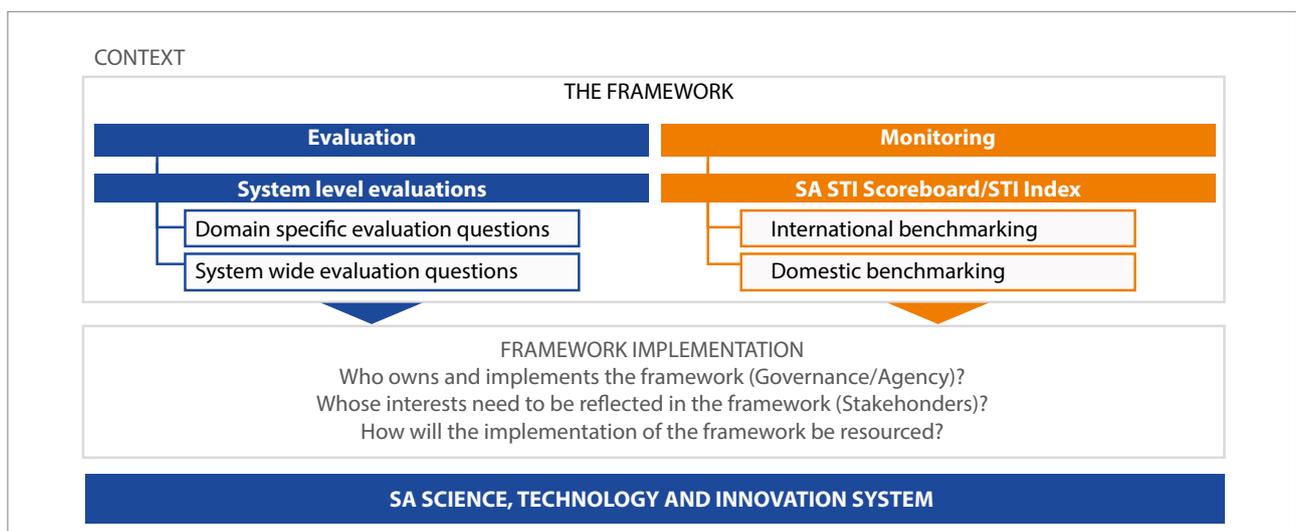


Figure 2: Outline of a M&E framework for the South African STI system

2.4. STI evaluation

The process began with the 1996 and 2019 white papers on STI. The 2019 White Paper was not yet operationalised into the Decadal Plan, and provided no explicit theory-of-change. Therefore, the team developed a reconstructed theory-of-change for this policy document. SciSTIP identified 87 actionable policy intents and mapped these onto the STI system framework. It was emphasised that the results were unreliable.

The term ‘innovation for inclusive development’ was mentioned multiple times. Despite criticism, the paper emphasised the importance of basic high-quality and socially impactful science. The notion of innovation was also expanded to include grassroots innovation.

2.5. Domain specific evaluation questions

- 1) Mapping of policy to intents: STI domains were numbered from the White Paper (Figure 3). It was emphasised that the numbering sequence was important. The numbered evaluation questions were mapped to STI domains. Programme theory would then be used to guide evaluation. The team would gauge whether this resonated with DSI before proceeding further.

In the diagram, SMEs and SMMEs, IPR need to be spelt out; lower case B in Brokers, delete hyphen in coordination

