This programme is an executive course for strategic leaders and top managers in the public service and is being offered for the fourth time. It is designed to assist participants to use evidence to make well informed decisions about policies, programmes, projects and services and to improve government’s impact on society.

There is increasing pressure on policy makers to develop more effective policies and to direct and manage resources in more focused and efficient ways that result in improved implementation and outcomes. Evidence-based policy-making is an approach that has become increasingly prevalent in recent years. It is based on the premise that better policies and better decision-making result when these are based on sound empirical evidence and solid rational analysis. It is also critical to use evidence to improve implementation. Evidence-Based Policy-Making and Implementation (EBPM&I) therefore focuses on establishing rigorously objective evidence as a key informant of policy, but also for improving implementation of public services.

However, there are many areas of government which are not well served by quantitative research, leading to debate about the methods and instruments that are considered critical for the collection of relevant evidence. In addition to data, understanding institutional policy- and decision-making processes, analytical skills and political support are seen as important elements. This course aims to engage with this debate and help leaders understand how evidence can help them to make the best decisions about policies, programmes, services and budgets.
EBPM&I tools include qualitative and quantitative research, empirical research, action research, pilot projects and reflections, clinical trials, stakeholder engagements, expert input, case studies/diaries/photographic stories/autobiographies, evaluations, impact assessments and appraisals. Some of these will be discussed during the course.

The programme

The course will unpack the different influences on policy-making and implementation processes (facts, experiences, expertise, judgement, politics and institutional capacity) and the ways in which evidence can be incorporated into the management process. It will analyse the different types of evidence and their usefulness in different arenas. The course will be very practical, using case studies and drawing on participants’ experiences, as well as global thinking and best practice.

The three day programme will cover:

- The uses of evidence in public policy and decision-making processes
- Examples of EBPM&I tools and the institutional culture and structures required to support more effective use of evidence in the policy process, programmes, project and service management for strategic decision-making and implementation
- Practical application of the lessons learnt to strengthen current policy and implementation processes.

What will participants gain from attending the course?

- An understanding of the factors that influence policy and implementation processes and the difference between evidence and opinion
- An understanding of the reason for, and the method of constructing, a theory of change
- An understanding of how the use of evidence can improve the performance of leaders and departments as well as the implementation and impact of policies
- An opportunity to reflect on existing policy-making and management processes, their strengths and limitations
- An understanding of tools for evidence-based policy-making and implementation
- An understanding of the role of evidence in managing political and other influences on the policy and implementation process.
**Resource people**

The resource and facilitation team will be comprised of leading experts, drawn from both academia and government. The team is led by Ms Lindiwe Msengana-Ndlela of DST and Prof Ruth Stewart of UJ, supported by Dr Ian Goldman of DPME and Prof Alan Hirsch of UCT.

**Ms Lindiwe Msengana-Ndlela** joined the public sector senior management service in 1995 and is currently the Special Advisor to Minister Naledi Pandor, in the Department of Science and Technology in South Africa. She is also a Research Associate at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) on matters of Economic Development, Governance and Service Delivery. Her experience in management roles as Accounting Officer (in all three spheres of government) combined with her current Ministerial advisory role, helps to bring depth and useful perspectives in her facilitation of training interventions. She is able to assist participants as they reflect and discuss aspects of managerial leadership, particularly the interfaces between policy, research, planning, implementation, performance management, monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

Whilst at the helm of the National Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG), as Director General for seven years, she successfully managed a budget which grew from R6 billion in 2002 to approximately R32 billion by 2009. All her Department’s Annual Reports to Parliament received unqualified audit opinions from the Auditor General. During this period, she served as the Chairperson of some high-level committees in the public service, such as the Technical Committee to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Local Government Minister’s Forum, the Technical Committee to the Presidents Co-ordinating Council (PCC) and was the Co-Chairperson of the Governance and Administration (G&A) Cluster of the Forum of South African Director Generals (FOSAD).

**Prof Ruth Stewart** has worked in the area of evidence-informed decision-making since 2000. Producing research to sit on a bookshelf has never been enough for her and she is committed to ensuring research is useful and used. She specializes in the transparent and systematic collation of evidence for decision-making, and in capacity-development for the use of evidence.

Having grown up in Malawi, she has been working in both the UK and South Africa since 1998. She is affiliated with the Evidence for Policy and Practice Information Centre (EPPI-Centre) at University College London, and the University of Johannesburg where she is based. She has also served at the UK’s National Audit Office from 2009-2012 where she led initiatives to promote the use of a wider pool of evidence in value-for-money audit, as well as increasing the audit of the use of evidence in decision-making by departments.

She works across sectors, on wide-ranging projects including the development of evidence-informed national policy development and implementation in newborn health care screening in the UK; and systematically reviewing the evidence on the effectiveness of micro-credit in the reduction of poverty in low and middle-income countries.

Her most recent post is leading a programme to build capacity in the use of research evidence (BCURE), supporting government colleagues in South Africa and Malawi. Together her team is working with the Departments of Basic Education, Science and Technology, and Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, as well as the Ministry of Local Government in Malawi.

**About the Graduate School of Development Policy and Practice**

The School provides professional and academic training for senior government officials, elected office bearers and those engaged in public policy in South Africa, other African countries and beyond. It also engages in research, consultancy and policy advice on issues related to development policy and practice in Africa. In doing so, it builds on the academic resources of the different faculties at the University of Cape Town, as well as those of local and international partners. It seeks to strengthen links between the research community and the policy community and promotes the development of strategic leadership in government, including a strong emphasis on accountability in government.
What previous participants liked about the course

"It is important that work is informed by evidence. If you don’t use evidence effectively you could be prescribing inappropriate medication."

"It is good to see that there are different sources of evidence available and one does not need to recreate as there is a whole body of knowledge out there that we need to tap into doing our every day work."

"The course enabled me to see the gaps in the work that I am currently doing and going back home I will be able to plug the gaps and even to strengthen the areas that are working every well."

"Being able to take time out and just learn."

How to apply?

Applications close on Monday 21 September. Space is limited so we suggest you apply as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

Participation will be confirmed by Monday 28 September at the latest. On confirmation you will receive payment details.

To participate you need to be:

- A senior official, from Director General to Chief Director level, in a national or provincial government department in South Africa, tasked with managing policy processes. (It is preferable that a management team from a department attends, as they will get a lot more from the course and find it easier to implement in the department.)
- In a position to influence and/or apply new approaches to policy-making and implementation

To apply, please complete and submit the attached application form.

Costs

- Course fees R9,000 (nine thousand ZAR) per delegate payable in advance

Course fees include course attendance, course materials, meals and parking.

Please note that transport and accommodation need to be booked and paid for by your department.

The course itself will take place at the Townhouse Hotel, Cape Town. Directions will be provided.

For more information or to apply please contact

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University of Cape Town Graduate School of Development Policy and Practice