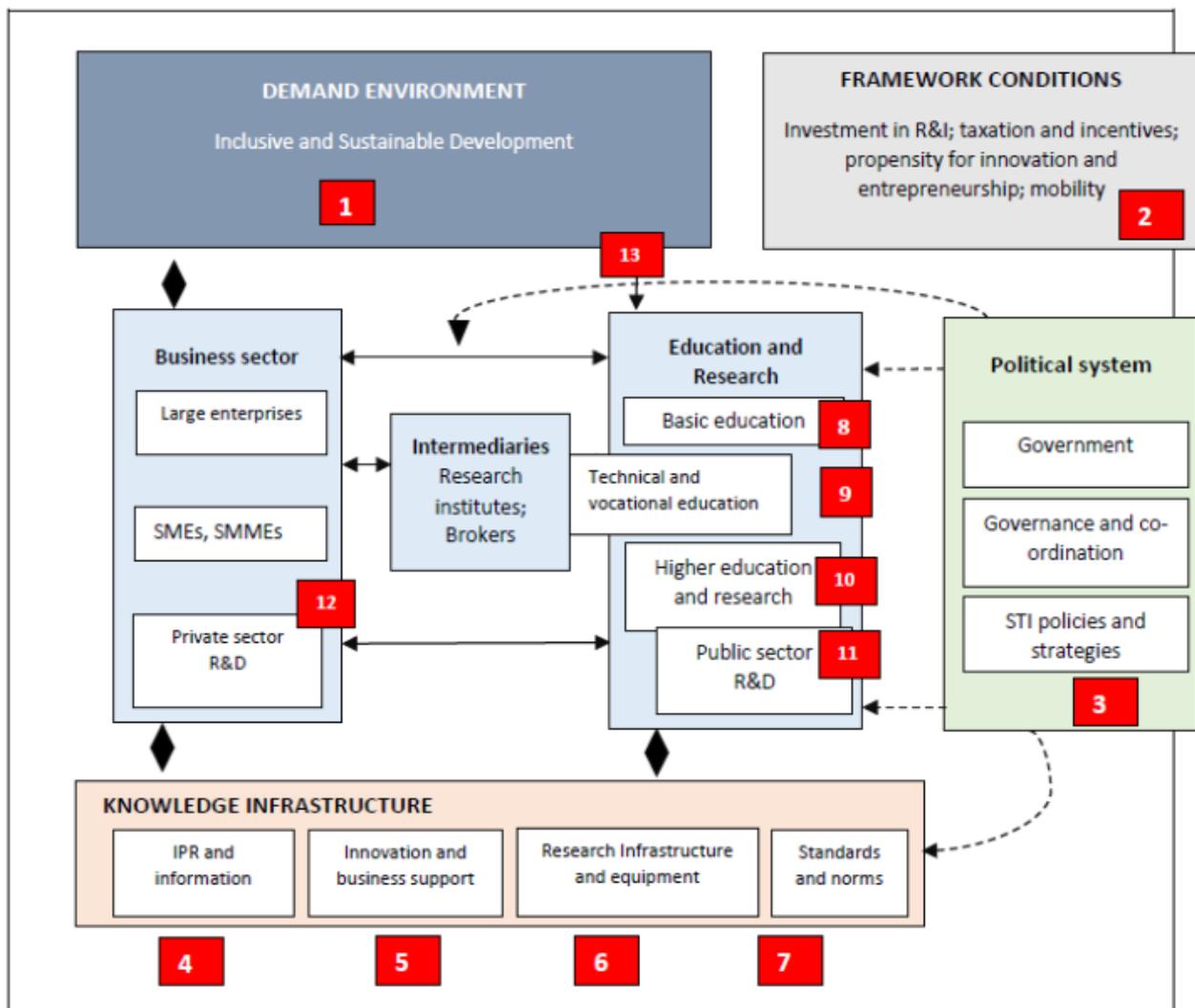


Figure 3: Mapping policy intents to STI domains

- 2) System-wide evaluations: the White Paper was the primary reference, but global and national imperatives were also considered. Eight evaluation questionnaires were formulated. Domain-specific questions (domain specific) and system-wide questions were discussed.
- 3) STI monitoring: monitoring questions focused on time-dependent issues. Monitoring processes are predominantly quantitative. Types of STI indicators were noted. It is possible to develop a South African STI scoreboard. The functionality and analytical dimensions underpinning the scoreboard were discussed. The STI scoreboard indicators will allow for both domestic and international comparisons.
- 4) South African innovation index: Indicators would be used to develop a single index value. A draft STI scoreboard was under construction.
- 5) Implementation: The White Paper identifies six actionable M&E references. Implementation issues identified included: who owns the framework, whose interests need to be reflected in the framework and its implementation, and who will implement the M&E framework/agency. Prof Mouton discussed what the reconfiguration of NACI meant, whether this would mean a new inhouse unit dedicated to M&E, the development of a consortium-like institution, or if NACI would assume a liaison/oversight role. Prof Mouton noted that clarification was required on what was intended by the statement in the White Paper that 'the DSI and Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) would cooperate with the higher-education sector to expand'.
- 6) Other issues: Prof Mouton expected contestation from various sources conducting evaluations and reviews, such as the NRF, the Council on Higher Education (CHE), and universities. He agreed with the intent of the policy to create better coordination, uptake and use of recommendations.
- 7) Next steps: if the framework was accepted, a clear identification of implementers would be required. The indicators needed to be populated with data. It would be challenging to conduct three-yearly evaluations.

2.6. Questions and comments

Dr Cele invited delegates to comment and pose questions following the presentation.

The following comments and observations were made:

- 1) The number of international papers had dropped over the previous five to 10 years. It was noted that 'always-on monitoring' was preferred to identify changes in trends. There must be an annual scorecard report and a question was raised on whether there was sufficient capacity to do so, or even to report every two years, as this was a big undertaking and the indicator report was time consuming. NACI can still gather the data annually. It was stated that the White Paper was a conceptual framework that contained contradictions and failed to address difficult questions.
- 2) There is an assumption of coherence and homogeneity within the DSI. The merit of a political economic analysis institutionally was raised, as this could yield an objective view of contradictions in the White Paper.
- 3) Increased investment in public and private research and development (R&D) was noted as part of the theory of change and a wording change suggested to 'increase public and private investment in R&D'. This would influence the indicators.
- 4) How does the M&E framework interface with programmes and administrative data. It was noted that the system-level framework interfaced with programmes at the institutional level. Institutional reviews were commissioned previously by other bodies and had not been coordinated. Who would own the framework as the NRF was currently mandated to review universities every five years?
- 5) Of 100 reviews, only three were questions on technology and innovation. Although there were R&D indicators, only a few innovation indicators existed. It was suggested that this could result from incorrect TOCs and/or poor implementation and recommended intervention on publications as they did not lead to innovation, the right theory of change and good implementation were ideal. It was agreed that interventions should address societal issues. It was believed that the publication subsidy scheme had been effective in increasing the quantity of publications but not the quality or ethics. A delegate noted that the publication subsidy system should not be scrapped (R2.4 billion a year funding was provided by National Treasury for research). No work had been done to establish whether studies translated into innovation and entrepreneurship from doctoral theses.
- 6) More than three reviews had been done, but the information had not been shared by the private sector. The strategic five-year and decadal plans should be redefined. Clarity of roles was needed as there were many players but limited

funds. The system should be coordinated at system and sectoral levels. The government could convene a coordinating body and include all stakeholders.

- 7) It was commented that the publication of the White Paper should have been delayed and that macro issues (such as the establishment of the NSI) had not yet been addressed, yet the M&E framework was being implemented. The danger of retrofitting the NSI into the M&E framework was highlighted. The key targets set in the 1996 and 2002 white papers were questioned. The system had failed and the economic situation was not conducive but the burden for the government to fund R&D was increasing. While the South African private sector invested less in R&D, similar investment was increasing by as much as 70% in other countries. Macro issues were noted. A question was raised on whether the problem stemmed from a lack of political will or if it was a resource issue.
- 8) While five TOCs were referenced, a single TOC had not been selected. It was noted that figure 3 on page 12 was dated, presenting a 1950s' economist linear view when systems were more complex in reality and that it was disappointing and unhelpful that such elementary models were being applied in the science arena. It was noted that the team sought a middle ground and that linear relationships were important to diagnose problems in the loops of complex systems. It is the responsibility of those in the system to monitor public investment, which amount to R20 billion and sufficient checks and balances are needed. It was also emphasised that the White Paper was not taken at face value.
- 9) A suggestion was made that consideration be given to what business and the private sector needed, which is believed to be problem-solving innovation and learning from others.
- 10) The indicators report is a valuable document for South Africa with a wealth of useful research information, and could be used for research and strategy in many areas. A concern was raised that the Minister of Basic Education, the National Planning Commission and the Presidential Advisory Board were not aware of the document. The report should be marketed to ensure wider recognition. It was noted that the information in the report changed each year and that although the previous years' information was lost, it was useful. It was suggested that the team working on the framework should consider a time series of booklets and a generalised annual publication with an intensive report every three years. It was noted that at a 'research obstacle to uptake course' at Stellenbosch University it was discussed that the report producers must do more to bring reports to politicians' attention. Indicator reports were less frequent and time could be taken to make them more accessible. The government's decision-making appeared to be based on politics rather than evidence. The one-year timeframe was important and trends over time could be overlooked.

3. PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE DRAFT M&E FRAMEWORK

3.1. Prof Anastassios Pouris

Prof Pouris noted that South Africa is a pessimistic society and tends to ignore successful projects. Twenty years before, the DSI did not exist and only a few publications were in circulation. However, the trend now was fault finding and suggestions were being made to shut down the programme. More controls were required but it is necessary to retain what is working. Each year, R150 million in government funding and additional private sector funding was received each year for research. Projects had not been properly evaluated, with R600 million lost each year from the science system. He asked who would be held accountable and recommended that new projects be initiated, and that lessons learnt be considered.

In terms of the needs of business and NSI, Prof Pouris noted that software and digital industry initiatives had been ignored by the government in the past. The government was currently ignoring important R&D issues such as the fourth industrial revolution and would miss out on job creation yet again. This was not directly science- and technology-related but there was a fragmented system of innovation. The lack of collaboration and infighting were detrimental to the system.

He noted that the indicators report was a new document and was one of several successful initiatives. NACI is a small part of the DSI with few people in the unit and 70% of the report had been outsourced. He agreed that there should be a smaller annual report, a larger three-yearly report and a time series. He reiterated that new initiatives should be undertaken and programmes that were successful should be retained.

3.2. Prof John Mugabe

Prof Mugabe clarified that NACI was not presenting a framework, but rather a useful report on how to develop an STI M&E framework. He questioned whether the framework was intended to evaluate/assess the efficacy of STI or the White Paper. The report is rich in information and clarified several concepts. Other issues to consider included general assertions about governance, which were politically sensitive. Prof Mugabe asked whether an assessment of the new White Paper or an assessment of the efficacy of the system of innovation was required.

Stakeholders appeared to confuse indicators and reports and a focus on the utility of reports was suggested. The European Union (EU) approach could be adopted when identifying the kinds of reports that would be useful to the government, with less focus on STI indicators and greater focus on scoreboards and general indicators. Attention should be moved from production of reports to use of reports. South Africa needed to identify countries other than the EU, Austria and Malaysia as there were better references. He asked what was sought in a framework and what kinds of indicators were needed.

3.3. Reactions from delegates

Dr Cele invited reactions from delegates. A suggestion was made that the framework was better framed to provide clarity. The NSI-used 'system failure' approach had not been included in this document, which focused on the more academic element of STI indicators. It was suggested that the team clearly define the distinction between NSI and STI. Dr Cele invited written submissions on these important questions. The report alluded to the effect of changes in government departments on coordination. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development work conducted some years before had noted policy coherence and coordination as crucial factors in the implementation of a functional system. It was important to include private sector participation.

4. 2020 AND 2021 STI INDICATORS REPORTS

Mr Dhesigen Naidoo led this discussion, noting his belief that the lack of optimism had diminished South African's capability. He recommended pragmatism. A People's Republic of China representative had referred to South Africa 20 years before when South Africa had been ahead of China. South Africa's previous advantages over China and the rest of Africa had been eroded. A Rand Merchant Bank report on investor attractiveness of African countries had demoted South Africa to number three on the list. South Africa needed to move faster to stay in the same place for now. South Africa was performing poorly given its economic weight on the African continent.

The June deadline to publish reports in September created a pressurised timeframe. NACI planned to start both the 2020 and 2021 reports in 2019 and would consider a five-year timeframe around the conceptualisation of the report. It was noted that further analysis of the report was required, which could be accomplished through a series of shorter papers, and that the current product was unsatisfactory to most stakeholders. A larger team was needed to produce a better STI outlook (for example the environmental outlook).

He noted that embracing complexity was not limited to the STI report and that people would ignore the report if there was an absence of direct linear connection and focus on what to do next. He also highlighted ownership as a current problem with the report, stating that the owners did not want to hear concerns, and those who should own the report could not resonate with it. Mr Naidoo did not believe that NACI should be a single government department.

He noted that South Africans expected policy to have the right algorithm to make everything work, emphasising that Trevor Manuel considered the National Development Plan a vision

rather than a gold standard strategy. He urged everyone to view the STI White Paper in a similar way.

A more coherent tactical plan and further engagement were needed. Mr Naidoo questioned the STI report's influence on conversation at the upcoming Presidential Investment Summit and the Africa Investment Forum, emphasising that more sophisticated marketing of the STI report was needed. It was also noted that the report was not presented to Cabinet and, as such, NACI and DSI had missed an opportunity. The NACI provincial roadshows could be useful but engagement with the executive and graduated levels of the government was equally important. The DSI should allow NACI latitude in this process. The STI report is a report on DSI performance.

Lastly, he noted that innovation should become an ideology and an element of strategy driving the economic plan. The world is transitioning to the post fourth industry phase, led by the developing world for the first time in history.

4.1. Comments and discussion

The following were raised by stakeholders:

- a. NACI should not report to a line function department.
- b. The United States (US) National Science Foundation briefed incoming US presidents and a suggestion was made that NACI could do something similar. A comment was made that NACI should report less often and choose crucial times and that the current South African president would be open to an approach from NACI as NACI has more integrity. It was also noted that a change of location would not guarantee increased influence. An observation was made that the National Science Foundation had been established in 1945 to advise on how science would benefit of US society.
- c. A delegate emphasised that NACI was a national advisory council established to advise the DSI and that as NACI was expected to expand, it should be given an outline of how to do this. Strict evaluation guidelines could be restrictive, and innovations were not realised. NACI should keep to its White Paper mandate and continue in its advisory capacity. It was a statement of policy intent in the White Paper that the innovation M&E facility be housed in NACI and it would be impossible for NACI to execute this brief/mandate unless its relationship to several bodies was changed.
- d. While one would wish to centralise NACI, it needed to be clarified whether NACI was an advisory body only or whether it requires a further mandate. Where NACI was located would also be important.
- e. Future discussions should be more structured to deal with broader political economic questions versus programmatic issues and indicators. The sources of reports were not discussed. It was important to

distinguish between broader institutional issues and the use of indicators in reports. The need to learn from countries (such as Taiwan, South Korea and Singapore) other than the EU was emphasised as they have grappled with the indicators question.

- f. Focus should be on innovation rather than R&D. The measurement should be whether innovation had increased jobs, gross domestic product and tax to the fiscus, and whether it had ultimately improved the lives of South Africans. Small and medium enterprises are looking for an innovative advantage not supplied by universities.
- g. The CHE mandate was stronger than NACI's mandate and the political dynamics had changed as there is now one minister rather than two.
- h. Innovations occurred in industry daily, but were not recognised. Local industry often worked with international industries but the work was not recognised

in South Africa. Institutions must play a bigger role in NSI and the design of programmes.

In closing, Mr Naidoo noted that NACI wished to initiate a two-yearly discussion and produce a 2020 report. Matters raised during stakeholder engagements would be addressed in the 2020 report.

5. CLOSING REMARKS

Dr Cele noted that the discussion had been fruitful. He highlighted that NACI presented progress on the system M&E framework and would ensure that stakeholders were kept updated on its evolution. In addition, NACI provides a platform where stakeholders could discuss STI policy issues. It was also noted that NACI will consider creating a targeted community of practice through the portal.

Annexure 1: Delegates

Title	Name	Surname	Organisation
Dr	Adrian	Tiplady	Square Kilometre Array South Africa
Prof	Ahmed	Bawa	Universities South Africa
Mr	Alvero	Mpofu	Technology Innovation Agency (TIA)
Prof	Anastassios	Pouris	University of Pretoria
Ms	Anneline	Nobelo	Companies and Intellectual Property Commission
Dr	Annette	Bennet	Cotton SA
Dr	Ashwell Rungano	Ndhlalo	Agricultural Research Council (ARC_
Dr	Azar	Jammie	Econometrix
Prof	Ben	Anderson	Da Vinci Institute
Mr	Ben	Durham	DSI
Dr	Bok	Marais	ST Network
Ms	Bongiwe	Kheswa	DSI
Ms	Buhle	Khumalo	DSI
Ms	Busisiwe	Ntuli	DSI
Dr	Branham	Francis	The Innovation Hub Management Company
Dr	Callil	Sui	DSI
Prof	Charles	Hongoro	Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)
Dr	Christa	Van Zyl	HSRC
Mr	David	Mmakola	DSI
Dr	David	Walwyn	University of Pretoria
Mr	Desighen	Naidoo	NACI
Ms	Claire	Buseti	NACI

Title	Name	Surname	Organisation
Mr	Elikana	Moroge	NACI Secretariat
Ms	Elma	Scheepers	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)
Dr	Edmore	Marinda	HSRC
Ms	Fredda	Makoto	University of Limpopo
Mr	Frank	Mazibuko	NRF
Mr	Garth	Williams	TIA
Mr	Gordon	Mashishi	DSI
Dr	Gerard	Hagg	HSRC
Ms	Happy	Molefe	DSI
Dr	Hamilton	Mphidi	Tshwane University of Technology (TUT)
Prof	Himla	Soodiyall	NACI
Ms	Ilse	Karg	NACI
Ms	Ida	Mabaso	FLOIDA Engineering Services
Dr	Jacob	Medupe	CSIR
Prof	Johan	Mouton	Stellenbosch University
Dr	Janine	Chantson	North-West University
Ms	Jetane	Charsely	National Intellectual Property Management Office
Mr	Johan	Kruger	DPME
Prof	John	Mugabe	University of Pretoria
Adv	Jonas	Mosia	Department of Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (Free State)
Mr	Johann	Diederiks	NRF
Mr	Joseph	Taetsane	Mopane Academy
Dr	Kulake	Mawila	NRF
Ms	Kedi	Aphane	DSI
Dr	Kedibone	Kgosana	ARC
Ms	Kgomotso	Matlapeng	DSI
Dr	Keleabetswe Lerato	Mpye	University of South Africa
Mr	Lebusa	Monyooe	NRF
Mr	Loganathan	Chetty	CIPC
Ms	Kgaladi	Thema	Small Enterprise Development Agency
Mr	Laurens	Cloete	University of Pretoria
Ms	Mavis	Masia	NACI Secretariat
Mr	Michael	Gordon	CHE
Prof	Nhlanhla	Mlitwa	University of Zululand
Prof	Nisha	Sewdass	University of Pretoria
Ms	Mariana	Purnell	Agbiz
Ms	Marthie	Van Niekerk	Stellenbosch University
Dr	Mathoto	Thaoge	TUT
Ms	Mavis	Anim	DSI

Title	Name	Surname	Organisation
Mr	Mathovana	Moyane	DSI
Ms	Nosizwe	Naiqhi	DSI
Ms	Nini	Tsiu	DPME
Ms	Nomkhosi	Peter	DSI
Ms	Nonhlanhla	Mkhize	DSI
Ms	Ntombi	Ditlopo	DSI
Dr	Nomusa	Dlamini	CSIR
Dr	Ntsane	Moleleki	NACI Secretariat
Dr	Petrus	Letaba	NACI Secretariat
Prof	Robert	De Mello Koch	University of the Witwatersrand
Dr	Semenya	Sebua	University of Limpopo
Dr	Shawn	Cunningham	Mesopartner
Adv	Pieter	Holl	Innovation Hub
Ms	Rebecca	Maserumule	DSI
Ms	Rudzani	Maila	NACI Secretariat
Ms	Sandy	Dlakude	TIA
Ms	Siphokazi	Magungxu	Eastern Cape Socio-economic Consultative Council
Ms	Senanile	Dlamini	NACI Secretariat
Dr	Sello	Rapule	Osizweni
Dr	Shadrack	Moephuli	NACI
Mrs	Susan	Veldsman	Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)
Mr	Thabang	Ramolefo	NRF
Ms	Thandokazi	Teti	NACI Secretariat
Mr	Tsepo	Majake	ASSAf
Ms	Tshidi	Mamogobo	DSI
Dr	Tiisetso	Lepphoto	NACI
Ms	Vuyokazi	Magungxu	Eastern Cape Socio-economic Consultative Council
Mrs	Wendy	Nyakabawo	Mmesopartner
Prof	Yali	Woyessa	Central University of Technology
Ms	Zeni	Methethi	DSI
Dr	Zolane	Dyosi	NRF





